

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
C O U N C I L

# Special Advisory Group

## Minutes - 16 November 2018

### Attendance

#### Members of the Special Advisory Group

Cllr John Reynolds (Chair)  
Cllr Alan Bolshaw  
Cllr Claire Darke  
Cllr Roger Lawrence  
Cllr Rita Potter  
Cllr Stephen Simkins

#### Employees

Dereck Francis	Democratic Services Officer
Jaswinder Kaur	Democratic Services Manager
Martyn Sargeant	Head of Public Service Reform

### Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*      *Title*

**1      Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Val Gibson and Wendy Thompson.

**2      Declarations of interests**

No declarations of interests were made.

**3      Minutes of the previous meeting - 19 October 2018**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**4      Matters arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

**5      Situation of Polling Stations for the 2019 local elections**

Martyn Sargeant, Head of Public Service Reform presented the report on arrangements for polling stations for the 2019 local elections. The report also provided an update on the timeline for commencing the statutory polling place review in 2019.

Councillor Stephen Simkins referred to a projected increase in the population in the Bilston area resulting from the Bilston Urban Village development and asked how this increase would be factored into the calculation for the number of polling stations that would be required in the future. He also queried whether a polling station located in the Bert Williams Leisure Centre was conducive given that members of the public would be using the building for other purposes. The Head of Public Service Reform reported that the polling station at Bert Williams Leisure Centre was separate from the main building. Regarding the projected increase in the population in the Bilston area, that would be picked up in the wider review of polling places that would commence in 2019.

Councillor Roger Lawrence added that the location of polling stations in multipurpose buildings could encourage increased voter turnout. As long as the polling station was distinctly separated within a building, he did not believe that was an issue.

Councillor Stephen Simkins also asked whether Bilston Town Hall could be reinstated as a polling station venue. The Head of Public Service Reform reported that it could be considered as part of the review of polling places.

Referring to the list of polling stations for the 2019 local elections, the Chair suggested that the third initial of each polling district be deleted as it was superfluous. The Head of Public Service Reform advised that, as part of the 2019 review, changes would be made to the lettering for the polling districts to make them clearer.

Resolved:

1. That Council be recommended to:
  - a. Agree that polling stations for the 2019 local election should be unchanged from those used at the 2018 local election with the exception that three stations would have a slight location change but would still remain in the polling district.
  - b. Delegate responsibility to make any operational changes to polling stations to the Returning Officer, following consultation with the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Governance and the Leader of the Opposition Group on the Council.
2. That it be noted that the statutory polling place review would commence in May 2019, shortly after the local election, in readiness for changes to be implemented by 2020.

### **Calendar of Meetings 2019-2020**

Jaswinder Kaur, Democratic Services Manager presented the proposed timetable for Council and Committee meetings for the 2019-2020 Municipal Year. The document had been modelled on the previous year's calendar. The main changes were the inclusion of an additional Cabinet meeting in December 2019; the inclusion of dates for the City Wide Briefing meetings; at the request of the Pensions Board an increase in the number of meetings from two to four; and splitting the Licensing Committee into a Statutory Licensing Committee and a Non-statutory Licensing Committee to reflect the recent change to the Constitution approved at Council on 7 November 2018.

Councillor Alan Bolshaw suggested that the start time for meetings of the Non-Statutory Licensing Committee be changed from 11.00 am to 10.30 am. It was felt that the 30 minutes would be sufficient time for the Statutory Licensing Committee to transact its business before commencement of Non-Statutory Licensing Committee meetings.

Councillor Roger Lawrence asked that the Executive Team meeting on 1 July be moved to 8 July to avoid a clash with the Local Government Association Conference 2019. He also noted that the Community Cohesion Forum and City-Wide Briefing were not Council committee meetings that would count as committee attendance and asked that they therefore be identified as such with the key at the bottom of the calendar of meetings.

Councillor Stephen Simkins suggest that the Sustainability Advisory Group should come under the umbrella of scrutiny. The Democratic Services Manager reported that member champions were required to periodically report to the appropriate scrutiny panel on their work during the year. She undertook to liaise with the Systems and Scrutiny Manager to ensure that it was incorporated into the appropriate scrutiny panel work programmes.

Resolved:

1. That Council be recommended to approve the City of Wolverhampton Council Calendar of Meetings for 2019-2020 with the following amendments:
  - a. Meetings of the Non-Statutory Licensing Committee commence at 10.30 am
  - b. The Executive Team meeting on 1 July be moved to 8 July.
  - c. The Community Cohesion Forum and City-Wide Briefing be flagged as meetings where attendance is not monitored.
2. That consultation with the political groups on the City of Wolverhampton Council Calendar of Meetings for 2019-2020 be approved.
3. That any amendments to the City of Wolverhampton Council Calendar of Meetings for 2019-2020 be delegated to the Chair of Special Advisory Group in consultation with the Director of Governance following consultation with political groups.