

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Thursday, 19 November 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held over Microsoft Teams (and streamed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-MI6YJsRgc>) on Thursday, 19 November 2020 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Catherine McGuinness (Chair)
Sheriff Christopher Hayward (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Keith Bottomley (Vice-Chairman)
Deputy Tom Sleigh (Vice-Chair)
Randall Anderson (Ex-Officio Member)
Rehana Ameer
Nicholas Bensted-Smith (Ex-Officio Member)
Tijs Broeke
Karina Dostalova
Anne Fairweather
Marianne Fredericks
Alderman Timothy Hailes
Deputy Wendy Hyde (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark
Shravan Joshi
Deputy Edward Lord
Alderman Vincent Keaveny
Alderman Ian Luder
Jeremy Mayhew
Andrew McMurtrie
Deputy Andrien Meyers
Deputy Brian Mooney (Chief Commoner) (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Alastair Moss (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Joyce Nash
Sir Michael Snyder
Deputy James Thomson (Ex-Officio Member)
Mark Wheatley
Deputy Philip Woodhouse
Alderman Sir David Wootton

In Attendance

Mark Bostock	Graeme Harrower
John Chapman	Oliver Sells
Helen Fentimen	Jeremy Simons
Alderman Sir Roger Gifford	

Officers:

John Barradell	- Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Peter Kane	- Chamberlain
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller and City Solicitor

Paul Double	- Remembrancer
Paul Wilkinson	- City Surveyor
Sir Nicholas Kenyon	- Director of the Barbican Centre
Chrissie Morgan	- Director of Human Resources
Damian Nussbaum	- Director of Innovation & Growth
Caroline Al-Beyerty	- Deputy Chamberlain
Paul Wright	- Deputy Remembrancer
Peter Lisle	- Assistant Town Clerk
Angela Roach	- Assistant Town Clerk
Emma Cunningham	- Town Clerk's Department
Charlotte Gordon	- Town Clerk's Department
Simon Latham	- Town Clerk's Department
Gregory Moore	- Town Clerk's Department
Kate Smith	- Town Clerk's Department
Kate Atkinson	- Chamberlain's Department
Deborah Cluett	- Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department
Ian Hughes	- Department of the Built Environment
Rachel Pye	- Markets & Consumer Protection
Giles French	- Innovation & Growth
Amanda Mays	- Human Resources
Sanjay Odedra	- Communications Team
Pete Digby	- City of London Police
David Evans	- City of London Police
Anne Bamford	- Director of Strategic Education and Skills
Nick Bodger	- Cultural and Visitor Development Director

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Wendy Mead, the Rt Hon Alderman the Baroness Patricia Scotland of Asthal, and the Rt Hon Alderman William Russell, the Lord Mayor.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

- a) The public minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 22 October 2020 were approved.

Matters Arising

City Airport Expansion – The Chair advised that a meeting had taken place but that airport expansion plans had been put on hold for the time being.

City Residents Meeting – It was confirmed that the session would be an interactive one with a question and answer session.

- b) The public minutes of the Projects Sub-Committee meeting held on 21 October 2020 were noted.
- c) The public minutes of the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee meeting held on 22 October 2020 were noted.
- d) The public summary of the Tackling Racism Taskforce meeting held on 16 October 2020 were noted.
- e) The public summary of the Tackling Racism Taskforce meeting held on 30 October 2020 were noted.
- f) The public summary of the Tackling Racism Taskforce meeting held on 6 November 2020 were noted.

4. **ELECTORAL REGISTRATION UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning electoral registration and associated matters.

The Assistant Town Clerk spoke to introduce the item, updating on feedback received from Members in advance of this meeting and outlining proposals to recruit a dedicated Campaign Manager to help further efforts in this area.

During discussion of the report, the following points arose:

- Several Members urged that further approaches be made to the Cabinet Office in respect of electronic voting and other mechanisms to widen the franchise, suggesting that the different electoral situation in the City leant real weight to change and such steps would strengthen the City's democratic legitimacy.
- Other Members, noting the amendments to primary legislation that would be required to achieve this, suggested that it would be unrealistic to expect to achieve change any time soon in this area, given Government was preoccupied with matters such as COVID and Brexit. It was felt, therefore, to be more pragmatic to focus on achieving realistic improvements within the powers of the City Corporation.
- Members expressed strong support for proposals to put additional resource into this area, emphasising the importance of utilising the opportunity at hand to ensure that both registration and turnout levels were increased significantly.
- A suggestion was made that a more proactive approach in respect of registration should be adopted, approaching new occupiers immediately following a property sale to engage as early as possible. Dedicated officer support for responding to and engaging with queries from prospective voters was also suggested.
- With reference to achieving increased turnout, a Member observed that there was also a role for Members in energising and appealing to the electorate, thereby encouraging greater participation from voters.

RESOLVED: That Members:-

1. Agree that the previously approved allocation of £127,000 from the Committee's contingency fund, intended to meet the cost of electoral and registration promotional activities, be transferred from 2020/21 contingency to 2021/22.
2. Note the additional activities referred to in paragraphs 25 to 30 of the report and that a more detailed report on these activities, including cost, would be forthcoming in respect of those being progressed.

