

Agenda

General Purposes and Arbitration Committee

Thursday, 31 March 2022 at 4.00 pm
in Committee Room 1, Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

This agenda gives notice of items to be considered in private as required by Regulations 5 (4) and (5) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

3 Minutes 5 - 10

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2021 as a correct record.

4 Additional Items of Business

To consider any additional items of business.

5 Nominations for the Offices of Civic Mayor and Deputy Civic Mayor of Sandwell for the 2022/23 Municipal Year 11 - 14

To recommend to Council the nominations for the offices of the Civic Mayor and Deputy Civic Mayor of Sandwell for the Municipal year 2022/23.



6 **Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen**

15 - 22

To consider recommending that Council confer the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen on Mrs Linda Horton.

Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL
Interim Chief Executive
Sandwell Council House
Freeth Street
Oldbury
West Midlands

Distribution

Councillor Dhallu (Chair)
Councillors Kaur, Allcock, Allen, Gavan, Kalari and Owen

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk

Information about meetings in Sandwell



If you are attending the meeting and require assistance to access the venue, please contact Democratic Services (democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk).



If the fire alarm sounds, please follow the instructions of the officers present and leave the building by the nearest exit.



Only people invited to speak at a meeting may do so. Everyone at the meeting is expected to be respectful and listen to the discussion.



Agendas with reports with exempt information should be treated as private and confidential. It is your responsibility to ensure that any such reports are kept secure. After the meeting confidential papers should be disposed of in a secure way.



This meeting may be recorded and broadcast on the Internet. If this is the case, it will be confirmed at the meeting and further information will be provided.



You are allowed to use devices for the purposes of recording or reporting during the public session of the meeting. When using your devices they must not disrupt the meeting – please ensure they are set to silent.



Members who cannot attend the meeting should submit apologies by contacting Democratic Services (democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk)



All agenda, reports, minutes for Sandwell Council's meetings, councillor details and more are available from our [website](#)

Minutes of General Purposes and Arbitration Committee

**Thursday 16 December at 6.00pm
in the Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

Present: Councillor Dhallu (Chair)
Councillors Allcock and Owen

In attendance: Tracey Hurst – Electoral Services Manager
Rebecca Maher – Head of Finance
David King – Elections Assistant
John Smith – Interim Accountant
Matt Powis – Senior Democratic Services Officer
Connor Robinson – Democratic Services Officer.

18/21 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allen and Kaur.

19/21 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

20/21 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2021 be agreed as a correct record.



21/21 **Additional Item of Business**

There were no additional items of business to consider.

22/21 **Admission Agreements to participate in the Local Government Pension Scheme**

The Committee considered the admission agreements to participate in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

The agreements would give delegated authority to the Chief Executive and Director of Finance to allow catering staff from Old Park Primary and Whitecrest Primary School to continue to participate in the Local Government Pension Scheme following their transfer to a new employer.

The Committee also considered the future delegated authority to the Chief Executive and Director of Finance to the future pension liability and guarantee where it was both below and greater than £250,000 and the signing and execution of these agreements through the Director of Legal Services.



Resolved to recommend to Council that:

- (1) the Chief Executive/Director of Finance be given the delegated authority to sign the Admission Agreements relating to the transfer of catering staff from Old Park Primary School to Mellors Catering Services, and Whitecrest Primary School to Aspens Services Limited, and for the Director of Legal Services to make arrangements for the necessary documents to be signed or executed under deed of seal (as required);
- (2) where the future pension liability/guarantee is below £250,000 that the Chief Executive/Director of Finance be given the delegated authority to sign all future Pension Admission Agreements below this limit, and for the Director of Legal Services to make arrangements for the necessary documents to be signed or executed under deed of seal (as required) to give effect to relevant organisations becoming admitted bodies;
- (3) where the pension liability/guarantee is greater than £250,000 that a separate report is presented to seek approval for the Chief Executive/Director of Finance to be given the delegated authority to sign the Pension Admission Agreement and for the Director of Legal Services to make arrangements for the necessary documents to be signed or executed under deed of seal (as required) to give effect to relevant organisations becoming admitted bodies.

