

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Thursday, 3 June 2021

Minutes of the informal meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held via Microsoft Teams and livestreamed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCgRdyXCFqY> on Thursday, 3 June 2021 at 1.45 pm

N.B. This meeting was held as an informal one, with the views reached by the approved formally by the Town Clerk after the meeting, in accordance with the Court of Common Council's Covid Approval Procedure. This process reflects the current position in respect of the holding of formal Local Authority meetings and the Court's decision of 15 April 2021 to continue with virtual meetings, with formal confirmation of decisions provided through a delegation to the Town Clerk after the informal meeting has taken place and the will of the Committee is known.

Present

Members:

Deputy Catherine McGuinness (Chair)
Sheriff Christopher Hayward (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Keith Bottomley (Vice-Chairman)
Deputy Tom Sleigh (Vice-Chair)
Rehana Ameer
Nicholas Bensted-Smith (Ex-Officio Member)
Karina Dostalova
Anne Fairweather
Marianne Fredericks
Tracey Graham (Ex-Officio Member)
Alderman Timothy Hailes
Caroline Haines
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
Wendy Mead
Deputy Andrien Meyers
Deputy Brian Mooney (Chief Commoner) (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Alastair Moss (Ex-Officio Member)
Sir Michael Snyder
Deputy James Thomson (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Philip Woodhouse
Alderman Sir David Wootton

In attendance

John Chapman
Helen Fentimen
Sophie Fernandes
Graeme Harrower

Deputy John Tomlinson

Officers:

John Barradell	- Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Caroline Al-Beyerty	- The Chamberlain
Paul Double	- City Remembrancer
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller and City Solicitor
Paul Wilkinson	- City Surveyor
Damian Nussbaum	- Director of Innovation & Growth
Bob Roberts	- Director of Communications
Peter Lisley	- Assistant Town Clerk
Angela Roach	- Assistant Town Clerk
Paul Wright	- Deputy Remembrancer
Charles Griffiths	- Bursar, City of London School
Ian Hughes	- Department of the Built Environment
Eugenie de Naurois	- Communications
Sanja Odedra	- Communications
Lorraine Brook	- Town Clerk's Department
Greg Moore	- Town Clerk's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Tijs Broeke, Ruby Sayed, Mark Wheatley, and the Rt Hon The Lord Mayor Alderman William Russell.

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

With reference to Item 8, it was noted that Alderman Tim Hailes and Alderman Vincent Keaveny had declared interests as Directors of the Lord Mayor's Show Ltd.

3. **MINUTES**

- a) The public minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 6 May 2021 were approved as an accurate record.
- b) The public minutes of the Public Relations and Economic Sub-committee meeting held on 29 April 2021 were noted.
- c) The Public minutes of the Projects Sub-committee meeting held on 14 April 2021 were noted.
- d) The public minutes of the Resource Allocation Sub-committee meeting held on 12 May 2021 were noted.

4. **RESOLUTION OF BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES BOARD**

The Committee endorsed a resolution of the Bridge House Estates (BHE) Board which outlined the intention for these BHE-related projects to continue to come to the Projects Sub-Committee for scrutiny in the usual way, albeit with

decisions now being for BHE Board (or the Court) in keeping with the Court's resolutions in establishing that Board in line with charity law and associated expectations of good charity governance.

5. **MEMBERS FINANCIAL SUPPORT SCHEME**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk relating to the introduction and implementation of a Members Financial Support Policy and seeking approval of proposals relating to administration and cost of the scheme for onward submission to Court of Common Council for final approval.

References within the report to a small number of outstanding matters with HM Revenue & Customs were highlighted, with it suggested that these may require decisions to resolve in the coming period. It was agreed that authority should be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman of the Committee and the Chairman of the Finance Committee, to take such decisions as may be required to resolve these items.

