

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Thursday, 9 July 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on
Thursday, 9 July 2020 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

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

In Attendance:

Mark Bostock
Peter Dunphy
Alderman Sir Roger Gifford
Alderman Prem Goyal
Alderman Alison Gowman
Graeme Harrower
Ann Holmes
Vivienne Littlechild
Graham Packham

Officers:

John Barradell	• Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Peter Lisley	• Assistant Town Clerk & Director of Major Projects
Angela Roach	• Assistant Town Clerk & Director of Member Services
Charlotte Gordon	• Town Clerk's, Deputy Elections Manager
Emma Cunningham	• Town Clerk's Department
Greg Moore	• Town Clerk's Department
Lorraine Brook	• Town Clerk's Department
Peter Kane	• Chamberlain
Caroline Al-Beyerty	• Deputy Chamberlain

Paul Chadha	• Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Chrissie Morgan	• Director of HR
Paul Double	• City Remembrancer
Paul Wright	• Deputy Remembrancer
Paul Wilkinson	• City Surveyor
Simon McGinn	• City Surveyor's Department
Peter Young	• City Surveyor's Department
Anna Dunne	• City Surveyor's Department
Carolyn Dwyer	• Director of Built Environment
Bruce McVean	• Department of the Built Environment
Bob Roberts	• Director of Communications
Richard Messingham	• Communications Team
Damian Nussbaum	• Director of Innovation & Growth
Giles French	• Innovation and Growth
Vic Annells	• Executive Director Mansion House & Central Criminal Court

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Deputy Alistair Moss.

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 and summary of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 11 June 2020 were approved.

Matters arising

Climate Action Strategy: In respect of the governance process for the Climate Action Strategy, which had been approved at the previous meeting, the Chair suggested that Deputy Keith Bottomley might be asked on behalf of the Committee to take on a Sherpa-style role in assisting officers with the Strategy's development, working with Alderman Alison Gowman on the Green Finance and COP26 aspects in particular. This would provide for greater Member scrutiny and involvement over the summer period. Members supported this suggestion and noted that a further report on the Strategy would be forthcoming in September 2020.

Public Works Loan Board: Noting the resolution from the Property Investment Board received at the last meeting, which had highlighted concerns about the end of Public Works Loans for investment properties, it was noted that suitable representations would be made through the consultation process.

- b) The public minutes and summary of the meeting of the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee held on 25 June 2020 were noted.

- c) The public minutes and summary of the meeting of the Projects Sub-Committee held on 25 June 2020 were noted.
- d) The public summary of the Tackling Racism Taskforce meeting held on 26 June 2020 was noted.

4. **COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS - POSSIBLE POSTPONEMENT OF THE CITY-WIDE ELECTIONS IN MARCH 2021**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning the City-wide elections currently scheduled for March 2021 and the possibility of moving the date of the election to later in 2021 or 2022.

During debate and questions on this item, the following points were noted:

- It was accepted that the realities of the current COVID-19 situation meant that conducting the canvass in September 2020 would compromise the safety both of canvassers and voters, as well as being ineffective. Businesses were also likely to be preoccupied with other matters at this point in time and the registration process for business voters would likely be impacted. The process would, therefore, be extremely unlikely to be able to achieve credible elector lists for March 2021, resulting in a poor turnout and a significant reputational risk.
- A Member expressed the view that the report did not sufficiently advance an argument for continuing to hold the elections in March 2021 and voiced their concern in relation to the risk of not being shown to grant sufficient consideration to this. However, on balance, it was felt that the practicalities precluded proceeding with this approach.
- In response to queries in relation to canvassing timetables, it was clarified that the Greater London Authority and London Borough Elections had a different canvass cut-off date, with the City Corporations' date being different and fixed by primary legislation.
- It was noted that the Court of Aldermen had delayed taking a decision on their elections, pending the outcome of today's discussions.
- In considering how long to delay the elections, Members noted the possibility of a second spike of the pandemic in late 2020 or early 2021, which would then require the further postponement of any July 2021 elections to 2022 in any event. It was, therefore, felt that delay until March 2022 would be more appropriate and prudent.
- It was clarified that, were the elections to be postponed until 2022, the ensuing terms of office would run for three years (rather than the usual four) to maintain the established electoral cycle.
- A Member suggested that a new and more robust register might be used to inform consideration of representation within Wards and a potential reallocation of Members.

