

Crawley Borough Council

19 January 2007

Agenda for the **General Purposes Committee** which will be held in Committee Room B, Town Hall, Crawley, on **Monday 29 January 2007** at **7.30 p.m.**

Nightline Telephone No. (01293) 551636

Head of Democratic Services

Members Councillors R D Burrett (Chair), D English (Vice-Chair),
B K Blake, C A Cheshire, D G Crow, M T Head, R A Lanzer,
J Mortimer D J Shreeves, J G Smith and L A Walker.

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| Please note that Members requiring refreshments should contact Member Services on 01293 438391 no later than 48 hours before the meeting |
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Please contact Julia Green (Democratic Services Division) if you have any queries regarding this agenda.

Telephone number: 01293 438282

Email: Julia.green@crawley.gov.uk

Business - Part A

1. Minutes

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 November 2006 ([Enclosure A](#)).

2. Apologies for Absence

3. **Members' Disclosures of Interest**

Members must declare if they think they have an interest in any item on this agenda and what the interest is. They have a personal interest if a reasonable person thought they had a greater interest in it than other residents of the town. If this was considered so great it would affect Members' judgements, it becomes prejudicial.

If a Member has a:

Personal and Non Prejudicial Interest – they must declare it, they may stay in the meeting, speak and vote.

Personal and Prejudicial Interest – they must declare it, leave the meeting while the item is discussed and take no part in the decision making.

4. **Audit and Governance Sub - Committee**

To receive the minutes of the meetings of the Audit and Governance Sub Committee held on 4 December 2006 ([Enclosure B](#)) and 15 January 2007 ([Enclosure C](#)).

5. **Appointment of Mayor – Proposed Points System**

The Committee at its last meeting considered Councillor Seekings' proposal that a points system be established for determining which political group should nominate the Mayor each year.

The Head of Democratic Services advised the Committee that whilst it would be possible for the Council to have a protocol providing guidance to members, it would not be lawful to enshrine in the Council's Constitution any procedure that would fetter the discretion of the Council to appoint whoever the majority of members present and voting at the Annual Meeting wished to appoint.

The Committee concluded that it would not be appropriate to operate such a protocol in circumstances where one political group had overall control but with a very slim majority. The Committee therefore asked the Head of Democratic Services to bring back to the next meeting a draft points based protocol to be used in circumstances where either there is no overall control or where the majority party has 21 or more seats (with the presumption that in all other circumstances the Mayor should be appointed on the nomination of the majority group and the Deputy Mayor on the nomination of the opposition).

The spread sheet attached as [Enclosure D](#) shows how the proposed points system would ensure that the Mayoralty rotates on a proportional basis. The figures assume, for simplicity, that the current political split continues unchanged in future years and would result in the following rotation over the next eight years:-

| | |
|---------|------------------------|
| 2007/08 | Labour Mayor |
| 2008/09 | Conservative Mayor |
| 2009/10 | Labour Mayor |
| 2010/11 | Conservative Mayor |
| 2011/12 | Labour Mayor |
| 2012/13 | Liberal Democrat Mayor |
| 2013/14 | Conservative Mayor |

The proposed protocol is as follows:-

Each group starts with one point for each member of the Group immediately prior to the election. Then, 37 points (being equivalent to the number of Councillors) are deducted from the Group who nominated the present Mayor. Finally each group has added to its total the number of members it has after the election (or the same number again if the starting point was a non-election year). The group with the most points then nominates the Mayor for the next Municipal Year. The process is repeated in subsequent years, but the starting point is then the number of points carried over from the previous year.

It is proposed that this system is used only in the situation of no overall control or where the majority party has 21 or more seats. If the Council returns to a situation of overall control with a slim majority, the protocol will not operate. If the position changes again either to no overall control or the majority group holding 21 seats or more, then the system will resume from the starting point of one point for each member of the group immediately prior to the election.

This system, if agreed by the Council, can be treated only as guidance to Members in the selection of the Mayor. The Members present and voting at the Annual Meeting retain the discretion to appoint whoever they wish as Mayor.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee decide whether or not to recommend to the Council the above protocol as guidance to Members on the selection of the Mayor.

6. Honorary Aldermen and Honorary Freemen

To consider report DS/68 of the Head of Democratic Services ([Enclosure E](#)).

7. Supplemental Agenda

Any urgent item(s) complying with Section 100(B) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Please contact Democratic Services on 01293 438282 if you would like a translation of any part of this agenda or copies in Braille, large print, audio tape or computer disk. If you require information on how to get to the meeting by public transport please ring West Sussex Traveline number on 0870 6082608

