

**COUNCIL MEETING – 8TH DECEMBER 2022**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 (1)**

**PROTOCOL FOR THE SELECTION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR**

A report from the meeting of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee held on 28th November 2022.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee requested that the criteria for the selection of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor be reviewed to ensure that it continues to be effective in supporting the mayoral selection process. In the past few years, it has proved difficult to secure nominations for the role without breaking the criteria.
- 1.2 A Members' Survey on the topic of the Mayoralty was carried out in July-August 2022 to understand more about councillors' interest and considerations in taking the role.
- 1.3 In October, a group of Members appointed by the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee met to consider the survey outcomes and discussed proposals for loosening the selection criteria to reflect the higher turnover of councillors and to ensure that those councillors who are interested to take the role have reasonable opportunity to be nominated without breaking the criteria. The Member Group was attended by Councillors P.J. Cullum, Christine Guinness, M.S. Choudhary and A. Gani.

**2. SURVEY RESULTS**

- 2.1 A summary of the Mayoral Survey results is attached at **Appendix 1**. The purpose of the survey was to find out more about individual councillors' personal interest in the mayoralty role, and barriers to accepting the position. The response rate was 25 Members, and overall, the outcomes suggest that approximately 50% of councillors may be interested in taking the role of Mayor at some point in the near future. From those responding to the survey who would be interested in the role (13 Members), only one councillor would be eligible to be Deputy Mayor in 2023 under the current criteria. This is due to forthcoming elections, recent past service as Mayor, or not yet having served a full term. The case for loosening the criteria was strong.

2.2 By a clear margin, the most likely reason that councillors would not wish to accept the role is the perceived time commitment to fulfil the mayoralty role in addition to employment, family, or other existing responsibilities.

### 3. **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE SELECTION CRITERIA**

3.1 A copy of the proposed amendments to the current criteria for the selection of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor is attached at **Appendix 2**. Revisions are shown as track changes.

3.2 The current arrangements use order of seniority determined by length of service to decide the selection, within eligibility, and the principle of this approach is proposed to be retained.

3.3 Under revised arrangements, it is proposed that each year the process will begin with the Chief Executive inviting all Members to advise if they are interested to take the role of Deputy Mayor progressing through to the position of Mayor. The seniority and eligibility criteria (as attached at Appendix 2) would then be applied to all Members who notified their interest. The Councillor who is highest up the seniority list from amongst the interested Members would then be considered for the appointment, subject to the eligibility requirements, and the Chief Executive shall follow up by contacting all Members in writing to ensure a broad base of support for the appointment.

3.4 The Member Group recommended the following amendments to the selection criteria to help increase access to the role, and the number of councillors who would be eligible (as shown in track changes):

- A Member may be selected as Deputy Mayor when they are seeking re-election at that year's Borough Election – contingent on a successful re-election (However, a Member will not normally be selected when they are seeking re-election which would fall between their year as Deputy Mayor and Mayor).
- Past Mayors will be reconsidered for the position of Mayor or Deputy Mayor eight years after the completion of the end of their Mayoral Year (rather than waiting 15 years as at present)
- A Member who has not been Mayor before shall be given priority in the selection process over a returning past Mayor.

3.5 The Group also recommended to preserve the criteria that Members should serve a full 4-year term before being eligible for selection.

### 4. **CONCLUSION**

4.1 The changes proposed by the Member Group help to increase the number of councillors who are eligible to take the role of Mayor, while retaining the current principle of applying seniority linked to length of service.

4.2 Following discussion, the Corporate Governance Audit and Standards Committee supported the proposed amendments to the selection criteria as recommended to the Council.

**5. RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL**

5.1 The Council is recommended to approve the amendments to the criteria for the Selection of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, as set out in Appendix 2 to the Report, for adoption in the Council's Constitution.

PETER CULLUM  
CHAIRMAN OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE  
AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

## Members Survey Results – Mayoralty

The survey was carried out end of July/August 2022 and 25 Members responded.

### Key Findings:

#### 1. Interest in the role of Mayor

13 councillors who responded indicated that they would be interested in taking the role of Mayor, and 12 would not.

Of the 13 who responded that they would be interested; 4 are current/former mayors who would not currently be eligible to take the role, and 4 are new councillors who are two to three years away from serving a full term.

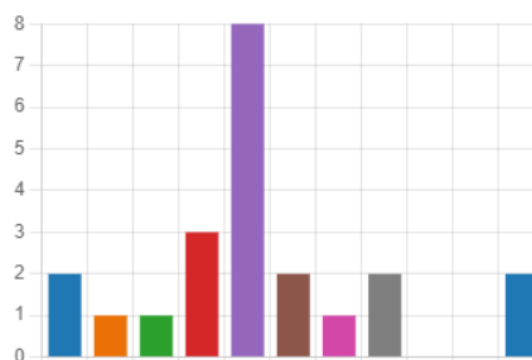
#### 2. Reasons not to take the role

By a clear margin, the most likely reason that councillors would not wish to accept the role of Mayor is the time commitment to fulfil the role - that it is too difficult to manage in addition to existing work, employment, family or other commitments.

