

# **Decisions of the Constitution and General Purposes Committee**

7 July 2022

Members Present:-

Councillor Barry Rawlings (Chair)

Councillor Geof Cooke  
Councillor Ammar Naqvi  
Councillor Paul Lemon  
Councillor Melvin Cohen

Councillor Elliot Simberg  
Councillor Anne Clarke  
(Substitute for Councillor Alison Moore)  
Councillor Ross Houston  
(Substitute for Councillor Ernest Ambe)

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Alison Moore  
Councillor Ernest Ambe

Councillor Laithe Jajeh

## **1. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

## **2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS**

Apologies were received from Councillor Moore who was substituted by Councillor Clarke. Councillor Moore had sent apologies due to mayoral duties.

Apologies were received from Councillor Ambe who was substituted by Councillor Houston.

## **3. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

None.

## **4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

None.

## **5. PUBLIC QUESTION AND COMMENTS**

Responses to public questions had been published and circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting.

## **6. MEMBERS ITEM - POLLING STATIONS**

### **Councillor Melvin Cohen – Polling Stations**

The Chairman invited Councillor Melvin Cohen to present his item

Councillor Melvin Cohen outlined the issues as set out in his Members Item. He reported that this was an ongoing problem for the orthodox Jewish community in some wards. In relation to some polling stations, alternative venues had been proposed.

The Assistant Director Assurance, Emily Bowler, advised the Committee that the representation would be considered as part of the polling station review which would start in September and report to committee in January 2023. Members requested that all Members be consulted as part of the review.

The Committee noted and agreed with this approach.

**RESOLVED** that the Member's Item and action were noted.

## **7. CREATION OF POST – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, RESIDENT EXPERIENCE AND DIGITAL**

The Director of Commercial and Customer Services, Deborah Hinde, presented a report which sought approval to establish and appoint to a new post of Assistant Director, Resident Experience and Digital.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee:

- 1. Approves the establishment of a new post of Assistant Director, Resident Experience and Digital.**
- 2. Approves the deletion of the post of Head of Customer Strategy and Digital.**
- 3. Approves the new post be graded at Grade 6.**
- 4. Note that the current postholder of Head of Customer Strategy and Digital will become the new Assistant Director, Customer Experience and Digital with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022.**

## **8. CONSTITUTION REVIEW REPORT**

The Monitoring Officer, Jessica Farmer, and Head of Governance, Andrew Charwood, presented a report which detailed proposed amendments to the Constitution.

An addendum had been tabled which set out further amendments and clarifications which had been published and circulated to the Committee.

In relation to item 8 (relating to Article 7, Section 7.3), it was agreed that this should be reviewed after one year to ensure that there had been no issues of this operating in practice.

In relation to item 21 (relating to Article 7, Section 7.19), it was agreed that officers should work with Councillor Cooke to develop some revised wording to bring to the October meeting of the Committee for consideration.

In relation to item 22 (relating to Article 7, Section 7.10), it was agreed that this should be reviewed after one year to ensure that there were no ongoing issues relating to the operation of this arrangement.

**RESOLVED that the Committee:**

- 1. Recommend to Council on 26 July 2022 that the Constitution be amended to incorporate the changes set out in this report and the amended versions attached within at Appendices A to J and the published addendum.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Committee, to draft proposed amendments to Article 3 (Residents and Public Participation) to revise section 3.2 to:**
  - **Allow residents to submit any number of written questions on substantive agenda items at committees;**
  - **Publication of all written questions submitted;**
  - **A 30-minute period at each committee to enable residents to obtain responses to as many of the questions as time allows. and to ask an oral supplementary;**
  - **To alternate responses to questions from residents at the meeting to ensure each resident has an opportunity to ask questions; and**
  - **Responses to any questions that are not dealt with during the 30-minute period to be at the discretion of the Chair to respond to in writing after the meeting**

**with the proposed amendments being reported to the next meeting of Council on 26 July 2022.**

**9. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee requested that the Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations be added to the agenda for the 12 January 2023 meeting.

**RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.**

The meeting finished at 8.00 pm