

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

**COUNCIL BUSINESS
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
28 AUGUST 2018**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 28 AUGUST 2018 AT 1400 HOURS,
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 6, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT:

Councillor Brigid Jones in the Chair;

Councillors Robert Alden, Shabrina Hussain, Gareth Moore, Martin Straker Welds and Mike Ward.

ABSENCE OF CHAIRMAN

2778 In the absence of the Chairman, Councillor Brigid Jones assumed the Chair.

NOTICE OF RECORDING

2779 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.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2780 Members were reminded that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and non pecuniary interests relating to any items of business to be discussed at this meeting. If a pecuniary interest was declared a Member must not speak or take part in that agenda item. Any declarations would be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Councillor Brigid Jones indicated that her partner had been involved in one trips listed at agenda item 5.

APOLOGIES

2781 Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors Kerry Jenkins and Ian Ward.

MINUTES

2782 That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 25 June 2018 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

OVERSEAS TRAVEL AND INWARD DELEGATIONS FROM ABROAD

The following report of the Chief Operating Officer - Strategic Services was submitted:-

(See document No 1)

Following introductory comments relating to the report it was-

2783 **RESOLVED:-**

- (i) That approved Member and officer overseas travel be noted;
 - (ii) that the details of inward delegations from abroad be noted; and
 - (iii) that it be noted that with effect from 19 January 2016 authority for foreign travel by City Council Members and officers will only be granted when 4 weeks' notice has been given. Visits proposed with less than 4 weeks, notice will be refused unless under EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES which will require written documentation and an extremely robust reason for travel.
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INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL - MEMBERSHIP

The following report of the City Solicitor was submitted:-

(See document No 2)

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services, made introductory comments relating to the report and in response to a comment from Councillor Robert Alden advised that discussions were still ongoing relating to the Conservative nominee so the second sentence in paragraph 3.5 was incorrect.

Councillor Mike Ward wished to place on record his disappointment that there was no longer an opportunity for the Liberal Democrat Group to have a member on the panel. Emma Williamson noted that the membership of the panel had last been reviewed 2-3 years ago and, following a suggestion from the Chair, noted that next time membership was reviewed then the possibility of including representation from the Liberal Democrat Group could be considered.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the Council's Business Management Committee recommends to City Council that the following person be appointed to the Independent Remuneration Panel as follows:

<u>Appointee</u>	<u>Term of Office</u>
Hon. Alderman Stewart Stacey	14 September 2018 – 14 New appointment September 2022
	14 September 2018 – 14 New appointment September 2022

- (ii) that it be noted that a further nominee will be recommended to City Council if available.
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DISCONTINUING DISTRIBUTION OF COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL PAPERS

The following report of the City Solicitor was submitted:-

(See document No 3)

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services, made introductory comments relating to the report.

Councillor Martin Straker Welds indicated that, whilst welcoming the proposals, he was concerned at the apparent short timescale to introduce them and asked that officers ensure that suitable training be given to Members.

Councillor Mike Ward welcomed the proposals as the reduction in paper would be beneficial to both budgets and the environment. However he was concerned that Members may miss important information because of the need to read things on a computer or equivalent. He also emphasised that Members made notes on their agenda papers which, whilst possible on an annotatable pdf file, may present problems without hard copies. He suspected that Members would continue to print agendas and the cost would be borne by budgets elsewhere in the Council.

Councillor Robert Alden questioned the potential officer time savings identified in the report as he felt that the 1,000 hours was too high. He felt that amendments to motions should continue to be circulated in paper form as Members would not necessarily be able to view them on screen during the meeting. He was also concerned at the lack of charging facilities and the suggestion to make charging facilities available in the Chamberlain Room would mean Members would be away from the Chamber. The idea that Members should be prepared and charge their device before the meeting did not take into account the fact that Members often went from meeting to meeting throughout the day which would not allow for charging of devices.

During further discussion the training needs of members were emphasised and the Chair indicated that such training should include how to extend the time the

battery of devices lasted by using power saving settings. Officers indicated that they were confident that training of Members in the form of a member's day and on a one to one basis could be undertaken within the proposed timescale. Hard copies of amendments would continue to be distributed around the Chamber as currently.

2785

RESOLVED:-

That the Council's Business Management Committee agrees to implement measures to discontinue hard copy paper agendas and reports for all council meetings by November 2018 subject to the continuation of the circulation of printed amendments to Motions.

PROVISIONAL CITY COUNCIL DATES FOR 2019/2020, 2020/2021 AND 2021/2022

The following report of the City Solicitor was submitted:-

(See document No 4)

The Chair suggested, and it was agreed, that the Annual meeting proposed for 19 May 2020 be put back a week to the 26 May 2020 as it was Ramadan. Reference was also made to the need to consider the possibility of moving the 7 April 2020 so that it was not in the 'Purdah' period for the West Midlands Combined Authority Mayoral Election. Officers agreed to look in to that.

