

THE COURT OF ALDERMEN'S STANDING ORDERS

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MEETING OF THE COURT

1. Unless the Lord Mayor directs otherwise, meetings of the Court of Aldermen will be held on Tuesdays at twelve-thirty in the afternoon.
2. The Lord Mayor or their locum tenens, together with 10 Aldermen, shall be a quorum.
3. Where a physical meeting of the Court takes place, no person shall be allowed to stand in the passage leading from the door to the bar during the sitting of the Court; witnesses and petitioners attending the Court shall be allowed to take seats at the table. All other persons will be required to take their places in the public gallery.
4. Meetings of the Court of Aldermen are not limited to a meeting of participants all of whom, are physically present in the same appointed place. A meeting of the Court of Aldermen may take place on a virtual or hybrid basis whereby participants may attend and participate in a meeting by electronic means, including by telephone conference, video conference and live interactive streaming. An individual Member attends virtually if all the following conditions are satisfied:
 - a. the member can hear and where practicable see, and be heard and where practicable seen, by the other members in attendance; and
 - b. the member can hear and where practicable see, and be heard and where practicable seen, by any witnesses and petitioners in attendance; and
 - c. the member can be heard and where practicable seen by any members of the public observing the meeting.
5. If connectivity issues arise at a virtual or hybrid meeting and a member's connectivity temporarily fails, the meeting can continue so long as it remains quorate and that member will have the ability to continue engaging in that particular item and allowed to vote on said item.
6. Where practicable, not less than five working days' notice shall be given of a meeting of the Court of Aldermen.

7. All meetings of the Court of Aldermen shall, unless otherwise directed by the Lord Mayor, be accessible to the public either as a physical meeting, a virtual meeting or a hybrid meeting.

COMMITTEES

8. There shall be two Standing Committees of the Court of Aldermen, namely, a Committee for Nominations to the Shrievalty and Mayoralty (Nominations Committee of Aldermen)¹ and a Committee for General Purposes (General Purposes Committee of Aldermen).
9. The Lord Mayor for the time being and all the Aldermen shall be members of both the Nominations Committee of Aldermen and the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen.
10. Unless the Chairman, or in their absence the Deputy Chairman or the Senior Alderman, directs otherwise, meetings of the Committees of the Court shall be held on the same day as the meetings of the Court of Aldermen.
11. Each Committee shall elect a Chairman for the year ensuing, by ballot, at the meeting held in July each year from among the Aldermen who have passed the Chair, nominations being sent, in writing, to the Town Clerk at least eight clear days before the meeting for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting.
12. With effect from December 2018, the term of office of the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen shall be restricted to not more than five years, except where a vacancy for the Chairmanship of the Nominations Committee of Aldermen occurs at the same time at which point the Chairman shall be eligible to serve for a further one year with the Committee's consent.
13. With effect from July 2019, the term of office of the Chairman of the Nominations Committee of Aldermen shall be restricted to not more than five years.
14. The General Purposes Committee of Aldermen shall elect a Deputy Chairman for the year ensuing, by ballot, at the meeting in July each year from among the Aldermen who have passed the Chair except for the Lord Mayor at the time and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Nominations Committee of Aldermen. Nominations shall be sent, in writing, to the Town Clerk at least eight clear days before the meeting for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting.
15. The Nominations Committee of Aldermen shall elect a Deputy Chairman for the year ensuing, by ballot, at the meeting in July each year from among the Aldermen who have passed the Chair except for the Lord Mayor at the time and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen. Nominations shall be sent, in writing, to the Town Clerk at least eight clear days before the meeting for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting.
16. With effect from July 2019, the term of office for the Deputy Chairman of each standing committee shall be restricted to not more than five years.

¹ Known as the Privileges Committee of Aldermen prior to 09/02/21

17. The Chairman and in their absence the Deputy Chairman of each of the standing Committees shall have a second or casting vote.
18. In any case where both the Chairman and Deputy Chairman shall not be present at any meeting, the Senior Alderman present shall be Chairman for that meeting.
19. Each Committee shall be summoned under the directions of the Chairman whenever in their judgement the business shall render it necessary: or upon requisition to him/her by three members of the Court, provided they have business to lay before the Committee. The nature of the business requested shall be stated in the requisition and shall appear on the summons.
20. The quorum of a Committee shall be three members.
21. Meetings of the Standing Committees of the Court of Aldermen, or any sub-committees, are not limited to a meeting of participants all of whom are physically present in the same appointed place. A meeting of the Standing committees, or any sub-committees, may also take place on a virtual or hybrid basis whereby participants may attend and participate in a meeting by electronic means, including by telephone conference, video conference and live interactive streaming (where the meeting is to be public). An individual Member attends virtually at any time if all the following conditions are satisfied:
 - a. the Member can hear and where practicable see, and be heard and where practicable seen, by the other members in attendance; and
 - b. the Member can hear and where practicable see, and be heard and where practicable seen, by any witnesses and petitioners in attendance; and
 - c. the Member can be heard and where practicable seen by any members of the public observing the meeting.
22. All meetings of the Nominations Committee of the Court of Aldermen shall, unless otherwise directed by the Court of Aldermen, be held in private.
23. All meetings of the Committee for General Purposes (General Purposes Committee of Aldermen) shall, unless otherwise determined in accordance with Standing Order 25, be held in public.
24. Where practicable, not less than five working days' notice shall be given of a meeting of the Committee for General Purposes (General Purposes Committee of Aldermen).
25. In accordance with the Court of Aldermen's Disclosure Arrangement (*appended*), the business of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen (including access to meetings, agendas, reports and minutes) will be available to the public except where it is determined by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen that, having had due regard to the Disclosure Arrangement, disclosure should not be permitted. The Committee may revisit any such disclosure determination.
26. All meetings of any of the Standing Committee's sub-committees shall, unless otherwise directed by the Court of Aldermen, be held in private.

