

PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 11 January 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 9.00 am

Present

Members:

Oliver Sells QC (Deputy Chairman)	Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark
Randall Anderson	Alderman Alastair King
Douglas Barrow	Alderswoman Susan Langley
Peter Bennett	Oliver Lodge
Mark Bostock	Deputy Edward Lord
Deputy Keith Bottomley	Natasha Maria Cabrera Lloyd-Owen
Deputy Peter Dunphy	Alderman Bronek Masojada
John Edwards	Deputy Brian Mooney (Chief Commoner)
John Fletcher	Deputy Barbara Newman
Marianne Fredericks	Graham Packham
Graeme Harrower	Susan Pearson
Christopher Hayward	Judith Pleasance
Christopher Hill	Deputy Henry Pollard
Deputy Tom Hoffman	Alderman Sir David Wootton

Officers:

Gregory Moore	- Assistant Town Clerk
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Rhiannon Leary	- Town Clerk's Department
Shani Annand-Baron	- Media Officer
Aqib Hussain	- Technology Support Partner
Fleur Francis	- Comptroller and City Solicitors Department
Juliemma McLoughlin	- Executive Director, Environment
Gwyn Richards	- Chief Planning Officer and Development Director
David Horkan	- Department of the Built Environment
Peter Shadbolt	- Department of the Built Environment
Bruce McVean	- Department of the Built Environment
Liam Hart	- Department of the Built Environment
Ian Hughes	- Department of the Built Environment
Adrian Roche	- Department of the Built Environment
Gemma Delves	- Department of the Built Environment
Emmanuel Ojugo	- Department of the Built Environment
Lara Sims	- Department of the Built Environment
Mike Kettle	- Community and Children's Services Department

Introductions

The Town Clerk opened the meeting by introducing herself.

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. It was confirmed 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 Town Clerk also reminded Members, and any members of the public observing the meeting on-line, that this was an informal meeting and that any views reached by the Committee today would therefore have to be considered by the Assistant Town Clerk or those deputising for him after the meeting in accordance with the Court of Common Council's COVID Approval Procedure and that they would make a formal decision having considered all relevant matters. The Town Clerk highlighted that this process reflected the current position in respect of the holding of formal Local Authority meetings and the Court of Common Council's decision of 16th December 2021 to recommence hybrid meetings and take formal decisions through a delegation to the Town Clerk and other officers nominated by him after the informal meeting has taken place and the will of the Committee was known in open session. Details of all decisions taken under the COVID Approval Procedure would be available online via the City Corporation's webpages.

The Deputy Chairman (in the Chair) then welcomed all in the room and online to the meeting and wished all those attending and viewing a Happy New Year.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Alastair Moss (Chair) and Shravan Joshi.

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 public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 14 December 2021 and approved them as a correct record, subject to the addition of the point below.

Mr Hayward indicated that the sole reason that he had offered his apologies for the last meeting had been the result of a specific conflict of interest on the planning application at Holborn Viaduct. He asked that this be recorded in the minutes of the last meeting.

MATTERS ARISING

Moor Lane (page 24) – A Member noted that the minutes concluded that the Chair and Deputy Chairman of this Committee and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Streets and Walkways Sub Committee would look to engage

further with this issue in the first instance and questioned what progress had been made on this. The Member commented that this was a hugely important issue in the eyes of residents and expressed an enormous amount of concern at the handling of this matter to date and at the fact that the greening of Moor Lane now looked to be in jeopardy with a developer potentially securing additional land free of charge. Officers undertook to alert colleagues in the Public Realm to this question and to ask that they respond to the Member in writing on this outside of the meeting. It was confirmed that a meeting to discuss this matter further had already been arranged. The Member thanked Officers for this and asked that the Chair and Deputy Chairman give their strong support to the team negotiating this matter.

Presentation of Sustainability Information – Call for Consistency (page 15) – A Member referred back to the call from Members to have clear and consistent sustainability information reported alongside all future planning applications and the assurances from Officers that this would form part of the wider Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which was currently being developed. She suggested that it might be useful for Members to meet further with relevant Officers and discuss what might be helpful in terms of key data so that this could start to come forward in future planning applications in the interim and ahead of the finalisation of the SPD which could still take some time. The Chief Planning Officer suggested that a meeting between Members and Sustainability Officers to discuss this in greater depth would be welcomed and could be arranged.

