

Report title	Preliminary consideration of mayoral selection
Report author	Mario Leo, Corporate Head of Law and Governance
Department	Law and Governance
Exempt?	No
Exemption type	Not applicable
Reasons for exemption	Not applicable

Purpose of report:

To recommend to the Council.

Synopsis of report:

To recommend a nomination for the office of Mayor for the municipal year 2024/25 to the Council.

Recommendation(s):

That the Corporate Management Committee agree its nomination for the office of Mayor for the municipal year 2024/25.

1. Report

1.1 In accordance with Standing Order 7, the following procedures apply for the selection of the Mayor:

- a) consideration of candidates for the office of Mayor will be undertaken by the Corporate Management Committee before the end of February in each calendar year;
- b) the Corporate Management Committee will recommend one member of the Council to be nominated as Mayor for the following municipal year to the Council; and
- c) if the Council approves the recommendation of the Committee, the nominee will be put forward as a candidate for the office of Mayor at the Annual Meeting, provided that they are still a member of the Council.

1.2 The Committee is therefore asked to consider candidates for the office of Mayor and make a recommendation for the 2024/2025 municipal year to the Council.

- 1.3 At the annual meeting of the Council on 17 May 2023, Councillor Saise-Marshall was elected as Mayor of Runnymede Borough Council for the municipal year 2023/24 and Councillor Bromley was appointed Deputy Mayor.
- 1.4 It has been the custom and practice of the Council to appoint the outgoing Deputy Mayor as Mayor for the following municipal year.

2. Legal Implications

- 2.1 Section 3 Local Government Act 1972 requires every principal council to annually elect from amongst the elected members a member to act as the chairman of the council. The chairman, if present at a meeting of the council, shall preside and shall have a second or casting vote in the event of equality of votes on any question coming before the authority.
- 2.2 At common law the duties of the chairman are, "... to preserve order, to take care that the proceedings are conducted in a proper manner, and that the sense of the meeting is properly ascertained with regard to any question that is properly before the meeting" (per Chitty J. in *National Dwellings Society v. Sykes* [1894] 3 Ch. 159, at p. 162). "I do not doubt that in presiding over a meeting a chairman must act entirely neutrally, allowing (subject to standing orders) different opinions to be fully and fairly presented and debated" (per Bingham L.J. in *R. v. Bradford Metropolitan City Council, ex p. Wilson* [1990] 2 Q.B. 373, 380).
- 2.3 In the event of omission to hold an election for the office of chairman, the High Court may order an election to be held on a day appointed by the court: see the Representation of the People Act 1983, s.39(2).
- 2.4 Under the provisions of section 245 Local Government Act 1972 a district council may petition the monarch for the grant of a charter conferring upon it the status of a borough and entitling the chairman and vice-chairman to the style of mayor and deputy mayor. In such cases the mayor shall exercise the same powers as the chairman. Runnymede submitted such a petition and the chairman and vice-chairman it elects annually are styled as mayor and deputy mayor.

Background papers

None