23/21

Review of Polling Places and Polling Stations 2021/22

The Committee considered the review of polling places and polling stations 2021/22.



Post elections 2021, the Elections Team undertook a review of polling places within the Borough. Although not statutory it was considered good practice to undertake a review after an election year as a means of identifying and resolving any issues.

The number of schools being utilised for elections was regarded as too high as the use of schools and the subsequent enforced closure was adding to the disruption faced by pupils in their education. In addition, the use of temporary cabins had also been reviewed owing to their cost and practicality of their set up.

When reviewing polling places, it had been necessary to review their appropriate efficacy. The perspective of the electorate had to be considered in any change, such as, the accessibility of the site, its suitability, parking arrangements and disabled access. If alternative sites could not be found in the vicinity, then the site would not be changed.

The review was concluded, which recommended the following changes:

- amendment to 24 polling places across 24 wards;
- the number of school polling stations used would be reduced from 47 to 27;
- the number of temporary cabins reduced from 16 to 12.

The Committee noted that all recommended changes had taken place with consideration to the current framework, access and suitability of a subsequent site.

It was understood that a number of schools utilised the election day as a teacher training day. Agreement had been sought from those schools that wished to continue being a polling station provider. Communications had been carried out in in November and October 2021 to inform them of the forthcoming May election to ensure schools prepare accordingly.

It was highlighted that polling station location changes would be communicated with residents online on the Council's website and via social media. Impacted residents would also receive a letter and the changes would also be highlighted on polling cards.



In response to questions from Members of the Committee to officers it was noted:

- where there were recommendations of a change ward members had been consulted and given the opportunity to engage with the elections team and put their views forward. Where no change had been recommended, no consultation occurred;
- in new large estates with little to no public buildings finding suitable polling places was difficult. In any event the Elections Team aimed to ensure the accessibility and suitability of every polling place.

Resolved to recommend to Council that:

- (1) the proposed changes to specific Polling Places and Polling Stations as set out in Appendix 1 be approved;
- (2) subject to (1) above, authorise the Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer to implement the approved changes detailed in Appendix 1;
- (3) subject to any required changes with a Polling Place or Polling Station within the Borough prior to elections in 2022 (and beyond), the Returning Officer (or in their absence/unavailability, the Deputy Returning Officer) be authorised to change any Polling Place(s) and/or Polling Station(s), following consultation with relevant Ward Members and Chairperson of the General Purposes and Arbitration Committee, as considered necessary to enable the efficient and effective running of elections.

Meeting ended at 6.23pm

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk



This page is intentionally left blank

Report to General Purposes and Arbitration Committee

Thursday 31 March 2022

Subject:	Nominations for the Offices of Mayor/Chair of Council and Deputy Mayor/Vice Chair of Council of Sandwell for the 2022/23 Municipal Year
Director:	Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer – Surjit Tour
Contact Officer:	Trisha Newton Senior Democratic Services Officer Trisha_newton@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations







- 1.1 That the Committee recommends to Council the nominations for the offices of the Civic Mayor and Deputy Civic Mayor of Sandwell for the Municipal year 2022/23

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee has delegated authority on behalf of Council to consider and make recommendations on the nomination of Elected Members to the offices of Mayor and Chair of Council and Deputy Mayor/Vice Chair of Council of Sandwell for the Municipal Year 2022/2023.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

		As the first citizen of Sandwell, the Civic Mayor and Deputy Civic Mayor are ambassadors of the Council, thus promoting and thereby contributing to all of the Council's ambitions.
		