It was confirmed that budgetary provision would be made for now on a prudent basis which assumed all Members claimed the full amount; however, once the Scheme was embedded and greater clarity around take-up levels was available, this provision could be ameliorated.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

1. Approve the final draft Members Financial Support Policy including the Extended Members Support Scheme section as set out in the appendix to this report.
2. Reconfirm the current policy on claims for travel expenses where expense reimbursement only applies when travelling from Guildhall to undertake City Corporation business.
3. Agree that the Scheme should be administered by an external third party who would receive and validate applications before passing to the City Corporation for payment, with the appointment being made in accordance with the City Corporation's procurement policy.
4. Agree that Members should have the ability to claim from the Scheme as soon as it is settled, and a scheme administrator is appointed i.e. in October 2021.
5. Agree that, given current financial constraints, the tax and NIC incurred on expenses and other benefits in kind liable to tax and NIC (such as the provision of certain meals, with exception of business meals - or accommodation, with the exception of accommodation provided for the betterment of an office) should no longer be met by the City Corporation.
6. Agree that, notwithstanding desires for anonymity, Internal Audit be given free and unfettered access to information when necessary and decide whether payments should be publicised in aggregate or by named recipients.
7. Note the potential annual cost of the Extended Member Support element of the Members Financial Support Policy with full take up is £937,500 (not including employer's NIC where payable or the cost of the scheme administrator).

8. Agree that the cost of the Scheme be split across City Fund and City's Cash on a suitable, allocation criteria, e.g. Committee/Board time, employer's pensions contributions or on the basis on which we split corporate departmental time and consider the options on how this cost should be met;
9. Subject to final approval of the scheme and the implementation date, note that part year costs incurred in the financial year 2021/22, will be funded from one-off contingencies included within the budget that are no longer needed relating to pay. Future costs are to be included in the 2022/23 budget setting and medium-term financial planning
10. Agree to the submission of the Scheme to the Court of Common Council for final approval.

6. GOVERNANCE REVIEW: CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES; THE PRINCIPLE OF WARD COMMITTEES

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning those aspects of the Governance Review relating to Constitutional Issues and the question of the principle of retaining Ward Committees. The report presented the recommendations of the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee, following an informal engagement process intended to gather the views of all Members.

Introducing the report, the Chair reflected on the structured and piecemeal consideration of Lord Lisvane's recommendations to date. Whilst this had been productive so far, now that consideration turned to the overall committee structure itself she was minded that a more holistic approach would be beneficial. With that in mind, she sought and obtained the Committee's endorsement for the proposal that, rather than continuing to press ahead on a piecemeal basis, a revised approach seeking to draw together the totality of Members' emerging views into an overall proposition for consideration, be adopted. She also reminded Members of the general desire expressed at the outset of the review process in terms of streamlining the committee structure and rationalising where it made sense to, with a view to reducing the overall number of formal bodies and expediting decision-making, including looking at changing meeting cycles.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

1. Note the proposals in relation to Constitutional Issues made by Lord Lisvane in Sections 2-5 of his Review (Appendix 1).
2. Note the proposals in relation to Ward Committees made by Lord Lisvane in Section 7, paragraphs 270-272 (Appendix 1).
3. Note the feedback provided by Members through the informal engagement process (Appendix 2).
4. Endorse the recommendations made by the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee in respect of the aforementioned various proposals, as set out in paragraph 34 of the report.

7. CITY JUNIOR SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee considered a joint report of the Head of City of London School and Head of City of London School for Girls relating to the creation of a City Junior School Board of Governors and presenting draft Terms of Reference for approval for onward submission and approval by the Court of Common Council.

The Chair noted that there had been some concerns expressed in respect of the way in which the Junior School proposals had been progressed and took the opportunity to reflect on the importance of a joined-up approach across the entire organisation, with early and effective engagement and collaboration.

Discussing the proposals within the report, whilst some Members expressed support for a new and separate Board, several others expressed reservations as to whether now was an appropriate time at which to establish a new Committee, as well as whether the proposed approach was necessarily the most suitable one, and whether alternatives such as a joint sub-committee might be explored. Following debate, it was agreed that the matter should be referred back to the respective Boards of Governors for further consideration.

