

COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Friday, 12 April 2019

Minutes of the meeting held at Guildhall at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Randall Anderson (Chairman)	Natasha Maria Cabrera Lloyd-Owen
Dhruv Patel OBE (Deputy Chairman)	Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Rehana Ameer	Deputy Joyce Nash
Peter Bennett	Barbara Newman
Mary Durcan	Susan Pearson
John Fletcher	William Pimlott
Marianne Fredericks	Henrika Priest
Alderman Prem Goyal OBE JP	Jason Pritchard
Caroline Haines	James de Sausmarez
Deputy the Revd Stephen Haines	Ruby Sayed
Graeme Harrower	
Deputy Henry Jones	

In attendance – John Scott, Chief Commoner

Officers:

Andrew Carter	- Director of Community and Children's Services
Simon Cribbens	- Community & Children's Services
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerk's Department
Chandni Tanna	- Town Clerk's (Media Team)
Gerald Mehrtens	- Community & Children's Services
Paul Murtagh	- Community & Children's Services
Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services
Mike Saunders	- Community and Children's Services
Steven Chandler	- City Surveyors
Andrew Shorten	- City Surveyors

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Matthew Bell, Alderman John Garbutt, Laura Jorgensen, Matt Piper and Philip Woodhouse.

Before commencing the business on the agenda, the Chairman welcomed the Chief Commoner and thanked him for his regular attendance at the Community and Children's Services Committee, during his term of office.

The Chairman also commented on the vacancies that the Committee was carrying. Members were reminded that the Committee would be trialling holding three of its meetings during 2019-20, on a different day of the week to Friday, which might encourage more interest.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 8 March 2019 be approved, subject to an amendment recording Mr James De Sausmarez as having been present and not submitting apologies.

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Members received the Committee's outstanding actions list and noted the items thereon which had either, or would be discharged on this and future agendas. Members also noted the following updates:

- Following confirmation of capital funding, an update on the procurement of a service provider for the planned Mental Health Centre would be brought to a future meeting.
- The Assistant Director advised that Rough Sleepers were not automatically residents of the City of London, by virtue of their rough sleeping status. However, if they were historically a resident before becoming a rough sleeper, then they would have resident status. The issue of access to health services for non-resident rough sleepers would be addressed in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub Committee.
- In respect of Sir John Cass Foundation Primary School, Members noted an error in that provision of free school meals was for children in reception and years 1 - 6, not 7. The Director advised that this report would be presented to the Community and Children's Services Committee later in 2019, once the budget had been confirmed and there had been time to analyse its impact.
- In respect of the update on the roll-out of fibre broadband to City of London estates, Members noted that a site visit had taken place and the contractor, acting for the fibre operators, had been instructed to hide all fibre spools inside ducts/conduits on Golden Lane. In respect of a roll out of the project to Mansell Street, officers agreed to provide an update at the next meeting on 8th May. Members noted that the City of London Corporation had a model agreement in respect of wayleaves, which they were encouraging providers and property owners to adopt.

5. **IMPACT OF BREXIT**

The Director of Community and Children's Services was heard in respect of the latest Brexit implications. Members noted nothing substantial since the last update on 8th March 2019 and that officers were continuing to work with partners on contingencies.

6. **HOUSING PROPERTY SERVICES - ACHIEVEMENTS 2018**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which provided an update on the work and positive outcomes of the Housing Property Services Team for 2018.

Members acknowledged the Chairman's pro-active involvement in addressing the procurement issues; i.e. the implementation of the new Housing Framework and good progress generally, as evidenced by the recent works to Cullum Welch House.

Members discussed leaseholders' rights to a high level of scrutiny of expenditures for which they will be billed and suggested that additional time be factored in, at the start of contracts, to allow for alternative suggestions to be explored. Members noted that, once the current backlog had been cleared, officers would be able to include more accurate projections, enabling better planning and less disruptions to lease holders. Officers anticipated that the first projections report would be available in July 2019, subject to tender results. Members were reminded that loans were available to assist leaseholders.

Officers agreed to chase progress to the balcony doors on Middlesex Street and noted that the windows were triple, not double glazed.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

7. REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which provided them with an update on the Regional Adoption Agency which would be going live this month. Members were first advised of the plans for the City of London Corporation to become a Member of a new Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) in June 2018.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

8. BUDGET ANALYSIS

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the 2019/20 budget position, which reflected increased provision for inflationary costs and a reduction in expenditure delivered by efficiency savings. Members noted that the City Corporation, in common with all local authorities, faced budgetary pressures in 2021 and some unknown factors; i.e. government funding, the fair funding review and the Autumn comprehensive spending review. Members were assured that any subsequent proposals would be presented to them for decision. Officers were commended for their preventative work with Integrated Commissioning and the Strategic Needs Assessment.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

9. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

A Member asked a question about the potential loss of over £6,000.00 in unclaimed VAT, over the first three quarters of this financial year, which had been due to a failure to obtain VAT invoices, and asked what steps were being taken to rectify this?

Members noted that, as a local authority, the City Corporation can recover VAT paid on some purchases, where a valid invoice or receipt is provided. The monitoring process had actually recorded potential recoverable VAT of £1,160, which might have arisen as a result of inputting error, and this would be addressed through targeted training. The Assistant Director accepted that the Member's question rightly highlighted the continuing need to monitor and challenge transactions. Members noted that some corporate card users had already had their purchase cards withdrawn, where there was evidence of non-compliance. However, Members also noted that the cards supported nearly 2,400 purchases annually (totalling £160,000); saving considerable administration costs to both the Community and Children's Services Department and Chamberlain's.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no items.

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that – under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act

Item No(s)	Paragraph No
12 – 13	3
14	2 & 4
15 – 19	3

12. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED, That – the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 8th May 2019 be approved.

13. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS - NON-PUBLIC

Members received the Committee's Non-public Outstanding Actions list and noted the items thereon which had either, or would be discharged on this and future agendas.

14. NEW PARTNERSHIP SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

15. WILLIAM BLAKE ESTATE AND DRON HOUSE DOOR ENTRY SYSTEM REPLACEMENT

Members considered and approved a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

16. **WAIVER REPORT WLOF0120 - RULE 25 PROCUREMENT CODE**
Members considered and approved a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
17. **WAIVER REPORT WLOF0124 - RULE 25 PROCUREMENT CODE**
Members considered and approved a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
18. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
There were no questions.
19. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
Members received a report of the City Surveyor.

The meeting ended at 1.15 pm

Chairman

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