

PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 13 April 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee held virtually at 10.30 am

Present

Members:

Oliver Sells QC (Deputy Chairman) (in the Chair)	Michael Hudson
Munsur Ali	Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark
Randall Anderson	Shravan Joshi
Douglas Barrow	Oliver Lodge
Peter Bennett	Natasha Maria Cabrera Lloyd-Owen
Mark Bostock	Andrew Mayer
Deputy Keith Bottomley	Deputy Barbara Newman
Henry Colthurst	Graham Packham
John Edwards	Susan Pearson
Helen Fentimen	Judith Pleasance
Marianne Fredericks	Deputy Henry Pollard
Tracey Graham	James de Sausmarez
Graeme Harrower	William Upton QC

Officers:

Angela Roach	- Assistant Town Clerk
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Antoinette Duhaney	- Town Clerk's Department
Rhiannon Leary	- Town Clerk's Department
Chloe Rew	- Town Clerk's Department
Sanjay Odedra	- Head of Media (Financial Services), Communications Team
Aqib Hussain	- Technology Support Partner
Damian Nussbaum	- Director of Innovation & Growth
Deborah Cluett	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Ola Obadara	- Property Projects Director, City Surveyor's Department
Alison Bunn	- City Surveyor's Department
Gwyn Richards	- Interim Chief Planning Officer and Development Director
David Horkan	- Department of the Built Environment
Bhakti Depala	- Department of the Built Environment
Paul Beckett	- Department of the Built Environment
Paul Monaghan	- Department of the Built Environment
Peter Shadbolt	- Department of the Built Environment
Liam Hart	- Department of the Built Environment
Gordon Roy	- Department of the Built Environment
Leah Coburn	- Department of the Built Environment

Simon Glynn	- Department of the Built Environment
Lucy Foreman	- Department of the Built Environment
Bruce McVean	- Department of the Built Environment
Maureen Joyce	- Department of the Built Environment
Kerstin Kane	- Department of the Built Environment
Tom Noble	- Department of the Built Environment
Emmanuel Ojugo	- Department of the Built Environment
Rachel Pye	- Department of Markets and Consumer Protection

Also in Attendance:

- Rabbi Shalom Morris – Bevis Marks Synagogue
- Sarah Sackman - Objector
- Carole Shaw - Objector
- Michael Bear
- Owen Connick (Associate, Hoare Lea) – for the Applicant
- Drew Steadman (Senior Consultant, Avison Young) – for the Applicant
- Merrik Baggallay (BentallGreenOak) – for the Applicant
- Michael Keats (Eastmount Group) – for the Applicant

Introductions

The Town Clerk opened the meeting by introducing herself and stating that the Committee was quorate.

A roll call of Members present was undertaken.

The Town Clerk highlighted that the meeting was being recorded as well as live streamed and would be made available on the City Corporation’s YouTube page for a period of time after the meeting had concluded. With this in mind, it was confirmed that participants in the meeting had all individually agreed and given their consent to being recorded and that all personal data would be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. The Town Clerk highlighted that, for further information on this, viewers could contact the City Corporation using the details provided on the public webpages.

The Deputy Chairman (in the chair) then introduced himself and welcomed all those in attendance and viewing the meeting via YouTube.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Alastair Moss (Chair), Deputy Peter Dunphy, Alderman Emma Edhem, Sheriff Christopher Hayward, Christopher Hill, Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney, Alderwoman Susan Langley, Deputy Brian Mooney (Chief Commoner) and Alderman Sir David Wootton.

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 late, separately circulated public minutes and summary of the meeting held virtually on 30 March 2021 and approved them as a correct record.