BILLS AND ACCOUNTS

27.No bill or account exceeding £5,000 shall be paid by the Chamberlain without the special direction of the Court, unless the subject matter of the bill or account has been approved by, or on behalf of the Court.

PETITIONS AND MOTIONS

28. Notice of all petitions or memorials intended to be presented to the Court of Aldermen (and by whom) shall be submitted to the Town Clerk's office at least ten clear days before the Court at which they are intended to be presented. Notice of the subject of such petitions or memorials shall be inserted in the summons for the meeting of the Court.

29. All notices of motions to be discussed shall be submitted to the Town Clerk's office at least ten clear days before the next Court of Aldermen and shall be inserted, subject to the order of the Lord Mayor, in the summons for the Court. Consideration of all motions of which notice has not been given in the summons shall be adjourned (without debate) till the next Court.

CITY'S CASH

30. As often as there shall be occasion for any committee of this Court to disburse or to contemplate the disbursement of any sum of money exceeding £5,000 out of the Chamber, the Court shall be first consulted and its assent given, unless the matter in question has been delegated to either a Committee or an officer of the Court of Aldermen.

31. Any question proposed, which may affect the estates or the funds of this City, shall, if not inserted in the summons for the Court (stating the amount in case of a grant of money), be adjourned to the next meeting of the Court.

32. No report from a Committee which recommends the addition of any sum, or sums, of money to the salary of any officer connected with this Court, or any place in the care of this Court shall be considered, unless notice be given on the summons for the Court, stating the additions proposed to be made to the salary.

CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT

33.It shall be the duty of each Alderman, not excused or exempt, to attend a sitting at the Central Criminal Court, at least one day each month, except August. The Aldermen holding the Office of Lord Mayor or Sheriff shall be exempt. The Town Clerk shall prepare a list showing the dates of each duty and the list shall be circulated to every Alderman.

34. Aldermen having undertaken to perform a particular duty shall be held responsible for the performance of that duty. Aldermen on the rota may attend the morning duty, but luncheon and afternoon duty shall be obligatory.

35. The Town Clerk shall prepare a list showing the dates on which rotas shall be completed for each period of six months in the ensuing year, such list to be circulated to every Alderman.

36. The Aldermen shall, at the request of the Town Clerk every six months, choose their respective dates and fill up the rota papers accordingly. The Aldermen, in order of seniority, shall select the days of attendance and fill up the rota. The Town Clerk shall send a copy of the completed rota to every Alderman and the Central Criminal Court.

VACANCIES

37. In the event of the death or resignation of an Alderman, the duties which but for such death or resignation would have been performed by him/her in his/her role as an Alderman (but not as a Chairman or Deputy Chairman of any Committee or any other additional role) shall devolve upon his/her successor, and pending the appointment of his/her successor shall normally be distributed as evenly as possible among the junior members of the Court of Aldermen not on duty upon a rota who shall be held responsible for the due performance thereof.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

38. It being the custom that Leave of Absence be requested from the General Purposes Committee for periods of more than one month, that when an Alderman has been granted leave of absence, the duties which would have devolved upon them shall be distributed as evenly as possible among the junior members of the Court not on duty upon any rota.

THE LATE LORD MAYOR AND LORD MAYOR ELECT

39. It is not expected that, except in very exceptional circumstance and with the approval of the Lord Mayor in consultation with the Senior Alderman, or in those circumstances otherwise prescribed by the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen, the Late Lord Mayor attend any occasions in a civic capacity until the Easter Banquet of the year following the conclusions of his or her Mayoralty. The Lord Mayor Elect should, from the date of election to taking up the office of Lord Mayor, abide by the same, in so far as the necessary preparations for the assumption of that Office Permit. The rota duties which would otherwise have devolved upon them shall be distributed as evenly as possible among the junior Aldermen not on duty upon any rota. After the Easter Banquet the Late Lord Mayor shall resume their rota duties according to their then seniority in the Court of Aldermen.

SHRIEVALTY

40. The rota duty allotted to an Aldermanic Sheriff shall be performed by the junior members of the Court who are not already on duty.

COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL

41. In addition to the regular summons for a Court of Common Council, a special notice of the meetings of the Court shall be sent by the Hallkeeper to the Aldermen on the rota.

