PORT HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Monday, 2 June 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Port Health & Environmental Services Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 2.00 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Peter Dunphy (Chairman)
George Abrahams (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Christopher Boden
Deputy Timothy Butcher
Simon Burrows
Simon Duckworth OBE DL
Deputy John Edwards
John Foley
Dawn Frampton
Deputy Marianne Fredericks
Deputy Jaspreet Hodgson
Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney
Helen Ladele
Antony Manchester
Vasiliki Manta
Fraser Peck
Deputy Henry Pollard
Sushil Saluja
Hugh Selka
Stuart Thompson

Officers:

Gavin Stedman	-	Port Health & Public Protection Director
Jenny Pitcairn	-	Chamberlain's Department
Frank Marchione	-	Principal Lawyer
Rachel Pye	-	Environment Department
Jayne Moore	-	Town Clerk's Department
Ian Hughes	-	Environment
Katie Stewart	-	Executive Director, Environment
Joanne Hill	-	Environment Department
Timothy Bage	-	Environment Department
Robin Whitehouse	-	Environment Department
Alexander Anrude	-	Environment Department
Ellie Robles	-	Chamberlain's
Joanna Leyden	-	Environment Department
Thomas Hodgkiss	-	City Surveyor's
Joseph Smith	-	Corporate Strategy & Performance
Joe Kingston	-	Environment Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

   Apologies were received from the following people:
   Alderman Zaman, Leyla Boulton, Deborah Oliver, Jason Pritchard, and Alethea Silk.

   These Members observed the meeting online:
   Deputy Caroline Haines, Giles Shilson and Mercy Haggerty.

Chief Commoner Deputy Henry Pollard moved that Alderman Hughes-Penney take the chair until the election of the Chair, seconded by Deputy Peter Dunphy.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
There were no declarations.

3. **COURT ORDER**
The Committee received the Order of the Court of the April 2025 meeting of the Court of Common Council.

4. **ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN**
A single expression of interest having been received, Deputy Peter Dunphy was duly confirmed as Chair of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year in line with Standing Order No. 28.

Deputy Peter Dunphy thanked the Committee for their trust and support, welcomed new Members and previous Members.

The Chief Commoner delivered a Vote of Thanks to the outgoing Chair Mary Durcan as follows:

Members of the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee wish to extend their sincere, appreciation and thanks to Mary Durcan for her exemplary leadership and dedication as Chairman of the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee.
Mary was passionate about the City of London maintaining the cleanest streets in London and was thus instrumental in securing an additional £1 million of funding, resulting in significant enhancements in street cleansing. She would frequently report in issues herself, acting as a conduit between residents, businesses, fellow Members and officers, listening and understanding concerns to ensure that they were resolved as quickly as possible whilst at the same time realising the constraints that the Service. She also chaired the judging panel and presented awards at three Clean City Awards, championing businesses adopting a sustainable approach to waste management. She recognised the importance of the City of London City maintaining its own waste transfer station at Walbrook Wharf and advocated for the continuation of sustainable waste transfer on the River Thames. She was also pivotal in the approval and adoption from the Court of Common Council of the Circular Economy Framework.
During her tenure Mary has overseen the City of London Corporation’s readiness plans for the new Border Target Operating Model and checks of imported food and feed from the EU, resulting in a substantial increase of doubling staff and operational hours for Port Health, with checks set to rise from 20,000 to 140,000 annually.
Her commitment to environmental health is evident through the championing the City of London Corporation’s outstanding pollution team, that provides one of the most responsive services to residents and businesses, and the adoption

of the new Air Quality Strategy, aimed at reducing pollutants like PM2.5 and improving public health in the City of London. Additionally, she has championed the introduction of a new workstream focused on private sector housing regulation, ensuring the safety of high-rise buildings in the City of London for residents – taking a proportionate and methodological approach to target buildings with unsafe cladding and building owners making the least progress.
Mary's leadership has also overseen robust actions against illegal vapes and underage sales by the Trading Standards team, seizing over £60,000 worth of non-compliant products and planning test-purchasing exercises upon volunteers. Her leadership has also overseen the implementation of a new replacement IT administration system at the Cemetery and Crematorium, ensuring future efficiencies and savings.
The Committee wishes to place on record their sincere thanks to Mary for her unwavering passion and commitment. Her colleagues wish her continued health and happiness in her future endeavours.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY, That the Members of the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee extend their sincere, appreciation and thanks to Mary Durcan as moved by Chief Commoner Deputy Henry Pollard and seconded by Deputy Peter Dunphy.

