

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
30 April 2015 (7.30 - 8.30 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group	Michael White (Chairman), Roger Ramsey, Melvin Wallace, +Joshua Chapman and +John Crowder
Residents' Group	Stephanie Nunn, Barry Mugglestone and +Barbara Matthews
East Havering Residents' Group	Clarence Barrett (Vice-Chair) and Darren Wise
UKIP Group	Lawrence Webb and Ian de Wulverton
Independent Residents Group	+David Durant

Apologies for absence were received from councillors Osman Dervish, Damian White, Ray Morgon (on other Council business) and Jeffrey Tucker who were substituted by councillors +John Crowder, +Joshua Chapman +Barbara Matthews and +David Durant respectively.

On behalf of the Chairman, the clerk reminded those present of the procedure to follow should a need arise to evacuate the building.

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest

Decisions were taken without division unless otherwise stated.

32 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2015 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

33 REVISION TO THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE FOR REGULATORY SERVICES

A report had been presented at the previous meeting of the Committee on 11 March 2015 setting out proposed changes to the call-in procedure for planning applications brought before the Regulatory Services Committee.

At that meeting, Members deferred making a decision so that further thought could be given to the proposed revisions.

The revised report before Members retained the proposal for the call-in of a planning application to be restricted to the councillors for the Ward in which the planning application site was located. It was recognised however that there may be exceptional circumstances whereby non-ward councillors felt it was necessary for an application to be brought for the consideration of the Regulatory Services Committee. In such exceptional circumstances, it was proposed that approval needed to be sought in writing, setting out detailed reasons for the call in which had to be related solely to matters of material planning concern and obtained from the Head of Regulatory Services for the application to be brought before the committee.

This issue was subject to comment from various members of the Committee with the strongest objection being that some planning matters had political aspects to them and by referring them to a senior officer, that officer's political neutrality would be compromised. This was countered by reference to the fact that the process required the Member making the call-in to show that the call-in was based on planning principles alone and therefore the Head of Service's political neutrality would not be compromised.

Having discussed the matter at length, the issue of whether to accept the recommendations as set out in the report was put to the vote.

In favour of the motion: Councillors: Michael White, Roger Ramsey, Melvin Wallace, John Crowder, Joshua Chapman, Clarence Barrett, Barbara Matthews, Stephanie Nunn, Barry Mugglestone, Darren Wise and Ian de Wulverton

Against the motion: Councillor: David Durant

Lawrence Webb abstained

The motion was **CARRIED** by eleven votes to one.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **recommend to Council** that:

1. That Committee Procedure Rule 13(e) of the Council's Constitution be revised to read as follows:
 - (e) *Only a Councillor representing the ward in which the planning application is located, or in exceptional circumstances any member of the Council, may call-in an application before the Regulatory Services Committee. Any such request for call-in must be received by the Head of Regulatory Services in writing (to include email and facsimile) and must set out detailed reasons for the call in which must be related solely to matters of material planning concern. Any Member of the planning committee calling in a matter must take care to express themselves in a manner which would not amount to bias or pre-determination should they intend to take part in the meeting.*

2. That Section 3.6.6(d) be revised to read as follows:

“Members of the Ward in which a proposal is situated may request that an application be referred to the Regulatory Services Committee for determination. Such request must be made in writing to either the Head of Regulatory Services personally. If no such request is received by the deadline of that period the Head of Regulatory Services may determine the application.

If any Member considers there are exceptional circumstances warranting the calling in of a planning application which is not situated within their Ward then they must seek and obtain approval from the Head of Regulatory Services.”

3. That the Council’s Monitoring Officer be authorised to make the necessary change to the Council’s Constitution, should the proposal be agreed by Council.

34 **APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Committee was reminded that the Governor Appointments Panel considered applications for the LA governor positions on school governing bodies and recommended individuals to the Director of Children, Adults and Housing.

The Governance Committee appointed three Members to the Panel on an annual basis and in June 2014 it appointed the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, Councillor Gillian Ford and Councillor Lawrence Webb to serve as the Council’s representatives for the current municipal year.

On 1st April 2015, Councillor Webb resigned from the Governor Panel and the Committee was asked to note the vacancy, which would be considered with the annual appointments to Outside Bodies at the end of May meeting.

The Committee **noted** the position in respect of the Governor Appointments Panel.

35 **MONITORING OFFICER REPORT NR 05**

Members considered a report of the Monitoring Officer containing various changes to the Constitution.

The Committee **noted** the changes within the appendices to the report.

36 **NOMINATIONS FOR THE AWARD OF FREEMAN OF THE BOROUGH**

The Committee was reminded that the Council had the power under Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 to confer the title of “Freeman of

the Borough” on persons who had, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the borough. For the purposes of the Act, ‘person’ included organisations. The Council’s Constitution (Council Procedure Rule 24) provided for Council to confer the title of Freedom of the Borough.

At the time of the meeting, the Group Leaders had been unable to reach agreement on whether there should be any nominations for the award. It was for the Governance Committee to decide whether to make a recommendation to Council in accordance with the ‘protocol on the nomination and appointment of Honorary Freemen and Honorary Aldermen for the London Borough of Havering.’

Members discussed this at some length but could reach no agreement on any names to be put forward.

The Committee **agreed** that as no-one had been put forward under the protocol it could not recommend anyone to Council, but that if any Group put forward a nomination by the closing date (May 5th) they could do so.

37 **ROLL OF HONOUR**

The Committee carefully considered the issues surrounding the setting-up of a Roll of Honour in recognition of those armed forces personnel from the Borough who had died on active service between 1 April 1965 and 1 April 2015.

The Committee **recommended to Council** that a roll of honour in recognition of Lance Corporal Kirk Redpath and Warrant Officer Class 2 Ian Fisher, both of whom died on active service between 1 April 1965 and 1 April 2015 should be created; and that any other members of the armed forces from the Borough who died on active duty during that period should be added to it as they came to the Council’s knowledge.

38 **CHANGES TO DELEGATED POWERS - REGULATORY SERVICES**

The following minute refers to a late item submitted with the agreement of the Chairman as an urgent matter pursuant to Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972

The Chairman introduced a late item concerning changes to the Constitution relating to powers delegated to the Head of Regulatory Services which had been ratified by Council at its meeting of 28 January. Council had agreed that Section 3.6.6(p) be altered to: *“To issue Enforcement Notices, Stop Notices and Listed Building Enforcement Notices.”* Due to an oversight however, the wording of the altered text should have continued to say the following words brought forward from the existing Section 3.6.6(p):

"... and to take any action necessary to achieve compliance with a notice, including commencing proceedings for injunctions and demolishing buildings."

It was therefore requested that this additional wording be noted as a supplementary alteration to the previously agreed change to Section 3.6.6(p).

The Committee agreed and **noted** the addition of wording to the original recommendation.

Chairman