

Crawley Borough Council

Governance Committee

Agenda for the **Governance Committee** which will be held in
**Committee Rooms B & C - New Town Hall, on Monday, 13 March
2023 at 7.00 pm**

Nightline Telephone No. 07881 500 227



Chief Executive

Membership:

Councillors

P K Lamb (Chair), J Bounds (Vice-Chair), R D Burrett, K L Jaggard,
G S Jhans, M G Jones, Y Khan, T Lunnon, K McCarthy, J Millar-Smith
and S Pritchard

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democratic.services@crawley.gov.uk
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Switchboard: 01293 438000
Main fax: 01293 511803
Minicom: 01293 405202 DX:
57139 Crawley 1
www.crawley.gov.uk

Town Hall
The Boulevard
Crawley
West Sussex
RH10 1UZ

The order of business may change at the Chair's discretion

Part A Business (Open to the Public)

| | Pages |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Apologies for Absence | |
| 2. Disclosures of Interest | |
| In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, councillors are reminded that it is a requirement to declare interests where appropriate. | |
| 3. Minutes | 5 - 12 |
| To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Governance Committee held on 24 January 2023. | |
| 4. Public Question Time | |
| To answer any questions asked by the public which relate to an item on this agenda and which are in line with the Council's Constitution. | |
| Public Question Time will be concluded by the Chair when all questions have been answered or on the expiry of a period of 15 minutes, whichever is the earlier. | |
| 5. Review of the Constitution | 13 - 22 |
| To consider report LDS/197 of the Head of Governance, People & Performance. | |
| 6. Review of Provisions Relating to Call-In and Urgency | 23 - 24 |
| There have been three cases, during the period since the last report, where items have been protected from the Call-In Procedure on the grounds of urgency as provided for in Call-In Procedure Rule 8. | |
| In line with the Urgency provisions set out in paragraph 16 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules within the Constitution, the decisions set out in report LDS/196 of the Head of Governance, People & Performance were Protected from Call-In (under Call-In Procedure Rule 8 of the Constitution) by the Chief Executive (as Head of Paid Service) due to their urgent nature. | |

Due to the circumstances surrounding the Protections from Call-In it is not deemed necessary to change the provisions at this stage.

Recommendation

That no change to the provisions relating to Call-In and Urgency be made.

7. Supplemental Agenda

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

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Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Governance Committee

Tuesday, 24 January 2023 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

P K Lamb (Chair)

J Bounds (Vice-Chair)

R D Burrett, K L Jaggard, G S Jhans, M G Jones, Y Khan, T Lunnon, K McCarthy, J Millar-Smith and S Pritchard

Officers Present:

Mez Matthews Democratic Services Officer

Andrew Oakley Electoral Services Manager

Chris Pedlow Democracy & Data Manager

1. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interests were made.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Governance Committee held on 10 October 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Public Question Time

No questions were asked by the public.

4. Polling Arrangements: May 2023

The Committee considered report [LDS/195](#) of the Head of Governance, People & Performance which requested that some temporary changes to the Scheme of Polling Places relating to the May 2023 Borough Council elections be made in advance of the introduction of voter ID.

The current Scheme was adopted in January 2019 following ward boundary changes arising from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England electoral review of the Borough. The Polling Scheme worked well at the three sets of elections held in 2019.

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Governance Committee (17)
24 January 2023

Several temporary changes had been made to the Polling Scheme for the elections held in 2021 and 2022 and, at its meeting held on [10 October 2022](#), the Committee considered the use of schools as polling places for May 2023. Further temporary changes to the Polling Scheme were now recommended for polling districts LLB (Broadfield Ward), LMC (Three Bridges Ward) and LMD (Three Bridges Ward) due to the unavailability of venues and the requirements for the checking of voter ID.

Polling District LBB – Broadfield Ward (Broadfield Community Centre)

Committee members discussed the proposal to change the polling place for polling district LBB (Broadfield Ward) for the May 2023 election to Broadfield Community Centre as the building at the current polling place (the former adventure playground at Creasys Drive (“Creasys Drive”)) would be unavailable in May and for future elections. The Electoral Services Manager advised that future polling provision for this part of Broadfield would be considered at the statutory polling district review.

