

PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 20 September 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Shравan Joshi (Chairman)	Alderman Ian David Luder
Deputy Alastair Moss (Deputy Chairman)	Alderman Bronek Masojada
Deputy Randall Anderson	Deborah Oliver
Brendan Barns	Deputy Graham Packham
Deputy Michael Cassidy	Deputy Susan Pearson
John Edwards	Ian Seaton
Deputy John Fletcher	Luis Felipe Tilleria
Deputy Marianne Fredericks	Shailendra Kumar Kantilal Umrada
Jaspreet Hodgson	William Upton KC
Deputy Edward Lord	Alderman Sir David Wootton
Natasha Maria Cabrera Lloyd-Owen	

Officers:

Clive Whittle	-
Fleur Francis	-
David Horkan	-
Ian Hughes	- Department of the Built Environment
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Gwyn Richards	- Department of the Built Environment
Bruce McVean	-
Andrew Coke	-
Rob McNicol	-

1. APOLOGIES

This being the first meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee since the death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, the Chairman asked that all stand for a moment's silence. He concluded this by recording his thanks to Officers who had worked diligently around the clock to ensure that all had been in place for arrangements in the City and beyond over the past fortnight.

Apologies for absence were received from Alderman Alexander Barr, Ian Bishop-Laggett, Antony FitzPatrick, Martha Grekos, Alderman Alastair King, Deputy Brian Mooney, Judith Pleasance and Deputy Henry Pollard.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

The Committee considered the public minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2022 and approved them as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

347 Crescent House, Golden Lane Estate, EC1Y 0SN (page 11) – A Member questioned whether if, for future reference, where various amendments were proposed, the Chairman or Clerk might summarise what had actually been voted on and agreed at the end of an item. The Chairman undertook to action this going forward.

4. **THAVIES INN HOUSE, 3 - 4 HOLBORN CIRCUS, LONDON EC1N 2HA - TO CONFIRM A GROUP TREE PRESERVATION ORDER (TPOs) ON THE LONDON PLANE TREES (PLATANUS X CERIFOLIA) SITUATED ON THE PUBLIC HIGHWAY ON ST ANDREW STREET, TO THE FRONT OF THAVIES INN HOUSE**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer and Development Director to confirm a group Tree Preservation Order (TPOs) on the London Plane Trees (*Platanus x acerifolia*) situated on the public highway on St Andrew Street, to the front of Thavies Inn House.

The Chief Planning Officer reminded the Committee that, on 20 April 2022, they had agreed to issue a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) for two London Plane trees on this site because of their contribution to the amenity of the area and reported that the TPOs needed to be confirmed within six months. He added that, in Summer of this year, the Committee had also agreed to grant permission for the redevelopment of the Thavies Inn site. By virtue of the public benefit and the tree planting proposed, it was agreed that the loss of these trees would be acceptable. The confirmation of the TPO was to address the fact that there was no guarantee that this scheme would come forward (although there was equally no suggestion that it would not) and to protect the City Corporation's position on this.

A Member commented that the report suggested that this needed to be confirmed every 6 months. She went on to question whether these were the only TPOs to bring to the Committee's attention. The Chief Planning Officer reiterated that this would be confirming the TPO in perpetuity. He added that it was extremely rare for these matters to be brought to Committee as there were very few of these.

RESOLVED - That the Thavies Inn Tree Preservation Order (2022) be confirmed without modification.

5. **TRAFFIC ORDER REVIEW**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment relative to the Traffic Order Review.

Officers reminded the Committee that they had agreed a three-stage approach to this review in May 2022. This report provided an update on the outcome of the first stage which had involved the compilation of a comprehensive index of all of the traffic orders currently in place on the City's streets. The report also sought approval for the methodology of the second stage of the review and contained some suggestions as to some orders to be excluded from further review.

