

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Thursday, 14 October 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 14 October 2021 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Catherine McGuinness (Chair)
Christopher Hayward (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Keith Bottomley (Vice-Chairman)
Marianne Fredericks
Tracey Graham (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Wendy Hyde (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark
Deputy Edward Lord
Alderman Ian Luder
Jeremy Mayhew
Andrew McMurtrie
Wendy Mead
Deputy Brian Mooney (Chief Commoner) (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy James Thomson (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Philip Woodhouse
Alderman Sir David Wootton

Officers:

John Barradell	- Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller and City Solicitor
Paul Double	- City Remembrancer
Paul Wilkinson	- City Surveyor
Caroline Al-Beyerty	- The Chamberlain
Damian Nussbaum	- Director of Innovation and Growth
Bob Roberts	- Director of Communications
Angela Roach	- Assistant Town Clerk
Simon McGinn	- City Surveyor's Department
Giles French	- Innovation and Growth
Simi Shah	- Innovation and Growth
Chrissie Morgan	- Town Clerk's Department
Aaron Downey	- Private Secretary to Chair of Policy
Douglas Trainer	- Deputy Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Will Norman	- Community and Children's Services
Mark Gattleson	- Town Clerk's Department
Saira McKechnie	- Town Clerk's Department
Greg Moore, Clerk	- Town Clerk's Department
Chris Rumbles	- Town Clerk's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Rehana Ameer, Tijs Broeke, Karina Dostalova, Anne Fairweather, Alderman Tim Hailes, Shravan Joshi, Alderman Vincent Keaveny, Deputy Andrien Meyers, Ruby Sayed, Deputy Tom Sleigh, Sir Michael Snyder, Mark Wheatley, and the Rt Hon The Lord Mayor Alderman William Russell.

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

It was noted that Shravan Joshi had declared an interest in respect of Item 5 as Deputy Chairman of the EC BID, although he was now unable to be present at the meeting.

3. **MINUTES**

- a) The public minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 16 September 2021 were approved, subject to Caroline Haines' attendance being recorded and Wendy Mead being removed from the list of those present.
- b) To note the draft public minutes of the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee meeting held on 17 September 2021.

4. **REVIEWED AND UPDATED WARDMOTE BOOK**

The Committee considered a joint report of the Comptroller and City Solicitor and Town Clerk & Chief Executive presenting a reviewed and updated version of the Wardmote Book.

During discussion, a number of queries or suggested areas of further consideration or revision were raised, as follows:-

- There was some debate as to whether the item before the Committee should be for decision, with a Member suggesting that some of the proposed amendments could benefit from political input and determination. It was clarified that the Wardmote Book itself was a technical document which was presented the arrangements specified by various Acts of Common Council and so on; it remained entirely within the gift of Members to propose changes to the relevant Acts which would then result in consequential changes to the Wardmote Book.
- Several Members commented on the benefits of both seeking and articulating a definitive view in respect of the application of the franchise in relation to licensing arrangements for shared workspaces. Members commented on the significant use of shared office space through companies such as WeWork or Regus, commenting that the arrangements as currently understood appeared to disenfranchise a significant number of potential electors. Consequently, it would be worth exploring any opportunity via external legal advice to allow for a more liberal interpretation of legislation. Following discussion, the Comptroller & City Solicitor undertook to engage leading Counsel's Opinion on the matter and report back in due course. In any event, once the position was clarified, it needed

to be set out as transparently as possible within any revised Wardmote Book.