Following queries from the Committee regarding the reasons for the unavailability of Creasys Drive, the Electoral Services Manager advised that the site had been earmarked for use as a potential Patch Team Depot by the Council. In addition, information had received that day which called into question the structural integrity of the building, although detailed information as to the nature of that structural damage had not yet been provided in detail.

The Committee acknowledged that the health and safety of voters and polling staff was paramount and, should it be deemed unsafe, due to any damage to the building or use/storage of large machinery within the vicinity, the building should not be used for polling. However, both the extent of damage to the building and potential disruption to the operation of any future use as a Depot was unknown at the current stage, and therefore the Committee felt it was important to obtain a greater understanding of those issues before a decision could be made on the matter.

Several Committee members held the view that Broadfield Community Centre had become very crowded when it had been used as the polling place for the whole of Broadfield Ward during the poll for the General Election. Those Councillors therefore suggested that Creasys Drive should be retained to reduce both queuing and overcrowding at the Community Centre. Additionally, it was asserted that frequently moving the location of a polling place within a Ward was confusing for electors and it was stressed that consistency of polling place locations should be retained.

It was however noted that voter turnout had improved when all polling for Broadfield Ward had taken place at Broadfield Community Centre and some members of the Committee highlighted that the Community Centre was more conveniently located than Creasys Drive for the voters who lived on the eastern, Tollgate Hill, side of Broadfield.

The Committee was reminded that the proposed change to polling place for polling district LBB would only be in place for the May 2023 elections, and that future polling provision for the district would be considered at the statutory polling district review.

Following a detailed discussion, the Committee agreed in principle that, should Creasys Drive be deemed unsafe to use as a polling location, it would accept that Broadfield Community Centre be used as a polling place instead for polling district LBB. The Committee emphasised however that it required more detail as to the health and safety concerns, the structural integrity of the building and the anticipated disruption to any potential future operations at the site before a definitive decision could be taken by the Full Council on the matter.

Polling District LMC – Three Bridges Ward (The Hawth Theatre)

The Committee was reminded that, due to the usual meeting room at the Holiday Inn Xpress being unavailable, polling had been held at The Hawth Theatre for the May 2022 election. The Committee was advised that the meeting room at Holiday Inn Xpress would not easily accommodate the new requirement to have facilities to check voter ID in private, where requested by the voter. It was therefore recommended that the polling place for the district be changed to The Hawth Theatre as that offered more suitable facilities.

The Committee expressed support for the continued use of The Hawth Theatre as a polling place, with several members of the Committee stating that its use as a polling place had worked well. It was also highlighted by Committee members that positive feedback on use of The Hawth Theatre had been received from constituents, particularly given that it was not necessary to cross a busy main road to gain access to the site, as had been the case with the Holiday Inn Xpress. Additionally, it was acknowledged that previous use of The Hawth Theatre had not negatively affected voter turnout, as the minor reduction in turnout between the 2021 and 2022 for the elections in polling district LMC had been reflected across polling districts within the Borough.

Polling District LMD – Three Bridges Ward (The New Town Hall)

The current polling place was the Town Hall, however that building was due to be decommissioned by May 2023 and it was therefore recommended that the designated polling place be amended to the new Town Hall as the reception area would offer excellent facilities for polling.

RESOLVED

That the Full Council be recommended that, for the 2023 elections, the Polling Scheme be amended to allocate polling places as follows:

1. LBB - Broadfield Community Centre (subject to a report being submitted to the next meeting of the Full Council which provided satisfactory evidence demonstrating that it would not be possible to use the former Adventure Playground site at Creasys Drive as a polling place due to health and safety concerns, structural damage to the building and/or anticipated significant disruption to any potential future operations at the site).
2. LMC – The Hawth Theatre.
3. LMD – The new Town Hall.

5. Update on the Implementation of the Elections Act 2022

The Electoral Services Manager gave an update on the Implementations of the Elections Act 2022. The presentation is attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

In giving the presentation, the Electoral Services Manager highlighted that:

- The changes mainly related to voter ID and disability provisions.
- It was estimated that 2%-5% of the population did not have ID which would be accepted at a polling station. It was therefore expected that approximately 1,500-2,000 voter ID cards would potentially need to be issued, and consequentially the Elections Team wanted to issue those as early as possible as the deadline for applying for voter ID was 25 April 2023.

