

Decisions of the Constitution and General Purposes Committee

25 June 2019

Members Present:-

Councillor Melvin Cohen (Chairman)
Councillor Alex Prager (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Geof Cooke Councillor Alison Moore
Councillor Richard Cornelius Councillor Barry Rawlings

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Committee held on 9 April 2019 be approved as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Helene Richman

3. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

None.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION AND COMMENTS

Written comments had been received from the following:

- David Guttman
- Paul Lakra
- Fiona Brickwood

Written comments had been circulated to committee members and published on the website alongside public questions.

John Dix and Theresa Musgrove addressed the Committee and made public comments.

Details of the questions asked by residents and the answers provided had been published and circulated at the meeting. Verbal responses were given to supplementary questions at the meeting.

6. MEMBERS ITEM

None.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee considered a report of the Monitoring Officer which set out proposed changes to the rules relating public participation and resident engagement at committee meetings.

Councillor Alex Prager, seconded by Councillor Melvin Cohen, moved the following amendment to the proposals set out in paragraph 1.7:

Delete sub paragraphs number 4 and 5 as set out below

- 4. Residents may raise one question/comment per committee meeting in order to allow as many residents as possible to raise questions/comments and ask a supplementary question at Committee.
- 5. The deadline for submitting a question/comment be extended to 10am two clear working days before the meeting. Questions/comments will be responded to verbally at the meeting only. Residents will be able to ask one supplementary question for each question/comment made. If there is insufficient time to deal with all questions in the 30 minutes of allocated time, a written response will be provided within a reasonable period. The Chairman should also have the discretion to request that a question answered at the meeting also be responded to in writing.

The proposed amendment was put to the vote and votes were recorded as follows:

For	3
Against	3
Absent	1

The Chairman used his casting vote in favour of the amendment and the amendment was declared carried. The amended proposals became the substantive recommendations.

The substantive recommendations were put to the vote and votes were recorded as follows:

For	3
Against	3
Absent	1

The Chairman used his casting vote in favour of the substantive recommendations and they were declared carried.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The Committee agree that Article 3 (Residents and Public Participation) be amended to give effect to the following changes:**

1. Questions and comments should be amalgamated; it is perfectly possible to raise a comment as part of a question. The number of words for each question/comment should be limited at 100.
2. Questions/comments should be raised under the current rules for questions. This means that the council and lead officer would have notice of the question/comment before the meeting and would therefore be in a position to amend the committee report (if necessary) to include a relevant matter raised in the question/comment, if not currently within the committee report.
3. Residents may raise one question/comment on an agenda item. The question/comment must relate to the substantive matter to be determined by the committee. No more than two questions from residents will be allowed per agenda item taken in the order of receipt by the Governance Service

2. Officers be instructed to prepare revisions to Article 3 for reporting to Full Council

8. BARNET COUNCIL'S ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The Head of Safety, Health and Wellbeing presented the report which provided the committee with information on the Council's health and safety performance for the period 2018/19. The report further set out the priorities for the period 2019/20 to ensure continued improvement in H&S performance.

He explained that the performance information and data is obtained from the council's accident/incident reporting system, together with independent audit results, corporate training records and ill health data. He clarified that the statistics relate to directly employed council employees.

With regards to figures relating the number of staff who have completed the mandatory corporate health and safety training modules he explained due to a number of factors, including staff turnover and long term sickness, attaining the 100% completion target was difficult.

With regards to health and safety performance of the council's partners he confirmed that all partners are required to provide him with this information. The Committee requested if the information could be included as part of this report going forward [**ACTION: Head of Safety, Health & Wellbeing**]

RESOLVED that the report be noted and the priorities for the period 2019/20, as outlined in section 3 of Appendix 1 (Councils Annual Health and Safety Report), be approved.

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT & SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN (LGSCO) UPHELD COMPLAINT CASE ID 18009897

The Monitoring Officer presented the report which detailed the LGSCO decision concerning the upheld complaint (Case ID 18009897). It is a requirement of law that this is reported to Committee as the LGSCO issued a public report.

RESOLVED - That Committee note and consider the LGSCO upheld complaint (Case ID 18009897) as detailed within the Ombudsman’s report at Appendix A.

10. CODE OF CONDUCT ALLEGATIONS 2018/19

The Monitoring Officer presented the report which provided the Committee with an update on complaints he has received about Member conduct during 2018/19.

RESOLVED that the Committee note the update as set out in Appendix A

11. COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Director of Assurance updated the work programme with the following items;

Meeting	Report title
7 October 2019	Review of the European Parliamentary Review – May 2019
16 January 2020	Compulsory Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations
	LGBCE - Electoral Review of the London Borough of Barnet Final warding arrangements
1 April 2021	Annual Report on Electoral Registration

RESOLVED – That the Committee note the updated Work Programme

12. ANY ITEM(S) THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES IS URGENT

None.

The meeting finished at 8.26 pm