4. **BURY HOUSE 31 BURY STREET LONDON EC3A 5AR**

Prior to the Committee considering a report of the Interim Chief Planning Officer and Development Director regarding the proposed development of Bury House, 31 Bury Street, London, EC3A 5AR, specifically the demolition of the existing building and construction of a new building comprising 2 basement levels (plus 2 mezzanines) and ground floor plus 48 upper storeys (197.94 AOD) for office use (Class E), flexible retail/café use (Class E), publicly accessible internal amenity space (Sui Generis) and community space (Sui Generis); a new pedestrian route and new and improved Public Realm; ancillary basement cycle parking, servicing and plant, a Member raised a point of order and stated that, having read the report and supporting documents, he would find it difficult to make an informed judgement on the application without the benefit of visiting the site, particularly the area around the synagogue. Given that it was likely that a site visit would soon be possible as pandemic restrictions continued to be eased, he questioned whether the Deputy Chair could ask the applicant and the objectors speaking today whether they would object to a deferral of the application to enable this to happen prior to the consideration of the report. Two other Members spoke to endorse these comments.

The Deputy Chair referred Members to late representations, specifically one which referred to the possibility of a site visit. The Deputy Chair stated that he understood the concerns raised and sought the views of the Interim Chief Planning Officer and Development Director on this proposal.

The Interim Chief Planning Officer and Development Director stated that he was of the view that there was sufficient information before Members for them to be able to make an informed decision on the application. He added that it was nevertheless open to Members to request a site visit if they felt that it would enhance their understanding of the application. He did, however, caution that this was an extremely challenging site at present as it was a building site with scaffolding erected around all four elevations of the synagogue up to parapet level. The interior also had scaffolding meaning that it would not be possible for Members to get an idea of the light levels and the true impact upon buildings in the backdrop. He continued by reporting that he had discussed this possibility with the Rabbi and the Rabbi had advised that the internal scaffolding would be removed in July and it was therefore felt that it would not be unreasonable to defer consideration of the application for a site visit by Members. He added that one of the key issues was the historic and religious significance of the interior.

The Deputy Chair welcomed any further views and contributions from Members.

A Member questioned whether the deferral of the application would necessitate a further, additional meeting of the Committee later in the year given the

already very busy schedule in terms of applications coming forward. The Deputy Chair stated that his understanding was that a site visit would not be possible until July when the internal scaffolding was removed, and that the application would not therefore return to Committee until September 2021 at the earliest.

A Member questioned whether it would be appropriate to hear the views of the applicant on this proposal. The Deputy Chair stated that he was reluctant to open any debate at this stage as this was a matter for the Committee at this stage. He questioned whether the Interim Chief Planning Officer and Development Director had had the opportunity to discuss the matter of a deferral with the applicant. The Interim Chief Planning Officer and Development Director reported that he had and stated that the applicant would clearly be disappointed with a deferral but that they understood the rationale behind this.

All Members of the Committee present indicated that they were in favour of deferring the application pending a site visit by Members.

A Member questioned whether a more definite date by which the application would be considered could be given for the benefit of the applicant and other interested parties. The Deputy Chair stated that he was very conscious that this application had been submitted in November 2020 and was keen for it to be dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner. In response to the question, that Interim Chief Planning Officer and Development Director reported that Officers would be comfortable in setting a deadline of 30 September 2021 for the application to be considered.

A Member referred to the Jewish holidays set to take place in the September/October period and asked that any deadline for the consideration of the application take these into account. The Deputy Chairman assured those present that this would be the case.

RESOLVED – That the application be DEFERRED for consideration until Autumn 2021 pending a Member site visit to be scheduled for July 2021.

5. **RECOVERY TASKFORCE - FINAL REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Innovation and Growth concerning the Recovery Taskforce.

The Director introduced the report by stating that the Square Mile faces major challenges but also big opportunities going forward with problems to address and preparations needed for the medium-term, hence the introduction of the Recovery Taskforce. It was reported that the Taskforce had worked quickly over the past six months to bring together teams across the Corporation and draw on key existing Corporation Plans. The report had an ambitious aim – to ensure that the Square Mile is the world's most innovative, inclusive and sustainable business ecosystem and an attractive place to work, live and visit. The Director highlighted that this was part of a broad package of Corporation activity to tackle the impact of the pandemic on businesses with each having an important and different role to play including the COVID Recovery Fund, the

Safe Return to the City promotional activity, a re-opening campaign and this Recovery Taskforce. The Director explained that, whilst this report did not comprehensively list every action being taken, it looked at what the priorities and focus should be to drive economic growth and ensure long-term success for the Square Mile.