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Governance Committee (19)
24 January 2023

- It would only be possible to issue an emergency proxy in circumstances which had been stipulated by the Electoral Commission once the deadline for voter ID had passed if the voter did not have alternative suitable ID.
- A significant amount of training on voter ID would need to be undertaken by polling station staff.
- Extra staffing would be provided at polling stations to assist with the additional work generated by the new requirements for checking ID.
- Further provisions relating to elections were expected over the next few years and, when necessary, updates on those provisions would be brought before the Governance Committee.

The Committee discussed the information provided and, in response to queries or comments made by the Committee, the Electoral Services Manager:

- Confirmed that publicity would be undertaken across the town to promote the need for voter ID, means of such publication would include community noticeboards and digital boards in the Town Centre.
- Advised that although the types of ID used for polling would not be recorded at the next election, records would be kept as to how many people were refused a ballot paper due to insufficient/unacceptable ID.
- Informed the Committee that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had provided funding to pay for an additional Poll Clerk for each Polling Station to assist with the additional work generated by checking ID. That funding had been guaranteed for the next two years, but no pledge had been given by DLUHC that funding would continue beyond that period. Several members of the Committee felt uneasy that ongoing funding was not guaranteed.
- Advised that currently, when an elector came to vote in person and the Register of Electors suggested they had already received a vote, that elector would be offered a tendered ballot paper. The Electoral Services Manager advised that the number of tendered ballot papers issued was recorded and those statistics were passed to the Electoral Commission for analysis on a national basis. The Electoral Services Manager assured the Committee that the number of tendered ballot papers issued at elections run by Crawley Borough Council was low, and they would be disappointed if more than two/three tendered ballots were issued at any election.
- Confirmed that no petition had ever been submitted to challenge a Crawley Borough Council election result.
- Clarified that Presiding Officers would have the final say as to whether an elector's ID was acceptable.
- Informed the Committee that privacy screens would be provided whereby a female Presiding Officer could check the identity of an elector wearing a face covering. In a situation whereby such a check was required, but a female Presiding Officer was not stationed at such a polling station, it was likely that a female member of staff (deputising on behalf of the Returning Officer) would travel to the polling station to check the ID. Following a concern that the proposal could cause a delay to those electors, the Electoral Services Manager assured the Committee that various options were being worked through at present.

Several Committee members believed there was insufficient evidence which demonstrated that election fraud was a current issue and questioned the need for voter ID. However, other Committee members countered that electoral fraud could be unknowingly taking place and additionally, voter ID could reduce the number of tendered ballot papers being issued.

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24 January 2023

Concern was expressed that the requirement for voter ID could result in electors being refused a vote should they not have appropriate documentation. It was therefore suggested, and agreed by the Democracy & Data Manager, that a report be brought before the Governance Committee in Autumn 2023 which detailed the number of electors who had been refused a ballot paper at the May 2023 election due to insufficient/unacceptable ID.

6. Electoral Services Manager

Following the Chair's announcement that this was likely to be the last Governance Committee attended by the Electoral Services Manager before they retired, both the Chair and the Committee expressed an appreciation for the Electoral Services Manager's work and dedication over the past 18 years. The Electoral Services Manager had maintained their good humour, patience, and calm nature throughout their time at the Council, especially given the challenging circumstances in recent years. The Committee wished them a long and well deserved retirement. The Electoral Services Manager responded by thanking the Committee for its kind words and shared that they had found it a pleasure working for the Council.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Governance Committee concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.05 pm

P K Lamb (Chair)

Appendix A

Implementation of the Elections Act 2022



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1

Elections Act 2022

In force for May 2023

- Voter Authority Certificate
- Voter ID
- Disability Provisions



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2

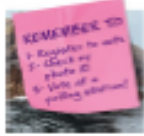
Voter Identification

- From 4 May, applies to:
 - UK Parliamentary by-elections
 - UK Parliamentary recall petitions
 - Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales
 - Local government elect and referendums in England
- From 5 October, also applies to:
 - UK Parliamentary general elections

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Voter Identification


- Raising awareness
 - National publicity "Note to Self"
 - Poll card information
 - Spring Crawley Live
 - Community/Disability groups
 - Social media
 - Council website



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Voter Identification


- Voter Authority Certificate
 - Applications via national website.
 - Paper/ in person applications
 - deadline 5pm 25 April
 - emergency proxy



5

Voter Identification

- Staff training



- Increased staffing in polling stations
- Polling station equipment

6

Accessibility

- A general responsibility to take all reasonable steps to support voters with disabilities
- The provisions for voters to be assisted by a companion will be extended to allow anyone over the age of 18 to assist
- Electoral Commission guidance due imminently.
- Staff Training
- Awareness raising of provisions

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Remaining Provisions

4 May 2023.

- Change of voting system - The voting system used for PCC, election has changed from Supplementary Vote to First Past the Post for polls taking place on or after Overseas Electors .

