

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
31 March 2021 (7.30 - 8.00 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group	Robert Benham, Joshua Chapman, Roger Ramsey, Damian White (Vice-Chair), Ciaran White (Chairman) and Timothy Ryan
Residents' Group	Ray Morgon and Barry Mugglestone
Upminster & Cranham Residents' Group	Linda Hawthorn
Independent Residents Group	David Durant
Labour Group	Keith Darvill
North Havering Residents Group	Martin Goode

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors . Councillor Viddy Persaud sent apologies and was substituted by Councillor Tim Ryan.

The Chairman reminded Members of the virtual meetings protocol.

13 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

14 MINUTES

The minutes of the Governance Committee held on 13 January 2021 were agreed and signed (electronically) by the Chair of the Committee as a true record of the same.

15 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Mr Abdus Choudhury, Monitoring Officer for the London Borough of Havering presented the report to the Committee, detailing the recommendation to appoint three further trustees to the Board of the Hornchurch Housing Trust.

The Hornchurch Housing Trust is a registered charity that administers and manages alms-house accommodation in the parish of Hornchurch. The Trust also has a portfolio of commercial and residential properties. The Council appoints a number of nominative trustees to the Trust for a four-year term of office expiring in sequence over each four-year period.

The term of office of both Councillor Damian White and Councillor Carol Smith expired in February 2021. Councillor Damian White has indicated that he wishes to step down, having served on the Board since March 2017. Councillor Carol Smith is eligible for re-appointment and wishes to continue in the role of Trustee. Councillor Smith has been a Trustee since September 2015. In addition, Councillor Joshua Chapman has indicated that he wishes to resign from the Board, leaving a vacancy until February 2023.

Eligibility for appointment to the Board comes from residence in or special connection to the Borough. Two candidates had been put forward by the Trust for appointment by the Committee as specified under the Council's constitution. It was noted that appointments do not have to be Members of the Council.

The remaining nominative Trustees are Councillor John Mylod and Councillor Nic Dodin (appointed until February 2022) and Councillor Melvin Wallace (appointed until February 2023).

Councillor Ray Morgon put forward a motion that Councillor Gerry O'Sullivan be considered for appointment to the Trust. This motion was seconded by Councillor Barry Mugglestone.

Councillor Damian White indicated some history of the Trust. He had served on the Board as trustee for a number of years and it was agreed that there be a process of modernisation in the governance of the Trust. Following advice and support from other organisations and lawyers it had been decided to recruit trustees with a particular expertise in housing to assist the Trust who have a substantial portfolio of property.

The Trust had undertaken a full skills audit of the trustees and following a robust recruitment programme the two nominations were put forward, namely Mr Peter Salisbury and Mr Roger Evans. Members had sight of CV's for these candidates as part of the agenda pack.

There was discussion regarding the role of the Committee in this process. Authority for the Governance Committee to make these appointments comes from the Council's Constitution. There is a provision for an ex officio appointment to the Trust by the local diocese.

Both Councillors D White and J Chapman indicated that they had been happy to stand aside to allow the appointments to come through of Trustees with specific housing expertise. The two proposed candidates had exceptional housing experience.

The trust had taken advice on this from external lawyers through OneSource and the Alms-House Association together with other professionals including the Council's Director of Housing.

Councillor Ray Morgon expressed concern regarding the links proposed nominees had with the Administration Group recommended Councillor O'Sullivan as an alternative nominee who would not be so connected.

Following further discussion a vote was taken as to the **proposed motion that Councillor Gerry O'Sullivan be put forward as a nominee.**

Councillors voting in favour were:

Councillors Hawthorne, Durant, Mugglestone, Darvill and Morgon (5).

Councillors voting against were:

Councillors C White, D White, Ramsey, Benham, Chapman and Ryan (6).

Councillor Goode abstained.

The motion was not carried 6 votes to 5.

The Governance Committee then proceeded to the vote on the recommendation within the report to:

1. **APPOINT** three Trustees to the Board, one to serve until February 2023 and two to serve until February 2025.

Councillors Ryan, C White, D White, Ramsey, Benham, Chapman and Goode voted in **FAVOUR** (7).

Councillors Hawthorn, Durant, Darvill, Mugglestone and Morgon voted **AGAINST** (5).

Governance Committee:

AGREED by majority vote to appoint three Trustees to the Board, Cllr Carol Smith until February 2023 and both Peter Salisbury and Roger Evans to February, 2025.

Chairman

