

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

<p>COUNCIL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 12 FEBRUARY 2024</p>

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL BUSINESS
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 12 FEBRUARY
2024 AT 1400 HOURS IN COMMITTEE ROOM 6, COUNCIL
HOUSE, VICTORIA SQUARE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT: - Councillor John Cotton in the Chair;

Councillors Robert Alden, Baber Baz, Sir Albert Bore, Ray Goodwin, Katherine Iroh, Brigid Jones, Gareth Moore, Sharon Thompson (joined via MS Teams and so could participate but not vote) and Chaman Lal.

NOTICE OF RECORDING

272 The Chair advised the meeting to note that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

273 No declarations of interests were made.

APOLOGIES

274 There were no apologies for absence.

MINUTES

275 The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2024 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

COMMISSIONER’S REVIEW AND COMMENTS ON AGENDA

276

The Committee noted the comments submitted by Commissioners in relation to agenda item 7 ‘Overseas Travel and Inward Delegations From Abroad’. The comments submitted by Commissioners were included in a document which was available for public view as part of the agenda pack for this meeting.

PETITIONS UPDATE

The following report of the Interim City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer was submitted:-

(See document No 1)

Ben Patel-Sadler, Senior Committee Manager made introductory comments relating to the report.

The Committee expressed a view that it was essential for all directorates to fully understand the petitions process and the timelines associated with discharging petitions. The Senior Committee Manager would liaise with directorates following the meeting to ensure that petitions submitted by Members at City Council continued to be responded to and discharged according to the agreed timescales.

The Committee noted that the number of outstanding petitions continued to decrease which was a positive step.

It was-

277

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee noted the Petitions Update report.

OVERSEAS TRAVEL AND INWARD DELEGATIONS FROM ABROAD

The following report of the Strategic Director, Place, Prosperity and Sustainability was submitted:-

(See document No 2)

The Lord Mayor declared an interest as some aspects of the report referenced travel undertaken by him as part of his role as Lord Mayor.

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The Committee noted that overseas travel would only be undertaken if contractually necessary and where all travel costs had been met in full by the hosting organisation. Any overseas travel undertaken would only be done so where dedicated ring-fenced grants were in place for that purpose.

The Committee noted that all upcoming work trips to be undertaken by the Lord Mayor were fully funded by the host organisation.

The Committee recognised the serious financial situation facing the Council at this time, but acknowledged the importance of facilitating face-to-face meetings wherever possible as per the funding arrangements outlined above.

It was-

278

RESOLVED:-

The Committee noted:

- 1.) Approved Member and officer overseas travel.
- 2.) The proposed upcoming forward travel proposals.
- 3.) The details of inward delegations from abroad.
- 4.) That with effect from 19 January 2016 authority for foreign travel by City Council Members and officers would only be granted when 4 weeks' notice had been given. Visits proposed with less than 4 weeks' notice would be refused unless under EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES which would require written documentation and an extremely robust reason to travel.
- 5.) That additional requirements to complete a COVID risk assessment prior to travel had to be conducted as part of the Authorisation to Travel process

BUDGET COUNCIL 2024 – VERBAL UPDATE

During the discussion in relation to the 5 March 2024 Budget meeting, the Committee noted the following points:

- 1.) A detailed plan was in place to ensure that the Council could take a decision in relation to the 2024/25 budget even if the meeting was disrupted. The Committee expressed a view that Council should be able to take any decisions in relation to the budget from within the Council Chamber.

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- 2.) The Committee noted that appropriate and proportionate security measures would be implemented on the 5 March so that the Council could set its budget with minimal disruption.
- 3.) Members noted the importance of ensuring that a legal budget was set on the 5 March 2024.
- 4.) Following the completion of the Cabinet meeting on 27 February, an addendum would be issues in respect of the 5 March City Council agenda to reflect the decisions taken by Cabinet on the budget.
- 5.) A short note would be drafted by officers to be published on the website to explain to the public the process to be used by Council to set the budget on the 5 March 2024.
- 6.) The Committee agreed that all proposed amendments to the Budget (as approved by the Section 151 Officer and Commissioners) would be submitted to Committee Services at 1030 on 5 March 2024.
- 7.) The Committee agreed that the following timings should apply at the 5 March meeting:

Leader to have 20 minutes to propose the budget.

Conservative Group Leader to be allocated 20 minutes to propose his Group's amendment.

Liberal Democrat Group Leader to be allocated 20 minutes to propose his Group's amendment.

Green Group Leader to be allocated 10 minutes to speak to the budget proposals.

Councillor Sir Albert Bore to be allocated 10 minutes to speak to the Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group recommendations report.

It was-

279

RESOLVED:-

That Council Business Management Committee noted the points raised during the Budget meeting related discussions as outlined above.

COUNCIL AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING

The following draft agenda was submitted:-

(See document No 3)

During the ensuing discussion on the Council agenda the following was agreed/noted:-

Where a Member has raised a question at a City Council meeting, a response should always be provided by the relevant officer(s) in advance of the next meeting.

The Committee noted that in addition to the Budget report, the Pay Policy Statement 2023/24 would also be considered at the 5 March 2024 meeting.

Pay Policy Statement 2023/24 Report: 15 minutes.

2024/25 Budget Setting Process: 4 hours.

280

RESOLVED:-

That the agenda for the meeting of the Council on 5 March 2024 be noted taking account of the timings as outlined above.

CITY COUNCIL AND CBMC FORWARD PLAN

The Committee noted that there would be no notices of Motion at the April 2024 meeting due to the number of agenda items scheduled for consideration. These Groups scheduled to submit Motions to the 16 April meeting would now submit them to the June 2024 meeting, with the order of Motions then continuing as scheduled from this point.

The Committee agreed that the Improvement and Recovery Plan report to be considered on the 16 April should be allocated 70 minutes.

The Committee requested that the Forward Plan presented at the April meeting should provide a forward look to the items scheduled for consideration at CBMC and City Council meetings across the 2024/25 municipal year.

Members agreed to discharge the Motions which had been actioned.

281

The Committee noted the City Council and CBMC Forward Plan.

(See document No 4)

COUNCIL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE DATES FOR 2024

282 The Committee noted the Council Business Management Committee dates for 2024:

To be held on Mondays at 1400 hours except where specified as follows:-

2024:

2 April

7 May

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

283 There was no urgent business.

AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS

284 **RESOLVED:-**

That in an urgent situation between meetings the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer, has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 15:02