

Committee(s) Planning and Transportation Committee	Date(s): 14 May 2020
Subject: Report of Action Taken	Non-Public
Report of: Town Clerk	For Information
Report author: Gemma Stokley, Town Clerk's Department	

Summary

This report advises Members of action taken by the Town Clerk since the last formal meeting of the Committee, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman, in accordance with Standing Order Nos. 41(a) and (b).

Recommendation:

- That Members note the report.

Main Report

1. Since the last formal meeting of the Committee, approval was given for six decisions to be made under the urgency procedures, Standing Order No. 41:

Urgent Authority – PARKING COMMS [27 March 2020]

2. In response to the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis, and consistent with the advice of London Councils on parking, the City of London adopted a proportionate stance on parking enforcement, supporting key workers and being responsive and flexible to the current situation and in line with the industry guidance.
3. The City has adopted a common-sense parking enforcement approach whilst reducing the risk to individuals. The focus is on operating a rapid response service able to respond to issues and problems identified by CCTV and / or called through to our enforcement hotline, maintaining road safety and ensuring access to goods and services.
4. This approach was approved by the Gold Group and the Chair/Deputy Chairman of the Planning and Transportation Committee were kept informed of plans throughout. The need for approval under urgency was to ensure that this vital information was communicated as quickly and as widely as possible.

Urgent Authority – SERVICE CHANGES (CONSOLIDATED) [6 April 2020]

SUBJECT 1 : Car Park Management

5. As a result of the COVID-19 crisis, our current parking contractor, reduced their resource to manage our six car parks and this, in turn, affected their ability to

operate these on a 24/7 basis in the way that they normally would. As a result, the hours of operation of all six car parks were temporarily reduced to operate from 7am to 7pm only, allowing unhindered access outside of these hours.

6. Officers were reluctant to consider closing the carparks entirely as this would directly and adversely affect access for both critical workers and residents. Instead, available resource was reviewed and a decision was taken by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman to allow three of the most critical car parks (Smithfield, London Wall and Baynard House) to be staffed and revert back to a 24/7 operation. This will mean that the remaining three at Tower Hill, Minories and Barbican Centre will operate free of charge and without access restrictions, for the time being. The advantage of this approach will that we are able to assist key workers with parking closest to Barts hospital. However, income from the three car parks not being actively managed will potentially cease. We aim to provide patrols of these car parks, but these will be mobile and not therefore permanently at the sites.
7. Gold group were consulted on and approved the recommended way forward prior to the decision being taken and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee were also kept informed of the plans throughout and informally voiced their support for these.

SUBJECT 2 : Concessionary Parking

8. From the outset of the COVID-19 crisis, the City received a number of requests for free parking from people attending hospital for treatment for underlying illnesses, and who had health concerns about travelling on public transport as well as concerns regarding car parking fees. It therefore seemed appropriate to agree concessionary parking for such individuals if supported by some form of evidence of medical need such as an appointment letter.
9. Gold group were consulted on and approved the recommended way forward prior to the decision being taken by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman of the Planning and Transportation Committee. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee were also kept informed of plans throughout and informally voiced their support.
10. The need for approval under urgency in both cases was to ensure that vital information was communicated as quickly and as widely as possible to avoid confusion/ misunderstanding and also to support the critical and highly valued work of the NHS and other key workers, as well as critically ill patients attending Barts hospital.

Urgent Authority - Planning and Transportation Committee – 31 March 2020 – Decisions arising from COVID-19-affected informal/virtual Meeting [20 April 2020]

11. With Members unable to attend physically in light of the public health implications arising from COVID-19, the 31 March 2020 meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee could not meet in its usual, public format at the Guildhall.

In lieu of a formal meeting, Members were given the opportunity to informally discuss two 'for decision' reports via video and teleconference, as well as by email, with a view to facilitating Member oversight and scrutiny to inform any decisions taken under urgency procedures following the meeting.

12. Both matters were decided under urgency procedures as there was a desire to ensure that these matters could be progressed without undue delay and the current COVID-19 situation was such that it was unclear at that time when a further quorate meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee might be convened.

SUBJECT 1: City of London Local Plan Review: Proposed Publication, Submission and Examination of the City Plan 2036

13. The Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman of the Planning and Transportation Committee agreed the Proposed Submission City Plan 2036 as set out at Appendix 1 of the report considered and supported by the 31 March informal virtual meeting of the Committee and agreed that it be published for consultation. The Director of the Built Environment was also authorised to make further non-material amendments and editorial changes prior to public consultation and submission to the Secretary of State.

SUBJECT 2: Advertising 'A' Boards Policy

14. The Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman of the Planning and Transportation Committee, agreed to option C as set out within the report to the informal virtual meeting of the Committee on 31 March 2020 and supported by Members: that A-Boards should not be permitted on the public highway in the City; and
15. It was also agreed that the decision on when to begin implementing the education and enforcement plan be delegated to the Director of the Built Environment in discussion with the Chair and Deputy Chairman of the Planning and Transportation Committee, in line with the views expressed by Members at the virtual, informal meeting of the Committee held on 31 March 2020.

**Urgent Authority - RINEY – RETURNING TO WORK ON CAPITAL PROJECTS (S278's)
[27 April 2020]**

16. Riney, our term maintenance contractor, have reduced their resource to manage all critical works including highway inspections and highway defects. As of the end of April, patching and street lighting project works have also returned. It should be noted that all risk assessments and method statements have been amended to allow for social distancing when undertaking these tasks.
17. Further to working with Riney at director level, the City acknowledged that works on our capital projects (S278's, Crossrail, Bank) could now also be slowly phased back. Each project/site will have an amended risk assessment and method statement attached to it to ensure that social distancing is being adhered to. If the

required standards at specific sites cannot be achieved, then the works operation will NOT commence. Supervision of the sites will be undertaken via video links, further to direct engagement with the teams working on each site. This is not our preferred option, but it will help us to control and inspect the works during this difficult time.

18. Before any works commence, it is standard process to notify local residents and businesses. Obviously, these operations/businesses will be quieter than normal due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, but Officers will, nevertheless, still follow this process. Relevant Ward Members will also be notified of the works via email and project managers will use their contacts within the comms strategy to make all Members aware of these plans in due course. In terms of noise, all works have to adhere to the City's stated work hours and these will be no exception.
19. In line with recent government advice about keeping the economy moving and the acknowledgement that building sites seem to be scaling up once again, a suitable and sufficient approach was agreed by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman of the Planning and Transportation Committee under urgency procedures in terms of returning our contractors to work in a safe and controlled manner.
20. The City Corporation's Gold Group were consulted on and approved the recommended way forward. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee were also kept informed of the plans throughout and informally voiced their support for these.
21. The need for approval under urgency was to ensure that Officers have sufficient time to align resource and material (from specialised suppliers) to ensure that these works can commence on the stated dates. All materials have lead-in times and Officers need to ensure that due warning can be given before returning to work. Furthermore, Officers need to ensure that this information is communicated as quickly and as widely as possible to avoid any unnecessary confusion/misunderstanding, whilst also allowing for the correct paperwork and working practices to be put into place.

Conclusion

22. Background papers for Members are available from Gemma Stokley on the email address provided below.

Gemma Stokley

Town Clerk's Department

E: gemma.stokley@cityoflondon.gov.uk