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REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Thursday, 7 September 2023

Present:

| | | |
|-------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Councillors | C Cooke | M Redfern |
| | B Hall | J Stewart Laing |
| | M Jordan | K Stuart |
| | L Luxon-Kewley | M Sullivan |
| | C McDonald | E Tomeny |
| | K Murphy | I Lewis (In place of |
| | R Pitt | A Hodson) |

Apologies

| | |
|-------------|-----------|
| Councillors | A Hodson |
| | S Bennett |
| | G Davies |

11 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Members of the Committee were asked to appoint a Chair for this meeting.

On a motion by Councillor M Jordan and seconded by Councillor M Sullivan, it was –

Resolved – That Councillor I Lewis be appointed Chair for this meeting.

12 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the webcast.

13 APOLOGIES

The Chair confirmed apologies had been received from Councillor A Hodson (Chair) for whom he was deputising, Councillor S Bennett (Vice-Chair) and Councillor G Davies.

14 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Committee were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in connection with any item on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

15 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

The Chair reported that there had been no questions submitted from any members of the public or from any Members.

16 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

The Chair reported that there had been no statements or petitions received.

17 **MINUTES**

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2023 be approved.

18 **MINUTES OF THE REGULATORY PANEL AND THE LICENSING PANEL**

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Regulatory Panel (now re-named as the Licensing Panel) held on 19 May 2023 and the Licensing Panel meetings held on 20 June, 28 July and 4 August 2023 be approved.

19 **HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH (POSTHUMOUS AWARD)
GLENDA JACKSON**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report requesting that Members of the Committee recommend to Council that Glenda Jackson be posthumously admitted as Honorary Freewoman of this Borough at an Extraordinary Council meeting to be held on 9 October 2023.

The Civic and Electoral Services Manager reported that this was a very significant step for the Council to take. Very few people had been awarded this status and it should only be awarded to someone who had made an exceptional contribution to the Borough. Glenda Jackson of Birkenhead is considered to be within this category.

Councillor M Sullivan paid tribute to Glenda Jackson for her great service to the country and highly commended that this award be given.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Civic and Electoral Services Manager advised that proposals for this award may be provided by a Councillor or anyone in the Borough for consideration by this Committee.

On a motion by Councillor M Sullivan and seconded by Councillor J Stewart Laing, it was –

Resolved –

- (1) That in pursuance of the provisions of Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in recognition of her dedicated service to the Borough, that Glenda Jackson be posthumously admitted as an Honorary Freewoman of this Borough at an Extraordinary Council Meeting to be held on 9 October 2023; and**
- (2) That officers be requested to take the necessary actions associated with (1) above and arrange a small civic reception for family representatives of Glenda Jackson and some invited guests on a mutually agreeable date following the Extraordinary Meeting of Council on 9 October 2023.**

20 **PARLIAMENTARY POLLING PLACE AND POLLING DISTRICT STATUTORY REVIEW**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report advising Members of the arrangements for the statutory polling place and polling district statutory review 2023.

The Civic and Electoral Services Manager reported that the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) must conduct a statutory review of polling places and polling districts every five years which can start no earlier than 1 October 2023 and must be completed within 16 months. Therefore, this must be completed no later than 31 January 2025.

Members were informed that the statutory responsibility for reviewing UK Parliamentary polling districts and places rests with each relevant local authority in Great Britain for so much of any constituency as is situated in its area.

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to undertake a full review of their Parliamentary polling places and polling districts within the Borough and make such changes as would be considered necessary to ensure they remain accessible to all electors. Any proposed changes to current arrangements would be presented for consideration at the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee meeting on 23 November 2023.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee, the Civic and Electoral Services Manager advised that any proposed changes would be presented to this Committee at its meeting on 23 November in order that the new register could be published on 1 December 2023 to enable the register to be used for elections held in May 2024 as publication would be delayed otherwise. Members were also advised that no changes were envisaged for local elections and that in addition to the statutory review required to be taken

every 5 years, polling places were reviewed following each election by Electoral Services.

Members were advised that the consultation in respect of the polling place and polling district review would take place with local disability and community groups and all Members, notices would be placed in Birkenhead Town Hall and on the internet, there would be a press release then local MP's would be invited to comment and anyone who wishes to comment would be invited to do so. Details of these comments would be published on a paper notification in Birkenhead Town Hall, on the internet and as part of a press release.

The Chair thanked the Electoral team for their ongoing hard work.

On a motion by Councillor M Redfern and seconded by Councillor M Sullivan, it was –

Resolved – That the Polling Place and Polling District review be undertaken and any proposed changes to current arrangements be presented for consideration at the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee meeting on 23 November 2023.