

COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Friday, 11 June 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Community & Children's Services Committee held via Microsoft Teams and livestreamed at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mMUDunToasE> Friday, 11 June 2021 at 1.45 pm

N.B. This meeting was held as an informal one, with the views reached by the Committee approved formally by the Town Clerk after the meeting, in accordance with the Court of Common Council's Covid Approval Procedure. This process reflects the current position in respect of the holding of formal Local Authority meetings and the Court's decision of 15 April 2021 to continue with virtual meetings, with formal confirmation of decisions provided through a delegation to the Town Clerk (or his nominated representative) after the informal meeting has taken place and the will of the Committee is known.

Present

Members:

Ruby Sayed (Chair)	Graeme Harrower
Randall Anderson (Deputy Chair)	Natasha Maria Cabrera Lloyd-Owen
Mary Durcan	Alderman Bronek Masojada
John Fletcher	Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark
Marianne Fredericks	Deputy Elizabeth Rogula
The Revd Stephen Haines	Deputy Keith Bottomley
Caroline Haines	Deputy Tom Sleigh
Deputy Catherine McGuinness	Alderman Emma Edhem
Susan Pearson	Rehana Ameer
William Pimlott	

Officers:

Paul Murtagh	- Community & Children's Services Department
Chris Pelham	- Community & Children's Services Department
Gerald Mehrtens	- Community & Children's Services Department
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
Chandni Tanna	- Town Clerk's Department
Andrew Carter	- Director of Community & Children's Services
Carol Boswarthack	- Community & Children's Services Department
Simon Cribbens	- Community & Children's Services Department
Julie Fittock	- City Surveyor's Department
Ellie Ward	- Community & Children's Services Department
Anne Bamford	- Community & Children's Services Department
Damian McCann	- Tavistock Relationships
Jack Joslin	- City Bridge Trust
Greg Knight	- Community & Children's Services Department
Thomas Newman	- Community & Children's Services Department
Chris Lovitt	- Community & Children's Services Department
Ola Obadara	- City Surveyor's Department
Chris Rumbles, Clerk	- Town Clerk's Department
Sarah Philips	- Town Clerk's Department

The Town Clerk confirmed to Members that the Chair was in attendance, but that they were unfortunately feeling unwell and, as such, the Deputy Chair would chair the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mark Wheatley, Dawn Wright, Sir Michael Snyder, Nick Bensted-Smith, Peter Bennett, Henry Jones, Helen Fentiman and Chris Hayward.

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

There were no declarations.

3. CITY WELFARE CENTRE

The Committee heard from Dr Damian McCann, Head of Development & Learning, Tavistock Relationships, regarding The City Wellbeing Centre.

Dr McCann welcomed the opportunity of presenting to Members and highlighted a key aim of The City Wellbeing Centre being to increase the range and access of therapeutic mental health treatments available to workers and residents in the City of London and surrounding Boroughs. The City Corporation had provided premises for a period of three years, with a clear outcome in mind being to increase choice and accessibility to mental health therapies regardless of income.

Dr McCann talked the Committee through the work that had been ongoing throughout the pandemic in promoting The City Wellbeing Centre and its range of low cost and no cost therapies, the challenges ahead in attracting enough high paying individuals to allow The Centre to continue providing low-cost and no-cost therapy and also explained how work continued on a number of fronts to further the outcomes of the original bid.

Members welcomed the positive step in making this service available, whilst also noting the challenges presented. It was questioned how Members could do more to help promote the service to higher paying individuals and help support the business model. Members proposed The City Wellbeing Centre be brought to the attention of the City Corporation's Recovery Taskforce so it can then be included as part of the City's reopening messaging, promoting the service at the upcoming virtual City Residents Meeting and also considering a stall as part of a possible in person City Residents Meeting later in the year following a relaxation of social distancing measures. Members acknowledged the huge competition in this space and the challenge presented in making the business model work.

Dr McCann referred to a relaunch of The City Wellbeing Centre in September when there would be an opportunity to further promote the services on offer and update the website. Dr McCann welcomed an opportunity to attend the City Residents meeting to help promote the service and highlight to residents that the service was there for them.

Dr McCann agreed to report back to Committee after the relaunch of The City Wellbeing Centre in September when it would be hoped a fuller update could be offered on what was being achieved following a return to normal in the City.

The Deputy Chairman thanked Dr McCann for his helpful update.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on Friday 30th April 2021 be approved.

5. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk detailing outstanding actions from previous meetings.

