

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 17TH MAY, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor K Wakefield in the Chair

Councillors S Bentley, A Blackburn, J Blake, S Golton, P Gruen, A Lowe, J Procter and N Taggart, M Lobley (as substitute for A Carter), G Latty (as substitute for J L Carter) and T Leadley (as substitute for R Finnigan)

Apologies Councillor A Carter, J L Carter and R Finnigan

64 Appeals against refusal of inspection of documents

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

65 Exempt Information - possible exclusion of the press and public

There were no resolutions to exclude the public.

66 Late items

There were no late items submitted to the agenda for consideration.

67 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made either under this item or at any stage during the meeting.

68 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J L Carter, A Carter and R Finnigan.

69 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 30th March 2011 be approved as a correct record.

70 Matters Arising

The Chair raised the proposal for an additional meeting of full Council to that already circulated to be held on 30th November 2011 which would be solely for the purposes of receiving and debating a State of the City Report. The

Chair proposed that this date should be incorporated into the schedule of Council meetings to be agreed at the Annual meeting.

RESOLVED – Members agreed to recommend to full Council that an additional meeting on 30th November 2011 be scheduled to receive and debate a State of the City Report.

71 Annual Review of the Constitution

The City Solicitor presented his report. The report asked the Committee to recommend amendments to the Constitution to full Council.

Members discussed the report in detail and specifically focussed on:

(a) the proposed revisions to the Area Committee Procedure Rules. Members expressed a desire for Area Committee Members to continue to have involvement in the process of electing Chairs for Area Committees. However, it was also noted by Members that the current procedure (whereby Area Chairs are appointed by the Area Committees at the first meeting of the committees in the new municipal year, and contested elections are referred to full Council) was not satisfactory owing to the significant delay in appointments which might arise. Members requested that the proposed amendments be revised to incorporate reference to a nomination process by Area Committee Members, but to allow appointment by full Council at its Annual Meeting where an election is contested.

(b) the proposed revisions to the Council Procedure Rules. In relation to Council Procedure 11.2, Members considered that Whips should continue to confirm the order of questions, but that it would be useful for clarity about the order to be obtained, at an earlier stage in the process. Members considered that the proposed amendment would do this. In relation to Council Procedure 13.1, Members acknowledged difficulties raised by existing time-scales, but raised concerns about delays arising during the process for considering amendments to the Budget Motion before they are submitted to the Chief Executive under the Council Procedure Rules. Members therefore asked for a review of this process to be carried out, in addition to the proposed amendment..

RESOLVED – Members of the General Purposes Committee resolved to recommend to full Council that:

- (a) the revised Article 4 be amended, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (b) the terms of reference of the General Purposes Committee be amended as set out in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (c) the delegations to the Chief Recreation Officer be withdrawn;
- (d) the additional function of making a special extinguishment order under Section 118B of the Highways Act 1980 to the Chief Highways and

- Transportation Officer and the Director of City Development be concurrently delegated;
- (e) exception (h) to the delegation to the Chief Planning Officer, be amended to read “the determination of applications submitted in a personal capacity by or on behalf of Members, Directors or any other officer who carried out development management functions”;
 - (f) the Council Procedure Rules 11.2 and 13.1 be amended as set out in Appendix 3 of the report;
 - (g) a review to be conducted into the timescales affecting how amendments to the Budget Motion are dealt with before they are submitted to the Chief Executive under the Council Procedure Rules;
 - (h) the amendments relating to the appointment of Area Committee Chairs to Article 10.6 as shown in Appendix 4 of the report, and to Area Committee Rule 5.1 be not approved,
 - (i) That further proposals for approval at the Annual Council Meeting be brought forward which preserve the role of Area Committees in appointing the Chair whilst also ensuring Area Committees meet in advance of the Annual Council Meeting to appoint chairs and that any deadlock in this respect, is capable of being resolved at the Annual Council meeting, and;
 - (j) that the amendment to Area Committee Procedure Rule 6.7 be approved ;

(Councillor A Blackburn arrived at 3:07pm during the discussion of this item)

72 Overview and Scrutiny - Proposed Changes and Amendments to the Constitution

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented his report, which set out recommendations in respect of amendments to the Overview and Scrutiny function. The report also detailed a number of minor changes to the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules and Article 6 to ensure consistency in wording and to provide clarity.

Members discussed the report in detail giving consideration to possible implications for smaller Groups, arising from the proposed amendment to Article 6, to provide that Group spokes persons should not be appointed as Scrutiny Board Chairs. Members considered the proposal should be amended so that it did not apply to groups with a small proportion of Council membership.

Concerns were also raised about full Council solely determining the work programme of the Scrutiny Boards and Members agreed that Scrutiny Boards should retain the authority to determine their own work programme in addition to the topics identified in the proposed terms of reference. It was agreed that amendments to the proposed terms of reference be made to reflect this.

RESOLVED – Members of the General Purposes Committee resolved to recommend to full Council that:

- (a) the following Scrutiny Boards be appointed, with the terms of reference set out in Appendix 1 to the report, subject to those terms of reference being amended to reflect :
 - Scrutiny Board (Children and Families);
 - Scrutiny Board (Safer and Stronger Communities);
 - Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture);
 - Scrutiny Board (Regeneration);
 - Scrutiny Board (Health and Well-being and Adult Social Care); and
 - Scrutiny Board (Resources and Council Services).
- (b) To approve the revised Article 6 as set out in Appendix 2, but subject to amendments to allow Group spokespersons from smaller parties to be appointed to Chair a Scrutiny Board and to reflect the Committee's decision in relation to the Boards' Terms of Reference; and
- (c) the revised Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules be amended as set out in Appendix 3, subject to any further amendments required to reflect the Committee's decision in relation to the Boards Terms of Reference.

(Councillor T Leadley left the meeting at 4:00pm during the discussion of this item)