

Meeting of the

# GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

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Wednesday, 25 September 2013 at 7.00 p.m.

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## A G E N D A

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### VENUE

MP702, 7th Floor, Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent,  
London, E14 2BG

Members:	Deputies (if any):
<b>Chair: Councillor Shiria Khatun</b>	
<b>Vice-Chair:</b>	
<b>Councillor Aminur Khan</b>	Councillor Peter Golds, (Designated Deputy representing Councillor Craig Aston)
<b>Councillor Rajib Ahmed</b>	Councillor Khales Uddin Ahmed, (Designated Deputy representing Councillors Shiria Khatun, John Pierce, David Edgar and Ahmed Adam Omer)
<b>Councillor Marc Francis</b>	Councillor David Snowdon, (Designated Deputy representing Councillor Craig Aston)
<b>Councillor John Pierce</b>	Councillor Bill Turner, (Designated Deputy representing Councillors Shiria Khatun, Rajib Ahmed, Marc Francis and John Pierce)
<b>Councillor Alibor Choudhury</b>	Councillor M. A. Mukit MBE, (Designated Deputy representing Councillors Shiria Khatun, Rajib Ahmed, Marc Francis and John Pierce)
<b>Councillor Craig Aston</b>	

**[Note: The quorum for this body is 3 Members].**

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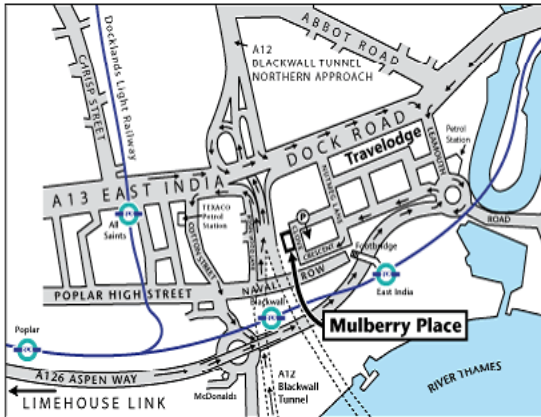
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QR code for smart phone users.

# LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

## GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 25 September 2013

7.00 p.m.

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

PAGE NUMBERS	WARD(S) AFFECTED
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### 2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1 - 4

To note any declarations of interest made by Members, including those restricting Members from voting on the questions detailed in Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992.

See attached note from the Monitoring Officer.

### 3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

5 - 10

To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the ordinary meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 17 June 2013.

### 4. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

#### 4.1 Polling Place Review - To Follow

### 5. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

In view of the contents of the remaining items on the agenda the Committee is recommended to adopt the following motion:

“That, under 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 for the consideration of the Section Two business on the grounds that it contains information defined as Exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972.”

#### EXEMPT SECTION (Pink Papers)

The exempt committee papers in the agenda will contain information, which is commercially, legally or personally sensitive and should not be divulged to third parties.

If you do not wish to retain these papers after the meeting, please hand them to the Committee Officer present.

**6. RESTRICTED MINUTES**

**11 - 14**

To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the restricted minutes of the ordinary meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 17 June 2013.

**7. Local Authority Governor Appointments**

**15 - 70**

**8. ANY OTHER EXEMPT BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

# Agenda Item 2

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS - NOTE FROM THE MONITORING OFFICER**

This note is for guidance only. For further details please consult the Members' Code of Conduct at Part 5.1 of the Council's Constitution.

Please note that the question of whether a Member has an interest in any matter, and whether or not that interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, is for that Member to decide. Advice is available from officers as listed below but they cannot make the decision for the Member. If in doubt as to the nature of an interest it is advisable to seek advice **prior** to attending a meeting.

### **Interests and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)**

You have an interest in any business of the authority where that business relates to or is likely to affect any of the persons, bodies or matters listed in section 4.1 (a) of the Code of Conduct; and might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial position of yourself, a member of your family or a person with whom you have a close association, to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward affected.

You must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of any such interest, for inclusion in the Register of Members' Interests which is available for public inspection and on the Council's Website.

Once you have recorded an interest in the Register, you are not then required to declare that interest at each meeting where the business is discussed, unless the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI).

A DPI is defined in Regulations as a pecuniary interest of any of the descriptions listed at **Appendix A** overleaf. Please note that a Member's DPIs include his/her own relevant interests and also those of his/her spouse or civil partner; or a person with whom the Member is living as husband and wife; or a person with whom the Member is living as if they were civil partners; if the Member is aware that that other person has the interest.

### **Effect of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest on participation at meetings**

Where you have a DPI in any business of the Council you must, unless you have obtained a dispensation from the authority's Monitoring Officer following consideration by the Dispensations Sub-Committee of the Standards Advisory Committee:-

- not seek to improperly influence a decision about that business; and
- not exercise executive functions in relation to that business.

If you are present at a meeting where that business is discussed, you must:-

- Disclose to the meeting the existence and nature of the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent, if later; and
- Leave the room (including any public viewing area) for the duration of consideration and decision on the item and not seek to influence the debate or decision

When declaring a DPI, Members should specify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which the interest relates. This procedure is designed to assist the public's understanding of the meeting and to enable a full record to be made in the minutes of the meeting.

Where you have a DPI in any business of the authority which is not included in the Member's register of interests and you attend a meeting of the authority at which the business is considered, in addition to disclosing the interest to that meeting, you must also within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the Register.

**Further advice**

For further advice please contact:-

Isabella Freeman, Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services), 020 7364 4801; or  
John Williams, Service Head, Democratic Services, 020 7364 4204

## APPENDIX A: Definition of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

(Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, Reg 2 and Schedule)

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vacation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	<p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by the Member in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of the Member.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority—</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to the Member's knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the Member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</p>

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**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT 7.00 P.M. ON MONDAY, 17 JUNE 2013**

**ROOM C1,1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE  
CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

**Members Present:**

Councillor Shiria Khatun (Chair)  
Councillor Aminur Khan  
Councillor Marc Francis  
Councillor John Pierce  
Councillor Alibor Choudhury (Cabinet Member for Resources)  
Councillor Craig Aston

**Officers Present:**

Chris Holme – (Acting Corporate Director, Resources)  
Louise Stamp – (Electoral Services Manager, Chief Executive's)  
  
John Williams – (Service Head, Democratic Services, Chief Executive's)  
Hania Franek – (Head of School Governance & Information)  
Evelyn Akoto – (Committee Officer)

**1. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

**RESOLVED**

That Councillor Marc Francis be appointed as the Vice-Chair of the General Purposes Committee for the remainder of 2013-14 municipal year.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

Councillors Craig Aston, Marc Francis and John Pierce declared that they knew some of the applicants applying for the positions of Local Authority Governor. Full details in restricted minutes.

#### **4. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES**

The unrestricted minutes of the ordinary meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 27 March 2013 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2013 were agreed as a correct record of the proceedings.

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

##### **5.1 General Purpose Committee Terms Of Reference, Quorum, Membership and Dates of Meeting (GPC001/124)**

John Williams, Head of Democratic Services, presented the report which set out for noting the General Purposes Committee Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership and dates of meetings as agreed by the Council Annual General Meeting held on 22 May 2013.

In response to a question, the Head of Democratic Services gave the following answer:

- It was possible for the 'Independent' to have deputies on Committees. If this was requested, a report would have to be submitted to Full Council for the appointments to be made.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the General Purposes Committee note its Terms of Reference, Quorum, membership and dates of future meetings as set out in the Appendices 1, 2, 3 of the report.

#### **6. REVIEW OF VIREMENT RULES - UPDATE**

At the request of the Chair the Committee adjourned for 5 minutes to allow Members to read the report which had been tabled.

Upon reconvening, the Chair asked Chris Holme, Acting Director of Resources, to present the tabled update report. Chris Holme highlighted key points in the report, which provided details on the resolution from Council that changes to the Virement rules should be part of the wider governance review being undertaken. He continued that Eugene Sullivan, a former Chief Executive of the Audit Commission was appointed to provide input to the review, and had already met with representative from each of the major parties.

In response to questions, Chris Holme gave the following responses:

- The governance review should be submitted to the General Purposes Committee in the autumn. A letter was sent to the Mayor and group leaders from the Head of Paid Service, setting out the time table.

- The intention was that the governance report would be seen by the General Purpose Committee before being submitted to Full Council.

The Chair requested that Chris Holme email the governance review timetable to General Purposes Committee Members.

Members noted that the process for the governance review could be delayed due to the Committee's meeting dates, and therefore proposed that Extraordinary General Purposes meetings could be held if deemed necessary.

**Action:** Chris Holme

### **RESOLVED**

That the Committee note the progress to date in undertaking the review.

## **7. WARD BOUNDARY CHANGES UPDATE AND POLLING DISTRICT POLLING PLACE REVIEW**

At the request of the Chair, John Williams, Head of Democratic Service presented the report and highlighted the following:

- The Boundary Commission had confirmed their recommendation to reduce the Council size from 51 to 45.
- There was an increase in the number of wards from 17 to 20, with a variety of Councillor Ward sizes. There would be 2 single-member wards; 11 two-member wards and 7 three-member wards.
- The final recommendations included three minor changes; the significant changes were on ward names.
- The Boundary Commission had confirmed that the draft order was laid in Parliament for a period of 40 sitting days, and if accepted would come into effect at the next elections in 2014. The first register based on the revised electoral arrangements would be published on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2014.
- An objection was made by Canary Wharf group PLC with 'Canary Wharf' being used as one of the revised ward names. Their objection was on the basis that it is their trading name and also that the ward did not include the entire Canary Wharf group. The Boundary Commission have indicated that they would not be revising the ward name. Canary Wharf Group PLC had therefore asked the Council to use its discretionary powers to make the change. A letter would be sent to the Mayor and group leaders about the representation made, to seek their views.

A discussion followed which focused on the implication and possible cost of the Council changing the proposed ward name. In response to questions John Williams, the Head of Democratic Services, and Louise Stamp, Electoral Services Manager gave the following answers:

- The initial name for the area was 'West India', but representations received complaints that the name was not suitable and so 'Canary Wharf' was a last minute change.
- The Council could use the Local Government Act to change the name of an existing ward, there are conditions attached and it would have to be with the permission of the Boundary Commission. If the council decided to pursue this, the timetable to make the change would be tight.
- The new revised register would be available for candidates and agents on 17 February 2014, and that would be the first register published on the new warding structure.
- As the electoral register would be published later than normal, it would be prudent for members to wait for the new information before canvassing.

John Williams, Head of Democratic Services highlighted key matters concerning the Polling District and Polling Place review;

- The Boundary Commission did not take into account the current location of polling stations, as it is recognised that once the recommendations had been confirmed the authority would carry out a Polling District Review in light of the new boundaries. The last review on Polling Districts was in 2011 and the Committee agreed to leave the polling locations at that time in place pending the completion of the Electoral Review by the Boundary Commission.
- John Williams would begin the review by seeking representations from members regarding any known issues about existing polling stations, or suggestions about other suitable premises that could be used.
- Maps of the new wards would be given to group leaders for their reference, and also posted on the website.
- A notice of review would be published on 21 June 2013 and Members would have up until 12 July 2013 to comment. An initial draft proposal would go to general public consultation, closing on 13 September 2013, with the final proposal report submitted to the General Purpose Committee on 25 September 2013.

In response to questions, the Head of Democratic Services gave the following responses:

- The guideline is that there should be an average of 1,500 electors per polling station, but factors such as major roads, accessibility etc, would have to be considered when making final decisions.
- There is a move away from using Secondary Schools as polling stations, due to exam periods, and also the use of portakabins due to hiring costs. There is now a move towards using other buildings such as community halls, but there needs to be assurances that they are DDA compliant before being considered.
- The final proposal would be presented to the General Purposes Committee, before being submitted to Full Council.
- The best ways for Members to make comments on the review of polling places is in writing to Louise Stamp.

The Committee suggested that a Members Seminar should be organised to give members the opportunity to further explore this matter and also comment. Members expressed a wish for the Seminar to be organised in July before the initial phase of consultation closes. Officers were reminded that the religious Month of Ramadan will need to be considered when making arrangements.

**Action: John Williams**

**RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee note the report and agree the proposed process and timetable for the review of polling districts and polling places as set out at section 6 of the report.
2. That members be invited to submit any initial comments on proposed new polling districts and polling places to the Electoral Services Manager by 12<sup>th</sup> July 2013.

**8. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

A motion to exclude the public and press was passed in the unrestricted part of the proceedings.

**9. RESTRICTED MINUTES**

Please refer to restricted minutes.

**10. LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS**

Please refer to restricted minutes.

The meeting ended at 8.35 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Shiria Khatun  
General Purposes Committee

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# Agenda Item 6

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# Agenda Item 7

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