

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
31 August 2016 (7.30 - 8.35 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group	Meg Davis (Chairman), Melvin Wallace (Vice-Chair), Roger Ramsey, Damian White and Osman Dervish
Residents' Group	Ray Morgon, Barbara Matthews and Barry Mugglestone
East Havering Residents' Group UKIP Group	Clarence Barrett and +Ron Ower Lawrence Webb
Independent Residents Group	+Michael Deon Burton
Labour Group	Keith Darvill

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors Darren Wise and David Durant.

+Substitute Members: Ron Ower and Michael Deon Burton (for Darren Wise and David Durant respectively).

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

Decisions were taken without division unless otherwise stated.

11 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

All Members present disclosed an interest in respect of item 6 on the agenda: Councillor Car Parking.

12 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2016 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman

13 **EXCLUSION OF PRIOR APPROVALS FROM COUNCILLOR CALL-IN PROCESS**

At its meeting on 31 August 2016 the Governance Committee considered a report which sought to ratify the way in which prior approval submissions for were considered.

Unlike planning applications, prior approval submissions had strict timescales for determination and receipt of decision which, if not adhered to, could result in their default approval irrespective of the Council's intended decisions. Currently, officers declined Councillor call-ins due to the practical difficulties of reporting these applications to the Regulatory Services Committee within the prescribed timescales for determination and the cycle of committee meetings.

The matter had initially been presented to the Governance Committee at its meeting on 26 May, but had been deferred for further information. The report considered by the Committee on 31 August contained that information (attached along with the original report) and showed that the majority of London boroughs delegated authority without call-in provision.

With Council's agreement, it was proposed that prior approval applications could not be called-in to the Regulatory Services committee unless an Extension of Time Agreement had been sought and agreed by the applicant. Prior approval applications however, would henceforth be included in the weekly publicity list so that Ward members could better understand the nature and extent of prior approval applications. After a period of three months the matter would be reviewed and reported to Governance Committee to assess whether the introduction of a call-in arrangement would be justified. Should further changes be considered appropriate at that point, the matter would be referred to Council for final approval

The Committee **recommended to Council** that it:

1. **Ratified** the proposals set out within the report that prior approval submissions cannot be called-in for determination by the Regulatory Services Committee unless an Extension of Time Agreement has been sought and agreed by the applicant.
2. **Noted** that prior approval applications would now be included on the weekly publicity list of applications and that after a three month period to enable assessment of whether a call-in arrangement was justified, a report would be provided to the Governance Committee and if there were any changes to the proposals the matter would return to Council before being applied.

14 **COUNCILLOR CAR PARKING - REFERRAL FOLLOWING FULL COUNCIL MOTION**

At its meeting on 13 July, councillors considered a motion on behalf of the Independent Residents' Group to make minor amendments to the existing arrangements for Councillor car parking at Havering Town Hall. Council resolved that: *"This Council, in recognising that when the charges for staff car parking were introduced they also applied to councillors who did not wish to impose on staff charges which they were unwilling to accept themselves, wishes this principle to continue and requests Governance Committee to review the implementation of the current scheme in order to ascertain whether any practical adjustments are appropriate"*

Members were accordingly now invited to consider how best to implement Council's expressed wishes. All Members present disclosed an interest in this matter at the outset.

The issue appeared to be two-fold: Access to the car park at the Town Hall and the definition of what constituted "Council business". This item received wide input from Members and at the end of the discussion the Committee had agreed with the proposal that Members' passes to be "switched on" to permit access to the Town Hall car park instead of having to contact reception each time. They accepted that the onus was very much on each Member to buy a parking ticket if they had not elected to pay for parking in advance.

Members did accept that they should continue to sign-in for formal meetings and it was considered reasonable that the swipe card audit details and meeting attendances should be sufficient to effect random checks.

The Chief Executive was asked if it would be possible for Members to purchase "one day a week" passes and he said that this would be considered and Members would be apprised of its viability in due course. In the mean-time, instructions would be issued to arrange a start date for Members' badges to be activated for the Town Hall car park barrier.

The Committee:

- 1 **Noted** the report
- 2 **Agreed** to having their passes activated so that they would allow access to the Town Hall car park without recourse to the Reception Staff.
- 3 **Accepted** responsibility for paying for parking tickets if they were not on Council business.
- 4 **Confirmed** their support of the principal that Members would pay for parking along with Staff.
- 5 **Requested** that they be provided with advice about the feasibility of purchasing limited access parking (such as one-day a week) for those Members who did not have a regular attendance requirement.

15 **MONITORING OFFICER NO 10 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The Committee was invited to consider a report concerning amendments made by the Monitoring Officer to the Constitution.

Following consideration the Committee **noted** the report.

16 **TERMS AND CONDITIONS REVIEW - PROGRESS REPORT**

The report before the Committee followed-on from an initial report considered by Members at its meeting on 29 June. This update provided more details (contained within an exempt appendix) of the review's objectives and informed the Committee that the process was about to move into its consultative phase which would last for the required 45 days – but could be extended if necessary.

Members were advised that the intention was to adhere to the proposals outlined in the appendix and that it was anticipated that the outcomes and position of the review would be clearer around Christmas. This being the case, it was proposed that a further update be brought to the Committee in the early New Year.

Having discussed various aspects of the proposals, the Committee **noted** the report and anticipated further briefings after the consultation had taken place.

Chairman