

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 15TH MAY, 2019

PRESENT: Councillor J Blake in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, D Blackburn,
R Charlwood, D Coupar, J Dowson,
S Golton, M Harland, H Hayden, W Kidger,
J Lewis, J Pryor and A Smart

26 Appeals against refusal of inspection of documents

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

27 Exempt Information - possible exclusion of the press and public

There were no resolutions to exclude the public.

28 Late items

With the Chair's permission a late item was added to the agenda which requested Members consideration to establish a Climate Change Advisory Committee. Minute 36 refers.

29 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

30 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Amanda Carter and Dan Cohen.

Councillor Barry Anderson was in attendance at the meeting as substitute for Councillor Dan Cohen.

31 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on the 13th February 2019 be approved as a correct record.

32 Review of Thresholds in Governance of Decision Making

The City Solicitor and Chief Officer Financial Services submitted a report setting out proposals to amend the decision making thresholds and the way in which those thresholds are applied.

The proposed amendments set out in the report will ensure that the thresholds in place, and the way in which they are applied, provide a clear and consistent approach to the governance of decision making, procurement and finance and meet legislative requirements; support the democratic mandate of elected members; provide appropriate check and challenge around the use of public money; and secure openness and engagement with Members and the public whilst remaining agile and responsive.

Members were advised that subject to recommendations from this committee being approved by the Annual Council Meeting, these changes would be with effect from 1st July 2019.

RESOLVED – To:

- Recommend that with effect from 1st July, Full Council
 - Amend Article 13 of the Council's Constitution to include the definitions of decision categories as set out at Annex 5 of the submitted report; and
 - Approve amendments to the delegations and limits for virements as set out at Annex 6 of the submitted report; and
- Note the contingent intention of the Chief Officer Financial Services to review and amend the capital finance thresholds set out in the Financial Regulations to align them with procurement and decision making practice and procedure.

33 Independent Member Appointment to Audit Committees

The City Solicitor submitted a report to seek Members views on the appointment of an Independent Member to the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee.

The submitted report provided background information to the proposals and the views expressed during consultation with the Leader of Council, Deputy Leader/ Executive Member for Resources and Sustainability and the Leader of the Opposition.

The Committee were advised that any recruitment activity would be a Member led process with emphasis on appointing a co-opted Member with the skills to supplement those already existing on the committee.

RESOLVED – To:

- Note the background information provided and the views expressed in paragraph 4.1 of the submitted report;
- Recommend that full Council approve amendments to Article 9 of the Constitution as set out in Appendix 1 of the submitted report
- Agree that, subject to Full Council agreeing the recommended amendments that the recruitment of an Independent Member be undertaken through a Member Panel.

34 Annual Review of Constitution

The City Solicitor submitted a report setting out proposed amendments to the Constitution to ensure that it remains up to date and fit for purpose.

The amendments proposed were in relation to:

- Article 6 – Scrutiny Boards (Appendix C of the submitted report)
- Officer Delegation Scheme (Council (Non-executive) Functions), particularly delegation schemes relating to the:-
 - City Solicitor (Appendix Ai of the submitted report)
 - Director of Communities and Environment (Appendix Aii of the submitted report)
- Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules (Appendix B of the submitted report)
- Appointments to Outside Bodies Procedure Rules (Appendix G of the submitted report)
- Procedure For Considering Complaints Alleging A Failure To Comply With A Members' Code Of Conduct Within The Area Of Leeds Metropolitan District Council (Appendix E of the submitted report)
- Members Code of Conduct (Appendix D of the submitted report)
- Protocol for Co-ordination of External Inspection Reports (Appendix F of the submitted report)

Members were advised that subject to the recommendations from the committee being approved at the Annual Council meeting, all amendments would be made with immediate effect.

RESOLVED – To make a recommendation to the Annual Meeting of Council on 22nd May that the proposals be approved.

35 Revised Criteria for the Appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Women

Members considered the report of the City Solicitor to seek approval for the creation of a protocol for the nomination of Honorary Aldermen/women to include criteria against which nominations for the role of Honorary Aldermen/women can be evaluated.

Members discussed the proposed revised criteria for the role of Honorary Aldermen/women including the definition of 'eminent service'.

The proposed criteria being:

Any person nominated for the honorary role of Alderman/woman should:

- No longer hold the position of Councillor
- Have served a minimum of 8 years on the Council, or have held the role of either Leader of Council or Lord Mayor
- Have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services by way of exceptional contribution to the City and it's Council

Members noted that the proposal had been discussed with Leaders and Whips from each Group.

RESOLVED - To make a recommendation to the Annual Meeting of Council on 22nd May that:

- The 'Protocol for the nomination of Honorary Aldermen/women within Leeds City Council' be adopted and included at part 5 of the Constitution; and
- The City Solicitor be authorised to review and amend the Protocol as necessary in consultation with the group whips.

36 Climate Change Advisory Committee

The report of the City Solicitor was considered as a late item with the agreement of the Chair.

The Leader of Council introduced the report which followed consideration of the Climate Emergency White Paper at the March meeting of Council and following receipt by Executive Board of a report titled 'Cutting Carbon Annual Report and Leeds Climate Commission'.

The Members were advised that the Committee would be established as an advisory committee under S102(4) Local Government Act 1972 and would provide leadership and oversight in relation to both Council and Executive Board. The proposed Committee would be a cross party committee.

Members were informed that the Chair of the Advisory Committee would be a significant role, with the Independent Remuneration Panel being asked to consider and make recommendation on the level of remuneration in early June, with those recommendations due to be considered by full Council in July 2019.

RESOLVED – To recommend that full Council establish an Advisory Committee on Climate Change with membership and substitution arrangements as detailed within the submitted report and Terms of Reference as set out at Appendix A of the report.