

GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 3 November 2022

Present:

Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe (Chairman)
Councillor Mike Botting (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Kathy Bance MBE, Nicholas Bennett J.P.,
David Cartwright QFSM, Robert Evans, Mike Jack,
Josh King, Alexa Michael, Keith Onslow, Melanie Stevens,
Harry Stranger, Ryan Thomson and Sam Webber.

Also Present:

Councillor Alisa Igoe

19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Kira Gabbert (who was replaced by Councillor David Cartwright), Councillor Andrew Lee (who was replaced by Councillor Alexa Michael) and from Councillor Jonathan Laidlaw.

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no additional declarations of interest.

21 QUESTIONS

Three questions had been received for written reply – these are attached as Appendix A.

22 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JULY 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th July 2022 be confirmed.

23 TEACHER PAY POLICY 2022/23 - CENTRALLY BASED STAFF

From 1 September 2022 revised arrangements had come into force in relation to Teachers' Pay and Conditions through the publication of the statutory 2022 School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. The report set out the main changes.

Bromley employed a small number of teachers (57 staff (45.43FTE)) within its specialist services – most teachers in Bromley were employed by the Academies. It was confirmed that there were still pressures in recruiting to

these posts, and to teaching posts across the country. Although the trade unions were against the differential increases, all teachers would receive at least 5% and the proposals allowed for the starting salary for teachers to be at least £30k from September 2023.

RESOLVED that

(1) The report be noted.

(2) It is noted from 1st September 2022 there will be a statutory 5% increase to all pay and allowance ranges and advisory points for Teaching Staff, with higher increases to some parts of the Main Pay Range.

(3) Officers be authorised to apply the % statutory increases to Teacher Pay Scales as set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2022 and to update the Centrally Based Teaching Staff Pay Policy for 1st September 2022; there are no other required changes to the Policy this year.

**24 FEEDBACK ON THE 2022 LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS AND
UPDATE ON ELECTIONS ACT 2022**
Report CSD22073

The Committee received a report on the key issues relating to the Local Council Elections held on Thursday 5 May 2022 and highlighting the measures to be introduced in the Elections Act 2022. An updated version of appendix 1, showing statistics about postal votes, was tabled at the meeting.

Members commented on the following issues –

(i) The count had taken longer than expected to conclude. It was noted that this was the Returning Officer's first local election and he was concerned to ensure that the results were thoroughly correct. A Member commented that count staff had been released too early before the Beckenham Town and Copers Cope recount. However, it was explained that experienced count staff had been hand-picked to remain for the recount.

(ii) The food provided at the count was not very good – this had already been picked up in a number of reviews. Members were informed that the caterer was new to the venue and a better service would be expected in future.

(iii) It was confirmed that although nomination papers could be submitted by email, this was so that they could be checked in advance and paper copies would still need to be submitted by hand.

(vi) There were still problems with people going to the wrong polling stations. The polling station address was always set out on polling cards and on the Council website, and officers would advertise changes as widely as possible.

(v) Officers were aware of the problems with duplicate registrations, and had lobbied the Electoral Commission for the messaging around registration to be modified.

(vi) The Elections Act 2022 would provide additional funding for elections, but details were not available, and it was expected that funding would be intended to cover equipment for polling stations as well as staffing. It was becoming harder to recruit election staff and officers were proposing new campaigns to recruit a wider base of available staff.

(vii) A reduction of the required number of nomination signatures from ten to two had been announced for the 2023 local elections, but it was unclear whether this was a permanent reduction.

(viii) All postal voters whose votes were rejected had been written to with an explanation of why their votes was rejected.

The Chairman thanked Carol Ling and her staff for their efficient conduct of the election.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and the Returning Officer be requested to take the comments summarised above into account when planning for future elections.

25 LIVE-STREAMING OF MEETINGS
Report CSD22090

The report updated Members on the possibilities for using live-streaming for Council and committee meetings. There had been recent upgrades in equipment in the Council Chamber; the new equipment had provided a major improvement to facilities in the Council Chamber and had been widely used in recent months to enable Councillors, officers and others to participate remotely in meetings. Live-streaming had also been used on special occasions since meetings returned to the Civic Centre in May 2021, though with relatively few viewers. This had required assistance from the IT and Communication Teams - live-streaming did require additional resources. The report gave Members the opportunity to establish a policy on live-streaming.

A number of Members proposed that live-streaming should be introduced for all meetings as this would make the Council more transparent and accountable, and enable more residents to be involved in the Council's decisions including those who might find it difficult to attend in person. Other Members argued that in a time of financial pressure the additional expenditure was not justified. However, it was clear that when matters of controversy and wide public interest, such as major planning applications or issues concerning Biggin Hill Airport, were being considered there was increased attendance at the Civic Centre and online when a live-stream was available. Members agreed to continue with live-streaming for specific high profile meetings but suggested that this should be accompanied with better advertising of live-streamed meetings, monitoring of viewing numbers and a review after a year.

RESOLVED that

(1) The resource implications of live-streaming be noted as well as the low numbers of viewers at recent meetings which were live streamed.

(2) The arguments for and against regular live streaming of meetings be noted and a policy be agreed to continue to use live-streaming as a useful tool available for a limited number of meetings where, in the view of the Chief Executive and the meeting's chairman, there is particular interest or a likelihood that the capacity of the public gallery will be exceeded.

(3) Where meetings are live-streamed, additional promotion be carried out and viewing statistics be kept, and the issue be reviewed in a year's time.

26 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES
Report CSD22115

The Committee was responsible for making the Council's appointments to outside bodies - most of these appointments were annual and were made by the Committee in May each year, but some had different timescales. Three of the Council's six appointments to the Beckenham Parochial Charities were due to be renewed early in 2023, as was the local authority governor role at Nash College.

RESOLVED that

(1) Mr Russell Mellor be reappointed to the Beckenham Parochial Charities for the four year term of office starting in January 2023, and the remaining two appointments be made at the Committee's next meeting.

(2) The appointment of a local authority governor for Nash College be deferred to the next meeting.

27 WORK PROGRAMME AND MATTERS ARISING
Report CSD22100

The Committee received a report summarising their work programme for the 2022/23 Council year and also covering matters outstanding from previous meetings.

In respect of Minute 14, the recommendations for appointment of Honorary Aldermen as made by the Working Group would now be put forward to the next meeting of the Committee, and there was no need for referral to the Constitution Working Group.

The Committee noted that the uncertainty around the outside body appointment to the Wood Lodge Living Skills Centre (minute 17) had been resolved – Councillor Gabbert would be the representative with Cllr Lymer as the reserve.

RESOLVED that the matters outstanding from previous meetings and the work programme for 2022/23 be noted.

28 LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE: MINUTES 22 JUNE 2022 AND 20 JULY 2022

The minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee meetings held on 22 June and 20 July 2022 were received.

29 RIGHTS OF WAY SUB-COMMITTEE - MINUTES 28 SEPTEMBER 2022

The minutes of the Rights of Way Sub-Committee meeting held on 28 September 2022 were received.

The Meeting ended at 8.13 pm

Chairman