

GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 8 November 2023

Present:

Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe (Chairman)
Councillor Colin Hitchins (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Jessica Arnold, Nicholas Bennett J.P.,
Robert Evans, Kira Gabbert, Christine Harris, Mike Jack,
Simon Jeal, Josh King, Tony Owen, Melanie Stevens and
Sam Webber

73 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for late arrival were received from Cllr Simon Jeal.

74 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

75 QUESTIONS

One question had been received for written reply – this is set out in Appendix A. The Chairman added her thanks to the member of the public who had raised the issue of spiking of drinks, and stated that she was glad to hear that this was not currently a significant issue in Bromley.

76 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2023 be confirmed.

77 TEACHER PAY POLICY 2023/24 - CENTRALLY BASED STAFF

From 1 September 2023 revised arrangements had come into force in relation to Teachers' Pay and Conditions through the publication of the statutory 2023 School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. The report set out the main changes.

It was confirmed that the report applied to 53 staff employed on Teacher's terms and Conditions in the Central Education Division which provided specialist education, and that all staff in Bromley were above the £30,000 minimum starting salary.

RESOLVED that

(1) The report be noted.

(2) It is noted from 1st September 2023 there will be a statutory 6.5% increase to all pay and allowance ranges and advisory points for Teaching Staff, with higher increases to some parts of the Main Pay Range to reach a minimum starting salary of £30,000 outside London, with slight variations to the London pay ranges.

(3) That officers to be authorised to apply the statutory percentage increases to Teacher Pay Scales as set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2023 and to update the Centrally Based Teaching Staff Pay Policy for 1st September 2023; there are no other required changes to the Policy this year.

78 BUSINESS AND PLANNING ACT 2020 DELEGATION OF POWERS AND PAVEMENT LICENSING POLICY EXTENSION UNTIL SEPTEMBER 2024
Report ES20319

As the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill 2023 had now received royal assent this report needed substantial updating and was therefore withdrawn from the agenda.

79 INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEASURES UNDER THE ELECTIONS ACT 2022 AND UPDATE ON POLLING ARRANGEMENTS
Report CSD23113

The Committee received a report updating them about the key measures being introduced through the Elections Act 2022 and polling arrangements.

Officers confirmed that the purpose of the amended polling district scheme was to tidy up the electoral register following the introduction of new parliamentary boundaries and there were no changes to boundaries or polling stations for electors.

Members noted that there were changes to candidacy rights, in particular the removal of the automatic right of European citizens to stand in UK elections, but it was not thought that this would affect any sitting Members.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

80 REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION
Report CSD23108

At the Committee's meeting on 11th July 2023 a report was presented setting out a new, simplified structure for the Council's Constitution. The Committee

deferred the proposals pending consideration by the Constitution Working Group. The Working Group had now met and considered the proposals, which were set out in the appendices to the report. This was an exercise to make the Constitution clearer and easier to use; no changes of substance were proposed.

The Chairman of the Constitution Working Group, Councillor Nicholas Bennett, introduced the report and urged the Committee to support the proposals. He proposed one additional change, which was to align the deadlines for submitting requests for statements at full Council meetings to be in line with the deadlines for submission of questions. This would mean that requests for statements would need to be submitted ten working days before the meeting, not three days as at present, and therefore they could be listed in the agenda papers. There would still be provision for requesting urgent statements, even at very short notice.

A Member objected that this change was unnecessary and that as it was proposed at short notice there had not been time for it to be considered by the Constitution Working Group. The Committee voted to support the proposed change to statements.

The Committee agreed a further change to Chapter 1, paragraph 2.3, point 6, to read –

“6. ensure that no one will review or scrutinise a decision in which they have been involved.”

A Member queried whether Members were always told about the outcome of standards complaints against them. It was confirmed that the process required Members to be informed and asked for comments after a complaint was received, and for them to be provided with the outcome.

RESOLVED that:

(1) The Committee recommends to Council that the new structure and updated contents of the Constitution attached to the report be adopted, including -

- (i) the minor amendment in Chapter 1, paragraph 2.3 outlined above; and**
- (ii) the deadlines for requests for statements be amended to be in line with arrangements for questions.**

81 SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS
Report CSD23111

The report provided the Committee with an opportunity to make changes to the membership of its sub-committees following the review of proportionality by full Council on 17th July 2023.

RESOLVED that Councillor Jonathan Laidlaw be appointed to the Rights of Way Sub-Committee and the Industrial Relations Sub-Committee.

82 OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENTS 2023/24
Report CSD23137

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, and, occasionally, it was necessary to make new appointments when people stood down or fixed terms of office ended.

It was reported that Councillor Michael Tickner had decided to stand down from the Beckenham Parochial Charities, leaving a vacancy for the four-year term of office until January 2027. It was also noted that Mrs Gill Hollamby, who had previously been proposed, was being co-opted by the Trustees. The Chairman of Trustees had requested that the Council appoint a serving Councillor to the vacancy, and Councillor Kathy Bance MBE was proposed.

RESOLVED that Councillor Kathy Bance MBE be appointed to the Beckenham Parochial Charities for the remainder of the four-year term of office ending in January 2027.

83 WORK PROGRAMME AND MATTERS OUTSTANDING
Report CSD23112

The Committee received a report summarising its work programme for 2023/24 and also covering matters outstanding from previous meetings, including the issue of licensing conditions raised by Cllr Jeal at the last meeting.

Cllr Owen suggested that the Committee should consider a report on officers working from home. Cllr Jeal pointed out that members of the Committee could look at policies rather than individual arrangements. Some Members commented that they preferred to see officers available in the office. Cllr Stevens cautioned that a recent tribunal decision had shown the danger of indirect discrimination in a case where a worker had caring responsibilities but management insisted on in-person attendance.

Members suggested that a report be brought to a future meeting on the Council's policy, and that the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management should be invited to the meeting.

A Member also raised the subject of appraisals. Views differed on the value and effectiveness of appraisals, but Members suggested that this should be considered alongside working from home policy.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted, and a report to a future meeting on working from home and appraisal.

**84 LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS
HELD ON 8 AND 22 JUNE, 3 AUGUST AND 19 SEPTEMBER
2023**

The Committee received and noted the minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee meetings held on 8th June, 22nd June, 3rd August and 19th September 2023. A Member congratulated the Members of the Sub-Committee meeting on 22nd June for dealing with a particularly difficult application.

A Member commented that there had been recent cases where Sub-Committee Members had not been informed about applicants who had submitted licensing applications without first obtaining planning permission. The Chairman stated that she would take this up with officers.

The Meeting ended at 7.37 pm

Chairman