

GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 19 March 2019

Present:

Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe (Chairman)
Councillor Michael Turner (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Marina Ahmad, Gareth Allatt,
Nicholas Bennett J.P., Mary Cooke, Robert Evans,
Josh King, Russell Mellor, Alexa Michael,
Neil Reddin FCCA, Melanie Stevens, Harry Stranger and
Stephen Wells

Also Present:

Councillor Graham Arthur, Councillor Julian Benington and
Councillor Nicky Dykes

90 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Vanessa Allen (who was replaced by Councillor Josh King) and Councillor Tony Owen.

91 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Robert Evans declared an interest as a trustee of Mytime Active in relation to agenda item 11 - the minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2019.

92 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions had been received.

93 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12TH FEBRUARY 2019

In relation to minute 78, the Chairman reported that the playgroup established by Cllr Dykes and Cllr Cuthbert was going well, and she hoped to visit it shortly.

The Labour group requested that their intention to give the increase to charity be noted in the minutes.

RESOLVED that, subject to the amendment proposed above, the minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2019 (excluding exempt information) be confirmed.

94 CHILD CARE LOAN DEPOSIT SCHEME

The Committee received a report proposing the introduction of a Childcare Deposit Loan Scheme which would enable Council employees access to an interest free loan of up to £2,000 (similar to a season ticket loan for travel) to cover the upfront costs of Ofsted registered childcare. This would be an additional optional benefit to employees and would be part of an overall package of benefits available to recruit and retain staff, especially those in hard to fill occupations. The scheme would also support parents back into work and would therefore support the Council's equality objective.

In response to Members' questions, it was confirmed that the underlying data about mothers and employment was from the GLA. Employees could potentially have more than one loan - there were no tax implications as long as the loans did not exceed £10k. However, the Council also had to bear in mind the employee's ability to repay the loans.

Councillor Nicky Dykes had championed the scheme, and attended the meeting to support its adoption. She thanked the Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management Portfolio Holder Cllr Graham Arthur and the officers for their work in developing the scheme.

The Chairman commented that, with only a very small number of authorities providing such a scheme, it was good to see Bromley leading the way in supporting staff.

RESOLVED that the introduction of a Childcare Deposit Loan Scheme be approved.

95 CONSTITUTION IMPROVEMENT WORKING GROUP - MINOR CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES Report CSD19053

The Constitution Improvement Working Group at its meeting on 21st January 2019 had made a number of recommendations to amend the Council's Constitution, including, in particular, changes to the arrangements for questions. A Member did suggest that the proposed new deadline of 10 working days before the meeting for receipt of questions was too early, but it was emphasised that the Working Group's proposal was that questions specifically on reports on each agenda could be submitted much later - before 5pm on the second working day after the final day on which the agenda had to be published. The existing provision for emergency questions would remain.

The Working Group had considered a request from the LJCC that consideration be given to making a "matters arising" or "matters outstanding" report a compulsory requirement on every agenda and had decided that this was not necessary. Councillor Nicholas Bennett stated that the Working Group had considered this at previous meetings and decided that all meetings

should have a matters outstanding report and that he was disappointed that some meetings did not do this. Committee members broadly supported this approach.

A Member commented that in his view it was regrettable that Development Control Committee had reverted to a 7.30pm start time rather than the standard time of 7pm. The Chairman of the Development Control Committee explained that the later start time made it easier for a number of Members who were at work during the day to arrive in time and attend pre-meetings. The clerk confirmed that the standard start time for meetings was indeed 7pm but there remained some flexibility where meetings needed to start at different times.

The report was also being submitted to the Executive on 27th March 2019 before final decisions would be taken by full Council on 8th April 2019.

RESOLVED that

(1) Council be recommended to approve the following changes to the Constitution, as proposed by the Constitution Improvement Working Group and as set out in Appendix to the report -

(A) That the following changes to Council Procedure Rules relating to questions be approved -

- **that public question time be extended to a maximum of 30 minutes, in line with the time allowed for Councillor questions;**
- **the deadline for receipt of questions should be 5pm, ten working days before each meeting;**
- **that questions specifically on reports on each agenda should be allowed within two working days of the normal publication date of the agenda;**
- **that questions be taken at special meetings, but only on the reports on the agenda;**
- **members of the public should no longer read their questions at Council meetings;**
- **the number of questions allowed be restricted to two per person.**

(The changes to be reviewed after six months of operation.)

(B) That Executive members should not sit on the Audit Sub-Committee.

(C) That the right for a single Councillor to request that an item be placed on an agenda be extended from PDS Committees to all other committees.

- (D) That the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be altered to confirm that where a planning issue is called in by a ward Councillor the delegation to officers is withdrawn.
- (2) That the other matters considered by Constitution Improvement Working Group (paragraph 6 of the report) be noted.
- (3) That the Executive and Council be recommended to include in the Constitution a requirement that all Committees and Sub-committees have a “matters outstanding” report on their agendas.

96 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES
Report CSD19056

The Committee noted that Councillor Peter Fortune had stepped down from two outside body appointments. The majority group had nominated Councillor Stephen Wells to represent the Council on the Nash College Education Governing Body, and Councillor Robert Evans to join the Diocese of Rochester Board of Education.

RESOLVED that

- (1) Councillor Stephen Wells be appointed to the Nash College Education Governing Body for the remainder of the four year term of office ending January 2023.
- (2) Councillor Robert Evans be appointed to the Diocese of Rochester Board of Education for the remainder of the three year term of office ending December 2021.

97 WORK PROGRAMME
Report CSD19052

The Committee considered its work programme for 2019/20.

98 LOCAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH JANUARY 2019

The draft minutes of the Local Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 9th January 2019 be confirmed.

99 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 item 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 summary
refers to matters involving exempt information**

**100 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12TH
FEBRUARY 2019**

**RESOLVED that the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 12th
February 2019 be confirmed.**

The Meeting ended at 7.22 pm

Chairman