- Members also debated the importance of clarification in relation to terminology concerning qualification for election as an Alderman; in particular, the use of the phrase “British subject”, which had the potential to cause significant confusion. The Comptroller & City Solicitor undertook to bring forward a report by no later than the December meeting of the Committee, proposing potential amendments to the relevant Act of Common Council for Members’ consideration.
- Concern was also expressed regarding use of the term ‘British Subject’ with this considered to be too narrow and it having presented a source of confusion previously; it was suggested reference to ‘British Subject’ should be removed.
- A number of specific drafting or typographical suggestions were relayed to the Comptroller & City Solicitor. Thanking Members for their suggestions, he also encouraged any further comments following the meeting via email, for the purpose of ensuring the final version was as clear as possible.
- The use of consistent non-gendered language (i.e., Common Councillors, rather than Common Councilmen) was suggested.
- A reference in paragraph 6 on page 35 to elections not “being held” in 2021 was noted, with it observed that the timing associated with publication meaning that it would be preferable to say “were not held”, or similar.
- The way in which paragraph 8 on page 48 was worded was challenged, with it observed that it currently implied that the candidate must not be a Commonwealth or Irish citizen. The insertion of semi-colons and relocation of the word “already” was suggested in the interests of clarification.
- The requirement set out on page 48, paragraph 9, for an Alderman to not reside in the Ward was queried, with it suggested that this was wider and should actually refer to there being no requirement for an Alderman to reside in the City.
- On page 79 paragraph 12, a Member referred to the wording relating to a Locum Tenens representing the Lord Mayor as Presiding Officer. They suggested this was too restrictive as it was currently written, arguing that, if possible, this should be expanded to incorporate Representative Lord Mayors, as the current restrictions could prove problematic in allowing for sufficient Presiding Officers to be identified where there were multiple elections on one day.
- Noting the likely future changes arising from the forthcoming Elections Bill, it was commented that a further update of the Wardmote Book would be required as soon as possible once the Bill had been approved, given the imminent local authority elections thereafter. There was some discussion around the potential for seeking the introduction to the City of rolling registers for electoral registration purposes, as were common elsewhere, through the Election Bill. However, it was noted that the Government had suggested they would not welcome such a suggestion at this stage.

The Comptroller & City Solicitor thanked Members for their comments, remarking on it being the first time the draft Wardmote Book had been presented to Members and reflecting on the value of regular review.

The Chair took the opportunity to update more generally on the forthcoming Elections Bill and the potential implications for the City. In particular, she advised of Government Plans to remove the ability of EU Citizens to vote and stand in local elections, unless there were reciprocal arrangements in individual member states or where particular EU Citizens had settled status. Given the City's business franchise and the relative prominence of EU voters, the effect was likely to be bigger on the City than elsewhere.

RESOLVED: That Members note the changes to the draft Wardmote Book.

5. **EC PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) PROPOSAL / 6. FLEET STREET QUARTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) PROPOSAL**

The Committee agreed to take Items 5 and 6 together.

The Committee considered two reports of the City Surveyor, presenting BID Proposals relating to the Eastern Cluster (EC) Partnership and Fleet Street Quarter (FSQ) Partnership.

Concern was expressed that the geographic boundaries of both BID proposals excluded integral areas of specific Wards, which would either benefit from inclusion or the exclusion of which made no logical sense. In particular, it was suggested the proposals needed to extend further north and south in the EC proposal, to take in the riverside area and parts of Bishopsgate Ward; for the FSQ BID, significant concerns were expressed about the exclusion of parts of the Temple, as well as the Whitefriars and New Bridge Street areas.

The City Surveyor responded explaining the current proposals did not extend further to the south owing to the potential for a future Riverside BID proposal. Several Members queried the wisdom and merits of such a BID, observing that there was no natural affiliation or similarities amongst the businesses along the City riverfront from east to west which might justify such a proposal.

In response to further queries around the exclusion of certain areas and businesses, the City Surveyor explained the proposed boundaries were highly permeable in reality and the benefits of the BID would still flow to neighbouring areas. He also added that there would be an opportunity to consider moving the boundaries in five years' time as part of the next BID ballot process. Several Members challenged the assertion that areas outside the BID would benefit to the same level as those inside, adding that a delay of five years was too significant a delay in any event.

The Chair noted the concerns raised by Members regarding the BID boundaries, as well as the significant impacts that any delay might have in respect of the BID proposals. The Committee agreed that a decision should be deferred at this point in time, with the Deputy Chairman and Vice Chairman

asked to meet with the BIDs to highlight Members' concerns and take forward further discussions, with a view to identifying a solution.

RESOLVED: That Members:-

1. Defer a decision in respect of the BID Proposals presented at this point in time.
2. Request the Deputy Chairman and Vice Chairman to engage with the BID areas with a view to identifying a prospective solution.

7. **HOMELESSNESS LINK IMMIGRATION PLEDGE APPEAL**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services providing an overview of the new Homeless Link Pledge Campaign and seeking Members' views on whether to sign up to the Pledge Appeal.

A Member stressed the importance of the pledge in ensuring vulnerable people knew where the City Corporation stood on this important issue, as well as the fundamental importance of gaining and keeping trust in being able to remove people from the streets. Signing up to the pledge would make the City Corporation's position extremely clear in this area.

RESOLVED: That Members endorse the City Corporation signing the Homelessness Link Immigration Pledge Appeal.