The Member went on to question progress around the SPD and a timeline for production. The Chief Planning Officer and Development Director undertook to come back to the Member in writing after the meeting with full details of this but assured the Committee that this was a priority for the team.

4. **15 AND 16 MINORIES AND LAND FRONTING ALDGATE HIGH STREET, 62 ALDGATE HIGH STREET: DEED OF VARIATION IN RESPECT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING MATTERS; PLANNING PERMISSION 15/01067/FULL**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer and Development Director regarding 15 and 16 Minories and land fronting Aldgate High Street, 62 Aldgate High Street: Deed of Variation in respect of Affordable Housing matters; planning permission 15/01067/FULL.

Officers explained that this was a request for a deed of variation to the affordable housing planning obligations for the scheme at 15 and 16 Minories. It was clarified that deeds of variation were normally dealt with by Officers under delegation and did not routinely come to this Committee for consideration. However, given the nature of this proposal, the interest that the Committee has in affordable housing matters and the fact that a change from on-site provision to off-site contributions was proposed, it was felt that, following discussions with the Chair and Deputy Chairman, it would be useful to seek the views of the wider Committee. Officers emphasise that a deed of variation was not the same as a planning application and that this had not therefore gone through the same

processes of consultation. The deed of variation was seeking an amendment to a legal agreement which was attached to an implemented planning permission.

It was reported that Officers had been in discussion with applicants on this matter since 2018 and that it had taken a number of years to reach this position. Officers were keen to explore all of the opportunities for the retention of on-site affordable housing in this case and, once this had been exhausted as an option, they wanted to ensure that any commuted sum was the maximum that could be afforded and was policy compliant before presenting a report to Members. In terms of the actual proposals, the affordable housing scheme at Minories was granted in 2015 as part of a wider scheme for the redevelopment for that part of Minories and Aldgate with a hotel scheme and an office scheme. The residential element was for 87 units, 27 of which were to be affordable. Since permission was granted, the sub-structure and concrete frame of the building had been constructed but there had been no progression of the building to full completion which was currently sitting as a concrete core. The deed of variation sought to discharge the affordable housing requirement by means of an offsite contribution rather than on-site provision and the discussions/variations were within the context of the provisions of the 2015 Local Plan and a 30% affordable housing requirement which was in force at the time that the application was determined and remained in force today. It was reported that Officers had looked at two key areas – the first being whether it would be feasible or viable to provide on-site affordable housing in line with the original planning permission. To that end, the applicant had provided two marketing exercises in 2018 and 2021, outlining the potential for the units to be managed by a Housing Association or by the City Corporation. In both marketing exercises, no Housing Association that was active in or near to the City, expressed any interest in taking on the flats or managing them for affordable housing. Essentially, it was felt that the number of flats was too small for most Housing Associations to manage economically. Secondly, the service charge attached to these flats would be the same as that applied to the private tenants and this was considered to be too high to be affordable and there was a proposed single, shared access point to both affordable and market flats which was felt to be undesirable by the associations. In the case of possible shared ownership housing, the actual cost of the units would have been far too high to meet the needs of those on the City Corporation's housing waiting list. The option of the City Corporation managing the flats as part of its housing stock had been considered in detail by Officers but, again, it was proposed that a commuted sum would be a better option and would enable the City Corporation to better address its wider estate regeneration plan and enable the provision of new social rented housing which meets the needs of people on the organisation's housing waiting lists. In turn, this would also secure a longer-term income stream to the Housing Revenue Account which could then be reinvested going forward.

Next, Officers focused on whether the commuted sum offered was sufficient and policy compliant. It was reported that when the proposal was first received, the commuted sum had been considerably below what would be considered to be policy compliant (assessed at £9.5 million). Members were informed that, over the past three years, they had seen three different appraisals from the

applicant but that each of these had been well below this level. In 2020 the City Corporation appointed external consultants to advise upon the affordable housing proposal and, after a lengthy assessment in discussion with the applicants, the consultants had concluded that a maximum affordable sum would be £7.5 million. It was reported that, during this process, the applicant themselves had increased their offer significantly. In the early part of 2021, the applicant had entered into a development partnership with a residential developer operating in London and, a result of that development partnership, felt able to increase their affordable housing offer and meet the full policy compliant figure. The current offer from the applicant was now therefore just under £9.5million and was policy compliant. Having made this offer, the applicant was now seeking the deed of variation and to progress the scheme. It was reported that they were now very keen to get on site and complete the development. Officers were now recommending that the deed of variation be approved.

