

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Thursday, 19 March 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 19 March 2020 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Catherine McGuinness (Chair)
Deputy Tom Sleight (Vice-Chair)
Randall Anderson (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Keith Bottomley
Marianne Fredericks
Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark
Deputy Edward Lord
Alderman Vincent Keaveny
Alderman Ian Luder
Jeremy Mayhew
Andrew McMurtrie
Jeremy Simons (Ex-Officio Member)

In Attendance (by video or teleconference facility):

Nicholas Bensted-Smith
Tijs Broeke
Doug Barrow (Ex-Officio Member)
Karina Dostalova
Simon Duckworth (Deputy Chairman)
Anne Fairweather
Alderman Timothy Hailes
Sheriff Christopher Hayward (Vice Chairman)
Shravan Joshi
Deputy Alastair Moss (Ex-Officio Member)
Graham Packham (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Dr Giles Shilson
Sir Michael Snyder
Deputy Philip Woodhouse
Alderman Sir David Wootton

In Attendance (non-Committee Members):

Alderman Prem Goyal

Officers:

Peter Lisley	- Assistant Town Clerk & Director of Major Projects
Angela Roach	- Assistant Town Clerk & Director of Member Services
Emma Cunningham	- Town Clerk's Department
Simon Latham	- Town Clerk's Department
Greg Moore	- Town Clerk's Department
Caroline Al-Beyerty	- Deputy Chamberlain

Paul Double	- City Remembrancer
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller & City Solicitor
Paul Wilkinson	- City Surveyor
Bob Roberts	- Director of Communications
Sir Nick Kenyon	- Managing Director, Barbican Centre
Giles French	- Department of Innovation & Growth
Nicholas Gill	- City Surveyor's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Wendy Mead, Deputy Joyce Nash, and Mark Wheatley.

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

There were none.

3. **MINUTES**

- a) The public minutes of the Policy and Resources meeting held on 20 February 2020 were approved.
- b) The draft public minutes of the Members' Privileges Sub-Committee meeting held on 18 February 2020 were noted and the recommendation set out under item 4 therein approved.

RESOLVED: That that refurbishment and renewal of items in the Chief Commoner's and Chair of Policy's flats form part of the Cyclical Works Programme going forward and that an annual light touch refresh take place to a value of circa £1000, to be funded through the City Surveyor's local risk budget.

- c) The public minutes of the Public Relations and Economic Development Sub-Committee meeting held on 19 February 2020 were noted.
- d) The draft public minutes of the Projects Sub-Committee meeting held on 24 February 2020 were noted.

4. **COVID-19**

The Assistant Town Clerk spoke to provide Members with an update on the emerging COVID-19 crisis and the City Corporation's response to it. He reminded Members that the City Corporation was a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act and, as such, had certain responsibilities placed upon it. He went on to outline that a structure had been established to manage matters consisting of Gold, Silver and Bronze level. The Assistant Town Clerk reported that he had the Gold command role within the organisation and was overseeing Gold meetings that were now taking place remotely on a daily basis.

He went on to report that the pace of activity around the response to COVID-19 had been challenging with the sudden emergence of information causing

Officers to change track where necessary. Members were informed that the organisation was now winding down huge areas of work with a lot of strain therefore being placed on a wide range of Officers. It was reported that IT systems were holding up well at present, although it was noted that there was currently a shortage of chargers to be issued to Members and Officers now working from home.

All non-essential staff (i.e. those not supporting critical services) had now been ordered out of the Guildhall and asked to work from home in accordance with Government guidance and to ensure that they were not travelling to work. Those coming into the building were being kept to an absolute minimum. The Assistant Town Clerk commented on the welfare duty the organisation had for all staff and the imperative to avoid taking any undue risks. He asked that Members support those who were providing critical services and continuing to come to work and also those staff who were now working from home in very unfamiliar circumstances. He noted that the organisation was actively pursuing what could be done for the health and wellbeing of such staff and how best to keep them engaged with the business.

The Assistant Town Clerk reminded Members of the breadth of the organisation and touched upon its wide range of different responsibilities, adding that the organisation was not particularly deep in terms of resourcing of certain areas and, consequently, that a lot of requests and strain was therefore being put upon a relatively small number of people. It was noted that this was particularly true of colleagues in the Community and Children's Services Department, where Officers were working extremely hard in terms of delivering critical services in what was and would probably continue to be rapidly changing circumstances. With this in mind, Members were reminded that any queries they might have at present should be channelled through the dedicated COVID email inbox – details of which were sent to all last week.