5. CENSUS UPDATE

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk which provided an update on the census taking place on 21 March 2021 and the City of London Corporation's involvement in supporting and promoting the decennial enumeration.

RESOLVED: That approval be granted to the allocation of £18,000 in the financial year 2021/22 for payment to the Greater London Authority in relation to the 2021 Census Information Scheme, to be met from the 2021/22 Policy and Resources Contingency Fund.

6. BARBICAN CENTRE BOARD: COMPOSITION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning proposed amendments to the Barbican Centre Board's composition and terms of reference.

Members debated the recommendation relating to term limits, querying whether or not this was something that should be applied now or whether consideration should be deferred until a later stage, when the question of term limits in general was explored through the Lisvane Review discussions. Ultimately, it was felt that there was no reason not to clarify the position now and Members supported the proposal, whilst noting that further adjustments could be made through the Lisvane process if required.

It was noted that the proposals would be put to the December Court meeting for approval, with implementation of the term limit cut-off to take effect in the coming municipal year.

RESOLVED: That approval be granted in respect of the following items, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report:-

1. An alteration to the composition of the Barbican Centre Board, to allow for two additional external Members.
2. The consistent application of a nine-year term limit across the Barbican Centre Board's membership, applying to all Members.
3. A clarification in respect of the Board's Terms of Reference in relation to the Barbican's creative learning activities.

7. PLANNING PROTOCOL

The Committee considered a joint report of the Comptroller & City Solicitor, Director of the Built Environment and Town Clerk recommending amendments to the Planning Protocol to reflect current case law and procedural updates.

It was noted that the report had been considered and endorsed by the Planning and Transportation Committee at its meeting earlier that week.

Noting that the proposed amendments were concerned with a specific issue, a Member observed that the wider protocol had not been reviewed in its entirety for some years. Following discussion, it was felt that such a review should be considered in the context of the wider Governance Review process, rather than a discrete piece of activity at this point in time.

In relation to a Member's specific query concerning Part 3 Section 7 of the updated Protocol and whether this would include public exhibitions in relation to planning applications, officers undertook to clarify the position outside the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the amendments to the Planning Protocol shown tracked at Annexure 1 to the report be approved.

8. RECOVERY TASK FORCE: PLACEMAKING FOR A WORLD-LEADING SQUARE MILE

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Innovation & Growth report which provided an overview of the proposed Recovery Task Force.

Members welcomed the report and observed the importance of the activity being commissioned. During discussion, the following points arose:

- It was observed that there would be key areas of activity related to this piece of work across the organisation, with the City Police's consideration of the future of policing provided as a specific example. It was urged that efforts be made to bring together various Chairs and Chief Officers to feed into this work in a structured way, utilising diversity of thinking to inform recommendations.
- A Member made reference to the management of the Climate Action workstream and suggested that it could be a useful blueprint in respect of the principles on how this piece of work might be approached.
- The importance of the Taskforce being external, as well as internal-facing, was stressed, given the Corporation's strong links with London boroughs and the crucial services it provided outside of the City boundaries.

The Director thanked Members for their comments, reassuring the Committee that officers understood the need for speed and inclusivity in this area, as well as working cohesively across departments and with other partners, such as Central London Forward and the Greater London Authority.

RESOLVED: That Members:-

1. Approve the project start up and next steps, as outlined in the report.

2. Approve funding of £100,000 for the Recovery Task Force, to be met from the 2020/21 Policy Initiative Fund, categorised as 'Promoting the City' and charged to City's Cash.

9. **HOLIDAY MEAL SUPPORT TO CITY OF LONDON SPONSORED ACADEMIES**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services in relation to the provision of food vouchers to the families of pupils attending City of London schools and sponsored academies, as well as City resident children attending other schools, who are eligible for free school meals over school holiday periods.

Through discussion, Members noted that information on both the Covid Winter Grant Scheme and the Holiday Activity and Food Programme was only recently available and that there were nuances in both schemes which would need to be considered. It was also noted that, with respect to Academy students, an assessment would also need to be made of provision in their home boroughs, so as to prevent duplication. Ultimately, Members agreed to support the report's recommendations and ask for this issue to be kept under close review.

RESOLVED: That Members:-

1. Approve the decision to await further Government announcements on the COVID Winter Grant and Holiday Activities and Food Programme before clarifying the City Corporation's role in providing food vouchers to pupils in City sponsored academies over holiday periods.
 2. Note that the City Corporation will review the allocation and distribution requirements to implement the Government Schemes as a Local Authority which is likely to require additional administrative resource to support the children who will benefit.
 3. Note that financial modelling has been conducted on support to families of pupils in City sponsored academies for information.
10. **REVIEW OF PILOT AND FUTURE BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES FUNDING FOR ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY AGAINST ILLEGAL STREET TRADING ON AND BY THE BRIDGES**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Markets & Consumer Protection updating on a enforcement against illegal street traders on the five Thames bridges owned by Bridge House Estates and seeking approval to continue the approach.