The Deputy Chairman reported that he and the Chair had spent a lot of time over quite a long period examining this proposal which, until now, had not been particularly satisfactory in terms of the proposed commuted sum. It was felt appropriate that this particular matter should now be considered by the Committee as a whole who could be fully appraised of the background to this before a decision was made.

A Member spoke to emphasise that he felt that the Committee should accept nothing less than policy compliant level payments and found it disappointing that the applicant would seek to offer less than this. He went on to state that his biggest concern here now was around the loss, in net terms, of affordable housing units. He noted that paragraph 10 of the report stated that on-site provision was not feasible or viable due to the design of the scheme and questioned what had changed in the design which had already been scrutinised and consented to as part of the planning application. Finally, he expressed concerns that the £9.5 million proposed here would simply go towards funding cost increases on other schemes meaning that affordable housing units would be lost.

Another Member spoke to state that, in principle, he was not keen on deeds of variation and questioned why developers could not carry out such marketing exercises in advance of submitting their original planning. He went on to state that it was well-known that the City had a huge challenge in terms of providing affordable accommodation, not least for young City workers, and stressed that this was yet another blow to that aspiration. However, this building was currently half-built and therefore, reluctantly, he suspected that he would be supporting the Officer recommendation given that he could not foresee any real alternative. He underlined that, whilst he was satisfied that the proposed sum was policy compliant, he would like to challenge the proposed payment schedule set out at paragraph 3 of the report which appeared to him to be too heavily reliant on sale. He questioned why the City Corporation should take this commercial risk which was a developer risk and stressed that he would like to see a higher percentage of that sum paid up front/on implementation.

Another Member stated that he was also minded to support this given that the alternatives were not remotely attractive. He went on to question what the implications of a rejection of this might be as well as the what the implications of approving this could be for future planning applications. He also queried whether there were general lessons to be learnt for the Committee and Officers emerging from this in terms of something being proposed and approved but subsequently not proving viable.

Officers reported that when this proposal had originally come to this Committee it had featured a policy compliant level of on-site affordable housing. However, there was no assessment at that time of the viability or deliverability of that affordable housing as the developer had quite clearly stated that they were able to deliver what was required. Over time, the design of the building had changed slightly, and, through the marketing exercise, it had clearly become apparent that it was not possible for a Housing Association to deliver affordable housing. Officers stated that, in hindsight, this was the sort of issue that should be further investigated and more rigorously assessed when considering future schemes, event those that were offering the full amount of affordable housing. Officers would be seeking assurances that developers had gone through the marketing and other exercises prior to the submission of their application.

With regard to the proposed phasing of the payments, Officers stated that, if Members were to approve the deed of variation, they could seek to negotiate this further with the applicant with a view to securing a higher percentage of the sum up front. It was explained that the phasing set out had been agreed with the applicant primarily on the grounds of cash flow.

It was reported that the developer had indicated that they were now very keen to get on and build this scheme and that, if the Committee were to refuse this deed of variation, the developer would have the option of submitting a revised planning application to seek a formal change to the s106 agreement and the affordable housing element and that, in the immediate future, the concrete core of the building would unfortunately remain untouched and partially complete until this process was complete.

A Member stated that he felt that this raised significant questions about the City's current policy regarding housing. He stressed that the current off-site contribution was unrealistically low and should be up to three times higher. He also suggested that, given the rate of inflation, this should be index linked. He recognised that a further Local Plan update was due this year and emphasised that this was probably one of the most important elements to consider as part of this. The Member went on to underline the need for a clear distinction between social and affordable housing. He commented that this proposal was now policy compliant and felt that the implications of a refusal would simply be significant further delay. He was therefore minded to reluctantly approve the request. He felt that it would also be useful to hear from Officers in the Community and Children's Services Department who were supporting this deed of variation.