August 2023

- scrap the 'fifteen-year rule' to allow all British citizens living overseas to vote in UK Parliamentary elections, regardless of when they left the UK
- enable electors to apply online for an absent vote, with both online and paper applications requiring the applicant's identity to be verified
- require postal voters to reapply every three years, replacing current rules of refreshing their signature every five years (reserved polls)
- further limit the number of people someone may act as proxy

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Remaining Provisions

November 2023

- clarification of undue influence
- new electoral sanction for intimidation
- digital imprints new regime

December 2023

- EU citizen's voting and candidacy rights (EUVCR) – final removal of ineligible EU nationals on publication of revised register

January 2024

- require postal voters to reapply every three years, replacing current rules of refreshing their signature every five years (reserved polls)

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Remaining Provisions

May 2024

- restrict the handing of postal votes, including limiting the number of postal votes an individual can hand in
- absent vote secrecy- the secrecy of the ballot requirements in polling stations extended to absent voting
- changes to candidates addresses come into force
- changes to commonly used names come into force

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Crawley Borough Council

Report to Governance Committee

13 March 2023

Review of the Constitution

Report of the Head of Governance, People & Performance – LDS/197

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report requests that the following matters be reviewed / considered by the Committee and decide whether any changes should be made to the Council's Constitution:
- Co-opting an independent member(s) onto the Audit Committee.
 - The allocation of Chair and Vice Chairs of Committees.
 - Future provision for webcasting formal meetings of the Council.
 - Protocol on the Appointment of Honorary Aldermen and Honorary Freemen.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Consider the recommendations set out in paragraphs 5.9, 6.5, 7.6 and 8.8 of this report and decide whether it wishes to recommend to the Full Council that changes be made to the Council's Constitution.
- 2.2. That, should the Committee recommend that changes to the Constitution be made, the Full Council be requested to instruct the Head of Governance, People & Performance to amend the Council's Constitution to reflect those changes to be in place from the municipal year 2023/24.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1. Paragraph 8.3 of the Introduction to Crawley Borough Council's Constitution section of the Council's Constitution states that the Governance Committee will monitor and review the operation of the Constitution. In recent times several areas for potential review have become apparent and therefore these issues are being brought before the Committee for its consideration before any changes are put before the Full Council for approval and adoption into the Constitution.

4. Background

- 4.1. A comprehensive review of the Constitution was undertaken in recent years with a revised Constitution being adopted by the Full Council on [26 February 2020](#) which came into effect on 1 April 2020. The new Constitution has received positive feedback.

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- 4.2. Several matters relating to the Constitution have been raised as possible areas for review and the Governance Committee is therefore requested to consider these potential amendments. Namely these matters relate to:
- Considering whether an independent member/members should be co-opted onto the Audit Committee.
 - Reviewing the current process relating to the allocation of Chair and Vice Chairs of Committees.
 - Future provision for webcasting formal meetings of the Council.
 - Reviewing the Protocol on the Appointment of Honorary Aldermen and Honorary Freemen.
- 4.3. For ease, this report is divided into sections which consider each of the areas above. Any recommendations for consideration by the Committee are included within each related section of this report.
- 4.4. It is recommended that, should the Committee be minded to recommend that the Full Council make any amendments to the Constitution, that those changes be in place from the 2023/24 municipal year.

