

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
9 September 2014 (7.30 - 8.05 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group Michael White (Chairman), Osman Dervish,
Roger Ramsey, Melvin Wallace and Damian White

Residents' Group Clarence Barrett (Vice-Chair), Jody Ganly,
Ray Morgon, Stephanie Nunn and Darren Wise

UKIP Group Lawrence Webb and Ian Wulverton

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jeffrey Tucker.

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest

All decisions were taken without division unless otherwise stated.

5 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2014 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

6 TRANSFORMATION OF SERVICE DELIVERY - 3G CONNECTION TO I-PADS FOR MEMBERS

The Committee received this report which sought to clarify the changes required to ensure that more councillors had full access to 3G technology in order to enhance their efficiency by making it easier (for example) to access the Members' Portal, receive and transmit e-mails etc. particularly when away from home or the town hall.

Members considered this in detail and a consensus emerged that whilst they were in broad agreement that Members should be encouraged to embrace new technology as it became available, it was not something which every Member might want. It was observed that whilst senior councillors e.g. Cabinet members and group leaders, made wide use of 3G and i-pads, some Members hardly – if ever – accessed their e-mails that way, so it was considered that a “one size fits all” position may not be appropriate.

Members expressed concern that 3G access (which was publically funded) could be misused – intentionally or innocently – unless it was monitored and it was agreed that monitoring was an absolute necessity and Members asked to pay for private use. It was suggested that each Member pay their individual monthly access subscription.

This led the Committee to consider whether the current IT Policy might be out of date as so much had changed in such a short period of time and that it was an opportune moment to have it fully revised and then keep it under regular review.

The Committee:

1. **Resolved** to allow 3G connectivity to be made available to every Member who requested it who used a Council supported i-pad and that funding for this be made available.
2. **Recommended** that the current IT Policy should be revised to reflect the recent changes in technology and Council usage and that from then on it should be annually reviewed and kept updated.

7 **APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS 2014/15.**

The Committee was reminded that at its last meeting appointments had been made to outside bodies. In the case of two or three bodies, additional information had been requested and that was now available. Subsequent to the appointments, changes to membership had been required and the Committee was asked to confirm those changes.

Members were informed that the items for consideration involved:

- The Havering Theatre Trust. Councillor Melvin Wallace to stand down due to potential conflicts of interest and Councillor Philippa Crowder was nominated to replace him.
- The City Regions Board. Confirmation that local authorities can no longer appoint directly to the Board but make nominations only to the Local Government Association.
- The London City Airport Consultative Group. Havering was no longer required to do anything about membership to this body.
- The Thames Regional Flood Defence Committee. Havering was no longer eligible to nominate a representative to this body due to a change in the political balance on London Councils.
- The Chairman asked for the Committee to consider the membership of IESE Ltd. which, at the previous meeting had continued the practice of appointing the Leader to the body. He explained that he had an interest in this body and asked whether the Leader would consider stepping down – which he did willingly – and then seeking nomination

for appointment to the body which the Committee assented to.

The Committee:

- 1 **Confirmed** the change of membership to the Havering Theatre Trust from Councillor Melvin Wallace to Councillor Philippa Crowder.
- 2 **Noted** the changes to the appointment arrangements to the City Regions Board, London City Airports Consultative Group and Thames Regional Flood Defence Committee.
- 3 **Approved** the change of membership of IESE Ltd from the Leader to Councillor Michael White

8 **MONITORING OFFICER NO 1 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Members were reminded that there had been a recent change in legislation to the freedoms individuals had to record public meetings by using mobile phones, social media and other means.

The report informed the Committee of the implications for the Council following the introduction of those regulations relating to the openness of Local Government Bodies and, as well as making relevant changes to the Constitution, Members were presented with a protocol for the reporting of meetings which – if approved - would be included within all Council, Cabinet and Committee agendas.

Members considered the merits of such recording and some Members wondered whether this could conflict (or even supersede) the Council's own web-casting, but after discussion, it was accepted that web-casting would still prove to be a valuable asset and that there was no option other than to ensure that the new regulations were applied in a controlled way and individuals permitted to make any recordings they wished in as unobtrusive a manner as possible otherwise sanctions should be applied.

The Committee:

- 1 **Noted** the report, including the amendments to the Constitution as shown in Appendix 1
- 2 **Approved** the protocol as shown in Appendix 2

Chairman