The Town Clerk provided clarification on an update in relation to use of the Green Box, which should have read:

“Ongoing City of London use could only be possible by negotiating a new lease for the land on which the modular unit stands. This would have a revenue cost implication. The current position is that the land should be returned to the landlord following relocation of the Green Box. Some reinstatement may be required.”

A Member referred to work on the new community centre and establishment of a Governance Advisory Board and questioned how this was progressing. Members noted a letter had been sent out to tenants this week asking for volunteers to join the Advisory Board that would begin in July. The Member proposed that this item be kept on the outstanding actions list.

RECEIVED

6. SAFEGUARDING SUB COMMITTEE

Members noted the appointment had been offered to the whole Court of Common Council as agreed. Mathew Bell had expressed an interest to serve.

Resolved, that Members agreed to the appointment of Matthew Bell.

7. ALLOCATED MEMBERS (HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB COMMITTEE)

Members noted the agreement of the Sub-committee to offer the position of an allocated Member for Sydenham Hill Estate to Members of the Grand Committee.

Members noted that no expressions of interest had been received to date. A Member proposed the Chair consider taking up the place as allocated Member to allow an opportunity for them to learn of and understand the key issues, which the Chair agreed to.

Resolved, that Members agreed to the appointment of Ruby Sayed as allocated Member for Sydenham Hill Estate.

8. COMBINED RELIEF OF POVERTY CHARITY - ADMINISTRATION UPDATE AND FUNDING FOR APPROVAL

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services presenting various options for consideration that were intended to support the better administration and management of the charity, consistent with the City Corporation's duties as trustee.

A Member welcomed the fact funds were being made available to all estates and stressed a need to ensure Estate Officers know about this funding and that they encourage people to apply. Residents should also be made aware of a need to form a Residents' Association if they do not already have one.

The Director of City Bridge Trust explained that work continued alongside colleagues in Community and Children's Services Department to ensure the Stronger Communities charity is well advertised. The team were always happy to help with organisation and to offer support and advice on setting up a Residents Association.

Resolved, that Members: -

- Approve delegated authority to the Director, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Community and Children's Services Committee, to consider and approve any application or requests made to the Benevolent Association restricted Fund of the CRPC in accordance with the charity's funding policy.
- Approve a grant of £60,000 to the First Love Foundation over 12 months to deliver advice and food support to City of London residents and those residing in bordering boroughs.
- Note the finance update for the charity.
- Instruct officers to review and make recommendations on the funding criteria for the charity to be considered at a future meeting of this Committee.

9. STRONGER COMMUNITIES ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services providing an update in relation to the Stronger Communities theme of the Central Grants Programme.

RECEIVED.

10. COVID-19 LESSONS LEARNT

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services reflecting on the lessons that had been learnt by the Department in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the related recommendations made by the Member Working Party. During discussion that followed the following points were noted:-

- It was suggested the report did not offer sufficient information to allow Members to understand the issues aired at the COVID-19 Working Party. Department performance would not improve in a meaningful way if it ignored issues raised. It was stressed the report had been produced in response to recommendations of the COVID-19 Working Party.

- Lack of a pandemic flu plan on the City Corporation's website should form part of the lessons learned. It should be made clear on the website when a plan was being reviewed and there should be no period during which a plan was not available to view. The Director of Community and Children's Services responded remarking that the Director of Public Health was not in attendance today to be able to respond to the point raised. The Director stressed that it was only fair that the Director be allowed to respond, and it was agreed officers would take this point away. The Director proposed the Pandemic Flu plan be brought to the Committee on an annual basis to review and approve it, with this proposal being welcomed and agreed.
- Communications with residents was still considered to be very poor, with a continuing reliance on a small amount of digital communications; more urgency was needed in addressing this issue. A Member highlighted they had not seen the City Residents Meeting advertised on one notice board.
- The team should be given a huge amount of credit for doing so well during a hugely challenging time and Members asked that this recognition be put record.
- A Member proposed an outstanding action list be produced in relation to the recommendations of the COVID Working Party to allow the Committee an opportunity to keep track of these.

The Director of Community and Children's Services responded. The Director agreed to follow up with the team regarding communications relating to the City Residents Meeting but confirmed his understanding that the event had been publicised widely through a written communication to all residents and that there had not been a reliance on digital communications alone.

The Deputy Chair agreed to discuss further with the Chair and Director the proposal for an action list.

RECEIVED

11. COMMISSIONING UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services providing a highlight of current activity, successes, issues and priorities for the Commissioning Team.