5. Appointment of Independent Member(s) to the Audit Committee

- 5.1. In 2022, The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) published its position statement '[Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022](#)', which sets out guidance for local authorities regarding the purpose and functions of Audit Committees. It is expected that all local government bodies 'make their best efforts to adopt the principles' outlined in the position statement.
- 5.2. The Council's Section 151 Officer and Chair of the Audit Committee have identified one of these principles in particular for consideration – that 'CIPFA recommends that each authority audit committee should include at least two co-opted independent members to provide appropriate technical expertise'. There is no legislative requirement for the Council to appoint an independent member (IM) to its Audit Committee, and it does not currently do so.
- 5.3. The purpose of co-opting one or more IMs to the Committee would be to supplement the knowledge of existing Audit Committee members by offering expert advice in an apolitical manner. The IM(s) would be experienced in the field and confident in providing specialist guidance at Committee meetings.
- 5.4. Following receipt of the position statement, officers have sought information from other local authorities regarding their protocol on the matter. Of those reviewed, it was found that the vast majority of local authorities do appoint an IM to their Audit Committee (or were in the process of doing so). Of these, most appointed one; a small proportion appointed two or three. All reported their IM(s) as being non-voting, and all reported not taking the presence of the IM into account when calculating the quorum of the Committee at a meeting.
- 5.5. CIPFA suggests that "at least two" IMs be appointed to the Committee; a decision must therefore be made as to the number of appointees to be sought. In doing so it is prudent to consider that it may be difficult to secure numerous experienced IMs. The term of office of any IM must also be agreed. A comparison could be drawn to the Independent Persons appointed to the Full Council, who serve a term of two years.

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- 5.6. As per the Local Government & Housing Act 1989, co-optees on committees have no voting rights. It is therefore advisable that if co-opted, an IM should not serve as Chair of the Committee, as they would not be permitted to use the Chair's casting vote.
- 5.7. It is proposed that any IM(s) not acting as Chair of the Committee receive an annual allowance of £750 (equivalent to that received by an Independent Person of the Full Council). An IM acting as Chair of the Committee would receive the Chair's allowance as per the Councillors' Allowances Scheme (£2,781 for 2023/24). A co-optee could not receive both allowances.
- 5.8. The views of Audit Committee members were informally sought. Comments received included:
- Support for the appointment of an IM.
 - A preference for the IM not to be Committee Chair.
 - A suggestion to initially appoint one IM, with a view to appointing another in the future.
 - Agreement that a two-year term would be suitable.

5.9. **Recommendations:**

That the Committee consider whether to make recommendations to the Full Council on the following:

- a) ***Whether any independent member(s) be co-opted as a non-voting member to the Audit Committee as of the 2023/24 municipal year.***
- b) ***Whether any independent member(s) co-opted to the Audit Committee should be appointed as Chair of the Committee (and, if so, that they do not have voting rights).***

6. Allocation of Chairs and Vice Chair of Committees

- 6.1. At its meeting held on [24 February 2021](#) (minute 7 for that meeting refers) the Full Council (following consideration of the matter by the Governance Committee on [26 January 2021](#) - minute 5 and report [LDS/162](#) of that meeting refers) adopted a process whereby the allocation of Chairs and Vice Chairs would be set out in the Constitution.
- 6.2. At the request of the Chair of the Governance Committee, and as the current process has now been in place for over two years, the Committee is asked to review the current process and either reconfirm its support for the current process or propose to the Full Council that changes be made to way in which these positions are allocated.
- 6.3. The current allocation for Chairs and Vice-Chairs is set out in Paragraph 6.2 of the Introduction to Decision Making section of the Council's [Constitution](#) and states that those positions will be allocated as follows:

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| Largest Opposition Group (number of seats held) | OSC | Audit | Governance | Planning | Licensing |
|--|-----|-------|------------|----------|-----------|
| 3 | VC | VC | | | |
| 6 | C | VC | | | |
| 9 | C | VC | VC | VC | |
| 12 | C | C | VC | VC | VC |
| 15 | C | C | VC | C | VC |
| 18* | C | C | C | C | C |

* Non-Administration Party

6.4. It is important to note that any changes proposed by the Committee to the allocation of Chairs and Vice Chairs must take into account any decision it has taken regarding the possibility of co-opting an independent member(s) to the Audit Committee and whether any such co-optee should be appointed as Chair of that Committee.

6.5. **Recommendation:**

That the Committee review the current process for the allocation of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees and consider whether to recommend any changes to the process to the Full Council.

