

Chairman, General Purposes Committee of Aldermen
Sir David Wootton, Alderman

Chairman, Livery Committee
Victoria Russell



To: All Livery Company Masters, Prime Wardens, the Upper Bailiff, and Clerks

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Date 9 September 2020

Dear Master, Clerk,

Arrangements for Common Hall: Election of Lord Mayor, 29 September 2020

We hope you will have had the opportunity to read this message already on the new Livery Committee website (<https://www.liverycommittee.org>) but, in case not, please see information below regarding Common Hall this September.

As you will be aware, we have been considering closely the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on how we might be able to proceed with Common Hall and the Election of Lord Mayor this September. This follows the cancellation of June's Common Hall and the Election of Sheriffs, and Liverymen will be aware of the Court of Aldermen's stated intention to return the current Lord Mayor, Alderman William Russell, for a second term.

It will come as no surprise, in the current circumstances, that Government legislation and guidance, aimed at controlling the spread of the virus, continues to present significant limitations on the manner in which the proceedings for the Election of Lord Mayor might be conducted this year. Careful thought and consideration has been given as to how things might be taken forward and this letter sets out how the election will need to be significantly reduced and streamlined in such a way that takes account of these limitations, whilst still recognising the integral role of the Livery in the Election of the Lord Mayor and ensuring compliance with both the City of London Corporation's electoral and Coronavirus-associated requirements.

Attendance Limitations

In order to fulfil our public health obligations, the ceremony will be significantly pared back to its essential functions. There will also be extremely reduced capacity for attendees as a result of the continued need to ensure adequate social distancing.

As a consequence, whilst we of course cannot and would not tell liverymen they could not attend to vote, any who do seek to attend should be aware that a wide range of restrictions, as outlined within this letter, will have to be in place this year which will cause significant delay and inconvenience on the day, and that these may further increase depending upon the situation relating to COVID-19 at the time. It is, unfortunately, the case that attendance will have to be a fraction of what it would normally be in order to comply with requirements. We are asking for the understanding and support of all Livery Companies at this time, given the unprecedented situation, in helping us to manage attendance as far as possible amongst their Liverymen whilst still facilitating attendance in the Great Hall from **one** Liveryman per Company.

Where Companies are still minded that they wish to send a representative then, in order to comply with Track and Trace requirements, the details of any Liverymen in attendance will need to be submitted to us in advance and will be verified on the day by officers. Attendees, following submission of details, will be provided with a **specific timeslot** in which they will need to arrive, in order to assist with the management of ingress into Guildhall. On arrival, participants will be asked to report to Guildhall Yard to register and be verified (whilst held in a socially distanced and managed fashion). The ceremony will begin at the usual time, i.e. requiring all in attendance to be seated by no later than 1140am.

On the Day

Seating will be allocated to Liverymen by officers after registration and will be arranged in such a way to allow for compliant social distancing. There will be no movement permitted within the building once seated. Attendees will not be allowed to change seats nor save seats for other Liverymen; there will be no cloakroom facilities available, and attendees are asked to refrain from the wearing of robes on this occasion. Exiting Guildhall at the end of the election will also be managed in a staggered way, to ensure that social distancing remains in place until all attendees have exited the Guildhall complex. We anticipate entry and exit into the building to take a significantly longer amount of time than usual.

In addition to seating arrangements, there will be various other measures in place to ensure we meet our public health obligations. These include (but will not be limited to):

- the requirement to wear a mask;
- no robing is to be permitted (badges may be worn);
- there will be no church service prior to the ceremony;
- there will be no Masters' Procession; and
- attendees may be subject to temperature checks on arrival.

Please be advised that it may be necessary to add to or amend these measures, if deemed to be necessary in order to meet our public health requirements.

We hope that all Liverymen will appreciate the unique and difficult situation the City finds itself in during these difficult times. Your understanding and assistance in helping to keep attendee levels manageable as far as possible is extremely appreciated, in order to allow for the ceremony to proceed and for it to be conducted safely.

Further information, including on how to provide the details of any nominated attendee for Track and Trace purposes, will be supplied in the coming weeks. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully,

Sir David Wootton

(Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of the Court of Aldermen)

Victoria Russell

(Chairman of the Livery Committee).