

GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 6 February 2018

Present:

Councillor Ian F. Payne (Chairman)
Councillor Stephen Wells (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Vanessa Allen, Graham Arthur, Alan Collins,
Robert Evans, Ellie Harmer, David Livett,
Charles Rideout QPM CVO, Tim Stevens, Teresa Te,
Pauline Tunncliffe and Michael Turner

Also Present:

Councillor Simon Fawthrop and Councillor Peter Fookes

308 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nicholas Bennett (Councillor Robert Evans substituted), Councillor Mary Cooke (Councillor Graham Arthur substituted) and Councillors Kim Botting, Tony Owen and Pauline Tunncliffe.

309 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Stephen Wells declared an interest as a member of the Fostering and Adoption Panel in relation to the report on Member Allowances, but it was confirmed that all Members were able to participate in this item.

Mark Bowen, Director of Corporate Services, declared an interest in the Licensing Update report as he was also employed in the Gambling industry.

310 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28TH NOVEMBER 2017

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 28th November 2017 be confirmed.

311 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions had been received.

312 VOTER ID PILOT SCHEME
Report CSD18024

The Committee received an update on the Voter ID Pilot Scheme and changes to polling places to be used at the local council elections on 3rd May 2018.

Councillor Vanessa Allen had submitted a number of detailed questions in advance of the meeting – officers provided the following responses –

(1) Acceptable forms of ID (paragraph 3.4 of the report) – There is no mention of any benefits related documents which might be suitable for ID purposes. Was this discussed at all?

This would be considered as part of the review – the acceptable documents were the same as were used to register.

(2) No ID (paragraph 3.7) – Will this form part of the public awareness campaign as a paper document as well as being available on the website?

Information would be focussed on the Council website, but paper information would also be available.

(3) Public awareness (paragraph 3.10) – Given the size of the borough the number of posters, billboards etc seems inadequate. It would be useful to know where they will be sited but I would like to see more posters and billboards generally. Would you consider information being displayed in places like libraries, sports venues, colleges and post offices for example?

The Chairman suggested that all Councillors should play a part in raising awareness, and that a range of community venues including doctors' surgeries, places of worship and community centres should be used for publicity.

(4) Direct communications (paragraph 3.11) – Is the poll card being redesigned to emphasise its importance?

It was confirmed that there was a fundamental re-design of the polling card. Bar codes were being trialled in some other pilots, but not in Bromley.

(5) Hard to reach groups – There is no specific mention of translation of information, has this been taken into account? Is it possible to see the Equality Impact Assessment?

Information had to be produced in English by statute, but translations would be produced.

(6) Training of Poll Staff – Will more people be required at polling stations than previously, and how can you ensure there will be sufficient suitably trained staff? Concern was expressed at previous meetings about recruitment

issues, prior to knowing about this Voter Identification Scheme, presumably more staff are needed than would have been the case if Bromley was not part of this pilot?

There would be additional staff in polling stations to manage the checking of ID. Additional polling staff were being recruited from Kent (where there were no elections this year) and all staff would receive training.

(7) As side issue really, but please can we have an update on the registration process, how many times people will be visited, the percentage registered etc?

It was confirmed that the deadline for registration, which was set by statute, was 17th April 2018 - registration levels were already very high in Bromley at around 97%. Since individual registration had started, the Council was aware of about 240 residents who had struggled to find the relevant identification documents and these would be targeted for additional assistance. People requiring a Certificate of Identity would need to attend the Council offices.

The Cabinet Office was funding the additional costs of running the pilot and had set up a network so that all the pilot authorities could remain in touch and learn from each other. There would be more observers in evidence checking on how the arrangements worked on polling day. At least one political party had asked to be supplied with literature about the pilot, and officers were checking with the Cabinet Office whether this was appropriate. A Member asked whether information was available in braille – this would be checked – and holding roadshows was suggested.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

313 2018/19 PAY AWARD

Under the local terms and conditions of employment framework, the Committee was required to make a recommendation on officer pay awards to full Council. The annual pay review was now part of the Council's budget planning process – this was a key driver for coming out of the national/regional pay negotiating frameworks. The 2% proposed was comparable to the national offer, plus it was proposed that the £200k pot for merit awards would continue.