A Member questioned the different documents that were to be used to define the scoring system such as the Transport Strategy, the Climate Action Strategy and the Road Danger Plan. He stated that the Committee and indeed the wider Court were very familiar with these documents, however, amongst the documents was one which was not so well defined to date – Destination City. He therefore expressed his concerns as to using this to help define the scoring system for the traffic order reviews when it was still largely unknown as a Policy document. Officers responded by stating that the ranking system was something which had not yet been finalised with the consultants working on the review. Further discussions on this would take place should Members agree the methodology set out within this report and would include how best to represent Destination City within this work.

Another Member spoke on site visits stating that she was very conscious that there were currently a number of pedestrian areas with markings on the road showing a white man and that these were confusing for cyclists and other road users as they were situated in what would ordinarily be the cycle lane. She added that she had personally witnessed a number of incidents here and questioned whether there was an awareness of these kinds of issues amongst Officers. She went on to ask whether the sites concerned would be visited and, if not, how this would be understood as part of a desktop exercise. Secondly, the Member questioned whether it was possible to have more information as to costs associated with this review and the suggestion that more may be needed. Finally, the Member questioned stakeholder engagement and noted that the report referred to focus groups of business leaders, disabled people and other people with protected characteristics. She sought clarification as to why business leaders were included here and not residents and workers who would only be contributing to a sentiment survey. She also questioned what 'business leaders' meant and how many would be involved. Officers responded to state that schemes where temporary arrangements were still in place since the COVID-19 measures had been introduced were not intended to form part of this review as they were experimental traffic orders with their own review processes currently underway. It was highlighted that a report had been submitted to the last meeting of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee highlighting these schemes. The original intention had been to remove these pedestrian areas demarcated with lines and to build these out by way of temporary pavement widening although this had proven to be more expensive than originally anticipated. Officers were now therefore seeking to move as quickly as possible to seek approval for permanent schemes in these locations. Public consultation would be undertaken on these in the coming months and, if recommendations were approved, would result in the permanent build out of pavements in these areas to address the various safety concerns raised. It was reported that the

use of different colour paint had been looked at as a temporary measure in these areas but that this had not been taken forward for a variety of reasons. Officers reported that they had learned a lot through this process and would not seek to replicate these arrangements (which had been introduced in response to a very particular and fast moving situation) going forward.

With regard to funding, Officers stated that most of this to date had been attributed to data collection with some funding also committed to the next stage of the review. There was a reasonably healthy balance left should the next stage require more detailed consultancy support. The third stage of the review was not yet funded. The current budget accounted for the review process only. If the review were to identify changes required on-street outside of existing projects or programmes then further funding may need to be sought for this. In terms of the focus groups, Officers reported that the number of focus groups that could be arranged and recruited to within the time and the budget available had been limited. Debate around traffic movements often revealed that business leaders and disabled persons often had views on these and it was felt helpful to better understand their needs. It was reported that the focus groups involved between 12-20 people. With regard to business leaders, these would include senior representatives of various businesses in terms of size and the areas covered. Officers went on to state that it was felt that the sentiment survey would provide a good and far-reaching view from residents and workers and would replicate previous surveys undertaken. It was reported that the intention was to work closely with Ward Members in the next stage of this work to seek to better understand local issues.

A Member commented that the review was currently silent in terms of member involvement. He suggested that Members should be involved in terms of approving the final list of key objectives against which the measures would be judged. He added that there may also be a need to rank these objectives. It was suggested that the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee might be best placed to undertake this work. Officers underlined that this may prove difficult in terms of the time frames set by the Court for this work. It was suggested that additional meetings of the Sub-Committee could be called to accommodate this.

A Member commented on the sheer volume of work involved here and questioned whether it was worthwhile drawing this to the attention of the Court and suggesting that either the review be broken down into different areas of the City or requesting additional time to undertake this. Officers stated that additional time to undertake the review would be extremely helpful and suggested that they might work alongside the Chairman and Deputy Chairman to request this within the forthcoming Court report. In terms of how the review might usefully be broken down, Officers suggested that the most logical way to do this might be to go through the first elements of the second stage and to finalise the methodology and scoring system around this before then undertaking a first sift of the orders which would then rationalise the list.