- Whilst the situation in general was far from ideal, Members reflected that the delay presented an opportunity to significantly improve the registration process and encourage far greater participation in City elections. It was asked that robust efforts be placed into exploring the digitisation of the registration process, as well as communication with businesses, to significantly increase the business vote registration; it was also suggested that mechanisms for electoral voting should be explored seriously, with the possibility for the City to take the lead in modernising the entire voting process ahead of the rest of the UK.
- It was confirmed that new software had indeed recently been purchased as a first step in digitising the registration process, to enable this to be in place for next year.
- In relation to queries around next steps, the Town Clerk confirmed that any change would be effected by a Bill for Act of Common Council. This would be drafted over the Summer in order to allow it to be submitted to the Court in September. The Bill would be subject to three readings, with completion expected in October 2020.

In concluding the debate, Members confirmed the request for a more detailed report on digital registration and what could be done to drive an improvement in the level of business voter registration, as well as the quality of information held and a greater sense the level of turnover on a ward list over a given period. The report should also begin to examine the options for an electronic voting system.

RESOLVED: That:-

1. A Bill for Act of Common Council be produced and submitted to the Court of Common Council, recommending that the City-wide elections in March 2021 be moved to March 2022.
2. The impact of COVID-19 on voter registration in respect of the preparation of the Ward Lists be noted.
3. The Town Clerk be instructed to produce a further report on improvements to the registration and voting process.

5. **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR MEMBERS**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk, drafted on behalf of the Members' Financial Assistance Working Party, concerning financial assistance for Members.

Noting the concern that the introduction of the report's recommendations might create a tax liability to all Members, irrespective of whether they sought the payment, it was advised that the Deputy Chairman of the Finance Committee had explored a possible solution with the City's Tax Advisers which would create a tax liability only for those Members making a claim. This would leave the choice to claim in individual Members' hands, thus allowing those who wished to maintain their current position to do so.

Consequently, he proposed an amendment to the recommendations to the effect that such a basic allowance would be implemented on a non-compulsory basis for those Members who wished to claim it, through a Scheme to be designed by the Corporation's tax advisers, where only those Members receiving the allowance would be liable to pay tax.

Members welcomed the report and thanked the Deputy Chairman for his most helpful intervention. Members emphasised the need to ensure that any solution should be implemented in a way that would not make Members feel uncomfortable, with several Members also noting the benefits that this arrangement might bring in respect of the current diversity agenda and widening representation on the Court.

RESOLVED: That:-

1. The introduction of an annual, flat rate allowance, based on the City Corporation's rate for inner-London Weighting (currently £6,710.04), payable to all Members and effective from April 2021 be approved, together with the following:-
 - a) expenses associated with travel, subsistence and caring responsibilities, with childcare and dependent adults being retained as separate payments;
 - b) a payment of £500 being made available to Members to cover the cost of formal clothing following election or re-election; and
 - c) the City Corporation meeting the reasonable costs of venue hire for Ward surgeries.
 2. Such basic allowance as outlined in recommendation 1 to be implemented on a non-compulsory basis for those Members who wish to claim it, through a Scheme to be designed by the Corporation's tax advisers, where only those Members receiving the allowance would be liable to pay tax.
 3. Tax and national insurance contributions on benefits in kind and the clothing allowance (which would be become liable as a result of the introduction of an allowance) be met by the City Corporation, subject to the implications of the proposal being examined and approval of the quantum of that liability once it is known.
 4. The introduction of a Special Responsibility Allowance be revisited by the Working Party, following the conclusion of the Fundamental Review and the Governance Review.
 5. Approval of the Court of Common Council be sought accordingly, once the implications of the tax liabilities and final arrangements be confirmed.
6. **COLAT TRUSTEE APPOINTMENT**
- The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk in respect of the appointment of a Trustee to the City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT).

The Chair thanked the outgoing appointee, Andrew McMurtrie, for his hard work and commitment to CoLAT over the past several years. It was advised

that the Trust had suggested the appointment of Deputy Edward Lord as a replacement for Andrew McMurtrie and Members expressed support for the proposal.

In response to a wider query concerning the process generally for volunteering for this and similar positions in the future, it was suggested that the general approach should be considered through the Governance Review process.

RESOLVED: That Deputy Edward Lord be appointed as a Sponsor Trustee of the City of London Academies Trust Board of Trustees, for a four-year term commencing 10 July 2020.

7. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY: CHANGES TO INSTALMENT POLICY

The Committee considered a report of the Director of the Built Environment in respect of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and proposed time-limited changes being advocated by Government.

RESOLVED: That the proposed time limited amendment, until 1 April 2021, to the Community Infrastructure Levy Instalment Policy be approved as set out in paragraph 9 of the report, and the flexibility on late payments as set out in paragraph 11 of the report.

8. COLPAI TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION COSTS

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's services in respect of the temporary accommodation arrangements for the City of London Primary Academy Islington (COLPAI).

RESOLVED: That:-

1. Additional funding of £283,066.38 be approved for temporary accommodation costs for the 2020/21 Spring Term, as a result of further delays to the completion of the permanent school build, due to the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic.
2. The revised projected costs for COLPAI temporary accommodation at Copenhagen Primary School during the 2020/21 Autumn Term, following approval for up to £300k by the Policy and Resources Committee on 12 December 2019, be noted.
3. It be noted that further funding requests may be forthcoming, should the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic cause further delay to the completion of the COLPAI permanent build into the 2020/21 Summer Term.

9. PROJECT FUNDING UPDATE

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain concerning capital prioritisation and the 2020/21 round of annual capital bids.

Members noted that this report had been discussed earlier in the day at the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee, where there had been particular discussion in relation to the bid for up to £1.9m for the Wanstead Flats Artificial

Grass Pitches project, to be met from City's Cash. It was advised that, following discussion, Members had agreed in principle to support the bid, subject to clarification on a particular item concerning arrangements with a third-party contributor and potential reprioritisation of funding to accommodate this, and had recommended that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman to approve the various proposals as a result, following the receipt of said clarification.

The Chairman of Finance spoke to express his concerns in relation to financial discipline and made reference the wider discussion at the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee earlier that day. Other Members of the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee spoke to challenge the assessment of the position, following which the Chair acknowledged that difficult decisions would need to be taken over the coming months and, as detailed discussion on future decisions may stray into categories exempt under the Local Government Act, asked that further debate be reserved for the non-public session.

RESOLVED: That:-

1. Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman, to:-
 - a) To review the four schemes listed in Table 1 (detailed in paragraph 7) and, in the context of the current crisis, to confirm their continued essential priority for release of funding at this time.
 - b) That subject to this confirmation, to agree to the release of up to £5.057m for schemes (i) to (vi) from the reserves of the three funds as set out in Table 1, subject to the approval of the relevant gateway reports.
 - c) To consider the 'in principle' allocation of central funding for the three new schemes submitted outside of the 2020/21 annual bid process (detailed in paragraph 8):
 - (i) Transportation response to Covid-19 Phase 3 – up to £568.5k (City Fund)
 - (ii) COLPAI Temporary Accommodation additional costs £283.1k (City's Cash)
 - (iii) Wanstead Flats Artificial Grass Pitches £1.9m (City's Cash)
 - d) That, subject to 'in principle' approval of bids (i) and (ii) above, approval be granted to the immediate release of funding of up to £568.5k from the On-Street Parking Reserve (also noting the loss of £336k in potential income) and £283.1k from the City's Cash provision, with funding to be identified from within the approved provisions set aside for the 2020/21 capital bids.
2. It be noted that an assessment of the financial impact and practical implications of Covid-19 on the 46 approved 2020/21 annual bids was underway to identify schemes for possible deferral, with a view to identifying substitute funding for the new bids.

3. It be noted that officers were being encouraged, in the first instance, to explore the opportunities to de-scope projects to contain increased costs arising from Covid-19 within the existing funding envelope.

10. **INTERNATIONAL PRIORITISATION**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Innovation and Growth concerning a review of the prioritisation of international partners and sectors. Members noted the initial findings as set out in the slide deck in the appendix to the report.

In response to a query concerning the FinTech and wider Tech sector, the Chair assured Members that there was considerable focus in this area, although it was accepted that there was no specific focus on 'big tech' given the current lack of fit with existing strategies. It was suggested that the Public Relations and Economic Development Sub-Committee should be asked to keep this under review.

RESOLVED: That the approach and initial findings set out in the appendix to the report be approved.

11. **UPDATED MAYORAL PROGRAMME**

The Committee received a joint report of the Executive Director, Mansion House & Central Criminal Court, the Director of Community & Children's Services, the Assistant Town Clerk, the Director of Economic Development and the Director of Communications, in respect of the updated Mayoral Programme for 2019/21; i.e. - *"Global UK – The New Future"*.

In response to a question about the "one team" approach, the Executive Director of Mansion House advised that his staff were working closely with the Innovation and Growth Team; however, given the difference in the roles; i.e. - political/financial and ambassadorial - some overlaps were inevitable. Officers were aware of where this might occur and would ensure that joint working was complementary.

Members noted the importance of measurable or tangible outcomes from engagement to allow for assessment of impact and the value of repeat activity. Whilst it was currently very difficult to be precise as to what could be achieved over the next 12 months, given the pandemic and evolving situation, it was noted that this Theme would help steer the Lord Mayor into trade growth and helping businesses through the crisis and recovery. The Chair added her thoughts on the successes of the current virtual engagement programme and expressed her hope that some aspects could continue moving forwards.

The Chair advised that the Resource Allocation Sub Committee's Away Day had discussed possible future aspects of the "one-team" approach and Members would be invited to consider these in due course.

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

12. 2020 PARTY CONFERENCES AND THINK TANK ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Director of Communications in respect of the updated arrangements for Party Conferences and Think Tank Engagement in 2020.

In relation to queries around potential cost savings that might accrue from the changes necessitated by COVID-19, both in respect of these particular activities and across the organisation more widely, the Chamberlain advised Members that officers were currently undertaking a review of cost savings and increases arising as a result of the pandemic.

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

13. SUPPORT FOR SMALL, MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SMEs) IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The Committee received a report of the Chair of the Covid 19 Business Engagement Group in respect of support for SMEs,

Members expressed concern in relation to those businesses reliant on office workers and footfall for their customer base, given the very low numbers currently in the City. Officers advised Members of various promotions and activities, such as the London & Partners campaign (detailed more fully at Item 23) and its work through its cultural institutions to encourage visitors, but acknowledged the difficulty of the situation, particularly given current Government guidance around working arrangements. The Chair also referenced the need to support City SMEs but emphasised that it was unrealistic for the City Corporation to hope to find a general panacea; unfortunately, some businesses simply would not survive regardless of help that might be offered. Whilst the City Corporation was working with Government on the messaging in respect of a safe return to work and the use of public transport, the Chair reminded Members that the City Corporation was a local authority, responsible for public health, and so had to consider its position in that context.

In response to further queries, it was advised that a dashboard on emerging indicators in this area had been produced, identifying items such as levels of use of public transport, numbers of pedestrians and cyclists, and so on. Whilst there was no single data source currently available on the number of closed or units, officers would work to seek to extrapolate this data.

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

14. CITY STREETS: TRANSPORTATION RESPONSE TO SUPPORT COVID-19 RECOVERY (PHASE 3)

The Committee received a report of the Director of the Built Environment in respect of the transportation response to support the COVID-19 recovery.

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

15. RECOGNITION OF WOMEN: PROGRESS UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk which provided a progress update in respect of work under the *Recognition of Women* theme.

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

16. POLICY INITIATIVES FUND AND COMMITTEE CONTINGENCY

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain which provided the latest position in respect of the Policy Initiatives Fund (PIF), the Committee's Contingency Fund, the Brexit Contingency Fund, and the Committee's Project Reserve.

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

17. DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY POWERS

Members received a report of the Town Clerk which updated on one matter agreed under urgency procedures since the last meeting of the Committee, in respect of the Tackling Racism Working Party.

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

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

Hong Kong

Mark Wheatley asked a question in relation about the City Corporation's position in relation to the recent imposition of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Specifically, he asked whether the Chair would endorse a statement offering the City's welcome to Hong Kong Citizens with the right to live and work in Britain, or seeking asylum as a result of the removal of their political rights.

The Chair thanked the Member for the question and expressed the view that caution should be exercised in respect of making what could be construed as a foreign policy statement. Several Members spoke to endorse the view that the City Corporation's role was to support the City's business and financial sectors, with international politics being the domain of Her Majesty's Government; however, the City Corporation would continue to be mindful of Government guidance in this area and seek advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Several Members expressed the view that China's behaviour was in contravention of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, noting that the Government had already intimated a pathway to citizenship for Hong Kong's residents. The Chair stressed that the City welcomed all talented workers from across the world and observed the City would continue to trade with Hong Kong as a financial business centre.

At 3.30pm Members agreed to extend the business of the agenda beyond two hours, in accordance with Standing Order 40, in order to conclude the business on the agenda.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

Investment Committee Appointments

The Town Clerk was heard in respect of appointments to the Investment Committee.

Members noted that the Policy and Resources Committee was responsible for appointing eight Members to the Investment Committee; however, owing to the timescales arising from the coronavirus pandemic and the Court of Common Council's decision to undertake its Annual Appointment of Committees at its meeting on 16 July 2020, the scheduling of meetings was such that this was not due to take place until the September meeting.

It was suggested that it would be pragmatic for the Policy & Resources Committee to make its eight appointments to Investment Committee during July, thereby enabling the Investment Committee to meet ahead of the summer recess and appoint its Financial, Property and Social Investment Boards for the ensuing year, given the key issues concerning income generation at this point in time. This proposal was agreed, with delegated authority granted to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman, to make the appointments to Investment Committee following an electronic indicative ballot.

RESOLVED: That authority be delegated to Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman, to approve appointments to the Investment Committee on the basis of an indicative electronic ballot process, to be undertaken following the Annual Court meeting on 16 July 2020.

20. 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 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item no	Para No
21-30	3

21. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

- a) The non-public minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 11 June 2020 were approved.
- b) The non-public minutes the meeting of the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee held on 25 June 2020 were noted.
- c) The non-public minutes of the Projects Sub-Committee meeting held on 25 June 2020 were noted.

22. **NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX: COLPAI TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION COSTS**

The Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 8.

23. **LONDON AND PARTNERS: REPURPOSING DOMESTIC TOURISM CONSORTIUM UNDERSPEND**

The Committee considered and approved a joint report of the Director of Major Projects and the Director of Communications concerning the repurposing of funds to promote domestic tourism.

24. **CITY OF LONDON POLICE (COLP) CAPITAL PROGRAMME - LOAN FUNDING**

The Committee considered and approved a joint report of the Commissioner of the City of London Police concerning loan funding for a capital programme.

25. **MARKETS CONSOLIDATION PROGRAMME - INTERIM BUSINESS CASE AND BUDGET REPORT**

The Committee considered and approved a joint report of the City Surveyor and Director of Major Projects concerning the Markets Consolidation Programme.

26. **BILLINGSGATE SITE - REVISED STRATEGY PROPOSAL**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the City Surveyor concerning the strategy for the Billingsgate Market site.

27. **COVID-19 CAPITAL PROJECTS CONTINGENCY FUND**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the City Surveyor concerning projects impacted by COVID-19.

28. **65A BASINGHALL STREET - FUTURE USE**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the City Surveyor in relation to the use of 65a Basinghall Street.

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

There were no questions.

30. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED.**

One item of business was discussed while the public were excluded.

31. **INFORMAL RESOURCE ALLOCATION SUB-COMMITTEE AWAY DAY OUTCOMES**

Members considered the draft confidential minutes of the Informal Meeting of the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee meeting held on 2-3 July 2020.

The meeting ended at 4.25pm

Chair

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