

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY 29 AUGUST 2023**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL BUSINESS  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE A HELD ON TUESDAY 29 AUGUST  
AT 1500 HOURS In COMMITTEE ROOMS 3 AND 4,  
COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA SQUARE, B1 1BB.**

**PRESENT:** - Councillor John Cotton in the Chair;

Councillors Baz Baber, Sir Albert Bore, Des Hughes,  
Gareth Moore, Sharon Thompson

**ALSO PRESENT:** - Cllr Chaman Lal – Lord Mayor  
Janie Berry, City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer  
Rob Connelly, Assistant Director Legal and  
Governance  
Christian Scade, Head of Scrutiny and Committee  
Services  
Anne Kennedy, Head of the Lord Mayor's Office

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**NOTICE OF RECORDING**

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

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**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No Declarations were made.

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**APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr Robert Alden and Cllr Brigid Jones.

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**MINUTES**

## **Council Business Management Committee – 29 August 2023**

It was noted that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2023 would be signed at the next ordinary meeting of the Council Business Management Committee.

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### **OVERSEAS TRAVEL AND INWARD DELEGATIONS FROM ABROAD**

A report of the Strategic Director - Place, Prosperity and Sustainability was submitted.

The report was taken as read.

During the ensuing discussion the following was agreed/noted:-

With regard to a question relating to EU Funding Project: Food Trails Project Visit and in particular the direction taken on meat, the Strategic Director, Place, Prosperity and Sustainability, would take a more detailed look and feedback.

It was-

#### **RESOLVED:-**

That the Committee:

- Note approved Member and officer overseas travel.
  - Note the proposed upcoming forward travel proposals.
  - Note the details of inward delegations from abroad.
  - Note that with effect from 19 January 2016 authority for foreign travel by City Council.
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### **REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND PLACES**

A report of the Assistant Director (Legal and Governance) was submitted.

The Assistant Director (Legal and Governance), in his capacity as Returning Officer made introductory comments relating to the report.

During the ensuing discussion the following was agreed/noted:-

- This was a statutory review to take place every five years. The earliest it could take place was October 2023 and the latest was January 2025.

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- Preparatory work was being conducted on provision of Polling Stations outside their polling district being used in an emergency situation and only for single use.
- If in such a situation the emergency venue was found to be better than the one used previously, a formal report would be brought back to the Committee for formal agreement.
- The Returning Officer agreed to establish a feedback method in such cases.
- Attention was drawn to a typographical error in the report, the code for Bordesly and Highgate should be BOH2 rather than BAH 2.
- In response to a question about public consultation, it was clarified that there would usually always be consultation, but if a Polling Station became unusable the day before a poll, this might not be possible. However, sitting Ward Councillors would be informed and others consulted with where possible. Councillors could also be asked for recommendations on where to use due to their knowledge of the area.

It was-

### **RESOLVED:-**

- That the polling station venues that are currently located outside the relevant polling district be noted and agreed.
- That where agreement of Council Business Management Committee (CBMC) to locate a polling station outside the polling district cannot be obtained prior to a poll, this power be delegated to the Acting Returning Officer (ARO). The ARO will only exercises this power where a venue becomes unavailable at short notice, and where it is impracticable to obtain CBMC agreement prior to polling day. Any changes will be for a single poll unless subsequently agreed by CBMC.

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### **THE LORD MAYORALTY FORMULA**

The following report of the City Solicitor was submitted:-

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The Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services, made introductory comments relating to the report.

### **RESOLVED:-**

That it be noted that, in accordance with the amendments outlined in this report and the amendments to the appendix undertaken following the June 2023 meeting, the Groups are entitled to put forward one of their Members to be the Lord Mayor as follows:

2024/25: Conservative

2025/26: Labour

2026/27: Liberal Democrat

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### **MEMBERSHIP FOR COUNCILLOR WORKING GROUPS**

The Committee received a verbal update on the membership for Councillor Working Groups:-

During the ensuing discussion the following was agreed/noted:-

- There had been requests to re-establish the Female Councillor Working Group and Member Working Group in relation to Member Learning and Development.
- Whilst they would not be subject to the proportionality rules, it was suggested that the Female Councillor Working Group should consist of five members: three Labour, one Conservative and one Liberal Democrat, while the Member Learning and Development Working Group should consist of seven members: four Labour, two Conservative and one Liberal Democrat.
- These groups were a priority and updated Terms of Reference would be required for each of the first meetings to ensure they could be resourced.

