



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

GENERAL PURPOSES URGENCY SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee** held at 6.00pm on Thursday 10 May 2012 at Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP

Present: Councillors Melvyn Caplan (Chairman), David Boothroyd and Robert Davis

1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 There were no changes to the Membership.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 The Chairman, with the consent of the Members present, signed the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2012 as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

4. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES (see report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services)

- 4.1 The Sub-Committee noted that the review had been conducted following the Leader's Speech on 7 March and led by the WSC. The main points arising had been set out in appendices to the report to be referred to each P&S Committee and monitored by the Westminster Scrutiny Commission.
- 4.2 The Sub-Committee considered the size of the new proposed Policy and Scrutiny Committees. It determined that these should be 9 Members, which would equate to a proportional split of 7 Majority Party Members and 2 Minority Party Members.

Resolved:

- (i) That the Annual Council be recommended to appoint the Policy and Scrutiny Committees with responsibilities as set out in Appendix B of the report with the constitutions as set out in Appendix D of the report in place of the existing Policy and Scrutiny Committees and that Officers be asked to report the relevant Committee proportionality to the Annual Council meeting on 16th May.
- (ii) That the issues highlighted in the consultation as best practice, set out in Appendix C, be endorsed and referred to Westminster Scrutiny Commission and the new Policy and Scrutiny Committees for implementation.
- (iii) That the Council be recommended to adopt a new Code of Conduct at the Extraordinary Council Meeting on 25th June 2012, to allow for the necessary Regulations relating to Pecuniary Interests to be issued by the Secretary of State and incorporated.
- (iv) That the Council be recommended to establish a new Standards Committee with a membership of 8 Members (6 Majority Party and 2 Minority Party Members) with the Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix F of the report.
- (v) That the function specified in paragraph 3.15 of the report be transferred to the Audit and Performance Committee and the revised Terms of Reference set out in Appendix G be recommended to the Council for adoption at its Annual Meeting on 16th May 2012.
- (vi) That the Council be recommended to approve the amendments to the Members Allowances Scheme set out in paragraph 3.18 of the report.
- (vii) That the programme of meetings for the first cycle of the Policy and Scrutiny Committees be subject to immediate consultation with the Chairmen of the Policy and Scrutiny Committees when appointed, as set out in paragraph 3.8 of the report.
- (viii) That the arrangements for the programme of meetings of the Council, Committees, Sub-Committees and Area Forums as set out in paragraph 3.9 of the report be endorsed for further work by Officers.
- (ix) That the Council be recommended to approve the revised Standing Order 48, relating to the approval of the financial regulations as set out in paragraph 3.22 of the report subject to the final recommended wording being agreed between the Chairman and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
- (x) That the Chief Executive be asked to write to each of the existing Independent Members on behalf of the Council, setting out the Council's thanks and a small corporate gift as an expression of gratitude for their service to the City Council.

5. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY RECORDER (see report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services)

Resolved:

That pursuant to Section 54 of the Courts Act 1971, HH Judge Alastair William McCreath be appointed to the office of Honorary Recorder of the City of Westminster during his tenure as Senior Resident Judge at Southwark Crown Court; and

That the appointment be formally recognised at an appropriate civic ceremony.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

None.

7. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved: That under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business because they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information on the grounds shown below:

<u>Item No:</u>	<u>Grounds</u>	<u>Para of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act</u>
8	Information relating to individuals	1

8. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS (see report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services)

- 8.1 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services introduced the report. He advised that Sally Long had withdrawn. He outlined the purpose of the role following which the Sub-Committee interviewed the two remaining candidates Geoffrey Rivlin and Leon Wong. The Committee determined that as this was new territory it would recommend the Council to make one appointment and review the position after 6-9 months.

Resolved:

- (i) That the General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee note the action taken by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, under delegated powers, detailed in this report, to advertise and shortlist potential candidates for interview.
- (ii) That having interview shortlisted candidates for the position of “independent person” of the City Council recommend Geoffrey Rivlin for appointment to the Council at its Annual Meeting on 16th May 2012.

- (iii) That the General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee has regard to the specification for the role of “independent person” detailed in this report and uses that specification to inform their assessment of the candidates interviewed, in addition to any relevant criteria Members deem appropriate.

Reasons for Decision

The appointment of independent members for the purposes of consultation, upon receipt of a complaint against a Member of the authority, is required by the standards provisions in the Localism Act 2011. The appointments must be formally adopted by the Council at its Annual Meeting on 16th May 2012. As such, the City Council has instigated the recruitment process to ensure timely completion and appointment of the required posts. The shortlisted candidates are to be interviewed by the General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee on 10th May 2012 against the person specification detailed below, in addition to any relevant criteria Members deem appropriate.

9. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 6.55pm.

CHAIRMAN _____

DATE _____