8. **FUTURE SKILLS AND TALENT - STRENGTHENING IG SUPPORT FOR CITY COMPETITIVENESS**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Innovation and Growth relating to Section 106 contributions for investment in employment and skills and seeking approval to the release of funds.

The Chair confirmed her role on the Financial Services Skills Commission and the Socio-Economic Diversity Taskforce. Members noted a minor point of clarification on the Socio-Economic Diversity Taskforce where reference should say "chaired by Catherine McGuinness" rather than "Policy Chair" as the appointment had been made in a personal capacity.

RESOLVED: That Members approve the release of £1.23m of Section 106 funds ringfenced for skills work in 2022/23 – 2024/25. This would entail no extra cost to the Corporation and is the same budget as for 2019/20 – 2021/22.

9. **CITY CORPORATION SELECTED AS FOUNDING SPONSOR OF NEW GLOBAL GOVERNANCE BODY FOR VOLUNTARY CARBON MARKETS**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Innovation and Growth informing Members that the City Corporation had been selected to be a founding sponsor of the new Global Governance Body for Voluntary Carbon Markets (VCMs).

It was clarified that the offer of a seat on the new body's Senior Advisory Council had been made to the current Chair of Policy & Resources in a personal capacity, rather than the post in an ex-officio sense.

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

10. **ELECTION ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Town Clerk & Chief Executive providing an update in relation to Electoral Services and Electoral Engagement activity and seeking approval for additional funding.

A Member remarked on a crucial part of the campaign being Member engagement, with up-to-date data important in allowing them to be fully engaged. It was noted that further data pertaining to each Ward would be circulated shortly.

The significant work being undertaken to increase voter registration was acknowledged, with a Member suggesting that a long-term look at the City's franchise might be needed in an effort at expanding the vote in the City moving forward. A Member also commented on a need to continue with the process beyond the current exercise, looking at using a range of options and digital solutions to broaden engagement.

In response to a query around how this election engagement campaign compared to previous processes in terms of registration levels, it was explained that the resident canvas was broadly as expected, but that business registration numbers were not as high as would be wished for.

The Chair remarked on a need to accept the impacts of Covid on registration this year, with Members needing to do what they could both now and in the future to help increase the numbers going forward. The Chair thanked officers for the huge amount of work they had put into the campaign to-date.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

1. Note the report.
2. Approve an additional £12,000 in funding for Electoral Services to support the Business Improvement District ballots (if required), increasing the capacity of the team during the Ward Elections. This is proposed to be funded from the Policy and Resources 2021/22 Committee Contingency.
3. Approve an additional £60,000 towards additional Election Engagement activities, including turnout-raising activities in January to March 2022. This is proposed to be funded from the Policy and Resources 2021/22 Committee Contingency.

11. **MID-YEAR UPDATE ON CLIMATE ACTION**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Town Clerk & Chief Executive updating on progress made during the first half of year one of the Climate Action Strategy.

The Chair reflected on the significant achievements made over the past two years and thanked the Members and Officers involved in driving the programme forward, adding that the Climate Action Strategy represented a strong example of positive collaborative working across the organisation.

The Chair reminded Members that the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the Strategy had changed, with the Deputy Town Clerk & Chief Executive now leading on this initiative. She took the opportunity to thank the Director of Innovation Growth, who was the outgoing SRO, for all his work to date in putting in place the team, strategy, and budget for this important piece of work.

A Member raised a concern in relation to an item at an Open Spaces & City Gardens meeting earlier that week and the plans of the City Gardens team to purchase diesel dumper trucks, suggesting that this undermined the Climate Action Strategy. The Deputy Town Clerk & Chief Executive reassured Members that this matter had been explored thoroughly by officers through the appropriate processes, clarifying that there were particular technical issues justifying the exemption on this occasion which rendered the action compliant with Corporation policies. In essence, the battery technology available for electric vehicles was not yet sufficient to allow for an operationally viable electric alternative to be purchased; however, the vehicles were being leased, rather than purchased, to facilitate a longer-term move to sustainable vehicles once the technology was sufficient.

The Chief Operating Officer also undertook to provide the Committee with an update on the City Corporation's Sustainable Purchase Strategy.

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

12. RECOVERY TASKFORCE UPDATE

The Committee received an update on implementation of the recommendations of the Recovery Taskforce report, *Square Mile: Future City*, published in April 2021.

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

13. POLICY INITIATIVES FUND AND COMMITTEE CONTINGENCY

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain providing the schedule of projects and activities which had received funding from the Policy Initiatives Fund, the Policy and Resources Committee's Contingency Fund, Committee's Project Reserve and COVID19 Contingency Fund.