A Member welcomed the very helpful report in providing an overview of key areas of work. It was noted how the team were currently managing 141 commissioned services and it was suggested that moving forward each of these services be listed out showing a name, service being provided and when it was due for recommissioning. This would then provide Members a greater understanding of the breadth of work of the Commissioning Team. The Director agreed to provide a report updating Members on all contracts currently commissioned.

A Member noted an update within the report relating to Golden Lane Leisure Centre and a contract with Fusion. The Member referred back to previous discussions relating to a wider Sports Development Strategy and questioned the progress being made in developing this strategy. The Director of Community and Children's Services explained the Sports Development Strategy was a corporate

strategy sitting more widely than his team. The Director agreed to follow up with the Chief Strategy Officer and request an update be provided to the Committee.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

12. DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN PERFORMANCE: 2020-21 QUARTER 4

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services setting out the progress made during Quarter 4 – January to March 2021 – against the 2017-2022 Department of Community and Children's Services Business Plan. It also commented on the Departmental Risk Register.

The Integration Programme Manager took the opportunity to update Members on the red indicators that were showing, three of which related to children services. It was explained that Business Plan KPIs covered a period of five months for completion, with the statutory requirement being six months. Members were assured that the City Corporation was meeting all its statutory deadlines.

It was further clarified that a review of KPIs would be undertaken. This would look to ensure the validity of all targets, offering Members a more realistic and useful picture and give the reassurance needed.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

13. REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk providing details of decisions taken under delegated and urgency procedures since the last meeting.

RECEIVED

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

Golden Lane Estate – A Member referred to their recent visit to Golden Lane Estate. The Member remarked on it being an iconic estate in need of investment to bring it up to the required standard. The Member proposed a visit to Golden Lane Estate be arranged for the newly appointed representatives from Policy and Resources Committee. This would allow an opportunity for Senior Members to engage with officers on the ground that were dealing with residents on a daily basis.

During the discussion that followed it was agreed to look more broadly across all City Corporation housing estates within the Square Mile. A Member proposed recording any visit to allow those not able to attend in person to be able to view the video and to see the condition of the estate and the repairs needed.

The Director of Community and Children's Services expressed his concern with any proposal that singled out estates for a visit. The Director stressed that the Housing Revenue Account was responsible for maintaining all estates and meeting all their needs. The Director proposed a report be provided at the next meeting updating on the financial situation of the Housing Revenue Account.

Further discussion followed. It was strongly agreed that one estate was not considered more important than any other. It was suggested the City Corporation could provide an injection of funding into developing an amalgamated programme of repairs across all estates.

The Assistant Director referred to plans and procedures for the Housing Estates being regularly presented and reviewed by Housing Sub-committee. These plans clearly demonstrated how money was being invested and allowed for transparent and clear oversight. It was further highlighted that a repairs and maintenance programme was in place for Golden Lane Estate that has seen and would see significant investment; lessons had been learnt from past experiences and officers continued to work closely with residents in communicating all the plans.

Chairman concluded the discussion and noted that visits to all of the Estates had been arranged for Members of the Housing sub-committee, but the pandemic had precluded these visits. He added that as soon it was possible to do so through a relaxation of restrictions, arrangements would be made for Members to visit the City Corporation's housing estates.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no additional items of business.

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED, That – under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

17. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the non-public minutes of the meeting held on Friday 30 April 2021 be approved.

18. CHARITIES REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS - THE CITY EDUCATIONAL TRUST FUND (290840) AND THE CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION COMBINED EDUCATION CHARITY (312836)

The Committee received a report of the Managing Director of Bridge House Estates and Chief Charities Officer.

19. HIGH SUPPORT HOSTEL SITE DEVELOPMENT; GATEWAY 1-4 PROJECT PROPOSAL & OPTIONS APPRAISAL

The Committee considered and approved a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

20. ASSESSMENT CENTRE FOR ROUGH SLEEPERS: GATEWAY 1-4 PROJECT PROPOSAL AND OPTIONS APPRAISAL

The Committee considered and approved a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

21. REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN (NON-PUBLIC REPORTS)

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk providing details of decisions taken under urgency procedures since the last meeting.

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

There were no non-public questions.

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

Waiver Report – Aldgate Youth Services. Members considered and approved a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

Confidential Agenda

24. COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES – TARGET OPERATING MODEL (TOM) PROPOSALS

Members considered and approved a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

The meeting ended at 3.29pm.

Chairman

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