



Report of Town Clerk

Proceedings at the Annual Meeting of Council

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Background

1. The process of proceedings for the Annual Meeting of Council are laid out in Standing Order 5.
2. The proposed dates for Annual Town Meeting, Annual Meeting of Council and the Mayor Making are as follows:
 - a. Town Meeting on Wednesday 11 May 2022,
 - b. Annual General Tuesday 03 May 2022, and
 - c. Mayor Making on Monday 09 May 2022.
3. There is no statutory basis for the Mayor Making ceremony, and much of what goes on at the Annual Meeting of Council is inherited practice and unsupported either by Standing Orders or legislation. However, these practices have been recently reviewed and in order to put the Mayor Making on a proper legal footing, it is practice that the Mayor Making be regarded as a continuation of an adjourned Annual Meeting of Council, whose business is to receive the declaration of acceptance of office of the incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
4. This means that the Annual Meeting of Council will continue to be chaired by the outgoing Mayor until its adjournment, and will be chaired by the outgoing Mayor upon its resumption (as the Mayor Making) until the point when the declaration of acceptance of office is signed and returned.

The election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor

5. There are many different systems by which Mayors or Deputy Mayors have been elected in the past, and all have some degree of value and some degree of weakness.
6. The election of a chairman of council is a significant moment in the life of a council, and it is axiomatic that the incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor must be able to command the support of council. It is therefore strongly arguable that the process of election must demonstrate that this is the case.
7. There are many examples of traditions where the succession of the Deputy Mayor to the Mayoralty has been deemed to be automatic; this may be desirable but the election of the Mayor must demonstrably be lawful, and that means allowing for the option of other candidates being proposed and seconded on the night. Logically it follows that if the possibility of an election must be allowed for, a process of election

must be provided for. The only analogous election process in your standing orders is the process for choosing candidates for co-option.

8. For the sake of clarity in future years, it is proposed that new standing orders are inserted setting out the process by which the Mayor and Deputy Mayor shall be elected, replicating the process by which vacancies are filled by co-option. That is to say, each candidate for Mayor or Deputy Mayor shall be required to have a proposer and seconder, who shall nominate them at the meeting, and the election shall take place by eliminating secret ballot with a candidate requiring the support of the majority of those voting to succeed. For these purposes, a blank voting paper returned is counted as a vote for any candidate other than the candidates who have been proposed and seconded; in this it differs from an abstention, which is indicated by a member failing to return their ballot paper. In the event of any candidate failing to achieve a majority of those voting in a round of voting where they are the only candidate it is the case that nominations must be re-opened and all members are once again eligible to be proposed and seconded. In order to ensure compliance with the law, the successful candidate is then moved and seconded as the sole candidate in an election by show of hands.

Recommendation

1. That council adopt the proposed procedures for both the conduct of the Annual Meeting of Council and Mayor Making, and for the election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor laid out in this report.

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Checked by	SC
Town Clerk sign off (if required)	GD