5. **ELECTION OF A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

Three expressions of interest were received from: George Abrahams, Deputy Timothy Butcher, and Deputy Jaspreet Hodgson.

A ballot was held in line with Standing Order No.29, and the results of the first ballot were as follows:

George Abrahams 7
Timothy Butcher 6
Jaspreet Hodgson 6

Spoilt ballots: 2

No clear majority being reached, the results of the second ballot were as follows:

Timothy Butcher 10
Jaspreet Hodgson 7

Spoilt ballots: 4

The results of the third ballot were as follows:

George Abrahams 10
Timothy Butcher 9

Spoilt ballots: 2

George Abrahams was duly elected Deputy Chair of the Committee for the ensuing year.

George Abrahams thanked the Committee for their support and particularly to the two candidates for the position of Deputy Chair.

6. **MINUTES**
RESOLVED, That the minutes of the meeting of 07 January 2025 be approved as an accurate record of the proceedings.

7. **APPOINTMENTS TO SUB COMMITTEES AND REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**
RESOLVED, That the following appointments be made:

Local Plans Sub (Planning and Transportation) Committee: deferred to July 2025

Streets and Walkways Sub (Planning and Transportation) Committee: Mercy Haggerty

Projects and Procurement Sub Committee: deferred to July 2025

Thames Estuary Partnership: Deputy John Edwards

Thames21: Deputy Marianne Fredericks

Deputy Peter Dunphy (Chair) confirmed his intention to take up his position on the Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Committee.

The Deputy Chair agreed to confirm by the July 2025 meeting whether he would take up his position on the Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Committee.

Health & Wellbeing Board: Marianne Fredericks as the appointed representative of the Committee.

8. **PORT HEALTH FOOD SAFETY ENFORCEMENT PLAN AND PORT HEALTH SERVICE PLAN 2025-6**
The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Environment. The Committee noted the Port Health Service Plan 2025/26.

RESOLVED, That the Committee approve the Port Health Service Food Safety Enforcement Plan 2025/26 as set out in Appendix 1.

9. **COMMERCIAL ENVIRONMENT HEALTH SERVICE PLAN 2025-26**
The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Environment.

RESOLVED, That the Committee approve the Commercial Environmental Health Service Plan 2025/26.

10. **DELEGATED POWERS TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT - SINGLE USE VAPES**
The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Environment.

RESOLVED, That the Committee

1. Approve delegation of authority to the Executive Director Environment and in her absence the Port Health and Public Protection Director to institute proceedings and other enforcement remedies in respect of offences under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Part VIII; and
2. Approve delegation of authority to the Executive Director Environment and in her absence the Port Health and Public Protection Director to authorise relevant officers under the provision of the Environmental Protection (Single-use Vapes) (England) Regulations 2024.

The Committee noted that these two approvals would enable the City Corporation's Trading Standards Team to continue carrying out their full statutory duties.

11. **HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN 2024/25 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT**
The Committee received the report of the Executive Director Environment providing an update on progress made between 01 October 2024 and 31 March 2025 against the high-level business plan 2025/25 for the cleansing service, and Port Health and Public Protection.

Referencing the community toilet figure shown in appendix 2, a Member asked whether more visible and mandatory signs could be distributed to signpost community toilet availability. The meeting noted that a comprehensive report is expected at the Committee's September meeting to examine the matter to include signage.

A Member asked for more information on currently closed coin-operated toilets in the riverside area (Tower Hill and Steelyard Passage in particular), noting the increased demand for those facilities particularly during the summer. The meeting heard that those conveniences were closed by the Committee due to a funding gap that has not been closed, noting that the matter will be discussed at the September meeting.

A Member commented on the apparent connection between increased levels of graffiti and reduced police patrol presence, noting also that residents are ultimately meeting the costs of graffiti clean-up and querying whether a change of policy on that has been introduced. The meeting noted that the Highway Authority is not responsible for graffiti on private buildings.