7. Webcasting Formal Meetings of the Council

- 7.1. As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, temporary legislation was passed (*The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels Coronavirus (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392*) which allowed formal Council meetings to be held virtually. At its meeting on [22 June 2021](#) (minute 6 of that meeting refers) the Governance Committee was informed that, despite lobbying by Local Authorities, the legislation had not been extended and therefore the provisions for holding virtual/hybrid meetings had ceased and formal meetings of the Council must once again be held in-person.
- 7.2. Whilst considering the matter of the potential format for future formal Council meetings at that Committee meeting, several Committee members expressed their support for virtual and/or webcasting meetings, should that option become viable in the future. Webcasting formal meetings also forms part of the Council's strategy to reconnect with residents following the pandemic. In addition, Democratic Services have noticed an increasing number of queries from members of the public and interested parties as to whether it is possible to view Council meetings live and/or online rather than attending in person.
- 7.3. Although legislation is not yet in place to hold formal meetings either virtually or in hybrid format, it is intended that the Committee rooms at the new Town Hall will have the necessary facilities in place to webcast meetings. Whilst those facilities are not currently available, it is anticipated that they will be installed later this year. It is not yet possible to provide details regarding the process, practicalities or costings with regard to webcasting at this time as this is still under development.

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- 7.4. The Committee is asked to consider whether to support the webcasting of formal meetings of the Council and, in line with the Council's Retention Policy, the [Virtual Committee Procedure Rules](#) and good practice, it is suggested that webcast recordings be retained for six months after the meeting.
- 7.5. It is hoped that, should the Committee be minded to support webcasting formal meetings, it will be financially and practically possible to webcast all formal meetings of the Council (with the exception of the Employment Panel and Grants Appeal Panel). However, should it not be financially viable or practicable to do so, it is suggested that priority for webcasting meetings be as follows:
1. Full Council
 2. Cabinet
 3. Planning
 4. Licensing
 5. OSC
 6. Audit
 7. Governance
 8. Licensing Sub-Committee

7.6. **Recommendations:**

That the Full Council be recommended that:

- a) ***Once the necessary functionality is available, all formal meetings of the Council (with the exception of the Employment Panel and Grants Appeal Panel), subject to cost and practicality, be webcast as soon as possible.***
- b) ***Recordings of webcast meetings be retained for six months after the meeting takes place.***
- c) ***The Head of Governance, People & Performance be delegated authority to make any necessary consequential amendments to the Council's Constitution.***

8. Protocol on the Appointment of Honorary Aldermen and Honorary Freeman

- 8.1. A review of the Protocol has been undertaken to ensure that it is clear, accords with current legislation and reflects the current process.
- 8.2. It is a requirement that, for a former Councillor to be nominated as an Honorary Alderman, they must have served a "significant amount of time" in that role. To define this phrase, it is proposed that this term be replaced to state that a former Councillor must have served a minimum total length of service of twenty years before they can be nominated. Bearing in mind that some Councillors have a break in service, "total length" will be their combined length of service minus any periods when they were not a serving Councillor.
- 8.3. There has been a misconception that a person cannot be nominated for an Honorary Alderman title until at least one year has lapsed since their role as Councillor has ceased, and the Council has always adopted this practice. As this practice is not set out in law it is proposed that an individual may be nominated for this title at any point following the conclusion of their term of office as a Borough Councillor.

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- 8.4. The current Protocol states that any nomination will be considered by the Governance Committee with a recommendation to the Full Council. To formalise the process further, and to enable officers to more efficiently arrange an extraordinary meeting of the Full Council to consider any nominations, a revised process is proposed. It is suggested that following any Borough election, the Head of Governance, People & Performance consult with each Group Leader to decide whether to put forward any eligible former Councillors for considered of Honorary Alderman honours at the first Governance Committee post-Borough election. There is no proposal to significantly change the process for nominating Honorary Freeman/women.
- 8.5. In addition, Section 249 of the *Local Government Act 1972* was updated in 2010 (by the *Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009*) to amend Aldermen to include Alderwomen, it is therefore proposed that the Protocol be amended to reflect those changes.
- 8.6. Section 249 of the *Local Government Act 1972* also requires that a resolution to confer the title of Honorary Alderman/woman must be passed by no less than two thirds of the Councillors voting on the matter. For completeness it is proposed that this requirement be reflected in the Protocol and, although not a necessity by law, it is suggested that this process also be adopted for votes on whether to bestow the title of Honorary Freeman/women.
- 8.7. The proposed revised Protocol is attached as Appendix A to this report and the current Protocol is set out as Appendix B.
- 8.8. **Recommendation:**