Another Member spoke to agree that changes were clearly needed to the Local Plan going forward in terms of affordable housing commitments. She went on to

express concern at the two attempts by the developer to conduct market exercises in the past four years with none seemingly carried out in advance of submitting their application. The Member remarked that the report did not provide much information as to the nature of the viability exercises carried out since the application had been approved but suggested that this could now be used as an example case study for the Committee to consider alongside revisions to the Local Plan going forwards. The Member went on to question what costs the City Corporation had incurred in terms of dealing with this application and a delay of four years. The report referenced the appointment of consultants to assess viability and questioned whether this was paid for by the applicant.

Another Member commented that he was particularly surprised that the Housing Association had suggested that a single entrance shared between the affordable housing and market rate units was unappealing to them. He stressed that the key point here was that when a developer proposed a development that was policy compliant, they need to have established, from the outset, how this was to be delivered without the need for 4-5 years of discussion thereafter. If the service charge envisaged by the developer would make affordable housing unaffordable then they should clarify this. The Member stressed the need for policies to require affordable housing that was genuinely affordable, even if this should mean introducing a reduced service charge for example.

Officers responded to state that it was clear that were lessons to be learned from this matter and accepted the need to factor these into the revised Local Plan and strengthen policies relating to affordable housing going forwards. Officers had originally taken the developers on their word and highlighted that a policy compliant level of affordable housing did not need to be justified through the submission of viability information. Officers underlined that they were also frustrated at not being able to report that affordable housing was to be delivered on-site to meet the housing needs of those in the City in this case. In terms of costs, it was reported that the costs of the independent review had been met by the developer and that the only cost incurred by the City Corporation was around staff time in managing the process. Officers clarified that, whilst developers are required as a matter of policy to pay for the independent assessments, the assessors reported to the City Corporation independently.

With regard to the point on shared access, Officers clarified that this related in part to the issue of service charge and that if a housing association and their tenants were using the same access point and services/facilities as private owners then the service charge reflected this.

A Member commented that he lived near to the site in question and had been intimately involved with this development for in excess of 12 years to date. He commented that local residents were fed up with having to look at a building site and that it would be very badly received by them if this should be artificially delayed any further. Secondly, the Member commented that, like others, he would have greatly preferred to have seen affordable residential units delivered in the City but that he was well aware that, as reported by Officers today, the obvious landlord for such a scheme would simply not have tenants to fill these

units due to high levels of affordable rent and service charge. The Member commented that there were many different and possible new social housing opportunities on existing estates which needed funding and so he stressed that funds would not go to waste but would be quickly and efficiently used. The Member concluded that he would therefore, with a heavy heart, be supporting the proposals given that there was no other real alternative that would avoid local residents having to look at an eyesore for another four years.

Another Member wished to discuss the effect on the HRA should this deed of variation be approved, further highlighting that the report provided no indication as to how much increased income stream would go to the HRA and when. It simply stated that new affordable housing constructed by the City elsewhere some of the proposals if they were to be managed elsewhere would generate an income for the HRA. He echoed the views of others in that this clearly now needed to be progressed.

MOTION - A Member spoke again on the proposed phasing of payments and the desire to see more of this paid upfront. He disagreed with the suggestion that this should be for Officers to negotiate further with the developer if the deed of variation were to be approved today and proposed that, if the deed of variation were granted, it should be subject to the commuted sum being payable in three instalments with 50% on implementation, 35% on 50% sales and the final 15% on 75% sales. He was of the view that this would provide the City Corporation with much greater financial security.

The proposed amendment was seconded and unanimously approved.

A Member wished to focus on the impact upon the 272 dwellings in the Department of Community and Children's Services development pipeline given that much was made of the fact that this development would help the proposed development of alternative affordable accommodation. He questioned whether this meant that there was a firm commitment from elsewhere in the City Corporation for the delivery of all 272 units and that this sum of money would not be used for other purposes.

The Housing Community Development Manager, Community and Children's Services stressed that his Officers supported the commuted sum given that, as at 31 December 2021, there were 888 people on the housing waiting list of which 190 were existing tenants wishing to transfer to larger properties or who had specific housing needs. With regard to the commuted sum, Members were reassured that this money categorically had to be used for the provision of new social housing and could not be swallowed into the HRA fund and be utilised for other purposes. Officers went on to explain that, in relation to the additional 272 properties which they hoped to provide, planning permission had been obtained in all cases with one project at Sydenham Hill which was going to be protracted due to a judicial review. It was confirmed that all of these would produce rental income for the HRA and that, even if you were to take a moderate sum of £120 per week, multiplied by 272 and by 52 weeks, this would equate to an income of £1.7 million per annum. Officers explained that Community and Children's Services were very supportive of this scheme and that, whilst it would be

preferable to have on-site affordable housing within the City (ideally managed by the City of London), it would need to be at social rent in the same way that the 272 properties that the City Corporation hoped to deliver would be, thereby providing accommodation for City residents and applicants on the waiting list.