In response to further questions, Officers reiterated that in terms of experimental traffic orders, the only ones currently in place were those that had

been introduced in relation to COVID measures and that recommendations on these would be taken to the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee early in the new year with review mechanisms built into this. For this reason, it was suggested that these were not included within this review. It was reported that Bank Junction also had a separate review process which was being undertaken by the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee.

A Member spoke out against the suggestion of excluding TMOs which enable the creation of traffic free public spaces, such as Aldgate Square, Walbrook and Southampton Buildings from the review. Officers stated that this was a matter for Members to determine as they saw fit.

A Member congratulated Officers on the work undertaken to date. They went on to discuss the matter of process. He referred to the Publica report on Bank Junction and questioned whether it might be sensible to go back to Publica post-pandemic and ascertain whether there were any aspects of their recommendations that they might like to rethink. He also questioned whether there might be any tensions between a technical review of traffic movements at Bank and the sort of vision that many Members, particularly the Policy Chair, clearly now had around a post-pandemic City and reintroducing vitality. The Chairman stated that it was important to differentiate this piece of work and the Bank Junction work. Officers clarified that the Bank Junction review was about the nature and timing of the traffic restrictions in place here on the arms that would remain open after All Change at Bank had been delivered. The All Change at Bank project would include the creation of significant amounts of new public realm outside of the Royal Exchange and Mansion House and was still proceeding as agreed.

Another Member recalled that this had originally come to Court as a Motion around traffic flow, particularly taxis, at Bank Junction and that the traffic order review had been offered as a peace offering. They noted that they had cautioned at the time that this would be a mammoth task in terms of timing and resources, they had also underlined that it was important to determine from the outset what this review was setting out to achieve and to also look at this in terms of 'future City'. The Chairman went on to acknowledge the stresses that the two Court motions had placed upon existing resources within the Environment Department in terms of both manpower and budget. He therefore underlined his support for returning to the Court and looking at how this might be better handled. He cautioned that he was, however, sceptical about widening the scope of this review even further until the current piece of work and existing traffic orders were better understood. Officers stated that they were always keen to look to the future and that this was underpinned in both the Transport and Climate Action Strategies as well as the City Plan which were both key in terms of what these orders would be reviewed against.

A Member questioned whether, if the Motion put to Court had come through proper/alternative channels such as the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee and this Committee, it might have come with a better idea of budget and greater detail attached to it. The Member underlined that her concerns were that a project costing this much should be done thoroughly but that this was

clearly not possible within the timeframes stipulated by the Court. They asked Officers to comment on what they felt was the best way to spend this amount in order to make a safe, climate conscious, future looking City. Officers commented to state that the process undertaken had been relatively efficient in terms of how the budget had been allocated. The desktop exercise to be undertaken next to narrow down the reviews to those that would benefit from a more detailed study should also be relatively quick and cost efficient once the scoring matrix had been defined and agreed. They also highlighted that, whilst this budget had been made available because of this review requested by the Court, the data and evidence being collected through the traffic surveys and other engagement exercises would be extremely useful going forwards in terms of understanding the post-pandemic City and would also help inform the Transport Strategy review. The work undertaken to date in terms of gathering together the information on all of the existing traffic orders into one document had also proven to be a very worthwhile exercise. Finally, Officers stated that they would not necessarily require all of the budget that had been allocated to this but that, at present, it was not clear as to what additional funds would be needed for the more detailed reviews.

A Member surmised that the general feeling here appeared to be that if this exercise was to be done it ought to be done properly and that Officers should therefore be supported in terms of requesting more time to undertake this work. This would allow for more effective management of resources and also for more Member involvement in and scrutiny of the process.