That the Full Council be recommended that the revised Protocol on Appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Women or Honorary Freeman/Women which is set out as Appendix A to this report be adopted.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1. If the appointment of any independent member(s) to the Audit Committee (in a non-Chair role) is agreed, an allowance of £750 per annum per member would need to be accounted for.
- 9.2. It is anticipated that each Honorary Alderman/woman / Honorary Freeman/woman title will cost approximately £1200-to bestow although, if several honours are bestowed at one Extraordinary Full Council meeting, the individual cost will be less than this. This cost will be funded through the Council's Ceremonial Budget.
- 9.3. It is not yet possible to provide detailed costings with regard to webcasting meetings at this time.

10. Background Papers

- [Constitution of Crawley Borough Council](#)
- Report [LDS/162](#) "Allocation of Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs" considered by Governance Committee on 26 January 2021
- Governance Committee [minutes of 26 January 2021](#) relating to Allocation of Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs

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- Full Council [minutes of 24 February 2021](#) relating to Allocation of Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs
- Governance Committee [minutes of 22 June 2021](#) relating to Update on Format of Council Meetings (Webcasting)
- [CIPFA's Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022](#) (*otherwise referred to in this report as the "Position Statement"*)
- [Section 248 of the Local Government Act 1972](#) relating to "Freemen and Inhabitants of Existing Boroughs"
- [Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972](#) relating to "Honorary Titles"

Report author and contact officer:

Chris Pedlow (Democracy & Data Manager)
chris.pedlow@crawley.gov.uk

PROPOSED Protocol on Appointment of Honorary Aldermen or Honorary Freemen

**PROTOCOL ON APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN/WOMEN
OR HONORARY FREEMEN/WOMEN**

1. CRITERIA FOR NOMINATIONS OF HONORARY ALDERMEN/WOMEN

- 1.1. Nominees for Honorary Aldermen/women should be former Councillors who have served a minimum total length of 20 years in that capacity. Their length of service is normally substantially greater than the average length of service per Councillor. Nominees should also have given service to the wider community in a role outside of their duties as a Borough Councillor. This might include notable work with the voluntary sector, with educational bodies, with other Local Authorities covering the geographical areas of the Borough, or any other body that the Council deems appropriate.

2. CRITERIA FOR NOMINATIONS OF HONORARY FREEMEN/WOMEN

- 2.1. Nominees for Honorary Freemen/women should be either individuals that have given extraordinary service to the town over a prolonged period, or who, by their action, have brought significant distinction to the town.
- 2.2. These honours will be given infrequently as they are a reward for exceptional service.

3. PROCEDURE FOR NOMINATING HONORARY ALDERMEN/WOMEN

- 3.1. Following any Borough election, the Head of Governance, People & Performance will consult with each Group Leader to decide whether to put forward any eligible former Councillors for considered of Honorary Alderman honours. If any names are proposed for nomination. the first Governance Committee post-Borough election will consider a report which details the names and total length of service of those former Councillor.
- 3.2. This Governance Committee would be expected to recommend that the Mayor convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council to bestow the title of Honorary Alderman/woman on those former Councillors (this Extraordinary Meeting will usually be convened to take place immediately before, or at the conclusion of, the July meeting of the Full Council).
- 3.3. Before an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council is convened, the Head of Governance, People & Performance will contact any nominees to ensure they would like to receive the honour.

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4. PROCEDURE FOR NOMINATING HONORARY FREEMEN/WOMEN

- 4.1. Before a nomination is made, the Head of Governance, People & Performance should be contacted, who will then consult the Mayor (as a matter of courtesy) and the Leader of each political group.
- 4.2. If the Head of Governance, People & Performance is satisfied that the person nominated is likely to receive the support of the Full Council, they will request that the Mayor convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council for that purpose.
- 4.3. Before any formal arrangements are made, the Head of Governance, People & Performance will contact the nominated person to ensure they would like to receive the honour.

5. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN/WOMEN OR HONORARY FREEMEN/WOMEN

- 5.1. Nominations for both Honorary Aldermen/women and Honorary Freemen/women will be considered at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council which has been convened for the sole purpose of considering the nominations.
- 5.2. Any resolution by the Full Council to bestow these honours must be passed by no less than two thirds of the Councillors voting on the matter.

CURRENT Protocol on Appointment of Honorary Aldermen or Honorary Freemen (extracted from the Council's Constitution)

PROTOCOL ON APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN OR HONORARY FREEMEN

1. CRITERIA FOR NOMINATIONS

- 1.1. **Nominees for Honorary Aldermen** should be former Councillors who have served in that capacity for a significant time. Their length of service is normally substantially greater than the average length of service per Councillor. Nominees should also have given service to the wider community in a role outside of their duties as a Borough Councillor. This might include notable work with the voluntary sector, with educational bodies, with other Local Authorities covering the geographical areas of the Borough, or any other body that the Council deems appropriate.
- 1.2. **Nominees for Honorary Freemen** should be either individuals that have given extraordinary service to the town over a prolonged period, or who, by their action, have brought significant distinction to the town.
- 1.3. These honours will be given infrequently as they are a reward for exceptional service. Many people provide good service both to the town and to the Council, but it should not be expected that retiring Councillors of many years' service will automatically receive such an honour.

2. PROCEDURE FOR NOMINATIONS

- 2.1. Before a nomination is made, the Head of Governance, People & Performance should be contacted, who will then consult the Mayor (as a matter of courtesy) and the Leader of each political group.
- 2.2. If the Head of Governance, People & Performance is satisfied that the person nominated is likely to receive the support of Full Council, they will report the matter to the Governance Committee. This Committee would be expected to recommend that the Mayor convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council for that purpose.
- 2.3. Then before any formal arrangements are made, the Head of Governance, People & Performance will contact the nominated person to ensure they would like to receive the honour.

Agenda Item 6

Review of Provisions Relating to Call-In and Urgency (LDS/196)

Details of Items Protected from Call-In

| | | |
|-----------|--|---|
| 1. | Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) - Revised | |
| | Decision Date | 27.07.22 |
| | Decision Maker | Leader |
| | Decision Taken | Approve the Council's revised Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund Discretionary Relief Guidelines and give delegated authority to designated senior officers to make relief awards within those guidelines |
| | Rationale for Protection | So the Council could start supporting its businesses as soon as possible |
| | Decision Published (Councillors' Information Bulletin Number) | IB/1141 |
| 2. | Council Tax Government Discretionary 'Energy Rebate' Scheme - Revised | |
| | Decision Date | 14.09.22 |
| | Decision Maker | Leader |
| | Decision Taken | Approve the Council's Revised Energy Rebate Discretionary Guidelines and give delegated authority to designated senior officers to make relief awards within those guidelines |
| | Rationale for Protection | So that an online application process could become live to enable the Council to start supporting eligible residents as soon as possible. The Scheme needed to be rolled out as soon as possible to enable people to apply to assist them with increased costs of utility bills |
| | Decision Published (Councillors' Information Bulletin Number) | IB/1148 |

Agenda Item 6

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| 3. | Warm Hubs | |
| | Decision Date | 23.11.22 |
| | Decision Maker | Cabinet |
| | Decision Taken | <p>a) Approved the proposal for the Council's warm hub provision as detailed within report CH/198.</p> <p>b) Delegated authority to the Head of Crawley Homes and Head of Community Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council to approve changes to the supply of Council warm hub provision. (Generic Delegation 7 would be used to enact this recommendation)</p> <p>c) Delegated authority to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Head of Crawley Homes and Head of Community Services to approve funding to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to deliver warm space provision and associated cost of living requirements from existing cost of living budgets and reserves. (Generic Delegation 7 would be used to enact this recommendation)</p> <p>d) Delegates authority to the Head of Crawley Homes, Head of Community Services in consultation with the Head of Governance, People & Performance, to negotiate, approve and complete all relevant documentation including legal requirements. (Generic Delegations 2 & 3 would be used to enact this recommendation)</p> |
| | Rationale for Protection | So that Warm Hubs could be set up urgently due to the current cost of living crisis there was a need to implement prior to any severe weather/winter period |
| | Decision Published (Councillors' Information Bulletin Number) | Cabinet 23.11.22 |