2786

RESOLVED:-

That the provisional City Council dates be agreed as follows, subject to officers clarifying whether the April 2020 meeting needed to be rescheduled:-

2019/2020

To be held on Tuesdays at 1400 hours unless otherwise stated.

<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
11 June	14 January
9 July	4 February
10 September	25 February
5 November	7 April
3 December	26 May (Annual meeting 1600 hrs)

2020/2021

To be held on Tuesdays at 1400 hours unless otherwise stated.

<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
9 June	12 January
14 July	2 February
15 September	23 February
3 November	13 April
1 December	25 May (Annual meeting 1600 hrs)

2021/2022

To be held on Tuesdays at 1400 hours unless otherwise stated.

<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
15 June	11 January
13 July	1 February
14 September	22 February
2 November	15 March
7 December	24 May (Annual meeting 1600 hrs)

REQUEST FOR THE USE OF THE COAT OF ARMS

The following report of the City Solicitor was submitted:-

(See document No 5)

Following consideration of the request it was-

2787

RESOLVED:-

That this Committee has no objection to the use of the Birmingham Coat of Arms by Peaky Blinders on their social media and at charity events.

At this point in the meeting the Chair agreed to consider an item of 'Other Urgent Business'.

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair was of the opinion that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency in order to expedite consideration thereof and instruct officers to act if necessary.

A. Request for the use of the Coat of Arms

The following report of the City Solicitor was submitted:-

(See document No 6)

Following consideration of the request it was-

2788

RESOLVED:-

That this Committee has no objection to the use of the Birmingham Coat of Arms by the Christmas Market management team on the central services building of the Christmas Market.

PETITIONS UPDATE

The following report of the report of the City Solicitor was submitted:-

(See document No 7)

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services, advised the Committee that the company hosting the Council's e-petition service, which had been operating for some 9 years, were withdrawing the service. Alternative providers would charge 10 times more than the current cost to the Council. Therefore officers were proposing discontinuing the service. In response to comments from Members she advised that current petitions would be dealt with in the normal way and users were being signposted to other external e-petition sites.

Councillor Robert Alden made reference the District Head referred to in relation to petition 2025 appeared to be incorrect. Councillor Mike Ward suggested that the discharge of 7 out of 38 petitions submitted in the last six months was poor. The Chair noted the comments relating to petition 1955 which showed why petitions were not responded to in a timely manner. Kate Charlton, City Solicitor, suggested, and it was agreed , that the petition schedule be raised at Council Management Team meetings so that support for quick responses to petitions from Directorates could be encouraged.

2789

RESOLVED:-

That the report and the comments in the forgoing preamble relating to the e-petition facility be noted.

CITY COUNCIL AND CBM FORWARD PLAN

The following City Council and CBM Forward Plan was submitted:-

(See document No 8)

2790

RESOLVED:-

That, subject to the comments made above, the City Council and CBM Forward Plan be noted.

At this point in the meeting the Chair agreed to consider a further item of 'Other Urgent Business'

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS (continued)

The Chair was of the opinion that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency in order to expedite consideration thereof and instruct officers to act if necessary.

B. City Council's Constitution

2791

Kate Charlton, City Solicitor, indicated that she would be circulating to Members of the Committee details of two amendments to the Constitution she wished to take to City Council. The first amendment was to add a new Standing Order on the Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer Appointments, Dismissals and Service Conditions Sub-Committee (also known as the JNC Panel) terms of reference. The new Standing Order would ensure that the City Council is compliant with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, as amended in 2014. The second was to amend the composition of the Standards Committee so that it was not on a proportionality basis but one of equality over the three political groups.

Councillor Robert Alden noted that when the Constitution was rewritten recently it had been checked externally yet the omission relating to the Standing Order relating to the JNC panel had not been identified and he hope this would be taken up with who ever gave the advice. Officers undertook to look in to that.

COUNCIL AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING

The following draft agenda was submitted:-

(See document No 9)

During a discussion it was agreed to amend the agenda as follows:

- Insert an agenda Item 9 City Council Constitution and allocate 10 minutes.
- Rerumber items 9, 10 and 11 to 10, 11 and 12.
- Allocate 40 minutes for item 10 (Section 24 Auditors Report).
- Reduce the time for the Report of Overview and Scrutiny Committees to 45 minutes (item 11).

It was noted that the above would mean that the Council meeting ended 20 minutes beyond it scheduled finishing time.

2792

RESOLVED:-

That, subject to the above amendments, the draft agenda be noted.

AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS

2793

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 1450 hours.

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CHAIR