Joint documents submitted by the Trades Unions (Unison, Unite and the GMB) setting out their pay demands had been circulated. A Member proposed that the Council should increase the salaries of the lowest paid workers so that no salaries were below the London Living Wage, and accept the Trades Unions' claim, but this was not seconded.

The number of staff earning less than the non-statutory London Living Wage was small, and included six apprentices. These were mainly part-time posts.

RESOLVED that

(1) Full Council be recommended to approve the following:

(i) A flat 2% pay increase for all staff (excluding teachers who are covered by a separate statutory pay negotiating process)

(ii) That the Trade Union's claims including the revised pay claim for staff be rejected (see para 2.3 and 3.6 below)

(2) It is noted a that, as in the previous years since coming out of the nationally/regionally negotiated frameworks, Bromley staff will receive the 2018/19 pay increase in time for the April pay.

(3) The Unions' revised summary pay claim be noted:

(i) For staff on pay bands currently above £19,000 FTE PA, a 2% increment.

(ii) For staff on pay bands currently between £17,000 - £19,000 FTE PA, a further consolidated lump sum uplift of £600.

(iii) For staff on pay bands currently between £16,000 - £17,000 FTE PA, a further consolidated lump sum uplift of £800.

(iv) For staff on pay bands below £16,000 FTE PA, a further consolidated lump sum uplift of £1,000.

314 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2018/19

Under the Localism Act 2011 the Council was required to publish a Pay Policy Statement which had to be approved by full Council each year. The Committee considered the Pay Policy Statement for 2018/19.

RESOLVED that Council be recommended to approve the 2018/19 Pay Policy Statement.

315 LICENSING UPDATE FEBRUARY 2018
Report ES18016

The Committee received an update on key licensing issues, including the appeal against the Licensing Sub-Committee's decision on 210 High Street, Beckenham.

The number of licensing applications had fallen in recent years (from 77 in 2015 to 52 in 2017), and although objections were still being received to most new applications or major variations the Licensing Team were seeking to mediate and resolve concerns, meaning that considerably fewer Sub-Committee hearings were required. The Committee were asked to consider

whether the mediation approach should continue, and whether a regular schedule of Licensing Sub-Committee meetings was still needed.

RESOLVED that

(1) The current approach being taken by officers to undertake mediation in response to representations against licensing applications should continue.

(2) In view of the significant reduction in the number of Licensing Sub-Committee meetings needed, meetings should be set up on an ad hoc basis rather than following a set programme.

(3) The position regarding an appeal against a Licensing Sub-Committee decision relating to 210 High Street, Beckenham be noted.

316 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2018/19
Report CSD18007

The regulations governing Members' Allowances required that, before the beginning of each financial year, the Council had to make a scheme of allowances for that year and the report details the proposed allowances for 2018/19. The allowances had remained frozen since 2009 due to the economic circumstances and the pressure on the Council's budgets, and this was reflected the proposed scheme at Appendix 2 to the report. The Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral Allowances were not part of the scheme, but were usually considered in conjunction with it. The report also referred to the latest report (published January 2018) of the Independent Panel on Remuneration of Councillors in London.

The Committee was satisfied with the main proposals in the Scheme, but discussed options for the payment of allowances relating to service on the Licensing Sub-Committee and the Adoption and Fostering Panel. The workload of the Licensing Sub-Committee had declined in recent years, and it was considered that the current flat rate payment of £670 was no longer needed. A proposal to remove the allowance altogether was rejected, but it was proposed that, to reflect the more occasional nature of the meetings, a payment of £50 per meeting be paid instead. The Committee also considered whether meetings needed to be held during the day; there was no legal reason why meetings had to be in the daytime, but it was recognised that this was probably helpful for the majority of applicants and other parties.