RESOLVED: That the proposals in the report be rejected and that the matter be referred back to the Boards of Governors of the City of London School and City of London School for Girls for further consideration.

8. LORD MAYOR'S SHOW

The Committee considered a report of the Remembrancer seeking approval for financial support to be provided for the 2021 Lord Mayor's Show.

During discussion, the following points arose:

- It was confirmed that it was very much intended to embed the professional experience of delivering the Show within the Corporation, so as to provide resilience and capability.
- The historic confusion around intellectual property rights had now been resolved, clarifying irrevocably that said rights were owned by the City Corporation.
- There was some discussion as to whether the Chairman of Finance was necessarily the most appropriate appointee to serve as a Director, in view of other commitments, although the incumbent's robust engagement and history with the Show left him highly qualified. It was suggested that the option to appoint a nominee might also be considered.
- Some reservations were expressed in relation to the commitment to underwrite any unquantified shortfall, given the potential exposure involved. It was, however, noted that the Show had never made a financial loss other than when cancelled due to COVID and that, on that occasion, the reserves built up through surpluses over the years had been sufficient to cover losses.
- It was observed that the clarity around intellectual property rights meant that the Lord Mayor's Show brand could now be commercialised properly, thereby ensuring greater opportunity for income and proper annual

business planning, which would in turn mitigate against the risk of any losses requiring underwriting.

- There was some discussion as to the structure of the Lord Mayor's Show Ltd and the possibility of the City Corporation becoming the guaranteeing member. Some caution was expressed as to the implications of certain changes and it was suggested that the Remembrancer give consideration to questions of future structure at the appropriate juncture.

RESOLVED: That Members approve: -

1. In-principle funding by means of an ongoing payment to the Lord Mayor's Show Limited to reflect services hitherto paid for from local risk budgets principally by the Department of the Built Environment, the Town Clerk (Communications) and the City Surveyor, in support of the Lord Mayor's Show, to be used exclusively to meet the costs of those services. For the 2021 Show, assuming it proceeds in its customary form, the total funding need in the current financial year would be approximately £210,000 and a payment of this amount would be made out of City's Cash Finance Contingency. If agreed in principle, a further report would be provided setting out the proposed payment mechanism for future years.
2. In the exceptional circumstances of this year, underwriting of potential losses in the operation of this year's Show (and any losses from a future Show were they to arise), noting that surpluses in delivery of the Show in future years will be transferred by the Lord Mayor's Show Limited to the City Corporation once a reserve of approximately £30,000 is established; and
3. The appointment of the Chairman of the Finance Committee to the Board of the Lord Mayor's Show Limited, the Board of the company and the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen having agreed the appointment, as a prerequisite for this Committee agreeing to the funding arrangement set out in this report.

9. **PARTY CONFERENCES 2021**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Communications concerning attendance and engagement forthcoming annual Party Conferences.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

1. Agree that City Corporation attendance and events at this year's party conferences remain unchanged and return to the pre-pandemic format, subject to the public health situation and associated government guidance.
2. Note the planned format for this year's party conference events.

10. **PROTECT DUTY CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning the proposed approach in responding to the Government's public consultation towards the Protect Duty.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

1. Note the consultation objectives and City Corporation responses outlined in this report.
2. Delegate the detailed consultation response to the Comptroller & City Solicitor, in consultation with the Chairs and Deputy Chairmen of the Policy & Resources and Planning & Transportation Committees.

11. **RECOVERY TASKFORCE POST-LAUNCH ENGAGEMENT AND ACTIVITY**

The Committee received a joint report of the Director of Innovation and Growth and the Director of Communications providing an update and feedback on the work of the Recovery Task Force since its launch.

A recent article in *CityAM* was alluded to, in which it had been suggested that employers in the City might seek to reduce their office floor space requirements. In response to a question as to the impact this might have on the City, it was advised that it would be precipitate to make any real assessment as to what employers might seek to do in general, with varying positions already being pursued by different companies or sectors. Some businesses were already seeking larger volumes of office space to allow for more space per employee; others were pursuing higher quality office space or space with better sustainability standards, rather than simply considering volume. The focus for the City Corporation would continue to be to encourage more and new businesses into the City.