He highlighted that there were three thematic areas – World-Class Business Ecosystem (in other words thriving businesses with innovation and growth opportunities) Vibrant Offer (retail, hospitality, culture, heritage and recreation) and Outstanding Environments (the right work spaces, environment and infrastructure).

Finally, the Director went on to speak of next steps and stated that the report was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee last week. If this Committee were also to agree it, the next steps would involve a wider Members Briefing on 26 April to fully inform all members of the Court of the plans and encourage them to act as ambassadors across the Square Mile, London and beyond. Next would be a public launch on 27 April with a panel and a short film.

RESOLVED – That the Committee:

- Approve the recommendations of the Recovery Taskforce (Appendix 1)
- Approve the proposed governance arrangements for the ongoing implementation of the recommendations (paragraph 21)
- Note that any additional funding required for implementing the recommendations would be subject to approval by the relevant Committees.

6. GATEWAY 6 REPORT - CITY STREETS: TRANSPORTATION RESPONSE TO SUPPORT COVID-19 RECOVERY (PHASE 1 AND 2)

The Committee considered a Gateway 6. Outcome report of the Director of the Built Environment regarding City Streets: Transportation Response to Support COVID-19 Recovery.

A Member referred to the feedback received on highways changes and the number of respondents and individual responses that were not supportive of the changes remaining in place and asked whether Officers could comment as to whether these responses had been thoughtfully considered as part of the proposed next steps given that there were quite a number of these. Officers assured the Committee that they would be considering all of the comments received as part of this consultation exercise as the measures proposed were reviewed and possibly taken forward as experimental traffic orders. Stakeholder engagement would also take place as part of that process.

Another Member commented that sometimes the Corporation struggled with the granularity in terms of identifying where certain feedback came from and questioned whether, on this occasion, it would be possible to assess the background of the 82% of respondents who had stated that they would not support any of these measures being retained long term and learn whether they

were City workers or residents for example. She also questioned whether an Equalities Impact Assessment would also be undertaken as part of this work.

Another Member commented that it was very important to ensure that none of these proposals were doing anything to deter businesses from operating. He endorsed the comments of the previous speakers and underlined that looking in detail at the objections received in detail would be very important.

Officers reported that, as they had flagged in previous reports, they had struggled to get representative feedback as part of this consultation given that the number of people in the City had been very low. There had therefore been a very high number of responses from taxi drivers for example and less from those walking around the City. Officers undertook to look at the granularity of the responses in so far as possible but reiterated that they had received a relatively small number of responses.

Officers went on to state that they were very conscious of the need to facilitate businesses and enable the return of workers to the City and underlined that this was the primary aim of the COVID-19 Recovery Report in the first instance. In terms of potentially looking to make some of these changes permanent, this would be done in line with the organisation's Transport Strategy, Climate Action Strategy and the Recovery Taskforce work.

A Member suggested that any proposed changes ought to also take into account the fact that many people had now been vaccinated.

A Member spoke again to state that she had posed her original question around the consideration of responses because similar feedback had been outlined in a previous report and she was keen to know if Officers had assured people that their views had been heard. She added that in her two most recent Ward meetings, Members had received quite a lot of pushback on these measures and various on-street restrictions and underlined that it was difficult to respond to this without knowing how their feedback and concerns would be dealt with under the consultation process.

Another Member commented that any measures to be made permanent would presumably require the approval of the Court of Common Council and went on to comment that he was not confident that such approval would be given in light of 82% of respondents suggesting that they did not wish to see these measures being retained long term. He asked that Officers and the Committee bear this in mind when considering the outcomes of any further consultation exercises.

Another Member commented that he was aware of those who had concerns about the measures within his own Ward. He added that, if only a small number of responses had been received to date, Officers should be urged to be more proactive in seeking these from businesses across the City.

Another Member highlighted that this was in line with the climate Action Strategy and Recovery Taskforce work and that it was important to remember that this was about the quality of the experience of those coming to work in and visit the City. She commented that the reason why workers might not return in

the numbers that they had previously would be connected, in large part, to the convenience and better experience of working from home and so having more space on the City streets may therefore impact upon and improve their experience.

A Member stated that he was concerned about the 82% of negative responses being misrepresentative as he was of the view that the website tended to be a place for people to lodge complaints rather than a place where those in favour of the scheme could come forward.

Another Member commented that many of the vehicles now in the City – including buses and taxis were electric and that this must also be taken into account.

A Member questioned why Officers were seeking to remove some of the measures at a time when people seemed to be returning to the City and a real test of their effectiveness could be undertaken. He noted that it was suggested that any removal of measures should be gradual over the next few months but asked Officers to confirm whether there would be a global assessment of all measures that would be reported back to the Committee.

Another Member urged the need for some flexibility here in recognition of the fact that the situation and people's behaviours were changing, particularly as larger groups of people were being vaccinated. She added that it was key that these measures did not result in any grid-locked traffic and also voiced concerns around the further rollout of electric scooters and the impact that these were also likely to have on pedestrians.

A Member commented that much of this appeared to be for the benefit of people who were not currently coming into the City but would hopefully return in the very near future and it was difficult to imagine that responding to a consultation on these measures would be high on their list of priorities once they did. He therefore underlined that it was important to be creative and devise a way to reach those who would be returning as opposed to just those currently using the City.

Officers clarified that, essentially, this report suggested removing measures from some streets such as Cannon Street where they had quite a significant impact on how easily vehicle traffic could move around the City. However, with the majority of other on-street measures, the proposal was to take these out of the COVID recovery programme, keep the changes in place over the coming months and review them holistically alongside other projects such as All Change at Bank. This process would also involve further stakeholder engagement and, where appropriate, some schemes would be brought forward as experimental traffic orders to then be further monitored and consulted upon. It was recognised that the current situation was difficult in that some people had begun to return to the City recently and would continue to do so over the coming months. It was also acknowledged that there would be ongoing need for social distancing, even as vaccines were rolled out. It had originally been envisaged that the temporary changes would have provided enough of an

understanding of what street users thought and what the overall impact of these changes were so that they might have been rolled over into more permanent changes. It was recognised that this had not, however, been the case which was why it was now proposed that this experimental route be taken. This would allow consultation to take place as people returned to the City and refamiliarized themselves with the City and adapted to new and different ways of working. It would also allow for ongoing monitoring around things such as traffic levels which may well remain lower post-pandemic as they had done following previous major economic disruptions.

Officers reported that people had provided feedback in various different ways – some through the website which did not allow Officers to follow up with individuals but did allow for as wide a range of views as possible and some people businesses/organisations who had written directly to Officers and had received a response. It was highlighted that some changes had already been made to what was on street in response to some of this feedback. Officers stated that they were happy to receive any additional feedback received via Wardmotes or other similar forums.

In terms of next steps, Members were informed that the intention was that these projects would be considered by the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee as was customary with other similar programmes and projects. It was suggested that a number of the projects be moved into a new Pedestrian Priority Programme which had been established in response to both the Transport Strategy and the Climate Action Strategy.

With regard to flexibility, Members were assured that the coming months would be a real opportunity to take stock and to take into consideration the advancement of the vaccine programme and any ongoing requirements around social distancing whilst keeping the measures in place to ensure the safety of those returning to the City.

RESOLVED – That the Committee:

- a) Agree that the Covid-19 Phase 1 and 2 transport measures set out in Table 1 in Appendix 2 will be removed after this report is approved. Timings for this will be determined by the Transport and Public Realm Covid-19 Bronze Group in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Transportation Committee and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Streets and Walkways Sub Committee.
- b) Agree that Covid-19 transportation measures set out in Table 2 in Appendix 2 remain on street (for the short term under the existing temporary traffic orders).
- c) Note that these interventions will move into existing or new programmes (as set out in Table 2 Appendix 2) within the next few months. Within these programmes further assessment of measures for retention is proposed to be undertaken through Spring and early Summer and an assessment of whether these should be retained longer term and promoted through

Experimental Traffic Orders is proposed to be reported to Streets and Walkways Sub Committee for approval.

- d) Agree to retain the temporary cycle parking spaces for continued use for cycle parking, dockless bikes and escooters until May 2022, as a minimum, for the reasons set out in the report paragraphs 4.5 to 4.6.
- e) To note that a future report will be taken to Planning and Transportation Committee by May 2022, seeking permission to make the cycle and e-scooter parking places permanent or remove as appropriate.
- f) Agree that Phase 1 and 2 of this project can be closed. Final finances as set out in Tables 1 and 2 will be verified and closed. Costs associated with the removal of the measures should recommendation (a) be approved are expected to be and will covered by local risk budgets. No further costs will be incurred following the closure of Phases 1 and 2 of this project
- g) Note the lessons learnt in Appendix 3

7. **GATEWAY 4C REPORT - TOWER BRIDGE HV SYSTEM REPLACEMENT AND INCREASING RESILIENCE**

The Committee received a Gateway 4C report of the City Surveyor concerning Tower Bridge HV System Replacement and Increasing Resilience.

RESOLVED – That the Committee:

1. Agree that a 99-year lease of the existing Diesel Generator room is granted to UKPN for installation of their substation, in order to significantly reduce the risk of power failure to the bridge and to the income generating exhibition
2. Approve a project cost increase of **£346,000** for a change to the project scope following an opportunity to implement a known HV control system whilst improving the network resilience and future proofing the existing bridge lift system (with this additional budget will be requested as part of the Gateway 5 budget)
3. Note the revised total estimated cost of the project at **£6,076,293** (excluding risk) if the change in scope is approved
4. Note the revised total estimated cost of the project at **£8,238,003** (including risk) if the change in scope is approved
5. Approve Option 1 - the partial integration of the existing bridge lifting and new HV SCADA systems and approval to grant a 99-year lease for a sub-station to UKPN.

8. **BUILDING CONTROL CHARGES REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of the Built Environment advising Members of the findings of the Building Control's review into their fees and charges from service users during 2020.

RESOLVED – That the Committee:

- Approve the new 'City of London Building Control Charges Scheme No 4: 2021'

9. **DECLARATION OF 100 BISHOPSGATE CITY WALKWAY (CLERK'S PLACE AND WRESTLERS COURT)**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of the Built Environment concerning the declaration of 100 Bishopsgate as a city walkway.

In response to a question, Officers highlighted that a plan of the proposed new city walkway was included within the report.

RESOLVED – That the Committee:

1. By resolution declare to be a city walkway the new walkway at 100 Bishopsgate named Clerk's Place and Wrestlers Court, on a date to be determined, in the terms of the resolution set out at Appendix 1 to this report
2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Transportation and Public Realm Director to insert an appropriate date for the declaration to come into force.

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

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

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

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

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

RESOLVED - That Members note the report.

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

Recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee re: The Planning Process

A Member reported that the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee on the Planning Process had been opposed in a petition that had been signed by almost 1260 to date including City residents. He noted that the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee were due to be put to the full Court for consideration but did not appear on the April Court agenda and questioned why this had been postponed.

The Deputy Chair reported that he was not aware of this matter having been postponed. The Assistant Town Clerk reported that the petition was on the April

Court agenda but that the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee were not. She went on to explain that the intention was that the petition, after being received by the Court, would be forwarded to the relevant Committee for consideration so that they could take this into account before any report on future recommendations could come forward.

Another Member questioned whether the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee due to come forward to Court would be considered at a virtual or in-person meeting. She went on to state that she understood that the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee were very vague with little detail on the constitution of Panels for example and questioned why therefore only half a recommendation would be put to the Court. She also questioned whether there would be an opportunity for this Committee to feed into proposals ahead of the Court of Common Council. Officers reported that any decisions around in person/remote meetings would be made by the Court of Common Council later this week. The Deputy Town Clerk undertook to provide a written response to members of the Committee around next steps for the report on Planning Panels but underlined that this would need to be considered further by both this Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee ahead of the Court of Common Council. She acknowledged that whilst the principle of geographically based Planning Panels had been endorsed, the details of this were yet to be worked up.

In response to further questions, Officers reported that the paper to Committees and eventually the Court would present Members with various options around things such as quorums, terms of reference and chairmanship of Panels.

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

Pavement Licences

The Deputy Chair reported that this had become an unnecessarily contentious issue in his view. He sought the assistance of all members of the Committee in terms of flagging where there were obstacles being put in the way of businesses (often very small businesses) looking to obtain pavement licences by any part of the Corporation. He went on to state that he felt that some of the recent responses of the City Corporation had been totally disproportionate and he urged the Committee to do all that it could in the coming weeks to encourage outdoor business activity to assist businesses in their economic recoveries.

The Deputy Chair added that he was also of the view that the timings attached to pavement licences were too restrictive with recommended closure at 9.30pm.

A Member spoke to concur with the comments made by the Deputy Chair and reported that she had informed Officers that she intended to raise this matter at Committee. She added that she had also emailed the Assistant Commissioner and the Commander to flag the overly cautious approach of the City Police with regard to the risk of terrorism in relation to the granting of these licences and thanked them for their response. The Member went on to state that some premises who, for many years, had had tables and chairs outside without

incident were not a terrorism risk. The Member thanked Officers and the Police for revisiting this issue and reported that she understood that a matrix system was now in place. She hoped that, going forward, the partial licences granted to date would also be revisited along with those that were initially refused. With regard to timings, the Member highlighted that pavement licences were temporary licences that the government had instigated to allow businesses to have tables and chairs outside solely for the use of their customers and to allow them to open and operate under current restrictions. The Member stated that she understood that the pavement licences were turned around very quickly (within seven days) and recognised that this put pressure on Officers who were therefore more likely to err on the side of caution in terms of refusals and limiting hours. The Member therefore asked that this Committee provide Officers with the confidence that Members would like to see the opening and the use of these tables and chairs extended for as long as possible dependent on the location of the site. Under pavement licences, tables and chairs had to be removed by 9.00pm whereas previously some of these premises had operated tables and chairs licences successfully until 10.30pm and it was therefore difficult to understand the justification for this. The Member asked whether this Committee could ask that this be revisited with Officers urged to be more generous and support pavement licences until 10.30pm where previous tables and chairs licences had operated successfully with Officers given the ability to reduce these hours should any issues arise.

The Deputy Chairman reported that he had now instigated a system whereby a refusal could not be issued without first consulting the relevant Members.

Another Member spoke to underline that the Police were rightfully trying to guard the safety of people in the City and added that, whilst she was broadly in favour of them, she also had some concerns around pavement licences. She went on to state that the use of pavements for tables and chairs could cause pedestrians to have to walk in the road in some locations. She therefore suggested that designated areas should be cordoned off and adhered to.

Another Member noted that there were currently different street users competing for street space and that this Committee therefore had a duty to determine what ought to be prioritised. To her mind, the survival of these businesses and the ability of people to return to their workplace and have a positive space around them to do so was a priority alongside accessibility for those in wheelchairs and mobility scooters. She added that it was important for the Committee not to speak of these matters in siloes.

A Member stated that he felt that the problems arising now were as a result of the original report on pavement licences agreed by this Committee which he had spoken out against at the time suggesting that it seemed that it was only half-heartedly supporting licences on-street at that stage. However, he could see that it was generally accepted that this needed to be a priority for the City now. He understood the comments made around other uses of the street however, he reported that there was not currently a huge amount of traffic in the City and stated that therefore totally endorsed the approach being taken by the Deputy Chairman.

Another Member mentioned the licensing perspective of this issue and underlined that it was important to strike the right balance when issuing these licences. He reminded the Committee of the terrorist incident at a German Christmas market a matter of years ago and stressed that it was important to take into account what the Counter-Terrorism agencies were suggesting as the Corporation would not want such liability on their shoulders otherwise. He added that the Corporation also wanted to be optimistic and to aid businesses in surviving and thriving as restrictions were eased but the correct balance needed to be struck. He stated that he was aware that officers had worked very hard to develop a risk matrix which now allowed for a more quantitative approach to determining whether or not a venue could be issued with a pavement licence and he was of the view that this approach should be followed with venues considered on their individual merits as opposed to an umbrella approach.

The Deputy Chair reported that the risk matrix mentioned had not existed a fortnight ago when he had been presented with a report from the City of London Police which he had felt was wholly disproportionate to the application in question which had been made by a small café in Smithfield. He had therefore declined to accept the recommendation and had underlined that these matters were for Members to decide. He underlined that he always paid attention to risks flagged by the various agencies but, where these risks were low, he saw no justification for refusal. He emphasised that these businesses needed to be able to open without further delay and urged Members to notify him of any similar issues they may encounter.

Officers stated that everything they did around the City was about balance, competing needs and priorities. With regard to Police advice on these matters, it was reiterated that a risk matrix was now in place and that this approach was now being piloted with any new applications received. Any past applications that had previously been refused or curtailed were also now being revisited. Once Officers were satisfied that his system was working well, it would be formally presented to Members but, based on early indications, this seemed to provide the necessary balance, taking into account any security concerns.

A Member commented to stress that good risk management was not the same as risk avoidance.

Another Member underlined that a number of premises that had applied for pavement licences could not currently apply for tables and chairs licences that they would normally apply for and be granted year on year. She added that their previous tables and chairs licences may have been granted until 10pm and beyond and that there was therefore no justification for these hours now being reduced under pavement licences. The Member highlighted that a decision on the licence applications received had to be made in seven days and that this quick turnaround seemed to be the problem in terms of Ward Members having sufficient time to be informed of any intended refusal, intervene and report any issues to the Chair and Deputy Chairman. She therefore questioned whether Ward Members could be informed if Officers

intended to recommend a reduction in hours or a refusal before a final decision was taken.

In terms of hours of operation, another Member stated that she felt that it would be good to take into account the needs of any nearby residents.

Another Member commented that he was of the view that the survival of businesses was the key priority here. He added that businesses in the City were also having to compete with those outside of the congestion zone and made the point that licences extending beyond 10pm would allow customers to be collected by friends or family by car without them having to pay a congestion charge to enter the City and do so.

Another Member suggested that many City residents were also keen to see businesses reopen and thrive.

The Deputy Chair thanked the Committee for a very useful debate and highlighted to Officers that there was clearly a strong impetus politically to support those businesses in the City making these applications and that Members were keen to learn of any potential refusals in advance.

14. **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.

<u>Item No(s)</u>	<u>Paragraph No(s)</u>
15 – 16	3
17 – 18	-

15. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the meeting held virtually on 30 March 2020 and approved them as a correct record.

16. **GATEWAY 5 REPORT - BLACKFRIARS BRIDGE PARAPET REFURBISHMENT AND BRIDGE RE-PAINTING**

The Committee considered and approved a Gateway 5 report of the Director of the Built Environment regarding – Blackfriars Bridge Parapet Refurbishment and Bridge Re-Painting.

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

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

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

There was no additional, urgent business for consideration.

The meeting closed at 12.03 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Gemma Stokley
tel. no.: 020 7332 3414
gemma.stokley@cityoflondon.gov.uk