The Fostering and Adoption Panels had recently been combined into one Panel with a higher workload and more frequent meetings, up to three per month. However, Members were being asked to attend on a rota basis and it was unclear at this early stage what the actual burden on individual Members would be. Various suggestions were made, but it was agreed that a payment of £200 per meeting would be appropriate, capped at £3,575 per annum, and payable at six month intervals to reduce administration. The cost would be contained within the overall Members Allowances budget.

RESOLVED that Council be recommended to approve the Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral Allowances and the Members Allowances Scheme 2018/19 as set out in the report, with the following amendments –

(a) The allowance of £335 for membership of the Licensing Sub-Committee be replaced with a payment of £50 per meeting payable at the end of the Council year.

(b) The allowances of £670 for membership of the former Fostering and Adoption Panels be replaced with a payment of £200 per meeting payable every six months, capped at £3,575 per annum.

317 EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS - ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18
Report CSD18008

As part of consideration of the Members' Allowances Scheme the Committee received annual reports from Executive Assistants summarising their work during 2017/18.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

318 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2018/19
Report CSD18009

The Committee approved the proposed programme of meetings for 2018/19.

RESOLVED that

(1) The programme of meetings for 2018/19 be approved.

(2) The Director of Corporate Services be authorised to adjust the programme in accordance with any changes to committees made by Members and to make minor corrections to the programme as necessary.

319 APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN AND HONORARY FREEMAN
Report CSD18022

The Committee received a report setting out proposals for the appointment of an Honorary Freeman and six Honorary Aldermen (further details were set out in a part 2 appendix.)

RESOLVED that the proposed appointments of an Honorary Freeman and Honorary Aldermen be recommended to Council.

320 WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18
Report CSD18010

The Committee considered its work programme. A Member suggested that a further update on the Voter ID pilot should be made at the next meeting on 20th March.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

321 PENSIONS INVESTMENT SUB-COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 26TH SEPTEMBER, 21ST NOVEMBER AND 14TH DECEMBER 2017, EXCLUDING EXEMPT INFORMATION

The draft minutes of the Pensions Investment Sub-Committee meetings held on 26th September 2017, 21st November 2017, and 14th December 2017, excluding exempt information, were received. Councillor David Livett claimed that the draft minutes of the meeting on 26th September 2017 needed to be amended; he was advised by the Chairman to raise this at the next meeting of the Pensions Investment Sub-Committee when the minutes were due to be confirmed.

322 AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8TH NOVEMBER 2017, EXCLUDING EXEMPT INFORMATION

The draft minutes of the Audit Sub-Committee meeting held on 8th November 2017, excluding exempt information, were received.

323 APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20TH NOVEMBER 2017, EXCLUDING EXEMPT INFORMATION

The draft minutes of the Appeals Sub-Committee meeting held on 20th November 2017, excluding exempt information, were received.

324 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006 AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

RESOLVED that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business referred to below as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

The following summaries
refer to matters
involving exempt information

**325 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12TH
SEPTEMBER 2017**

RESOLVED that the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 12th September 2017 be confirmed. (These minutes had been circulated late for the previous meeting, and so had not been signed then.)

**326 PENSIONS INVESTMENT SUB-COMMITTEE: EXEMPT
MINUTES - 21ST NOVEMBER AND 14TH DECEMBER 2017**

The exempt minutes of the meetings of the Pensions Investment Sub-Committee held on held on 21st November 2017 and 14th December 2017 were received.

**327 AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE: EXEMPT MINUTES - 8TH
NOVEMBER 2017**

The exempt minutes of the Audit Sub-Committee meeting held on 8th November 2017 were received.

**328 APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE: EXEMPT MINUTES 20TH
NOVEMBER 2017**

A summary of the exempt minutes of the Appeals Audit Sub-Committee meeting held on 20th November 2017 was received, and Members noted that one issue was to be referred to the Care Services PDS Committee.

The Meeting ended at 8.16 pm

Chairman