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

14. COVID 19 AND USAGE OF THE LONDON UNDERGROUND

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services seeking a decision on whether to support the Mayor of London's proposals for a bye law making the wearing of a face covering legal requirement on the London Transport network.

Members acknowledged the legal requirement to wear face coverings had ended in July as part of Stage 4 of the easing of lockdown restrictions. Consequently, any decision to submit a letter in support of the Mayor would be political consideration. During the discussion that followed, Members agreed that wearing of facemasks should be through encouragement rather than looking to introduce further legislation, and expressed a reticence to intervene in this matter.

The Chair acknowledged a lack of enthusiasm to send a letter in support and confirmed the request would be declined on this occasion. Nevertheless, the Chair asked Members to continue encouraging the wearing of masks where appropriate.

RESOLVED: That the proposal to write a letter of support to the Mayor of London, in support of introducing a bye law making face coverings a legal on Transport for London services, be rejected.

15. **LIVE STREAMING AND RECORDING OF MEETINGS**

The Committee considered a joint report of the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and Comptroller & City Solicitor in relation to the current arrangements for the live streaming and recording of formal committees and sub-committees and whether this should continue, for the benefit of the public.

Members offered their firm support for the continuation of live streaming of meetings, which supported transparency and allowed meetings to be as accessible as possible to electors.

Reference was made to non-local authority areas of activity and the longstanding inappropriate application of the provisions of local government legislation to their activity. In particular, the City's independent schools were cited, with it queried whether there remained a necessity there, given the atypical nature of this arrangement when compared to other independent schools. The Town Clerk confirmed that the continued application of Local Government legislation to independent schools would be a matter for Members to consider through the Governance Review.

Members also discussed arrangements for the Informal Court of Common Council meeting on 11 November 2021 and it was agreed that, whilst Members should be encouraged to attend in person where able, hybrid arrangements to allow for virtual participation should also be made.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

1. Note the decision taken under urgency procedures to maintain live streaming and recording arrangements as of 7 October 2021 as an interim measure.
2. Agree that the current arrangements for the live streaming and recording of all formal committee and sub-committee meetings should continue, for the benefit of the public.

3. Note the potential resourcing implications of future live streaming and recording arrangements.

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

Covid Business Recovery Fund

A Member referred to the £50m Covid Recovery grant scheme for businesses and asked whether an update could be provided to a future meeting. The Chair undertook to raise this at a forthcoming meeting of the Sounding Board to allow for an update report to be presented in due course.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

Afghan resettlement

Conscious of time remaining for the meeting, the Chair advised that in lieu of an oral update on this matter she would ask for written updates to be circulated as appropriate. A Member, also the Chairman of the Livery Committee, made reference to the Livery and asked the Chair to let advise outside them meeting if there were any areas in which Livery Companies or the wider Livery movement might be able to assist.

18. 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 of business 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.

At this point in proceedings, in accordance with Standing Order No.40 a decision was taken to extend the length of the meeting.

19. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

- a) The non-public minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 16 September 2021 were agreed.
- b) The draft non-public minutes of the Resources Allocation Sub-Committee meeting held on 17 September 2021 were noted.
- c) The non-public minutes of the Resource Allocation Sub-committee Awayday Part 1 meeting held on Tuesday 13 July 2021 were noted.
- d) The non-public minutes of the Resource Allocation Sub-committee Awayday Part 2 meeting held on Thursday 20 September 2021 were noted.
- e) The non-public minutes of the Hospitality Working Party meeting held on 19 July 2021 were noted.

20. **AGREEING TARGETS AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS FOR A NET ZERO PATHWAY FOR FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS FOR EACH FUND**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain setting out the findings of the Financial Investments workstream under the Climate Action Strategy, which has been adopted for all the City Corporation's Funds.

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

There was one question, relating to a recent decision of Community and Children's Services Committee regarding water charge refunds for tenants.

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

There were no additional items of non-public business.

Confidential Agenda

23. **REMEMBRANCER'S OFFICE - PROPOSED ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN**

The Committee considered a report of the Remembrancer in relation to the Remembrancer's Office proposed organisational design.

24. **GOVERNANCE REVIEW & TARGET OPERATING MODEL: INSTITUTIONS**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk updating on 'institutions' as part of the City of London Corporation' Target Operating Model.

The meeting ended at 3.50pm.

Chairman

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