

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**MINUTES OF THE FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH**

**HELD AT 1.00 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**ONLINE 'VIRTUAL' MEETING - [HTTPS://TOWERHAMLETS.PUBLIC-I.TV/CORE/PORTAL/HOME](https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home)**

**Members Present:**

Councillor Mohammed Ahab Hossain Speaker of the Council  
(Chair)  
Councillor Rajib Ahmed  
Councillor Sabina Akhtar  
Councillor Peter Golds  
Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE  
Councillor Victoria Obaze  
Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman

**Co-opted Members Present:**

Councillor Asma Begum  
Councillor Rachel Blake  
Mizan Chaudhury  
Councillor Sirajul Islam  
Mike Smith  
Mr Leslie Morgan OBE

**Officers Present:**

Jill Bayley	– (Head of Legal Safeguarding)
Matthew Mannion	– (Head of Democratic Services, Governance)
Muhammed Uddin	– (Democratic Services Officer, Civic & Members, Governance)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It was noted that Members were aware of all the main candidates for nomination and many of them had worked with the candidates on various projects or issues. It was agreed that should a candidate be proposed who was particularly close to a Member of the Panel then that would be declared and that Panel Member would have to excuse themselves from the discussion/vote.

### **3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED**

1. That the minutes of the last Board meeting held on Thursday 29 July be approved as a correct record of proceedings.

### **4. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Given the need to discuss individual nominations for the Freedom of the Borough and the commercial details of potential venue hires it was agreed that the full discussion of all matters would need to be held after the exclusion of the press and public:

#### **RESOLVED**

1. That in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the remaining agenda item contained information defined as exempt or confidential in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

### **5. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

#### **5.1 Freedom of the Borough Nomination Shortlist and Ceremony Venue**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and handed over to Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services, to administratively run the meeting and introduce the report.

Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services, presented a report on Membership, Nomination Shortlist and Ceremony Venue.

##### **Membership**

The Panel agreed the appointment of a representative of the new political group (Aspire) onto the Panel in line with the Terms of Reference.

##### **Nomination Shortlist**

The Panel were reminded of the process the Panel had undertaken to date. They were then provided with the results of the indicative voting panel Members had undertaken over the last few weeks. This gave an initial indication of those candidates Members thought had the strongest cases to be given the Freedom of the Borough.

It was noted that the voting should not be considered definitive and that not all Members had participated but that it was a useful guide.

The Panel then discussed the full list of nominees taking into account the above information and the details in the submissions themselves. They agreed to focus on the shortlist of 20 nominations that had been voted on.

The discussion in particular explored whether the nominee's contribution was boroughwide, over a long period of time and carried out over and above any paid position. After much discussion, the Panel agreed on a final list of 5 nominees.

### **RESOLVED**

1. That the nominations for the Freedom of the Borough Award for the following nominees should be put forward at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council:
  - Sister Christine Frost
  - Sir George Iacobescu
  - Sufia Alam
  - Abdul Aziz Sardar
  - Jim Fitzpatrick

### **Ceremony Venue**

The Panel discussed the options presented as potential venues for the Extraordinary Council Meeting and Freedom of the Borough ceremony and reception. This included looking at potential costs and the general suitability of the venue options. The Panel concluded that the Tower of London was the most suitable venue for such a prestigious event and that the proposed costs were within the Speaker's available budget.

### **RESOLVED**

2. That the meeting, ceremony and reception should be held at the Tower of London.

## **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT**

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 1.51 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Mohammed Ahbab Hossain  
Freedom of the Borough