

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE - 8 APRIL
2024

Present

Cllr Andy MacLeod (Chair)
Cllr John Robini (Vice Chair)
Cllr Michael Goodridge
Cllr Gemma Long

Cllr Peter Nicholson
Cllr John Ward
Cllr Joan Heagin (Godalming
Town Council Co-Optee)

Apologies

Cllr Joan Holroyd (Elstead Parish Council Co-Optee)

SGP13/23 MINUTES (Agenda item 2.)

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting on 8 January 2024 were a complete and accurate record.

SGP14/23 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS (Agenda item 3.)

There were no interests declared.

SGP15/23 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda item 4.)

There were no questions from members of the public.

SGP16/23 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL (Agenda item 5.)

There were no questions from Members.

SGP17/23 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES (Agenda item 6.)

The Committee received a report which recommended a new proposed set of Council Procedure Rules to be adopted into the Waverley Borough Council and Guildford Borough Council Constitutions.

The Committee discussed the proposed Council Procedure Rules at Appendix 1 and proposed the following amendments:

- a) Procedure Rule 2.3 – The Committee voiced apprehension about the Monitoring Officer presiding over the election of the new mayor for the reason that meetings of the Council should always be chaired by a Councillor. The Committee suggested adding wording from Rule 8 to ensure a non-Executive Councillor will preside at the election of the Mayor. The Democratic Services Manager noted the proposed amendment.

- b) Procedure Rule 2.4.1 – The Committee suggested that ‘Wishes of the Political Parties’ is amended to ‘group leaders’ to ensure that such decisions are taken by the leader of the political group, on behalf of the group. It was clarified by the DSM in response to Members that the wishes of political groups could only be expressed through the group leader in accordance with regulations, and no additional wording was necessary. The Committee were satisfied with the response.
- c) Procedure Rule 4.2 – The Committee noted that the list of business does not include business deferred from previous meetings and proposed that wording should be added to clause (vi) to refer back to 3.2(x) i.e. to dispose of any remaining business from the previous Council meeting.
- d) Clause 15.6 – Cllr John Ward commented on the clause and suggested that the Mayor should be allowed to use his discretion to allow a Member to speak again if it would be useful. A clause to allow the discretion of the Mayor should be incorporated. The DSM explained that the Monitoring Officer has advised that there are plenty of opportunities for Members to speak adequately and the point behind this clause is to encourage Members to speak once. The Committee were satisfied with the response.
Clause 15.13 – Cllr Michael Goodridge referred to the clause and noted that the papers considered at the JCRG included a clause 15.12 & 15.13 (Closure Motions). The clauses have not been included in the papers sent to this Committee. The DSM noted this point and agreed to consult with the Monitoring Officer about the inclusion of Closure Motions in the Council Procedure Rules.
- e) Procedure Rule 25.4 – Some Members raised concerns about the proposal for the Leader to be able to attend and speak at any Committee meeting. Cllr Michael Goodridge noted concerns about this prospect at Overview and Scrutiny meetings, as it opens up the possibility of extensive debate or pressure on the Chair. The Committee understood that the Leader should be able to attend and speak for clarification and informative purposes, but requested that the word ‘once’ be added to clause to limit speaking time.

Proposed amendments to the Council Procedure Rules;

- a) rule 2.3 – adding words from rule 8 to ensure a non-executive Councillor will preside at the election of the Mayor (and may use a casting vote)
- b) rule 4.2 – adding words to vi to dispose of any remaining business from the last Council meeting
- c) rule 25.4 – adding the word ‘once’ to the clause.

The Committee RESOLVED that; Subject to review of the proposed amendments by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chair, the new Council procedure rules be recommended to Council for adoption into the Constitution.

SGP18/23 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (Agenda item 7.)

There were no items of business to consider in exempt session.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and concluded at 7.10 pm

Chairman