#### 4. Please tick any of the following reasons why **you** would not wish to accept the Mayoral role (please tick any that apply)

[More Details](#)

<span style="color: blue;">●</span> The need to be politically neutral	2
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> Loss of a Special Responsibility ...	1
<span style="color: green;">●</span> Loss of another Special Respons...	1
<span style="color: red;">●</span> The number of mayoral engage...	3
<span style="color: purple;">●</span> Time commitment to fulfil the r...	8
<span style="color: brown;">●</span> Skills required for the role e.g. t...	2
<span style="color: pink;">●</span> Formality of the role	1
<span style="color: grey;">●</span> Expectations for fundraising acti...	2
<span style="color: olive;">●</span> Health/personal reasons	0
<span style="color: cyan;">●</span> Not sure what the role involves	0
<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Other	2



The reasons for not taking the role, in order of likeliness are:

- 1 Time commitment to fulfil the role in addition to existing commitments (8 respondents)
- 2 The number of mayoral engagements (3 respondents)
- 3= Need to be politically neutral (2 respondents)
- 3= Skills required for the role (2 respondents)
- 3= Expectations for fundraising activities (2 respondents)
- 6= Loss of a special responsibility allowance (1)
- 6= Loss of another special responsibility role at the Council (1)
- 6= Formality of the role (1)

## 5. SELECTION OF THE MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

The Council has established criteria for selecting the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. The Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee keeps the criteria under regular review. The arrangements are as follows:

Each year, the Chief Executive will invite all Members to advise if they are interested to take the role of Deputy Mayor beginning the next municipal year, progressing through to the position of Mayor the following year. The Chief Executive shall also check that the Deputy Mayor wishes to progress through to Mayor. This will usually be in early December and with a deadline for Members to advise their interest by early January.

The following criteria will then be applied to determine the position from the interested Members:

- 1) The position of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Borough will be determined by ~~taken in~~ order of seniority from amongst all interested ~~the elected~~ Members of the Council as notified to the Chief Executive and will be calculated in accordance with the procedure adopted by the Council on 20th May 1976 as follows:

“The order of seniority of Members of the Council shall be determined by the length of previous local government service with the Council, including past service with the former Aldershot Borough Council and Farnborough Urban District Council. In the case where two or more Members have the same length of service, then priority between such Members shall be determined by the number of votes received by each Member expressed as a percentage of the total number of ballot papers issued at the most recent election held in their respective Wards.”

- 2) The normal progression through the Mayoralty will be by the holding of the position of Deputy Mayor and then progressing to the position of Mayor the following year.
- 3) ~~Should an elected Member be in the position of not being able or wanting to accept the nomination when they reach their position within the seniority list, they will be considered in the following Municipal Year, depending on his or her wishes.~~
- 4) A Member will not normally be eligible for selection until that Member has served a full four-year term (previously para no. 6)
- 5) Where a Member ~~who~~ has not been Mayor before, that Member has the same number of eligible years' service as a Member who has already been Mayor, the Member who has not been Mayor shall be given priority in the selection process. (previously para no. 8)
- 6) Past Mayors will not normally be considered for the position of Mayor or Deputy Mayor until fifteen eight years after the completion of the end of their Mayoral Year; ~~at that time their position on the seniority list will be calculated on the basis of total length of service less fifteen years.~~ (previously para no. 5)

- 7) A Member may be selected as Deputy Mayor when they are seeking re-election at that year's Borough Council Election. The position would be contingent on a successful re-election. However, a Member will not normally be selected when they are seeking re-election which would fall between their year as Deputy Mayor and Mayor. ~~for Mayor or Deputy Mayor if they are seeking re-election at that year's Borough Council Elections.~~
- 8) The Offices of Mayor and Deputy Mayor must at all times be apolitical, and. ~~The Offices~~ should not be used for political advantage. (previously para no. 4)
- 9) A Member should recognise the time required in carrying out the duties and responsibilities of the Mayor and be able to allocate that time during their year of office.
- 10) Those considered for appointment:
  - must demonstrate a broad base of support amongst Members of the Council and all Members will be contacted in writing by the Chief Executive for their views on the proposed candidates ~~after they have been identified from the seniority list.~~
  - should be able to demonstrate some experience of chairing meetings
- 11) The Mayor-Elect and Deputy Mayor-Elect will be selected at the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee on the basis of the selections being submitted to Council by the end of March.
- 12) The Mayor must sign their acceptance of the Mayoral Protocol before beginning their term of office