A Member moved that it be delegated to Officers in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman to put a motion to the October Court of Common Council meeting seeking an extension to the timeframe set for this piece of work to be completed and explaining the reasons for this. The Chairman clarified that whilst he was supportive of this, he felt it important that the work already underway continued and was not paused whilst the outcome of this ask of the Court was determined. Members discussed the motion and it was decided that this Committee should present an update report to the October meeting of the Court of Common Council setting out what it had done in response to the Motion and, within the recommendations attached to this, request that there be an extension of time to enable Officers to comply with their initial instruction and explain the reasons for this.

RESOLVED – That Members:

- Note the outcome of the Stage 1 TMO review.
- Agree the Stage 2 TMO review methodology, detailed in paragraphs 11 to 15 and in Appendix 2.
- Agree the categories of TMOs to be excluded from the review process, detailed in paragraph 14 and in Appendix 2.
- Note the high number of traffic orders and associated measures that need to be reviewed and agree to extend the deadline for completing the traffic order review to March 2023.

6. **TRANSPORT STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN UPDATE: QUARTER 1 2022/23***

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director Environment providing an update on the Transport Strategy Delivery Plan for Quarter 1 2022/23.

A Member noted that the report referenced public realm improvements at Creed Court and a six week delay to these. However, the Member clarified that this was not strictly true as the project had taken six week's longer during the construction phase which had caused many of the shops located here to lose out in terms of passing trade. The Member reported that he had requested signage here to indicate that pedestrians could still pass through and was pleased to note that this had been quickly provided but he still expressed his frustration as to how the delay had been presented here. He questioned whether the business rates for these premises might be adjusted downwards to account for this period of time.

RESOLVED: That Members note the report.

7. **PUBLIC LIFT REPORT***

The Committee received a report of the City Surveyor concerning public lifts.

A Member referred to the London Wall up and down escalators and London Wall West. She commented that even the 27.42% of service did not tally with her own experience of these escalators not working all of the time. She questioned how, moving forwards, the reporting of this was intended to work. The City Surveyor reported that the Wood Street escalators were not within the City's remit and that, as such, Officers did not see any service data related to them. It was reported that the City were in ongoing discussions with the managing agent for 125 London Wall about this. It was understood that these escalators had been brought back into service but had since failed again.

The Member responded to propose that there were clearly a number of escalators here that members of the public would assume the City had some remit for. She therefore requested a short paper as to which other escalators aside from Wood Street had similar issues and were not the City's responsibility but were being used by those in the City and what the proposed solution to this might be.

RESOLVED – That Officers note the report.

8. **VALID PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY DEPARTMENT OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT***

The Committee received a report of the Chief Planning Officer and Development Director detailing development and advertisement applications determined by the Chief Planning Officer and Development Director or those so authorised under their delegated powers since the report to the last meeting.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. **DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR***

The Committee received a report of the Chief Planning Officer and Development Director detailing development applications received by the Department of the Built Environment since the report to the last meeting.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS***

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk setting out its list of Outstanding Actions.

A Member requested an update as to progress on the Sustainability SPD that she had requested. She also questioned whether this item, although for information only, could continue to feature within the main agenda pack given its importance.

The Chief Planning Officer and Development Director stated that Officers were conscious that the list required an update and undertook to action this ahead of the next meeting of this Committee. In terms of the Sustainability SPD it was reported that consultants had now been appointed to assist with the compilation of this document and that initial meetings had now been held with them on this. A comprehensive programme for developing this had now been drawn up. This piece of work would feed into both the City Plan and the work undertaken on the Whole-Life Carbon Planning Advice Note. It was expected that a final version of the document would be available for presentation to Committee in early 2023.

RECEIVED.

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

Capital Projects

A Member noted that, as a result of the financial pressures on the City's ability to fund capital projects, two responses had been initiated – the first being the formation of the Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee (OPPSC) and the second being the Capital Review process. He stated that he did not believe that the terms of reference of each of these had been circulated to Members which had led to a lot of confusion and unnecessary questions/debate. This had certainly been the case in the most recent meeting of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee. The Member therefore questioned whether Officers might provide an overview of both areas and how these were coordinated. He also sought assurances that when Planning and Transportation projects were being reviewed, that Members of this Committee would be able to provide informed input. Finally, he sought assurances that there had been no avoidable increase in Planning and Transportation related project costs because of delays incurred by these processes. He added that he was particularly referring to the latest Bank project where it was hoped that a decision could be secured under urgency in order to place orders for materials.

