

Unlock Democracy Council Meeting
5th Floor 9 King Street
London EC2V 8EA
16 July 2016
10:30am - 4:45pm

Present: Andrew Blick (AB), James Grindrod (JG), Stephen Carter (SC), Jack Maizels (JM), Jenny Cronin (JC), Phil Starr (PS), Sepi Golzari-Munro (SGM), Rachel Collinson (RC), Lisa French (LF), Peter Hirst (PH), Debbie Chay (DC), Stuart Weir (SW), Vicky Seddon (VS)

Attending: Pete Mills (PM), Alex Runswick (AR)

1. Induction

The morning induction session was led by Candy Piercy

2. Apologies

Apologies received from Danny Zinkus Sutton, Barry Stokes & Andrew Manning.

AR reminded Council to give reasons for apologies; non-attendance without reason at two consecutive meetings could result in removal from Council

3. Council minutes for approval

The Council minutes were agreed and there were no matters arising.

4. Minutes presented for information

MB meetings on 16 Feb, 19 Apr and 5 July (draft) 2016, and the AGM on 7 November 2015

There was no Rodell item this meeting; it would be fully introduced at a future meeting.

The AGM and Management Board minutes were noted.

5. Internal structure decisions

AR explained that she would chair the discussion about the internal structures and that, assuming there were to be contested nominations for the position of Chair(s), Vicky would continue as Chair of Council until the election process had been completed.

5.1 Honorary Officers

AR presented options on Honorary Officers.

Council agreed to consider Honorary Officers if a suitable candidate is identified.

5.2 Associates

AR presented options on Associates.

Council agreed terms of reference for Associates, amended to keep Associate roles distinct from Council and to appoint Associates for up to two years.

5.3 Meetings Schedule

AR presented options for restructuring Council and Management Board meetings.

Council agreed to increase the number of Council Meetings from 3 to 4 a year and to schedule Management Board meetings halfway between each Council meeting.

Council further agreed that the role of Management Board should focus on fundraising, finance and staffing, and that strategy should primarily be the responsibility of Council rather than Management Board. RC will circulate information on policy governance.

5.4 AR presented options for election of officers.

VS, SW & PS spoke about their experience of the existing roles of Chair and Vice Chair.

Council agreed to allow joint nominations for Chair and to process for electing Chair and Vice Chairs, to submit nominations by email to AR by 5pm on Monday with a supporting statement of up to 250 words, with an election run electronically using AV/STV, with voting lasting two weeks.

5.5 Management Board

AR clarified that the Officers automatically became members of Management Board however she recommended that candidates for Officer positions also stood in the election for Management Board if they also wish to serve on that body. She explained that the elections for Officers are run before the Management Board elections so the successful candidates are then removed from the election for Management Board.

Council agreed that there should be 8 members of Management Board and that the Chair of Council should also chair Management Board.

6. Budget

AR presented the budget and highlighted a 4% pay increase for staff agreed this financial year, with a proposal for serious consideration of a further increase of at least 2% next year. PS thanked staff for agreeing to a pay freeze during UD's financial difficulties, and pointed to the increase in income from Rodell Properties. AR outlined the implications to the budget of the changes to the membership system. AR to confirm corporation tax and AGM cost figures. SGM suggested a budget briefing with Arti Vyas and AR for Council members.

Council agreed the budget subject to clarification of queries raised.

7. Director's report and questions

AR asked Council members to email with any feedback on detail of Director's report. Council noted the departure of staff and agreed to thank John Franglen and Emily Randall for their service and hoped that they would continue their relationship with UD. AR outlined project currently running with Outrageous Impact.

8. Dates of future meetings

September meeting moved to 10 September.

The proposed dates were then agreed.

9. Europe discussion

AR outlined a paper on EU referendum, UD's role in campaigning on this issue, and proposed changes to the agreed strategy.

There was a general discussion about the referendum result and what it means for the prospects for constitutional reform. Council proposed that UD should focus on how our uncodified constitution has contributed to uncertainty around Brexit, rather than talking about the process of Brexit. Council agreed that UD should use Brexit as a hook to talk about taking back control of democracy at home. AR emphasised that UD should be careful not just to talk to the 48% who voted Remain, but that we should have something to say to Leave voters as well. Council underlined that UD should maintain neutrality on Brexit. The issue of thresholds for referendums was also discussed.

Council asked AR to revise the strategy paper in light of the discussions at the meeting. RC suggested using Loomio or Represent.Me to facilitate the discussion.

AR agreed to present a policy paper on referendums to the next meeting.

10. AOB

AR distributed copies of Campaigning for Change, and will arrange for organiser to speak to Council.

Council also thanked VS for her long service as Chair.