

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Appointments Centre, Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
26 September 2023 (7.30 - 8.51 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group	Nisha Patel, Keith Prince, Michael White and Timothy Ryan
Havering Residents' Group	Ray Morgon (Chairman), Gillian Ford (Vice-Chair), Christopher Wilkins, Graham Williamson and Gerry O'Sullivan
Labour Group	Mandy Anderson and Keith Darvill
East Havering Residents Group	Martin Goode

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

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE & SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no apologies for absence.

2 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 June 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

4 CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW - UPDATE

A report of the Monitoring Officer proposed a number of changes to the Constitution that had been suggested by the Constitution Working Party. It was noted that it was not anticipated that the changes referred to in the report would be brought to Full Council for final approval until the revised Scheme of Delegation was also ready to be approved. This would allow all the changes to be introduced together in a coherent fashion.

The changes agreed by Governance Committee, together with any relevant comments made by Members, are shown below:

Licensing Committee

Members felt that the proposed changes in the report were too wordy. It was **AGREED** that relevant sections of the Constitution should be amended to read as follows:

Part 2, Annex 2

2: Licensing Committee

2.2 Licensing Sub-Committees should be politically balanced where possible.

9. (iv) Sub-Committees or Hearings Panels should be politically balanced where possible.

Access to Information

It was **AGREED** that the revised Part 4.1 of the Constitution covering Access to Information Procedure Rules, as appended to the report, should be approved.

OneSource

Officers confirmed that the OneSource Joint Committee still existed for Legal, Exchequer and Transactional which remained part of OneSource. The role of the Joint Committee itself was also under review. It was **NOTED** that it was proposed to delete the OneSource delegations from the Constitution with the exception of those relating to Exchequer & Transactional. Further details would be included in the Scheme of Delegations report which would be presented to Governance Committee at a future point.

Member Code of Conduct

Members felt that the proposed timescale for dealing with correspondence was not realistic and could not be introduced, at least until a casework management system had been introduced. It was therefore **AGREED** that the relevant section of part 5.1 of the Constitution should read as follows:

As a Member of the Council, each Member will in particular address the statutory principles of the code of conduct by:

Dealing with representations or enquiries from residents, members of local communities and visitors promptly, fairly, appropriately and impartially.

It was further **AGREED** that the revised version of the Social Media Protocol as appended to the report be approved and that the relevant section of part 5.1 of the Constitution be amended to read:

Members will be expected to comply with the Council's policies on Equality in Employment, Equality in Service Provision, Harassment and Bullying at Work as well as the Council's Social Media Protocol.

Flags and Lighting Up Policy

It was **AGREED** that Armed Forces Day should be included as an example of a day when flags should be flown. Enquiries would also be made as to the current name of the Royal Anglian Regiment.

Other than the amendment shown above, it was **AGREED** that the revised Flag Flying and Special Lighting Policy, as appended to the report, be approved.

Recording Executive Decisions

Members felt that the Council's current process for recording Executive Decisions was very effective. The Executive Decision guidance note as appended, to the report was therefore **NOTED**.

Portfolios

It was confirmed that the portfolio for Councillor Gillian Ford should read Adults and Wellbeing rather than as stated and that the portfolio for Councillor Oscar Ford should read Children and Young People rather than as stated. The reallocated Cabinet portfolios as shown in the report were otherwise **NOTED**.

It was also **AGREED** that the revised Constitution should be submitted to full Council for approval in due course.

5 **APPOINTMENTS TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS 2023/24**

The Committee was asked to note two Executive Appointments – that of Councillor Gillian Ford to the North East London Foundation Trust Board of Governors and that of Councillor Ray Morgon to the Thames Freeport Governance Board.

The Committee was also asked to note the position re the Poyntz Charity which was currently dormant.

Members asked for information on how some representatives are elected onto the North East London Foundation Trust Board of Governors.

The Committee **NOTED** the addition of Executive Appointments to the North East London Foundation Trust Board of Governors and the Thames Freeport Governance Board as well as the current situation with the Poyntz Charity.

6 **PENSIONS COMMITTEE - TRADE UNION VOTING RIGHTS**

A report of the Monitoring Officer discussed options should the Committee agree that Trade Unions be allowed voting rights on the Pensions Committee.

It was **AGREED** that the Monitoring Officer should bring a revised report to a future meeting of Governance Committee proposing one elected staff member with voting rights to have a place on the Pensions Committee.

Members also discussed the establishment of a pension scheme for Members and would look to take this forward.

Chairman