Officers responded to highlight that there had been a resolution passed by the Resource Allocation Sub Committee (RASC) about the need to review all projects that the City Corporation was delivering across its entire portfolio in relation to the medium-term financial pressures that the organisation is facing. They highlighted a particular need to focus on strengthening financial discipline and to consider whether there was sufficient financial allocation to meet the needs of the projects that were being proposed and to ensure that the projects that are moving forward are aligned with the Corporation's strategic priorities. Officers went on to report that there was particular concern around inflation costs impacting projects across the board in terms of construction. For this Committee, it was clarified that those projects relating to S278 contributions from developers were excluded from this process. However, if the process did include all projects funded from central Corporation funded sources such as Community Infrastructure Levy. In terms of meeting this resolution from RASC, the Environment Department had looked at approximately 75 projects, many of which sat under the purview of this Committee. It was reported that this initial assessment of projects was moving at pace as there was a desire not to hold up the existing ability to deliver projects. With regard to Bank works, it was reported that Officers were looking to commence these very soon and that they had had reassurances from colleagues in Chamberlains Project Management office that this could be progressed through the urgency process. The expectation was that this short delay should not result in an increase in costs and it was reported that Officers had built in capacity through the Capital Bid process for an increase in costs in relation to the change in contractors. The Member responded by asking for an update on this particular matter as soon as possible. Officers stated that it was hoped that the outcome of this would be known by the end of the week.

It was reported that discussions around the need for broader engagement in terms of any decisions affecting spending committees had been widespread and that the initial assessment of and affordability/prioritisation of projects had now been completed by the Chamberlain and the Project Management Office and had been reviewed by Chief Officers at last week. Recommendations were to be presented to the Finance Committee later today and would then be considered by RASC. How spending committees might be better engaged in terms of priorities and impact would form part of the discussions here.

The Chairman thanked Officers for all of their work on this to date, noting that it was yet another demand upon existing resources within the Department. Officers stated that they appreciated the need to progress this at pace and to bring together a considerable amount of information to help inform how this process would work.

In terms of the broader remit of the OPPSC, Officers reported that this Committee were also leading a review of the governance process of Gateway Projects which would also be a key aspect of this piece of work.

Consultation Notices

A Member remarked that she had passed Stanley Cohen House earlier this week and seen public consultation notices posted in relation to the Crescent

House application stating that the consultation period ended on 17 May and others advertising a July deadline. She questioned who was responsible for removing these notices and why this had not happened in relation to this particular application. The Chief Planning Officer reported that this was the responsibility of his team and undertook to action the removal of these particular notices without further delay. He added that these were ordinarily removed around a month after the consultation period had ended.

Pavement Licences

A Member reported that several of her constituents had reported disturbances from those operating pavement licences over the past weekend. This had been reported and Officers had responded to state that pavement licences were up for renewal on 1 October and that residents had the opportunity to feed into this process with comments by no later than 27 September. The Member questioned whether this was being widely advertised amongst residents so that any issues could be addressed quickly and efficiently. It was reported that this process was managed by the Public Protection Team who took any complaints of this type very seriously and addressed them as they arose as opposed to awaiting a licence review period. Officers undertook to report back to colleagues in the Public Protection Team and ask that they respond to the Member in full with regard to the public consultation process on these licences.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no additional, urgent items of business for consideration.

13. 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.

Item No(s).

14
15-16

Paragraph No(s).

3
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14. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2022 and approved them as a correct record.

15. NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions raised in the non-public session.

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

There were no additional, urgent items of business for consideration in the non-public session.

The meeting closed at 12.35 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: