

## **PORT HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, 18 January 2022**

**Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Port Health & Environmental Services  
Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 11.00 am**

### **Present**

#### **Members:**

Deputy Keith Bottomley (Chairman)  
Mary Durcan (Deputy Chairman)  
George Abrahams  
Rehana Ameer  
John Bennett  
Peter Bennett  
Tijs Broeke  
John Chapman  
Deputy Peter Dunphy  
John Edwards  
Deputy Kevin Everett  
Helen Fentimen

Sophie Anne Fernandes  
Christopher Hill  
Deputy Wendy Hyde  
Alderman Gregory Jones QC  
Shravan Joshi  
Alderwoman Susan Langley  
Deputy Andrien Meyers  
Deputy Henry Pollard  
Jason Pritchard  
Deputy Elizabeth Rogula  
Jeremy Simons

#### **Officers:**

Gary Burks	- Superintendent & Registrar, City of London Cemetery & Crematorium
Ruth Calderwood	- Environment Department
Paul Chadha	- Chief Lawyer
Jim Graham	- Environment Department
Gerry Kiefer	- Environment Department
Frank Marchione	- Principal Lawyer
Jenny Pitcairn	- Chamberlain's Department
Rachel Pye	- Environment Department
Gavin Stedman	- Port Health & Public Protection Director
Leanne Murphy	- Committee and Member Services Officer
Kristina Drake	- Media Officer
Elisabeth Hannah	- Environment Department
Robin Whitehouse	- Environment Department
Ian Hughes	- Environment Department
Ben Eley	- Environment Department
Adam Collins	- Environment Department
Emmanuel Ojugo	- Environment Department
Samantha Tharme	- Environment Department
John Cater	- Town Clerk's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Alexander Barr, Anne Fairweather, Vivienne Littlechild, and Henrika Priest.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman took the opportunity to thank Leanne Murphy for her work as clerk to the Committee. Leanne was leaving the Corporation at the end of the week and all in attendance wished her well.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** - That the public minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021 were approved as an accurate, subject to a matter of clarification concerning a sentence on page 4, under item 6 (New World Health Organisation Air Quality Guidelines), namely:

“A Member challenged the focus on the black carbon pollutant as delivering the best health outcomes noting that the table identified nitrogen dioxide as double the outcome”

The Chairman asked officers to clarify the meaning of this sentence. Officers would come back to the Chairman and the Member after the meeting.

The Chairman informed Members that the Committee's recent Resolution to the Policy & Resources Committee concerning sewerage in the River Thames had been discussed at the recent meeting of P&R, and that the Chair of Policy & Resources was raising this matter through appropriate channels. The Chairman has tasked the Committee clerk to follow this up and he is expecting a formal letter to be sent shortly to the appropriate body; this letter will be circulated among Port Health and Environmental Services Committee Members in due course.

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS AND WORK PLAN**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk setting out the current list of outstanding actions:

Electric Vehicle Charging

The Chairman asked Members that, given there had been zero take-up of applications to use the Minories Car Park charging points by Middlesex Street Estate residents, this item was taken off the outstanding actions list.

In response to a query, officers informed Members that the Department for Community and Children's Services was currently carrying out a procurement for the installation of EV Charging Points in the parking areas on the Middlesex Street Estate itself. An update would be provided to this Committee in due course. Several Members welcomed this and pointing to examples in other local authority areas in London, asked that other initiatives are looked at across the City in an effort increase the availability of EV infrastructure for residents.

Other Members pointed out that the City Corporation's Transport Policy, which had been approved by the Court of Common Council, explicitly discouraged the use of private vehicles within the City - the installation of more EV Charging infrastructure would ultimately attract more vehicles on to the City's streets, so a careful balance needed to be struck, with the emphasis on providing the Points for tradespeople and taxis in the first instance.

Officers stressed that whilst EV Points are available in the City's public car parks, they were not being utilised to a great degree, with the notable exception of Smithfield Car Park.

Members were also informed that works were ongoing at the Baynard House Car Park to install EV points for larger commercial vehicle use (with over height clearance available).

#### Measurement and mitigation options for operational rail noise from London Underground affecting the Barbican Estate

The Chairman informed Members that he and the Deputy Chairman had held a meeting with Nikki Aitken MP at No. 12 Brandon Mews, where it was immediately apparent that the extent of the noise and vibration caused by the underground points crossing was unacceptable. Nikki Aitken would be issuing letters to Andy Byford, the Commissioner of TfL and Seb Dance, Deputy Mayor for Transport at the GLA expressing her concerns. In addition, the Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee would be writing to Seb Dance asking for a meeting, in which the Chairman and Deputy Chairman and Nikki Aitken would also be in attendance.

The Chairman informed Members that, in contrast to the works to mitigate the noise from the Elizabeth Line under the Barbican Centre, the works required under Brandon Mews would require a more complex and costly fix.

#### Busking at Southwark

Members were informed that a joint meeting was held on 8<sup>th</sup> December, with City residents, officers from Southwark Council, and City Corporation Members in attendance to discuss the ongoing concerns around busking.

As a result of that meeting a leaflet had been issued to buskers, outlining their responsibilities, as per the legal requirements. Separately, new signage for the South Bank clarifying the rules had been commissioned, with installation due shortly.

Southwark would be looking at the wider aspects of busking on the South Bank, including cracking down on unauthorised pitches, and the provision of quiet pitches, where amplified music is not allowed.

Given the ongoing work and scrutiny this issue was being given, the Chairman proposed that this item should be removed from the Outstanding Actions. Any new concerns arising in this area would be brought back to the Committee

#### Lighting Guidance Note

Officers informed Members that all new developments in the City would now be required to include provision for PIR (passive infrared sensor) lighting. Whilst the City was unable to apply this retrospectively, officers were currently drafting a Charter for Responsible Lighting which would be promoted among all commercial building owners across the City. Consideration was also being given to appoint an individual in the Corporation's Climate Action Team to lead on this in the future.

The Chairman informed Members that he would be asking officers to convene a forum of the Chairs of all the City's Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in the spring to discuss ways in which progress could be made in this area, amongst others.

Separately, the Chairman informed Members that the Garden Waste Trial has been revived.

#### **5. BUSINESS PLANS 2021/2022: PROGRESS REPORT (PERIOD 2 - AUGUST TO NOVEMBER)**

The Committee received a Report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning progress made across Period 2 (August – November 2021) against the High-Level Business Plans 2021/22 for Cleansing Services, Cemetery & Crematorium, and Port Health and Public Protection.

The Port Health & Public Protection Director made the following points:

- The focus of the Cleansing Service during this period largely remained dealing with the Covid-19 outbreak along with managing the new service model that was necessitated by the 2021/22 budget changes.
- At the end of Period 2, the Cemetery and Crematorium remained busy and operating at levels similar to the same period in previous years (excluding 2020/21), with burials and cremations slightly up on the 7-year average at this period (excluding 2020/21).
- Port Health & Public Protection were primarily dealing with Covid recovery, Brexit readiness, increased trade at the Heathrow Animal Reception Centre (HARC) (30%) and Ports (20%) and continued to address air quality issues.

In response to a query, the Director informed Members that central government funding for border preparedness in response to new checks on goods coming from the EU from July 2022 was still to be secured for 22/23. The government had acknowledged that, across all GB Port Health Authorities, the costs for new facilities and staffing required from July – November (the phasing in period) would be over and above projected income during that time, and it was in discussions with the respective authorities (including the City) about submitting bids for funding. It was hoped that government funding would underwrite the whole of the 2022/23 FY and an update would be provided to Members in due course.

In response to a separate query, officers informed the Committee that recent DEFRA air quality alerts had been pessimistic, with real world data recording readings significantly below the computer modelling; in the past week, the City had experienced moderate levels of air pollution. In addition, officers confirmed that the Audit and Risk Management Committee had not asked for a Deep Dive Report concerning Air Quality for some time, however, it was anticipated that this would be requested later in 2022; once finalised, the Report would be shared with Members of the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee for their information.

In response to a query, officers would liaise with colleagues in the Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department on the issue of whether the name of the firm which broke Trading Standards rules could be published.

In response to a query, officers informed Members that electric refuse collection fleet had experienced some technical problems since its introduction in 2021 which had required the manufacturer to undertake remedial works and replacement vehicles to be provided. These incidences were now reducing, and it was anticipated that, as the service matures, problems can be kept to a minimum.

In response to concerns, officers highlighted that, given the merger of the three separate departments, work was ongoing with colleagues in the Chamberlain's Department to introduce a more joined up and consistent approach to financial reporting.

In response to a query, the Director informed Members that the programme of food hygiene inspections had, pre-covid, been based on a risk-based approach, considering things like the number of covers, type of food processing and management controls, with inspections taking place from a range of once every six months to once every two-three years. During the pandemic, with many premises shut or operating in different ways, officers were unable to carry out these programmes in the traditional way. Instead, they took a more risk-based and ad hoc approach to inspections; inspecting premises that were operating and reaching out to those that appeared closed.

In response to a query, the Director informed Members that the uptake for City & Hackney Food Hygiene webinars were reasonably successful, he would come back to Members with the statistics at the next meeting.

In response to a query, the Director informed Members that learning outcomes from the Coroner's Report from the Fishmonger's Hall Inquest were still being worked through, especially those around Health and Safety considerations.

**RESOLVED** – That the Committee noted the Report.

6. **DRAFT HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLANS 2022/23**

The Committee considered a Report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning the Draft High-Level Business Plan for 2022/23.

The Port Health & Public Protection Director made the following points:

- At the time of this report, the proposed structure of the new Environment Department was progressing through the governance stage of the Target Operating Model (TOM) and would not be finalised until the end of the 2021/22 financial year. For this reason, High-Level Business Plans for 2022/23 had been prepared separately for each service area rather than for the Environment Department as a whole.
- Cleansing major workstreams for 2022/23 for this Committee include contributing to the Climate Action Strategy, developing the Circular Economy Strategy, addressing budget pressures, and supporting the post-Covid City.
- Port Health and Public Protection major workstreams in 2022/23 will continue to include addressing the outcomes of Brexit, particularly for Port Health and the HARC, supporting City businesses to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, and continuing the City's work to improve air quality.
- The Cemetery and Crematorium major workstreams are focused on staffing, succession planning, renewable energy, and finalising work on the Shoot Lawn grave area.

A Member requested that, for the next iteration of the Report, more prominence was given to highlighting the City's work and responsibilities around key areas such as air quality and food and health safety; in the current iteration, these were overshadowed, somewhat, by too much of a focus on the department's expenditure and income outlook. In response, officers said that they would re-arrange the wording, but stressed that all stakeholders needed to not lose sight of the critical importance of sustainable finances to the department's future.

In response to a query concerning the omission of the word "exercise" in appendix 1, page 3, under the first bullet point under the sub-heading: Square Mile: Future City, the Chairman proposed that this should be picked up when this Report is taken to the next meeting of the Planning & Transportation Committee.

In response to a query about the omission of the word "safe" in the first bullet point in appendix 1, officers explained that the wording here was directly lifted from the Corporate Plan outcomes, so amending the wording in this section would not be appropriate; it would, however, be possible to emphasise the word "safe" in other parts of the Business Plan.

In response to requests from Members about emphasising better links between finances and activities outcomes, the Chairman and officers stressed that a lot of work was being undertaken in this area, both departmentally and more widely. For the Environment Department, it was noted that due to the departmental restructure, the Business Plan and the Budget had, for this year, been separated, however, going forward, these two documents would be

brought back together and greater emphasis would be given to reporting performance on a more frequent basis.

More broadly, the Chief Strategy Officer was looking at these issues and processes across the piece; the Chairman asked the Town Clerk to share this minute with the CSO after the meeting for her information.

**RESOLVED** - That the Committee:

Approved, subject to the incorporation of any changes sought by this Committee, the 2022/23 High-Level Business Plans for the:

- o Cleansing Service (Appendix 1)
- o Port Health and Public Protection Service (Appendix 2).
- o Cemetery & Crematorium (Appendix 3)

**7. PROPOSED CHARGES FOR STREET CLEANSING, WASTE COLLECTION AND PUBLIC CONVENIENCES 2022/23**

The Committee considered a Report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning proposed charges for Street Cleansing, Waste Collection, and Public Conveniences in 2022/23.

In response to a query about discarded chewing gum, officers informed Members that its removal was part of the City's basic cleansing service, this specifically included regular sweeping, applying treatment to pavement surfaces, intensified cleansing at known hot-spots, and the promotion of campaigns to discourage the dropping of gum.

Highlighting the third paragraph in the summary on the first page of the Report, officers clarified that the recommended charges would commence from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022, not 2021 as written in the Report.

**RESOLVED** – That the Committee:

Approved that, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022:

- charges for Street Cleansing services to external clients are increased by 7.1% in line with RPI;
- charges for special events and other ad-hoc works provided to third parties continue to be made at full cost plus 30% to cover the City's management and administration costs;
- the charge for the collection of bulky waste is increased from £35 to £37.50 for up to three items;
- bulky waste collection continues to be offered free of charge on request to those who are in receipt of means tested benefits and to those who are infirm or disabled receiving assisted collections;
- the general waste charges for educational establishments are increased by 7.1% and food and recycling collection charges should be maintained at the current level to encourage recycling;

- charges for the removal of highway obstructions to be increased from £60 to £64 and for the removal of uncollected bagged waste also be increased to £134 from £125 for up to 10 bags and £5 per bag thereafter;
- charges for the staffed toilet facilities at Tower Hill and Paternoster Square conveniences to remain at 50p per use;
- costs of smart bins to be increased by 7.1% (post mounted cigarette bins) sold to businesses be charged at cost plus 20% to cover the City's administration costs;
- Clean City Awards Scheme membership fees are kept the same.

8. **CEMETERY AND CREMATORIUM FEES AND CHARGES REPORT 2022 - 2023**

The Committee considered a Report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning fees and charges for the services provided at the City of London Cemetery and Crematorium in 2022/23.

**RESOLVED** – that the Committee agreed the fees and charges as set out in the Report and shown in Appendix 1 for implementation with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022.

9. **COVID-19 AND BREXIT UPDATE**

The Committee received an oral update of the Port Health and Public Protection Director concerning the latest position for the ports in relation to COVID-19 and Brexit.

The Director made the following points:

- Trade continued to remain high at the ports (20% increases) and HARC (33%)
- The emergence of the Omicron variant had made an impact on staff sickness levels, however, as throughout the pandemic, the City has continued to maintain these services. The short-term picture remained uncertain, with changes to COVID regulations pending, the City was continuing to support businesses with advice and guidance.
- In terms of Brexit, we are now starting to receive some pre-notifications. But it is unlikely that we will see the true numbers until the phasing in of physical controls between July and November this year. We continue to work with the relevant trade and government agencies to understand what trade patterns will look like in the future.
- Many of the long-standing practical issues still need to be resolved. Partly due to the need for further legislative changes. As the Committee was aware, the financial settlement for 2021/22 had previously be confirmed but the support for 2022/23 still needed to be finalised. Recruitment and training of staff is progressing well, in line with the projected trade volumes, and the port operators are nearing completion of their new developments and upgrades.



- Things will continue to develop over the next few months through to implementation. When the implications of the new trade volumes are better understood, we will be able to confirm our longer-term port health resource requirements, but this is likely to be in early 2023.

In response to a query, the Director informed Members that work, including testing, was ongoing around the implementation of a bespoke UK customs IT system, known as IPAFFS (Import of products, animals, food, and feed system) all UK ports in time for the introduction of checks in July. The Director assured Members that, given the scale of the changes from July, contingencies had been thoroughly worked up, and there was confidence that resilience measures were in place to mitigate any teething issues.

**RESOLVED** – That the Committee noted the oral update.

**10. RISK MANAGEMENT - PERIODIC UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee received a Report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning risk management procedures in place within the Environment Department.

**RESOLVED** – That the Committee noted the Report.

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

There were no questions.

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

There were two items of urgent business.

Air Quality

Members were informed that, in December, officers from the City's Environment Department and the Remembrancer's Department held a further meeting with Defra officials about their progress with developing new powers for local government to control non-transport sources of pollution. Officers at Defra are still collecting evidence to inform recommendations, and further meetings with them will take place over the next few months. Defra is aiming to have something for consultation towards the summer.

Last week, officers attended a meeting with UK100, which is a network of Metro Mayors and local government leaders. Representatives there were keen to see how they could support our request for new powers to deal with non-transport sources of pollution, and the City expects to hear back from them shortly.

The City should be consulted shortly concerning the government's proposals for PM2.5 targets under the new Environment Act. This is likely to include an outline of the role that local government will be expected to play in controlling this form of pollution. Officers attended a workshop in December about this matter and stressed the importance of new powers to enable local government to effectively support national efforts to reduce levels of PM2.5.

### Annual Fishing Experiment

The proposed date for the 50th City of London Thames Fishery Research Experiment is Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2022. Members were asked to block this time in the diaries - a formal invitation would follow later this year.

**13. 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.

**14. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** - That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

**15. HEATHROW ANIMAL RECEPTION CENTRE - FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered a Report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning the Schedule of Charges in respect of services provided at the Heathrow Animal Reception Centre (HARC), for the forthcoming financial year 2022/23.

**16. NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX: RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT - RISK REGISTER**

The Committee received the non-public appendix to Item 10 (Risk Management – Periodic Update Report), namely, the Port Health & Public Protection Risk Register.

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

There was one non-public question.

**18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was no other business.

**The meeting closed at 12.20 pm**

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Chairman

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