



City of Westminster

Minutes

Meeting:

General Purposes Committee

Date and time of meeting:

Tuesday 31 October 2006 at 6pm

Venue:

**Rooms 6 and 7, 17th Floor, 64 Victoria Street,
London SW1E 6QP**

Attendees:

Councillors:

**Robert Davis (Chairman)
Nicola Aiken
Frances Blois
David Boothroyd
Melvyn Caplan
Tim Joiner
Tim Mitchell
Antony Mothersdale
Nick Yarker**

Apologies:

Councillor Alastair Moss

Contact:

Mick Steward

Details:

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1. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

- 1.1 The Director of Legal and Administrative Services advised that Councillor Frances Blois had replaced Councillor Christabel Flight.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 There were no specific declarations of interest from Members except a general declaration by the Chairman on behalf of all Members in respect of all items of business on the agenda having regard to the impact on them (see also 5.1 below).

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2006 were, with the assent of the Members present signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

4. ELECTORAL ISSUES (see report of the Director of Legal and Administrative Services)

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Committee agrees in principle to apply to repeat the electronic count pilot at future City Council elections, subject to the approval of the necessary equipment at the time;
- (ii) That the remainder of the report be noted.

5. ETHICAL GOVERNANCE AUDIT: FINAL REPORT AND UPDATE ON ACTIONS (see report of the Director of Legal and Administrative Services)

- 5.1 The Director introduced the report, which attached the final report of the District Auditor on the outcome of the Ethical Governance Audit. He declared an interest on behalf of all officers present who could be said to have a personal interest in certain aspects of the report. He reported that the audit report was generally positive and that good progress had been made with implementing the recommendations, which had not changed from the draft report. In view of this it was recommended that a further report be submitted in 12 months by which time all the specific actions referred to in the action plan should have been concluded although some matters will be the subject of ongoing work monitored by other Committees/Cabinet Members.
- 5.2 The Director drew the Committee's attention to recommendation 2.5 of the covering report, which referred to the placing of the Register of Members Interests on the Council's website. He also drew attention to the contents of paragraph 4.6 of the report which addressed this issue and to the advice of the Chief Executive which had been tabled at the meeting.

- 5.3 The Committee agreed, in principle, to the publication of the Register of Interests on the website and that this view should be forwarded to the Standards Committee for decision. The Committee noted the concern that Members had that home addresses should not be proactively publicised on the website for health and safety reasons. The Committee also noted the advice of the Director of Legal and Administrative Services that the full version of the register would still need to be available for public inspection and that it was important if home addresses were to be excluded from the website, that this be made clear so that the public are not in any way misled.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the final report "Setting High Ethical Standards" from the Audit Commission, attached as Appendix A to the report, be noted.
- (ii) That the progress made in implementing the recommendations (or comments in response) of the Ethical Governance Audit, as set out in the report, be noted.
- (iii) That the District Auditor be advised of the updated position as set out in the report.
- (iv) That in view of the progress made a further report be submitted in 12 months.
- (v) That, in respect of the publication of the Register of Members Interests on the Council's website the Committee's views outlined in paragraph 5.3 above be forwarded to the Standards Committee for it to make a decision.

6. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2007/08 (see report of the Director of Legal and Administrative Services)

- 6.1 The Chairman indicated that, in respect of dates for meetings of the Westminster Scrutiny Commission and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, consultation with the Members of the Westminster Scrutiny Commission as required. Accordingly, the Committee endorsed the programme of meetings in respect of full Council Meetings for recommendation to the Council but in order to allow for the consultation outlined above agreed to delegate approval to the programme of meetings in respect of Committee meetings to the Director of Legal and Administrative Services in consultation with the Chief Whip.
- 6.2 The Committee noted that in recommendation 2.1 the reference to 19 March 2008 should read 12 March 2008.

6.3 RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Council be recommended to approve that meetings of the Council for the municipal year 2007/08 be held as follows:

18 July 2007; 7 November 2007; 23 January 2008; 5 March 2008
(Council Tax); 12 March 2008; 30 April 2008 and 14 May 2008
(Annual)

- (ii) That to allow for consultation with the Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the approval of the programme in respect of Committee and Sub-Committees be delegated to the Director of Legal and Administrative Services in consultation with the Chief Whips.

7. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 6.47pm.

CHAIRMAN: _____ DATE: _____