

GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 13 November 2014

Present:

Councillor Tony Owen (Chairman)
Councillor Russell Mellor (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Nicholas Bennett J.P., Eric Bosshard,
Kim Botting, Mary Cooke, Peter Fookes, Ellie Harmer,
Samaris Huntington-Thresher, David Livett,
Charles Rideout, Diane Smith, Tim Stevens J.P.,
Pauline Tunnicliffe and Michael Turner

35 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor William Huntington-Thresher, who was replaced by Councillor Samaris Huntington-Thresher.

36 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were made in respect of Minute 40 (Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places) by Councillor Peter Fookes as a trustee of Melvin Hall and Councillor Ellie Harmer as Chairman of Bromley and Chislehurst Conservatives and a former governor of Scotts Park Primary School.

37 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions had been received.

38 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17TH SEPTEMBER 2014

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2014 be confirmed.

39 FEEDBACK ON 2014 ELECTIONS Report CSD14133

The Committee received a report on key issues relating to the 2014 European Parliamentary and Local Council elections. Overall, the arrangements had been very successful and few problems occurred. Members raised the following issues.

- At St Mary's Church, Shortlands, poll clerks had insisted on retaining all poll cards, preventing the tellers from taking numbers from electors on their way out. It was accepted that polling station staff were briefed about the role of tellers, but these misunderstandings still seemed to persist in some locations. It was proposed that posters explaining the role of tellers should be provided (as suggested in Electoral Commission Guidance) and that bins for unwanted polling cards could be provided near the tellers.
- At Scotts Park Primary School there had been problems with access – these issues had been resolved by senior officers on the day. There was now a new Acting Head Teacher who would be briefed before the 2015 election.
- A Member reported about a resident who had not received a postal vote and had been informed that there was not sufficient time to supply one before they went away.
- It appeared that there had still not been a board/clear directions for electors at the polling stations at the Pickhurst Schools.
- The problem caused by Conservative Central Office sending in a large number of postal vote application forms close to the deadline was acknowledged. The Committee was informed that the Electoral Commission was trying to establish a new code of conduct with the major political parties.
- A Member asked for further details about the 550 postal votes that had been rejected. It was explained that these were mainly about electors making errors with signatures and dates of birth – all had been contacted to ensure that these matters could be resolved. There was no suggestion of fraud.

The Chief Executive and Returning Officer agreed to take up the matters raised by Members.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted and the Returning Officer be requested to take Members' comments into account when making arrangements for future elections.

**40 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES
2014**
Report CSD14134

The Returning Officer had reviewed all polling districts and polling places in the borough and, following a period of formal consultation, reported on the outcome of the review with his recommendations.

Councillor Russell Mellor, as a ward councillor, supported the use of St George's Church Hall, Beckenham as opposed to Bromley Road Infant School. He also suggested St Paul's Church Hall, Brackley Road, as an alternative to Worsley Bridge Primary School, but this had already been assessed and there were problems with parking.

It was reported that the arrangements to separate the polling station from the rest of the school at Oaklands Primary School, Biggin Hill, were inadequate and amounted to a strip of tape in places. The Returning Officer accepted that there had been issues with the quality of fencing at several locations, and this issue would be looked at.

The Chairman suggested that the Methodist Church Hall in Prince Imperial Road should be investigated as a suitable polling station in Chislehurst.

The Committee thanked the Electoral Services Manager and her Team for their excellent work.

RESOLVED that

- (1) The outcome of the review and the consultation taken be noted.**
- (2) The proposals and recommendations of the Returning Officer outlined in Appendix 7 to the report be approved with effect from 1st December 2014.**
- (3) It is noted that polling districts and polling places will be kept under on-going review.**

41 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES
Report CSD14149

At its meeting on 10th June 2014 the Committee made appointments to various outside bodies. The report picked up on outstanding appointments, including two where there have been resignations since June, and also provided an update on a number of cases where the Committee asked that the continuing need for appointments to be made was reviewed.

Councillor Nicholas Bennett had resigned as the Council's representative on the Affinity Sutton Regional Scrutiny Board, and the Committee noted his reasons for doing so (appendix 1 to the report.) Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe, as Chairman of Care Services PDS Committee, summarised the position and status of housing associations and agreed that with Affinity Sutton there were serious problems with repairs and responding to complaints. Other Members supported these concerns. She would consider inviting Affinity Sutton representatives to a PDS Committee meeting to be scrutinised. Some Members commented that individual Affinity Sutton Officers provided good service at a local level, and it was understood that Affinity Sutton had ended its repairs contract and taken on the work in-house. The Chief Executive

reported that he and the Leader met with senior staff from Affinity Sutton on a regular basis, so he would raise the concerns of Members.

RESOLVED that

(1) The following appointments be made -

(a) Councillor Peter Fortune be confirmed with Councillor Hannah Gray as representatives on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Committee the remainder of a one year term.

(b) Councillor Chris Pierce be appointed to the Affinity Sutton London Regional Scrutiny Board for the remainder of a one year term.

(2) Consideration of appointments to the Cray Valley War Memorial Hall, the William Mosyer Charity, St Mary Cray, Bromley Relief in Need and the Joanna Collett Charity, Chelsfield be deferred.

42 PENSIONS INVESTMENT SUB-COMMITTEE - MINUTES 19TH AUGUST 2014

The minutes of the Pensions Investment Sub-Committee meeting held on 19th August 2014 were received.

Councillor David Livett commented in respect of minute 5 (Statement of Investment Principles) that the wording of the minute under-emphasised his opposition to the Pension Fund using high risk investments. He felt that it was not the role of the Pension Fund trustees to make good a shortfall in the fund by increasing risk. It was suggested that he should ask for a report to the Pensions Sub-Committee so that this issue could be pursued.

43 LOCAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE - MINUTES 21ST OCTOBER 2014

The minutes of the Local Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 21st October 2014 were received.

The Meeting ended at 7.44 pm

Chairman