		

4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 The Council, at its meeting on 8 January 2013, approved the process for the selection of Civic Mayor based on the following criteria:-

- nominees shall be serving members of Sandwell Council who have not previously served as Civic Mayor;
- nominees shall have given notable service to the Borough of Sandwell as a councillor and/or within the local community;
- each nomination shall be submitted by a serving member of the Council supported by five other serving members of the Council, regardless of political party.

4.2 All members of the Council have been invited to submit nominations for the office of Civic Mayor. All valid nominations will be reported at the meeting.

4.3 As Civic Mayor the individual will be Chair of the meetings of Full Council. In this capacity the Mayor will have the following responsibilities:

- to uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution, and to interpret the Constitution when necessary;
- to preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of councillors and the interests of the community;
- to ensure the efficient dispatch of business in accordance with Standing Orders;



- to ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place at which members who are not on the Executive are able to hold the Executive members to account;
- to ensure the thorough conduct of scrutiny, when undertaken by the Council in accordance with the procedure rules set out in Part 4 of the Constitution;
- to promote public involvement in the Council's activities;
- to be the conscience of the Council.

5 Alternative Options

5.1 The Council is legally required to appoint a Civic Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the 2022/2023 municipal year.

6 Implications

Resources:	The Council makes financial provision annually to enable the functions of the Mayorality to be undertaken. Staff support is provided by the Mayor's Office.
Legal and Governance:	The Council is legally required to appoint a Civic Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the 2022/2023 municipal year. The General Purposes and Arbitration Committee has the responsibility under its terms of reference to make recommendations to the Council on nominations for the Civic Mayor of the Council. The role and responsibilities of the Civic Mayor are contained within Article 5 of the Council's Constitution.
Risk:	There are no risk implications arising from this report
Equality:	An equality impact assessment is not required
Health and Wellbeing:	There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.
Social Value	There are no implications arising directly from this report.



This page is intentionally left blank

Report to General Purposes and Arbitration Committee

Thursday 31 March 2022

Subject:	Nominations for Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen
Director:	Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer – Surjit Tour
Contact Officer:	Trisha Newton Trisha_Newton@sandwell.gov.uk


1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Committee considers recommending that Council confer the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen on Mrs Linda Horton.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is invited to indicate whether or not it would wish to confirm the title on any person or persons. If the Committee wishes to nominate a suitable person it is recommended that an extraordinary meeting of Council is held on 12 April 2022, prior to the ordinary meeting of Council. The Council will consider this Committee's recommendations and, if appropriate, pass the necessary statutory resolutions required by Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Nominations for Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen are an endorsement of the aspirations, talent and achievements of local people.</p>
---	---



4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 In order to recognise eminent or notable service rendered to the Borough by former Councillors, in 1997, the Council introduced a scheme for the enrolment of Honorary Alderman of the Borough. This scheme was amended in 2008 to reduce the required number of years' service to twelve and in 2013 to reflect Section 29 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 to the effect that any reference to Honorary Alderman should be followed by the insertion of Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen.
- 4.2 The Local Government Act 1972 gave authority to the Council to confer the honour to elected members who had given eminent service to the Borough. Local Authorities define the operation of the scheme within their Council areas.
- 4.3 The Committee is requested to consider a nomination by Councillor Bawa Singh Dhallu, to award a honorary title to Mrs Linda Horton.
- 4.4 Former councillor Linda Horton served on Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council for 27 years, she had been a Cabinet Member for Leisure Services for a number of years and had also served as Mayor of Sandwell for the Municipal Year 2013-2014.
- 4.5 In accordance with the scheme of enrolment, Mrs Linda Horton has indicated her willingness to accept the nomination for enrolment as Honorary Alderwomen.
- 4.6 If the Committee is minded to support the nomination, the Committee's recommendation will be submitted for consideration at an Extraordinary Council meeting, to be held on 12 April 2022, immediately prior to the ordinary meeting of Full Council, scheduled to be held on the same day.

