

COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Monday, 25 April 2022

Minutes of the meeting at Guildhall at 4.30 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy John Absalom	Alderman Gregory Jones QC
Matthew Bell	Florence Keelson-Anfu
James Bromiley-Davis	Alderman Bronek Masojada
Anne Corbett	Benjamin Murphy
Aaron Anthony Jose Hasan D'Souza	Henrika Priest
Mary Durcan	Jason Pritchard
Helen Fentimen	Ruby Sayed
Deputy John Fletcher	Naresh Hari Sonpar
Deputy Marianne Fredericks	Wilkins

Officers:

Andrew Carter	- Community and Children's Services
Julie Fittock	- City Surveyor's Department
Jason Hayes	- Community and Children's Services
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerk's
Paul Murtagh	- Community and Children's Services
Will Norman	- Community and Children's Services
Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services
Teresa Shortland	- Community and Children's Services
Ellie Ward	- Community and Children's Services

1. APOLOGIES

Before commencing the business on the agenda, it was proposed by John Absalom, seconded by John Fletcher and agreed that Alderman Gregory Jones should take the Chair until the new Chair was appointed.

Apologies were received from Jamel Banda, Alderman Alastair King, Timothy McNally and Joanna Abeyie.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **ORDER OF THE COURT -**

RESOLVED, that – the Order of the Court dated 21 April 2022, appointing the Committee and approving its Terms of Reference, be noted.

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Chairman, in accordance with Standing Order 29.

RESOLVED, that – being the only Member expressing a willingness to serve, Ruby Sayed be re-elected as Chair for 2022/23.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Deputy Chairman, in accordance with Standing Order 30.

Helen Fentimen and Mary Durcan expressed a willingness to serve and following a ballot, where Helen Fentimen received nine votes and Mary Durcan received eight votes, it was RESOLVED, that – Helen Fentimen be elected as Deputy Chairman for 2022/23.

6. **APPOINTMENT OF TWO CO-OPTEEES**

The Committee proceeded to elect two parent-governors, as set out in the Order of the Court.

RESOLVED, that – Laura Jørgensen and Matt Piper be elected as Parent-Governors for 2022/23.

7. **APPOINTMENTS TO SUB COMMITTEES**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk, which sought to appoint to its Sub Committees and approve their Terms of Reference. Members were also asked to appoint lead Members in respect of adult and children safeguarding, young people, rough sleeping and homelessness and a carers' champion.

The Chair felt that there are elements of general best practice that we need to bring in, given that our Sub Committees look after very important areas of work. The Chair did not want to consider this today but asked for a report to our next meeting, setting out some of the things we could consider adopting; i.e. - whether we need to expand the number of members, term limits for chairs, etc. The Chair has taken advice from the Town Clerk in this matter, who had agreed that it would be very helpful to have these matters codified, to ensure clarity and consistency.

By convention, the place on the Education Board had generally been taken by the Chair or Deputy Chair of this Committee but the Chair was already a Member of the Board in her own right, so the position was therefore offered to another Member of the Committee.

The Town Clerk had circulated statements in support of nominations before the Committee and there was no contest for the available places.

RESOLVED, that: - the Terms of Reference and Composition of the Sub Committees be approved, together with their appointments as set out below, and that the Committee's Portfolio Holders be appointed, also as set out below:

SUB COMMITTEES

Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee

Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee

1. TIM MCNALLY
2. CERI WILKINS
3. MARIANNE FREDERICKS
4. FLORENCE KEELSON-ANFU
5. MARY DURCAN (current Chair)
6. JOHN FLETCHER (current Deputy Chair)
7. ALDERMAN GREGORY JONES
8. HENRIKA PRIEST AND JAMEL BANDA - *expressed an interest after the meeting*

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub Committee

Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee

1. MARIANNE FREDERICKS (current Chair)
2. MARY DURCAN
3. JOANNA ABEYIE
4. ALDERMAN BRONEK MASOJADA
5. HENRIKA PRIEST
6. ANNE CORBETT
7. JAMES BROMILEY-DAVIS
8. JOHN ABSALOM

In addition, 2 Members have been appointed by the Court and 2 Members have been appointed by the Police Committee

Safeguarding sub committee

Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee – *currently, this Committee does not elect its own Chair*

1. ANNE CORBETT
2. MARCY DURCAN
3. CERI WILKINS
4. ALDERMAN GREGORY JONES
5. JOANNA ABEYIE
6. 1 x vacancy

Integrated Commissioning Sub Committee

Chair of CCS

Deputy Chair of CCS

Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board; together with 3 Deputies:

1. Mary Durcan
2. Florence Keelson-Anfu
3. Ceri Wilkins – *expressed an interest after the meeting*

Education board representative

Naresh Sonpar – expressed an interest after the meeting

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Adult and Children Safeguarding – Ruby Sayed

Young People – Florence Keelson-Anfu

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping – tbc – *given that Homelessness and Rough Sleeping now has its own sub committee*

Carers' Champion – Anne Corbett

8. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that – the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 22nd February 2022 be approved.

Matters Arising

The Director advised that the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee (HMASC) would receive a report in respect of the water rates refund, setting out the rates of uptake, progress with communications and further action being taken.

9. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The Committee received the Outstanding Actions list and noted the following points:

There would be two new housing developments completed within the 2022/23 financial year; the first, at 99 Golden Lane (formerly known as COLPAI), which will provide 66 new homes and the second; an infill development at Isleden House, which will provide three new units.

In respect of housing allocations, the HMASC would receive a report on the application of either London Living Wage (LLW), or National Living Wage (NLW), on income thresholds. Officers hoped to settle this matter by opting for LLW, with due diligence.

The Department was in negotiation with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets as to whether they would be able to re-use the Green Box and absorb some of the cost.

10. **PRESENTATIONS**

Members received the following presentations:

10.1 **The Role of the Department of Community and Children's Services**

The Director and Assistant Directors were heard in respect of the work of the Department.

10.2 **Toynbee/City Advice**

During questions, the following points were noted:

- The City Advice Centre would be having a stand at the All-residents' meeting on 4th May 2022.
- Residents should make initial contact via telephone or email, to book an appointment, as open sessions can generate long waiting times.
- Appointments can be held at residents' homes, a venue close to their homes or at Toynbee Hall.
- The team have Bengali, Spanish and Portuguese speaking staff and welcomed Members making an initial approach, on behalf of those constituents for whom English is not their first language.

10.3 **Section 106 funding and how this is applied / calculated re: affordable housing**

During questions, the following points were noted:

- The City of London Corporation had negotiated on-site affordable housing in respect of the Minorities Development. However, the developers had not been able deliver on this; partly due to the cost, but mainly because it had not been possible to find a housing association willing to take on the housing due to high management costs.
- The pre-planning stage includes checking that schemes are designed so as to provide affordable housing as part the development. However, service and maintenance charges are an issue with high specification buildings. Planning Departments can require developers to have a partner on board, via the Section 106 Agreement, but there have been very few affordable housing

developments in the City. This had been discussed in depth at the Planning and Transportation Committee.

- The Director emphasised the difference between affordable and social housing. The Community and Children's Services Department had been approached to run the affordable housing element of the Minorities development but, as they do not have sufficient resources, they received funding for social housing on the City's estates instead.
- The City Corporation has made a commitment to providing 700 social housing units but the timeline has been pushed back to 2025. However, given current construction inflation costs, this will still be very ambitious. There is a further commitment concerning affordable housing but this is more flexible. Both this and the social housing target will be subject to review.
- Section 106 funds must be spent on the delivery of new affordable or social housing, and not on maintenance, but it can be used in the preparations: i.e., obtaining planning permission for new social housing development.
- The Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee (HMASC) would receive a detailed report on stock breakdown, including voids and the waiting list. The report would then be shared with this Committee, for information
- The unit cost of building in the City is a lot more expensive than other areas, so the City Corporation is seeking to build in areas where it already owns the land, thereby expanding its existing estates. This too will be explored in the forthcoming report to the HMASC.
- Going forward, this Committee will be able to feed into the development of the City's Local Plan.

11. **ARTIZAN STREET LIBRARY TRANSFORMATION PROJECT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the Artizan Street Library Transformation Project. Members noted that Barbican and Community Libraries had been awarded a £226,575 grant from Arts Council England's Improvement Fund.

Members noted that a Library Designer, specialising in Equality Impact Assessments and Special Educational Needs and Disability, had been engaged on the project. The Equality Impact Assessment and Test of Relevance had been signed off by Director, and improved facilities for those with protected characteristics had been written into the specification. Members were asked to be mindful of the scope of the funds available. The Chair congratulated officers on the success of this bid and the level of award.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

12. **UPDATES FROM THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Members received the following updates:

12.1 **Bridging Hotels**

Members noted that there were two Bridging Hotels in the City for Afghan guests, at non-identified locations, but the Director would provide more details to Members in confidence. The guests' needs in terms of health and education had been met and the Director thanked Members for their support. There had also been strong support from local charities and very good feedback from the guests about their experiences. However, the challenge in respect of longer term housing offers remained, as the Department is dependent on the Home Office. It was expected that the bridging hotels will be in the City until the end of this calendar year.

12.2 **Ukrainian Refugees**

Members noted that sponsors need to be either related to Ukraine citizens they will be supporting or be known to them. A number of sponsors had contacted the Department, via the government portal, and the Department was conducting DBS checks as part of the safeguarding process, as well as accommodation checks. The Department had dates for the arrival of Ukrainian citizens, and asked Members for their support in terms of anyone with Russian/Ukrainian language skills.

The Director explained that the Department's capacity had been reduced as part of the City Corporation's Target Operating Model but this might need to be revisited in light of additional pressures on resources.

12.3 **Covid - Update from the Director of Public Health, City and Hackney**

It has been intended for this to be the last standing update to the Committee in respect of Covid but given the time pressure on this agenda, Members agreed to defer this to the next meeting. The Town Clerk agreed to circulate the latest update, from the Director of Public Health, after this meeting.

At 6.20 pm, Members agreed to extend the meeting in order to conclude the business on the agenda.

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

There was one question in respect of Child Q, as follows:

In March 2022, the City and Hackney Safeguarding Partnership (CHSP) published a Practice Review of Child Q's experience in a Hackney secondary school. The report concluded that the school girl (Child Q) was strip searched by Metropolitan police officers on the school premises and that, significantly,

there was an absence of a safeguarding approach. The review made fourteen separate recommendations including advice on training and anti-racism programmes. A Member asked what action would the City of London take to disseminate the learning from the CHSP Practice Review and implement training across services for children and the City of London Police?

The Director advised that the next meeting of the Safeguarding Sub Committee, on 12 May 2022, would receive a joint report of the City of London Police and the Director of Community and Children's Services. The report responds to the recommendations and findings and the plans for moving forward. The Senior Safeguarding Advisor from the City and Hackney Safeguarding Partnership would be in attendance at the meeting, together with officers from the City of London Police. Any Members of this Committee would be welcome to attend the Sub Committee.

The Chair advised that she had signed a petition in respect of Child Q, in her personal capacity, and was happy to forward the link to Members on request.

The Director advised that the 'adultification' of black girls had been raised at the recent Heads Forum and the Department would be taking this forward in terms of training and future direction. Members noted that the Independent Safeguarding Commissioner was being very thorough in this matter and the Safeguarding Partnership had asked all of its agencies to map out their responses.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no items.

15. 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 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

16. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED, that – the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 22nd February 2022 be approved.

17. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS (NON-PUBLIC)

The Committee received the non-public outstanding actions list.

18. WINDOW REPLACEMENT AND COMMON PARTS REDECORATIONS: HOLLOWAY ESTATE - GATEWAY 5 - AUTHORITY TO START WORK

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

19. YORK WAY ESTATE COMMUNAL HEATING REPLACEMENT - GATEWAY 5 - ISSUES REPORT

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

20. REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN - NON-PUBLIC

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk.

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

There were no questions.

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 items.

The meeting ended at 6.35pm

Chair

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