The Assistant Town Clerk concluded by outlining his very real concerns around the number of staff continuing to attend work and outlined steps being taken to address this immediately. He added that the significant implications of imminent school closures on staff were also now being thought through in more detail.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Town Clerk for his comprehensive update and expressed her hope that, after today's proceedings, Members would also refrain from returning to the Guildhall. She also referred to the fact that all Member queries should now be directed to the dedicated mailbox and that Members should be regularly consulting the FAQ's page to ensure that the point they were raising had not already been covered and avoid unnecessary duplication.

Due to the ongoing COVID crisis and Government directives to minimise non-essential travel, a small number of Members (sufficient for a quorum) had attended in person. However, in view of the unprecedented circumstances and to facilitate informal contributions by those Members not physically present ahead of any decision-making, the meeting was adjourned at this point in proceedings. The

meeting was subsequently reconvened at 3.05pm and all items of business considered in the normal way.

Members proceeded to engage in wide-ranging debate on the matter, with the following items discussed:

Communications: In response to Members queries, the Director of Communications reported on the wide array of communications already circulated on COVID-19 and noted that a more targeted and focused approach may need to be adopted as the situation unfolded, to prevent information overload. He drew Members' attention to the FAQs page on the City website and outlined the wide range of communications activities underway with partners, businesses, and local communities.

In response to specific questions, he advised that that he would be happy to explore the possibility of issuing a more regular email bulletin to residents, as well as to place guidance on the public website in relation to domestic violence, given the potential for increase with more people forced to stay at home. He also agreed that messaging to staff based outside of Guildhall and those working outdoors, such as within the City's open spaces or refuse collectors, was also highly important and may need to utilise different mediums given the differing office environment. Finally, he agreed to explore arranging a weekly dial in which would, essentially, be a one-way conversation updating Members on the latest situation.

Support for businesses: The Chair highlighted the huge impact that the current situation would have on businesses and the fact that the City of London Corporation was looking urgently at what it could do to support cash-flow and essentially prevent companies from going under unnecessarily in the short-term. It was highlighted that the primary responsibility here rested with Government, but that Officers here were also working on how best to play a supporting role in terms of business and rental rates. The Chairman of Finance then spoke to elaborate on where immediate help would be targeted, noting that further discussion on this matter would take place under Item 25(B). The Chair of the Property Investment Board added to this, providing information on the consideration also being given to segmenting types of tenants for further support, as well as updating Members on the close ongoing liaison with tenants on a daily basis in areas such as Leadenhall Market, where small businesses were suffering particularly. He concluded by stating that the approach to all tenants would need to be collaborative and multidirectional across the City Corporation, with it recognised that there was a tension between pace and consultation at present and there was a need to strike the right balance.

In response to questions, the Deputy Chamberlain confirmed that council tax relief was available to residents who had unfortunately lost their jobs. She added that Officers were also urgently looking at what other mechanisms were in place in respect of both businesses and residents, including the potential deferment of payments and payment plans. It was also noted that some care would need to be taken in respect of not encouraging certain unviable

businesses in some sectors to take out more loans which they would never realistically be able to repay for some time, if ever.

Decision-making: The Assistant Town Clerk reminded Members of the current provisions of Local Government legislation and its application for City Corporation meetings, whereby a physical presence was required in order to contribute and make decisions. Government was currently exploring the inclusion of measures to relax the current legal requirements and facilitate virtual participation and decision-making; however, in the meantime, Officers were looking at various workarounds and the best way to continue to be inclusive, transparent, and ensure that Member oversight was maintained.

Given the advice not to travel unless absolutely necessary, it was reported that many meetings would now be taking place remotely as informal discussions, with papers circulated electronically and any requisite decisions ratified under urgency procedures thereafter. Alternatively, items would be circulated electronically to Committee Members with comments sought prior to taking urgent action.

Members were informed that Officers had now been asked not to submit any for information items to committees and to focus only on fundamental, for decision, items. The Assistant Town Clerk highlighted that for information items could continue to be shared in other ways, such as via email.