5 Implications

Resources:	Local Authorities are empowered to incur reasonable expenditure on the provision of an address or casket on the conferment of the title of Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman.
-------------------	--



	It is the practice of this Authority to present a Badge of Office and a commemorative scroll to the Aldermen and Alderwomen, the cost of which is met from the civic ceremonial budget.
Legal and Governance:	The authority to confer the title of Honorary Alderman and the power to incur expenditure is contained within Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, as now amended by Section 29 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
Risk:	There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.
Equality:	There are no equality implications arising directly from this report.
Health and Wellbeing:	There are no health and wellbeing implications arising directly from this report.
Social Value	Nominations for Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen are an endorsement of the aspirations, talent and achievements of local people.

6 Appendices

Nomination Form



This page is intentionally left blank

Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman

The Local Government Act 1972 gave authority to the Council to confer the honour of Honorary Aldermen of the Borough on elected members who had given eminent service to the Borough.

An Honorary Alderman shall be entitled to the following rights and privileges:-

- i) To enjoy the courtesy title of “Honorary Alderman” and to be addressed as such.
- ii) To attend as an observer at meetings of the Council or any other meetings to which the press and public are admitted and to have a seat reserved for this purpose.
- iii) On request to receive a copy of the Council Summons and Agenda and a copy of the Council’s Year Book.
- iv) To receive invitations to all civic events to which members of the Council are invited.
- v) To walk in civic processions in a position immediately senior to serving Members.
- vi) To wear the Badge of Office of Honorary Alderman on civic occasions.
- vii) On death, to have the Borough flag flown at the Sandwell Council House at half-mast.
- viii) To enjoy such other privileges as the Council may confer upon them from time to time.

In the event of an Honorary Alderman resuming membership of the Council, he or she shall cease to be entitled to be addressed as “Honorary Alderman” or to attend or take part in any civic ceremonies of the Council as an Honorary Alderman.

It shall be competent for the Council in any particular case to withdraw the title of "Honorary Alderman" and the attached rights and privileges on the recommendation of the General Purposes Committee. Such withdrawal of the title shall be by resolution of the Council, passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council, specially convened for the purpose by the Mayor. On the passing of such resolution, the Chief Executive shall delete the name of the person concerned from the Roll of Honorary Alderman and advise that person accordingly.

Nomination Criteria

The following will be taken into account when consideration is given to granting an individual Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman.

A person shall be deemed to be eligible for consideration to be nominated to the position of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman if he or she:-

- i) has rendered a minimum of **12** years service as a Member of the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council;

and/or

- ii) has rendered eminent or notable service to the Borough of Sandwell by serving as a Chairperson of a major Council Committee or holding one or more senior positions on the Council or in any political group.

N.B. In the case of qualification (i) previous service before 1st April 1974 with a constituent authority will be taken into account.

Nomination Form

I, Councillor BAWA SINGH DHALLU (COUNCILLOR) wish to nominate the following person to be considered for the status of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman of the Borough for Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

Nominee MRS. LINDA HORTON

I am aware that the following criteria is applied to the achievements of the nominee.

The Nominee has:-

[Please delete as appropriate]

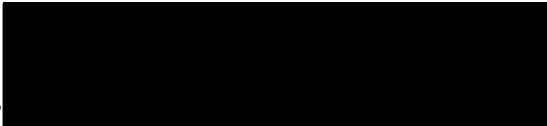
- i) has rendered a minimum of **12** years service as a Member of the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council;

and/or

- ii) has rendered eminent or notable service to the Borough of Sandwell by serving as a Chairperson of a major Council Committee or holding one or more senior positions on the Council or in any political group.

I believe the nominee has met the criteria in the following way(s):-

She was a Mayor of Sandwell 2013-2014
She was a Cabinet-member in 2012-2013
Leisure Services
She has done 27 years on the Council

Signed: 

Dated: 01-03-22

Nomination supported by: CLLR. MOHAMMAD ROUF

Date: 01/03/2022

Please return this form to the Chief Executive