A Member spoke to stress that the City Corporation should do all that it could to avoid a repeat of these circumstances in the future. She also reiterated the need to clarify the difference between affordable and social housing.

Another Member spoke in response to Officer comments around viability and the cost of social housing. She stressed that when this case had originally been considered by the Committee it was a change of use from office space to hotel with a new office development and a residential element and there had been some nervousness amongst Members around this. The assurances given at the time was that the office space and housing element would be delivered at the same time that the hotel opened and, crucially, this would result 27 affordable housing units in the City. Since then, the hotel had opened but the office space had still not been developed and it was understood that this site had since been sold on and was to be the subject of a new planning application coming forward shortly. There was clearly now also an issue with the housing element and the Member questioned whether the Committee would have granted the scheme at the outset had they have foreseen any of this. The Member went on to state that the greatest cost in affordable housing was the land cost which was why it was extremely important to see this housing delivered within the City. She went on to comment on the issue around shared access and service charges, stating that other local authorities such as Tower Hamlets and Newham had been able to successfully navigate these and deliver affordable and social housing with new schemes in their boroughs. She questioned why housing associations were not willing to take on 27 units which seemed a fair number to most and stressed that, if this was the case, the organisation would need to look again at how it was going to deliver housing in the City. The Member stated that an informal discussion around how best to tackle and deliver affordable and social housing within the City of London would be welcome going forward.

The Comptroller and City Solicitor reported that if a commuted sum had been approved as part of the original planning application, the timing of the payments would have been negotiated in the same way that they were now being as part of this proposal. In circumstances where section 106 payments were to be split or delayed, Members were informed that it was common to ask for approximately 50% of the costs to be paid up front, prior to commencement of development with the remaining 50% to follow upon 50% of sales. When negotiating the phasing of payments, this was done around cash flow and the viability of the scheme so it was hard to define a 'norm' for this. The Deputy Chair asked the Comptroller and City Solicitor to clarify if the Committee were therefore entitled to alter the phasing of payments in the manner now proposed. The Comptroller and City Solicitor confirmed that this was correct and that it was within the remit of this Committee to set out the terms for the deed of variation. It would then be for the developer to decide whether to accept such terms.

A Member commented that it would be useful for Officers to provide the Committee with information as to what other councils did in similar circumstances for any future reports of this kind given that the City's experience in delivering affordable housing was comparatively less than some of its neighbours.

The Deputy Chairman concluded the debate by underlining that he and the Chair had been keen for this matter to come to the Committee as it clearly raised a number of questions and difficult issues. He added that there were a number of lessons to be learned from this particular application as well as in the broader context of social housing.

The Committee then proceeded to vote on the amended recommendations. The vote was conducted by rollcall led by the Town Clerk.

Votes were cast as follows: IN FAVOUR – 27 Votes
 OPPOSED – 0 Votes.
 There were no abstentions.

RESOLVED – That a Deed of Variation of approved to the section 106 planning obligation under application number 15/01067/FULL, allowing the meeting of the required affordable housing contribution via a commuted sum payment of £9,483,635, to be paid in three instalments as follows:

- 50% on implementation
- 35% on 50% sales
- 15% on 75% sales

5. **SENIOR OFFICER RECRUITMENT**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment noting the retirement of a senior officer and proposing a recruitment plan.

The Executive Director, Environment underlined that this was a very important post for the Department given the importance of the City Plan which had already been touched upon today. The Director underlined the need to press on with the recruitment process and find a top quality candidate to fill the post, join the team and help shape the future. She reported that the department were undertaken targeted recruitment and making use of all social media channels to promote the vacancy as widely as possible.