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

12. **CAPITAL FUNDING UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain concerning bids for capital funding. It was noted that the report had been considered and approved by the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee at its most recent meeting.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

1. Approve the continued essential priority for release of funding at this time, as summarised in Table 1.
2. Agree the release of up to £2.93m for the schemes in Table 1 from the reserves of City Fund and City's Cash, subject to the required gateway approvals.
3. Note that in order to maintain sound financial discipline a review of unallocated central project funding provisions will be brought to Members before the summer recess.

13. **POLICY AND RESOURCES CONTINGENCY/DISCRETIONARY FUNDS**

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain which provided the schedule of projects and activities which have received funding from the Policy Initiatives Fund, the Policy and Resources Committee's Project Reserve and COVID19 Contingency Fund for 2021/22 and future years, with details of expenditure in 2021/22.

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

14. **DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY POWERS**

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

Members noted the specific action taken in relation to the COVID Business Recovery Fund ('the Fund') and the extension of application deadlines, querying whether there was scope to reconsider some of the other eligibility requirements. This was particularly in view of the refusal of some landlords to grant any rent forgiveness in certain cases, thereby blocking businesses from applying for grant from the Fund. It was noted that the Fund's Member Sounding Board would be meeting tomorrow so there would be an opportunity to discuss this and any other emerging issues.

A Member expressed concern as to the interpretation of aspects of the eligibility criteria, particularly the issue of rent deferral (rather than write-off), which it was argued still represented a significant financial concession on the part of landlords. The Member urged that a pragmatic view be taken, particularly with conditional grants being made to encourage further discussion and concessions from landlords.

Other Members spoke against the treatment of deferral as being akin to write-off, noting that the purpose of the criteria was to get landlords to share the financial hardships caused through COVID with their tenants. Whilst there was a strong desire to commit as much of the Fund as possible, to support businesses and keep the City thriving, there was a risk that encouraging deferral would simply mean the grants in some cases simply going straight on to the landlord and not materially benefiting the business itself in terms of medium- or long-term survival. Therefore, while flexibility was important, it was suggested that a hard-line insistence on rent forgiveness as a condition of support remained appropriate.

In relation to applications to date, it was confirmed that some businesses had applied via the wrong process but that, in each instance, they were advised of the correct alternative route to access relevant funds. Many businesses had reapplied successfully following such communications. Officers had also emailed over 1000 businesses following the recent application deadline extension to advise they may now be eligible to apply.

In response to a query concerning available sources of advice for prospective applicants, officers outlined the online tools and the telephone support lines for those who preferred to seek assistance orally.

It was noted that any changes to the Scheme following Sounding Board discussions would require the approval of the Policy & Resources Committee, likely under urgency procedures in view of the relevant timescales.

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

15. **PUBLIC RELATIONS (& ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT) SUB-COMMITTEE - FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk presenting options for discussion relating to the future of the Sub-committee and seeking Members' views and feedback on determination or further exploration.

The Chair suggested that Option 1 represented the most appropriate route in the current circumstances, given the ongoing Governance Review, retaining the composition and membership as-was for now. Members expressed support for this approach.

RESOLVED: That Members agree to retain the Public Relations Sub-Committee as-is for the current time, pending the outcomes of the Governance Review.

16. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were three questions:

Engagement with TfL

A Member asked if the Chair could engage with TfL to encourage them to undo the recent extension to congestion charge timings, suggesting that the expanded scheme was deterring visitors and putting obstacles and costs in the way of businesses. This was particularly problematic for smaller businesses which were dependent on footfall. The Chair recognised the issues that the extension was causing for some, whilst also expressing her cognisance of the requirements of the City's Transport and Climate Action Strategies, which called for a reduction in the number of motor vehicles in the Square Mile, and the need to avoid a car-led recovery. She advised that she would continue to liaise with TfL on the City's recovery and would be happy to seek clarification from them as to when they expected to review the temporary changes to the Congestion Charge. The Chair of the Planning & Transportation Committee took the opportunity to add that he would be meeting with the TfL Commissioner in the coming period and could also raise these points there.

