

To be considered at the Court of Common Council

2026

A BILL

For an Act of Common Council to –

Make new provision for the removal of the Freedom of the City of London from any person (disenfranchisement).

WHEREAS:-

- (1) From time immemorial there has existed and still exists in the City of London (“the City”) a Common Council consisting of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons in Common Council assembled (“the Common Council”) which has made such Acts, Ordinances, Rules, Orders and Regulations for the regulation and good government of the City and its Liberties as it has from time to time found necessary and expedient;
- (2) The Freedom of the City is an intangible property right that confers substantive legal rights which can only be removed through a formal process of disenfranchisement;
- (3) The historic power of disenfranchisement was exercised in the Mayor’s Court with proceedings commenced by the Common Serjeant of London (“the Common Serjeant”), the facts tried by a jury and the Recorder of London (“the Recorder”) deciding points of law;
- (4) Jurisdiction in relation to disenfranchisement was retained by the new Mayor’s and City of London Court established under section 1 of the Courts Act 1920 but it is very unlikely that that jurisdiction was maintained following its abolition and the creation of the County Court with the same name under section 42 of the Courts Act 1971;
- (5) It is no longer appropriate for disenfranchisement proceedings to be conducted in a court of law nor to involve the Common Serjeant and the Recorder whose roles have changed very substantially over time;
- (6) His late Majesty King Edward the Third by his Charter made and granted to the City in the fifteenth year of his reign afterwards confirmed and ratified by Parliament did (amongst other things) grant that if any existing customs in the City were in any part hard or defective or any things in the City newly arising in which no remedy had been ordained should need amendment the Mayor and Aldermen of the City and their successors with the assent of the Commonalty of the City might ordain fit remedy as often as it should seem expedient to them so that such ordinance should be profitable to the King and to the citizens and to all other liege subjects resorting to the City and agreeable also to reason and good faith.

IT IS THEREFORE ENACTED by the Common Council **AS FOLLOWS:**

Disenfranchisement

1. (1) The power to remove the Freedom of the City formerly exercisable by the Mayor's Court may be exercised by the Common Council.
- (2) No procedural practice of the former Mayor's Court will apply to the exercise of that power and neither the Recorder nor the Common Serjeant will have any function in relation to its exercise.

Commencement

2. The provisions of this Act will come into force on the day on which it is made and passed as an Act of Common Council.