Innovation, Growth, and Economic Engagement: The Director of Innovation and Growth updated Members in respect of emerging thinking around how to sustain long-term competitiveness and how to aid in speeding up the recovery of the economy after the current crisis. In this context, Officers had been talking to both the Chair of Policy and Resources and the Lord Mayor about how a virtual Economic Diplomacy engagement programme might be put together to replace and pivot from the normal visits that take place to something that takes advantage of the technology available and the ability to engage right around the globe. This was in addition to tracking global measures and economic impact so that they could support content for the Chair of Policy and Resources and the Lord Mayor when they are talking to public authorities and businesses.

The Director also thanked Members for their concern/support around the organisation's overseas offices. He reported that colleagues in China had now been working from home for around two months now and remained in close contact. He clarified that the Chair of Policy and Resources Committee and the Lord Mayor also held a call recently with staff based in China.

Through global work that Officers had been undertaking with countries such as Japan, South Korea, and China which had already been affected by COVID-19, the Director highlighted the evidence that mental health needed to be at the top of the agenda as the morale of those working from home dropped very quickly. The enormous implication of school closures on the workforce was also noted, as was the evidence that early focus should be around SMEs and that the Government need to take the first loss to prevent a loss of liquidity. Finally, it was noted that the sector was likely to change markedly as a result of this

crisis, with it likely that some small firms would disappear or consolidate and that more flexible services and far more online services would emerge.

With reference to Economic Diplomacy and the proposed Engagement Plan in particular, the Director outlined broadly the virtual engagement programme to be set up, focused on key markets and sectors and working both to those overseas markets (likely the US, EU, China and Japan in the first instance) and looking at key sectors within those markets, particularly those that had large investments into the UK. He added that Officers were very aware that, even prior to the COVID crisis, investors were looking at their footprint in London and the UK and that this would undoubtedly now accelerate that.

Officers were looking to put in place a programme which systematically looked at some of these key sectors and markets and provided an opportunity to engage and think about how London can be part of future success. Messages could then be relayed to Government around what measures need to be taken and thought could be given to how London could most strongly advocate its ongoing strengths coming out of this crisis and ultimately speed up economic recovery.

The Chair reported that this was still very much a work in progress. It was noted that the trade associations and others would remain focused on keeping the financial system going and that thought might therefore be given to the role that the organisation could eventually play here. She highlighted that she was continuing to work extremely closely with the Lord Mayor on this. The Lord Mayor added that feedback from the business community had been very positive to date in respect of these proposals.

5. RESOLUTION OF THE MARKETS COMMITTEE

The Committee considered a resolution of the Markets Committee concerning the composition of the Markets Consolidation Programme Working Party.

Members observed that the Working Party was intended to be a relatively small and fleet-of-foot group which could provide strategic oversight to the programme. Consequently, it was felt that it would not be appropriate to expand the size of the Working Party to accommodate this request, noting that it could lead to similar requests from other committees represented. However, it was agreed that the composition should be adjusted to allow for each Chair serving on the Working Party to have either their Deputy Chair or another nominated Committee Member attend in their absence.

RESOLVED: That the composition of the Working Party be amended to allow for a representative of constituent committees to attend and participate, in the event the Chair or Deputy Chair was unable to.

6. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND COMPOSITIONS

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk which set out the various amendments to Terms of Reference requested by Committees. It also set out the Policy and Resource's Committee's own Terms of Reference for review.

During discussion, the following points were raised:

- Members expressed support for the revised wording of the Education Board's terms of reference, which resolved concerns raised the previous year over the relative responsibilities of certain committees.
- The request from the Board of Governors of the Freeman's School was considered to be sensible and was supported.
- With reference to the request from the Markets Committee concerning a reversion to its previous terms of references, Members noted the draft minute and follow-up email circulated which outlined the rationale for the request. However, it was felt that the justifications behind the original decision remained and the request was rejected.
- It was noted that the proposed amendment to the Policy and Resources Committee's Terms of Reference at Appendix D did not confer any new powers; rather, it made explicit certain functions already delegated to the Committee by the Court in October 2014.
- The Committee received an additional resolution from the Barbican Residential Committee, concerning a reduction in the number of residential Members appointed by Aldersgate and Cripplegate Wards. Differing opinions were expressed as to whether or not this should be approved, with some concern raised as to the level of any consultation with affected Ward Members. Ultimately, it was felt that this was not a reason to reject the Committee's request at this stage, as there should be sufficient opportunity for colleagues to consult in advance of any final decision being taken by the Court in due course.