RESOLVED: That, acting collectively for the City of London Corporation as trustee of Bridge House Estates (charity registration number 1035628), Members:-

1. Note the review of the effectiveness and outcomes of the two-year trial period of increased enforcement activity against illegal street trading on and around the five bridges owned, supported and maintained by Bridge House Estates.

2. Agree to allocate £268k over two years from Bridge House Estates (subject to annual review) to meet the costs of enhanced local authority street trading enforcement capability on and around the bridges with a view to their support, safeguarding and preservation, and to the protection of the general public who use the bridges, subject to the approval of the Planning and Transportation Committee insofar as it has delegated responsibility for the City Corporation as trustee for “*all functions relating to the control, maintenance and repair of the five City river bridges*”.

11. BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES (BHE): POLICING THE BRIDGES

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain in relation to a request to the City Corporation as trustee of Bridge House Estates (registered charity no: 1035628) from the Police Authority Board on behalf of the City of London Police (CoLP) for an increase in annual funding for CoLP.

RESOLVED: That, acting for the City of London Corporation as trustee of Bridge House Estates (charity registration no: 1035628), Members approve:

1. An increase in funding by £56,000 to £298,000 per annum from BHE unrestricted income funds from 2020/21, subject to an annual increase in future years in line with pay awards and inflation to be confirmed in November of each year, ahead of the relevant financial year, to fund the cost of policing the City Bridges.
2. That this sum and the services provided be subject to regular review, with a formal review after 5 years.
3. The production of a framework agreement between BHE and CoLP that sets out each of the services to be provided.

12. DELEGATION OF WRITE-OFF LIMITS AND DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS RATE RELIEF

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain which sought amendments to the Scheme of Delegations in relation to write-off limits and discretionary business rate relief.

It was noted that the Finance Committee had expressed support for these proposals with the proviso that they be subject to review by 31 March 2021. The Policy and Resources Committee was asked to consider the proposals subject to this caveat.

RESOLVED: That approval be granted to the following changes to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers (subject to the concurrence of the Court of Common Council):

1. To increase the limits to write off all debts due to the City of London Corporation which are irrecoverable up to £100,000 (Head of Revenues) and up to £500,000 (Chamberlain) with any amount in excess of £500,000 to be submitted to Finance Committee for approval. Finance Committee to receive a report for information on any write-offs over £25,000.

2. To authorise the granting of discretionary rate relief under section 47 and section 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 up to £25,000 per annum.
3. To delegate authority to the Head of Revenues to determine and award all business grant payments under the government support schemes.

13. POLICY INITIATIVES FUND AND COMMITTEE CONTINGENCY

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain which provided an update on those projects and activities which have received funding from the Policy Initiatives Fund, the Policy and Resources Committee's Contingency Fund, Committee's Project Reserve, COVID19 Contingency Fund, and Brexit Contingency Fund.

It was advised that two *future.now* events, for which funding of £17,000 had previously been approved in the 2020/21, had now been deferred as a result of COVID associated delays. It was advised that the allocated funds would be returned to the multi-year PIF fund, with it noted that there would be a presumption of approval of funding for equivalent *future.now* events up to the same sum, should they be forthcoming.

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

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

Tomlinson Review

A Member sought an update in respect of the Tomlinson review of education and queried how prospective budget reductions for 2021/22 might be considered across the family of schools in the context of this review.

Responding, the Strategic Education and Skills Director updated on the progress made to date and the regular meetings between the Chair of the Education Review Working Party and officers from the Finance and Education Units. The Chair was of the opinion that two further such meetings were required in order to finalise a model that could accommodate the various "funding layers" recommended by the Tomlinson report.

With reference to the impact of budget reductions, it was suggested that the aim was to agree a formula for allocation of grants within the overall education budget envelope; consequently, whatever increase or reduction had to be made to that envelope as a whole could be applied proportionately. It was also accepted that any Tomlinson changes would have to be introduced over a transitional period.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no urgent items.

16. 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 of business on the

grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

17. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

- a) The non-public minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 22 October 2020 were approved.
- b) The non-public minutes of the Projects Sub-Committee meeting held on 21 October 2020 were noted.

18. REPURPOSING OF FUNDING FOR LONDON & PARTNERS: DOMESTIC TOURISM CONSORTIUM

The Committee considered and approved a report of the Director of Major Projects concerning the repurposing of previously approved funds in an effort to support increased footfall in the City.

19. SECURE CITY PROGRAMME - CCTV & TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKSTREAM

The Committee considered and approved a joint report of the Director of the Built Environment and the Commissioner of the City Police in relation to a request for delegated authority concerning the Secure City Programme.

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

There were no questions.

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

There were no urgent items.

22. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

The confidential minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 22 October 2020 were approved.

23. TARGET OPERATING MODEL

The Town Clerk provided an oral update in respect of the Target Operating Model.

The meeting ended at 3.36 pm

Chairman

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