A Member asked for more information on monitoring and management of river pollution and vermin. The meeting heard that the Corporation works closely with the Environment Agency on river pollution, and that complaints about vermin are investigated in line with the kind of premises involved, and that the Corporation works closely with relevant entities to tackle vermin issues. Members were advised to report issues to the Public Protection Teams for advice and information.

Referencing the waste recycling rate shown in appendix 2, a Member asked for more information on how waste recycling is being addressed. The meeting heard that Extended Producer Responsibility legislation is expected to be rolled out that is set to improve recycling rates. The meeting noted that recycling rates in the City of London are above the national average when the proportion of flatted properties are taken into account.

Referencing the cleansing service information in appendices 1 and 2, a Member asked for more information on the outcome of the additional resources, noting in particular the relevant performance measures. The meeting heard that some of the savings considered as part of the Target Operating Model involved savings around cleansing services, and that additional funding since 2021 has focussed more on evenings and weekends, resulting also in significant improvements. Members noted that the cleansing contracts are carefully monitored.

12. **RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

The Committee received the report of the Executive Director Environment setting out the key risks that fell within the remit of the Committee, these being Port Health and Public Protection and the cleansing service. The Committee noted that risk management procedures are in place within the Environment Department and met the requirements of the corporate Risk Management Framework.

A Member commented that changes in corporate risk management approaches did not yet appear to be reflected in the report. The meeting noted that changes in risk approaches are expected to be rolled out to Departmental levels during 2025.

A Member queried whether air quality risks could validly be shown as having a ‘low’ impact, referencing section 7 of the report and appendix 2. The meeting noted that further details would be provided.

On risk 006 (major incident affecting the use of Walbrook Wharf) a Member asked whether increased lithium battery use has been taken into account and whether firefighting measures around lithium-origin fires are in place. The meeting heard that such measures are in place and that lithium battery use has been taken into account.

13. **FIRST CONSIDERATIONS: ENHANCED FOR BIODIVERSITY DUTIES OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES**

The Committee received the report of the Executive Director, Environment and noted the statutory requirements and provisions placed on Public Authorities in relation to the Biodiversity Duty, as per the 2006 Act as amended by the 2021 Act and noted the reporting requirements of the Biodiversity Duty as set out in paragraphs 11 and 12 of the report. The Committee noted the report as part of the City Corporation's statutory First Consideration of the Biodiversity Duty.

In response to a question on whether the requirements were to extend to the foreshore, the Committee noted that the requirement did extend to the foreshore which would invoke the biodiversity duty – noting also the cost implications, and noting that the duty will be taken into account in future.

14. **REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN**

The Committee noted the report of the Clerk summarising the action taken by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee, to approve the awarding of the contract relating to the Cemetery and Crematorium Administration System to the preferred bidder GSS (NI) Ltd (PlotBox).

In response to a question on whether the system has been implemented and is working effectively, the meeting heard that the system is currently in transition.

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

The Chair reiterated the stipulation that questions will ordinarily be considered only where they are submitted 48 hours before the meeting in order to arrive at better-informed responses.

A Member asked whether the Golden Lane recycling facilities are being properly advertised to all City users, and asked whether more recycling facilities might be available in other City locations. The meeting heard that the matter would be investigated and a response circulated.

A Member commented that noise nuisance in the South Bank area affecting the Queenhithe area did not appear to be properly monitored, particularly in respect of unlicensed busking and inappropriate amplification. The meeting noted that the Corporation has been liaising with the Borough of Southwark and Better Bankside to properly manage the busking issue (including better signage), noting the rising levels of complaints. The meeting noted that resource issues and staff changes are affecting Southwark's capacity to respond and act in a timely and appropriate fashion, and that further liaison is expected to improve the situation.

16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no other business.

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**
The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting of 07 January 2025.

19. **ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICE - OPTIONS REVIEW**
The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director, Environment.

20. **WALBROOK WHARF FEASIBILITY 2027 AND BEYOND**
The Committee considered the report of the City Surveyor and Executive Director of Property and Executive Director of Environment.

21. **PORT HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEBTORS - PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2025**
The Committee noted the report of the Executive Director, Environment.

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

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

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm

Chairman

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