RESOLVED: That:-

1. The requested amendments to the wording of the Education Board's terms of reference be approved as set out at Appendix A.
2. That the requested changes to the quorum of the Board of Governors of the City of London Freeman's School, together with an amended descriptor in respect of co-opted Governors be approved as set out at Appendix B.
3. That the request from the Markets Committee to reinstate the wording removed from its terms of reference in April 2019 (Appendix C) be rejected.
4. That the proposed amendments to the composition of the Barbican Residential Committee in respect of residential Member appointments be approved, in line with the resolution of that Committee's meeting of 16 March 2020 (which had been tabled).
5. That the proposed amendment to the terms of reference of the Policy and Resources Committee in relation to Business Improvement District functions be approved as set out in Appendix D.
6. That authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in conjunction with the Chair and Deputy Chairman, to consider any further changes requested by Committees in advance of the next meeting.

7. **ANTI-TERRORISM TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of the Built Environment regarding the use of the City's permanent Anti-Terrorism Traffic Regulation Order (ATTRO) in 2019, as well as whether it should be retained more generally going forward.

RESOLVED: That the continued use of the ATTRO be approved, subject to a further review in three years' time.

8. **CITY OF LONDON COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY NEIGHBOURHOOD FUND COMMENCEMENT**

The Committee received a joint report of the Director of the Built Environment and the Chief Grants Officer & Director of The City Bridge Trust concerning the commencement of the Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund.

RESOLVED: That the process for the CIL Neighbourhood Fund and opening date of 1 April 2020 be noted.

9. **LONDON MESSAGING RESEARCH**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Communications proposing that the City of London Corporation work with London Councils to commission an external organisation to help develop effective messaging about London for UK audiences.

RESOLVED: That approval be granted for £40,000 of funding, to be allocated from the 2020/21 Policy Initiatives Fund, to support research with London Councils into messaging about London for UK audiences.

10. **CITY OF LONDON ACADEMIES TRUST - EXPANSION BY THE TRANSFER OF THE TWO CO-SPONSORED ACADEMY TRUSTS**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services concerning the transfer of The City Academy, Hackney and the City of London Academy Islington (co-sponsored by the City of London Corporation, to the City of London Academies Trust (of which the City Corporation is sole sponsor).

RESOLVED: That the Court of Common Council be recommended to:-

1. Approve the transfer of The City Academy, Hackney and the City of London Academy Islington to the City of London Academies Trust.
2. Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of both the Policy and Resources Committee and the Education Board, to take any decisions or steps required to give effect to this decision.
3. Note that funding of up to £20,000 will be allocated from the Department for Community & Children's Services budget (City Cash element) for legal and professional services to protect the City Corporation's interests.

11. SUMMER ENRICHMENT PILOT 2019 EVALUATION

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which presented an evaluation of the Summer Enrichment Pilot 2019.

RESOLVED: That the report be received and its contents noted, namely that the City Corporation is best placed to advocate and fund enrichment activities aimed at boosting social mobility for young Londoners, but that schools and local organisations are best placed to design and deliver programmes related to the needs of young people.

12. CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP GUIDANCE ON FOOD AND DRINK

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services regarding Corporate Sponsorship Guidance on Food and Drink.

RESOLVED: That the report be received and its content noted.

13. CAPITAL FUNDING UPDATE

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain setting out various bids for Capital Funding. It was noted that the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee had considered and approved this report earlier that day.

RESOLVED: That Members:-

1. agree the allocation of central funding of up to £4.449m to allow schemes (i) to (x) as set out in Table 1 and detailed in paragraph 6 of the report to progress, subject to the requisite gateway and other approvals.
2. note the full schedule of 2020/21 successful capital bids provided in Appendix 1 - comprising 'in principle' funding amounting to £89m together with 'in principle' internal loan funding of £47.7m.
3. note that a review of the annual capital bid process is under review and that any changes proposed will be brought back to Members for consideration.

14. POLICY INITIATIVES FUND AND COMMITTEE CONTINGENCY

Members considered a report of the Chamberlain regarding the Policy Initiatives Funding/Committee Contingency/Brexit Contingency/Committee's Project Reserve.