42. Any Alderman who may find it inconvenient to attend his/her duty upon the rota for the Court of Common Council shall obtain a substitute and inform the Town Clerk not less than ten days before the meeting of the Court.

LORD MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

43. The Alderman who is for the time being occupying the Office of Lord Mayor shall not act as a promoter in the incorporation of any company, or accept a new directorship of any company; nor shall they allow their name to appear as a director or proposed director of any company in any prospectus, offer for sale or advertisement, published in connection with the issue or sale to the public of any share or loan capital of that company or with any application for a quotation for or permission to deal in any such share or loan capital in any Stock Exchange and if this Standing Order cannot otherwise be complied with they shall vacate their directorship. Provided that this Standing Order shall not apply in respect of any private company or incorporated charity- or save so far as the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen may from time to time otherwise decide- in relation to the share or loan capital of any company of which any shares are for the time being quoted and dealt in on any Stock Exchange.

44. An Alderman shall not, during the tenure of their office, allow themselves to be described as such in connection with the promotion or direction of any Company.

OFFICERS

45. Persons entering the employment of the Court of Aldermen or any of its committees, shall, unless already employed by the City of London Corporation, have a medical assessment by means of a questionnaire (and medical examination if considered necessary by the Physician-in-Charge of the Occupational Health Service or his/her representative).

URGENCY POWERS

46. Where in the opinion of the Town Clerk, urgent matters arise which require a decision before the next meeting of the relevant committee or the Court, the Town Clerk shall refer the matter to the relevant Chairman, or in their absence the Deputy Chairman or in the Deputy Chairman's absence the Senior Alderman, who shall decide whether it is necessary to call a special meeting or, alternatively, to authorise the Officers to act.

INELIGIBILITY AND DISQUALIFICATION

47. Any Aldermen who has a pecuniary interest in any item under discussion, or an interest which would be declarable under the Code of Conduct which regulates the conduct of members in local government, shall forthwith declare their interest and withdraw from the meeting during consideration of that item.

DISCLOSURE ARRANGEMENT FOR THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF THE COURT OF ALDERMAN

Purpose and Status

1. This document, known as the “Disclosure Arrangement for the General Purposes Committee of the Court of Aldermen” (“the Disclosure Arrangement”), is guidance produced to assist the Court of Alderman (“the Court”) of the Corporation of London (“the Corporation”) in its determination of what information shall be voluntarily disclosed to the public. It is not to be interpreted as an acceptance that the Court is under any duty of public disclosure. It does not create binding rules on the Court nor legitimate expectations on the part of third parties.

Presumption in Favour of Disclosure and Redaction

2. The starting point is a presumption in favour of disclosure of all information. An exception to disclosure may arise where the information in question is “confidential.” In such instances, all reasonable efforts shall be employed to ensure only the information necessary to maintain that confidentiality is redacted.
3. Subject to any legal obligations, even where the information is confidential, the Court may take the view that the public interest is in favour of disclosure.

“Confidential Information”

4. There is no legal definition of “confidential information” that is of general application. The confidentiality or otherwise of information therefore needs to be considered in the context of individual circumstances. However, by way of general indicative guidance only, the following categories of information would normally be treated as confidential:
 - a. All reports that are in part II of Court of Common Council (or any of its committees/sub-committees) agendas (yellow or blue papers).
 - b. Matters concerning details of commercial negotiations, including those relating to the settlement of ongoing disputes.

- c. Where there is a legal restriction on the disclosure of information such as under the Data Protection Act,^[1] contractual obligations, intellectual property rights, commercial and industrial information protected by the law, a court order or pending legal proceedings covered by the *sub judice* rule.
- d. Matters concerning terms and conditions of employment of individual officers or pending grievance or disciplinary proceedings.
- e. Personal and commercially sensitive material matters relating to the appointment or progression of members of the Court.
- f. Personal information and commercially sensitive material relating to the Court's supervisory and other jurisdiction exercised in connection with the City Liveries and Guilds.
- g. Personal information concerning individual recipients, such as, beneficiaries of trusts administered by the Court or through its appointees, child protection cases in schools etc. administered by the Court or through its appointees.
- h. Information which, given its nature, timing and context is such that a reasonable person would consider it to be confidential. This would, for example, normally be the case when information is supplied to a Member by an Officer or another person and is clearly stated to be confidential. This may include, for example, communications with the Royal Family, HM Government, governments of the United Kingdom, overseas governments, national and international bodies, and local government authorities. The disclosure of such information would normally tend to have a detrimental effect on the interests of the Court, the Corporation, the service users or third parties involved.

^[1] Disclosing third party personal data should not be made if this would contravene the UK GDPR or the DPA 2018.

- i. Disclosure would affect the protection of the environment to which the information relates or would affect international relations, defence, national security, or public safety.
- j. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

Agreed by the Court of Aldermen on 5th July 2021 as an appendix to the Court of Aldermen's Standing Orders.

The Disclosure Arrangement is applicable as of 7th July 2021.