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- The Deputy Leader stressed the importance of Member Development. She added that the Female Councillor Group last met in January and requested that this be a Task and Finish-type group, and once this had concluded, another protected characteristic could be looked at to ensure that every characteristic had been accommodated.
- The Council House Working group was established earlier in the year, and it was noted that the Conservative Group would confirm their representative after the meeting.

It was-

### **RESOLVED:-**

- That the verbal report be noted.
- That the Female Councillor Working Group and Member Working Group in relation to Member Learning and Development be re-established.

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### **PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION - EQUAL PAY**

#### **REPORTING SCHEDULE**

The Committee received a verbal update on proposed changes to the constitution regarding the equal pay reporting schedule:-

During the ensuing discussion the following was agreed/noted:-

- In July, the Council had committed to bringing reports to ensure openness and transparency. These would be independent reports coming to the meeting of the Full Council every quarter. This would continue until such time as the issue was considered fully resolved.
- The Committee was asked to consider revisions to the constitution to accommodate this and include an equal pay quarterly reporting schedule as the current rules were prescriptive in terms of time on the agenda.
- The first equal pay could come to Full Council before the constitution change but the change would provide clarity. Interim reports could be seen in the meantime.

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- The quarterly updates would need to be timed so that the quarter didn't land on key dates such as the Budget meeting.

It was-

### **RESOLVED:-**

That the issue, and an options paper, be set out at the next meeting of the Committee so that the necessary changes could be made to Part B4 of the Constitution .

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### **COUNCIL AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

The draft agenda was submitted:-

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

- There would only be one tribute and so more time was not required for this item.
- Regarding the Executive Business report on Environment and Transport, Councillors Mahmood and Clements wished to split the time, each speaking for 5 and a half minutes, with the response time being split into 2 and a half minutes each. The Committee would need to agree to this.
- Issues were raised about logistical difficulties for members of the public asking questions. It was suggested that this be thought about going forwards and eventualities and scenarios planned for.
- In response to an issue raised about the Liberal Democrat Group being overlooked during Question Time, it was clarified that time was limited for questions and who spoke was at the discretion of the Lord Mayor. The Leader of the Council suggested that this be noted and picked up after the meeting.
- The Youth Justice Plan had 25 minutes allocated for it, however, as there was new guidance from the Government on the SACRE Constitution item, Officers were asking for this item to be

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withdrawn so that the new guidance could be looked at in more detail before submitting the report. This left an additional 10 minutes that could be added to this time.

- It was suggested to add time allocated to the Youth Justice Plan as it was not coming through Cabinet and Full Council was the only place it would be considered.
- The Chair of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Overview and Scrutiny Committee was willing, if required, to attend for the Lead Member report on WMCA Scrutiny. This offer was noted although it was agreed such attendance was not required for the meeting in September.
- There was sometimes a need to move last-minute amendments and flexibility in timings was needed for this as sufficient time was needed to consider amendments. The Leader of the Council noted that clarity for amendments needed to be communicated to the Lord Mayor and this could be picked up as part of a broader review of arrangements.

### **RESOLVED:-**

- That, subject to the amendments highlighted above, the agenda presented for the meeting of the Council on 12 September 2023 be approved.
- That the request submitted by Councillors Mahmood and Clements, in relation to the Executive Business report on Environment and Transport, be approved so each would speak for 5 and a half minutes when introducing (moving/seconding) the report, with the response time also being split into 2 and a half minutes each.

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### **CITY COUNCIL AND CBMC FORWARD PLAN**

The City Council and CBMC Forward Plan was submitted.

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

- The Scrutiny Inquiry on Child Criminal Exploitation was now expected to come to Council in January.

The Committee noted the City Council and CBMC Forward Plan.

**COUNCIL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE DATES FOR 2023**

The Committee noted the Council Business Management Committee dates for 2023/24:

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

<b><u>2023</u></b>	<b><u>2024</u></b>
23 October	22 January
20 November	12 February
18 December	Tuesday 2 April
	Tuesday 7 May

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**OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of other urgent business.

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**AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS**

**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.

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The meeting ended at 15:35