RESOLVED: That Members

1. Note the report and contents of the schedules.
2. Approve that all unallocated balances on the Committee's PIF and Contingency Fund should be carried forward into 2020/21.
3. Approve the roll forward of the Brexit Contingency Fund into 2020/21 due to the delays in reaching the Brexit date.

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

There were two questions:

Standards Committee Expenditure

A Member asked for information in respect of the oversight of and expenditure associated with the Standards Committee, in particular, with reference to a number of recent hearings, investigations, and the costs of external legal advice. The Member advised that they were intending to submit a Motion to a forthcoming meeting of the Court of Common Council proposing the establishment of a Working Party to explore the current standards regime and alternatives to it, commenting that the requested information would be beneficial in relation to this consideration. It was appreciated that relevant officers were currently busy responding to the COVID-19 crisis and so were not able to provide this information immediately but it was asked that this be provided in due course.

Members' Financial Assistance Working Party

In response to a request for an update on progress, the Chair advised that the Working Party had been looking at various proposals for payment. Whilst it was initially convened to review the financial loss scheme, having determined that the scheme was not fit for purpose the Working Party had since explored a package of initiatives which could replace, comprising an optional annual sum and a clothing allowance claimable every four years, together with certain expenses.

However, there were a number of relatively complex tax implications that needed to be worked through in formulating a formal proposal for consideration, with work also having slowed in part due to the recent requirements to cover COVID activities. The intention was to bring a comprehensive report of the Working Party to this Committee with options, including a possible package of financial assistance, the merits of an expenses-based scheme and a revised financial loss scheme. Consultation with all Members would be an integral element of the approach.

A Member made reference to the Members' Diversity Working Party's recommendations around remuneration for Members and the engagement of an external independent body to consider the matter. The Assistant Town Clerk advised that the independent panel that considered remuneration for London Councils had been engaged in this respect. A Member of the Financial Assistance Working Party also commented that the majority of that Working Party were minded that a lack of remuneration was a barrier to achieving diversity on the Court; however, there was also a political judgement to be made in respect of presenting balanced proposals that would gain the support of the wider Court and not be rejected outright.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was one urgent item:

S618 Housing Act 1985

The Committee considered a report of the Remembrancer which set out the options for amendment of section 618 of the Housing Act 1985 to disapply the prohibition of voting by Members of the Common Council in housing matters governed by that Act.

RESOLVED: That the Remembrancer be instructed to pursue conversations with Government in line with the options set out in his report, with respect to amendment of section 618 of the Housing Act 1985.

17. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

18. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

- a) The non-public minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 20 February 2020 were approved.
- b) The draft non-public minutes of the Public Relations and Economic Development Sub-Committee meeting held on 19 February 2020 were noted.
- c) The draft non-public minutes of the Projects Sub-Committee meeting held on 24 February 2020 were noted.

19. COLAT EXPANSION: NON-PUBLIC APPENDICES

Members noted the non-public appendices to be considered in conjunction with item 10 on the agenda.

20. SUPPORT FOR A NEW GREEN FINANCE INDEX

This item was withdrawn.

21. CHARITIES RATIONALISATION

The Committee considered and approved a report of the Comptroller & City Solicitor regarding the rationalisation of charities associated with the City of London School.

22. CYCLICAL WORKS PROGRAMME (CWP) AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR CITY FUND PROPERTIES (ARCFP) REQUEST FOR FUNDING FOR 2020/2021

The Committee considered and approved a report of the Chamberlain regarding the approval of funding for the proposed 2020/21 Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) and revisions to the Additional Resources for City Fund Properties (ARCFP).

23. DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY POWERS

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk regarding decisions taken under delegated authority or urgency powers since the last meeting of the Committee.

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

There were no questions.

25. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED.**

There were two urgent items:

(A) Markets Consolidation Programme Working Party

The Committee considered and approved a report concerning the appointment of external advisors.

(B) Support for Businesses

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain concerning support for businesses during the ongoing COVID crisis and supported the progression of formal measures to offer relief.

26. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

The confidential minutes of the informal meeting of Members of the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee held on 20 February 2020 were noted

27. **FUNDAMENTAL REVIEW**

The Committee considered two reports concerning the Fundamental Review.

The meeting ended at 3.25 pm

Chairman

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