A Member recognised that recruitment to this post could take a number of months and questioned whether this meant that the organisation would not be in a position to refresh the Local Plan until such time as the post had been filled. The Executive Director assured Members that this was not the case and that the Team were fully focused on updating the Plan to ensure that it was innovative and leading the way in London and that this remained one of their top priorities.

The Town Clerk confirmed that a Local Plans Sub Committee had already been scheduled to take place later this month to begin to re-examine the Plan.

RESOLVED – That Members note the report.

6. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk setting out its list of Outstanding Actions.

A Member requested that the call for a special, informal meeting to discuss housing specifically be added to the list of outstanding actions. She also questioned whether the Sustainability SPD could feature here.

The Chief Planning Officer and Development Director reiterated that he would be liaising with his sustainability officers to provide a more targeted timeline around the production of the Sustainability SPD and agreed to include this information in the list of outstanding actions. With regard to the housing issue, he stated that whilst he was not opposed to this, he had some concerns as to singling out certain issues that would be discussed with the Local Plans Sub-Committee when they came to review the Plan as a whole. He stressed that he felt that this Sub-Committee was the most appropriate forum for this detailed discussion to take place. The Deputy Chairman agreed that this was how the matter should be progressed. It was underlined that those who were not members of the Sub Committee were still able to attend these meetings as observers.

Another Member commented that a wider, informal discussion on social housing would be of use in terms of ensuring that everyone was better informed and should include members of this Committee, the Community and Children's Services Committee and the Housing Sub-Committee. This could then feed into the Local Plans Sub-Committee's discussions on this particular point. She asked that Officers consider taking this forward.

Another Member focused on the Daylight/Sunlight – Alternative Guidelines action stating that there had been a proposal from a previous member of this Committee to take a unique approach on this and questioned progress on this. The Chief Planning Officer and Development Director reported that Officers were still waiting on a high-level professional consensus from the BRE, underlining that he felt that there was a vulnerability in the City taking a different approach which it could not sustain in an appeal. It was confirmed that draft guidelines were expected from the BRE in the near future and that City Officers were meeting frequently with them on this. The Member thanked the Chief Planning Officer for this update and stated that he also shared these concerns around this proposal.

A Member questioned the need for the dates listed against actions and noted that some had now been in progress for almost three years. Officers clarified that the progress of some of these actions were dependent on external parties/factors and others were dependent on quite onerous consultation processes and the infrequency on some other key Committees meeting to also

consider proposals such as the Barbican and Golden Lane Conservation Area SPD.

RECEIVED.

7. DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

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

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. VALID PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY DEPARTMENT OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

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

Cost of the Tulip Inquiry

A Member noted that she had questioned the costs of the inquiry to the City Corporation at the end of last year and requested a response to this from the Chief Planning Officer. The Chief Planning Officer stated that, as the Committee would recall, on 2 April 2019, Members voted 18 to 6 in favour of granting The Tulip planning application. However, the Mayor of London then directed the City to refuse this. On 18 February 2020, this Committee were advised by Officers that the estimated cost to the City in contesting the public inquiry would be upwards of £200,000. The Chief Planning Officer went on to confirm that the cost was actually significantly below this at £158,000 with savings achieved as the result of very competitive legal fees but, critically, as a lot of the work on design and heritage which were both key issues had been undertaken in-house by himself and other colleagues in addition to their normal duties.

Built Environment Users Panel

A Member noted that she had questioned the composition and the objectives of the Built Environment User Panel at the last meeting of this Committee and had also asked if there were any other similar groups that the Committee should be aware of. She remarked that she was yet to receive a response to either of these points. The Chief Planning Office apologised for this oversight and undertook to assemble the relevant information and respond directly to the Member as soon as possible.

Public Conveniences

A Member reported that the number of public conveniences had fallen by 20% in the last six years across councils and questioned the City's position on this. She added that she was very conscious that many residents were seeing issues with urination. Officers reported that this matter was within the remit of the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee and that this question would therefore be directed to relevant Officers here with a request that they respond to the Member directly.

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

There were no additional, urgent items of business for consideration.

11. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION – 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.

Item No	Paragraph No(s)
12	3
13-14	-

12. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the last meeting held on 14 December 2021 and approved them as a correct record.

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

There were no questions in the non-public session.

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

There were no additional, urgent items of business for consideration in the non-public session.

The meeting closed at 10.24 am

Chairman

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