In response to comments around the reallocation of cycle lanes for pedestrian usage, the Chair observed that providing more space and priority for people walking was at the heart of the City's Transport Strategy, Climate Action Strategy and recovery plans. In addition to existing projects, such as All Change at Bank, a new Pedestrian Priority programme was being established, which would include reviewing the temporary pavement widening and pedestrian priority schemes delivered as part of the Covid-19 response, with a view to determining whether it was appropriate to retain these changes. However, the City was also keen to enable more people to choose to cycle and to continue the growth in cycling numbers that had occurred in recent years. Any decisions on whether and how to introduce cycling measures, including potentially retaining the current temporary cycling lanes, would be considered alongside the need to ensure there was adequate space for people walking.

Planning and Audit & Risk Management

Reference was made to an email which had been circulated by a Member raising the individual's concerns around the Corporation's planning arrangements, as well as subsequent correspondence in relation to this. In response to a question as to whether the Audit & Risk Management Committee should be asked to look at planning arrangements as one of its "deep dive" risk considerations, the Chair observed that the governance arrangements for planning were already under review through the Governance Review process.

World Uyghur Congress

Reference was also made to recent email exchanges following a letter from the UK Director of the World Uyghur Congress, with clarity sought in relation to the City Corporation's position. The Chair advised that she and the Lord Mayor had written in reply to the World Uyghur Congress, wherein they had made clear the City Corporation's condemnation of human rights abuses. She reiterated her previous comments around foreign policy being a matter for the UK Government, adding that the City Corporation could only seek to achieve things in areas where it had the relevant standing.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was one urgent item:

Amendment to an Act of Common Council – Aldermanic Elections

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning proposed amendments to an Act of Common Council, relating to electoral arrangements following the death of a serving Alderman.

In response to a query, reassurance was provided that any change would be strictly limited to addressing the particular issue caused by the death of a sitting Alderman. This matter was now pressing due to the sad and untimely death of Sir Roger Gifford and so urgency procedures would be required to expedite the requisite amendments.

RESOLVED: That:-

1. Approval be granted in respect of the proposal to amend the Act of Common Council of 14 July 1960, so as to postpone the election of an Alderman in the Ward of Cordwainer until after the 2022 Ward List comes into effect, for the reasons set out in the report.
2. The Town Clerk be authorised to settle the terms of an urgency report and associated Bill in consultation with the relevant Members (the Rt Hon the Lord Mayor, the Chief Commoner, the Chair of the Finance Committee, and the Chair of the Planning and Transportation Committee – or their nominees) and that the decision be taken in accordance with Standing Order 19, so as to ensure that any revised arrangements are in place ahead of the Court of Aldermen's next meeting, which is scheduled to take place on 6 July 2021.

18. 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.

19. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

The following non-public minutes were considered:

- a) The non-public minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 6 May 2021 were agreed.
- b) The non-public minutes of the Public Relation and Economic Sub-committee meeting held on 29 April 2021 were noted.
- c) The non-public minutes of the Project Sub-committee meeting held on 14 April 2021 were noted.
- d) The non-public minutes of the Culture Mile Working Party meeting held on 1 March 2021 were noted.

20. MARKETS CO-LOCATION PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT AND BUDGET REQUEST

The Committee considered and approved a report relating to the Markets Co-location Programme.

21. NON-PUBLIC DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY POWERS

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk advising them of non-public decisions taken under urgency or delegated authority procedures since the last meeting.

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

There were two questions, one concerning a staffing matter and one concerning a matter on which a legal opinion had been sought.

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

There was one urgent item raised, which resulted in a decision to delegate authority (in accordance with Standing Order 41b) to consider proposals relating to works in West Smithfield associated with health and safety requirements.

The meeting ended at 3.25pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Gregory Moore
tel. no.: 020 7332 1399
gregory.moore@cityoflondon.gov.uk