

COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Monday, 13 March 2023

Minutes of the Meeting held at Guildhall at 2.30 pm

Present

Members:

Ruby Sayed (Chair)	John Griffiths
Anne Corbett	Florence Keelson-Anfu
Mary Durcan	Alderman Ian David Luder
Helen Fentimen (Deputy Chairman)	Alderman Christopher Makin
Deputy John Fletcher	Timothy James McNally
Deputy Marianne Fredericks	Naresh Hari Sonpar
Steve Goodman OBE	

Officers:

Clare Chamberlain	-	Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services
Simon Cribbens	-	Community & Children's Services
Jason Hayes	-	Community and Children's Services
Paul Murtagh	-	Community and Children's Services t
Chris Pelham	-	Community and Children's Services
Chris Lovitt	-	Assistant Director of Public Health, City and Hackney
Mark Jarvis	-	Chamberlains
Julie Mayer	-	Town Clerks
Chandni Tanna	-	Town Clerks, Communications
Ellie Ward	-	Community and Children's Services Department
Ola Oadara	-	City Surveyors
Suzanne Spooner	-	City Surveyors

1. TO APPOINT A MEMBER TO THE HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB COMMITTEE

The Town Clerk advised that there had been two expressions of interest, from Joanna Abeyie and John Griffiths and a statement in support of John Griffiths' nomination had been circulated before the meeting. As there were just two nominees for one vacancy it was RESOLVED, that – John Griffiths and Joanna Abeyie be appointed to the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee for the ensuing year.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from :

Deputy John Absalom, Munsur Ali, Sophie Fernandes, Alderman Alastair King, Deputy Natasha Lloyd-Owen, Alderman Bronek Masojada, and Henrika Priest

The following Members had submitted apologies but joined the meeting remotely:

- James Bromiley Davies
- Ben Murphy

- Jason Prichard

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

The Town Clerk had circulated advice from the City Solicitor to all Members in respect of the reports on Crescent House at items 9 (a) Major Works Refurbishment Programme – Golden Lane Estate and 17 Windows and Common Parts Redecorations – Golden Lane Estate (Phase 1 Crescent House) on today's agenda .

The Town Clerk specifically reminded those Members, who are also Members of the Planning and Transportation Committee and wish to participate in any future Planning Decisions in this matter, to recuse themselves from taking part in the discussion and decision on the above items and ask for this to be recorded in the minutes.

For resident Members on the Golden Lane Estate, the City Solicitor had further advised that the Code of Conduct states that this will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, but *“You will only be expected to exclude yourself from speaking or voting in exceptional circumstances, for example, where there is a real danger of bias.”*

In respect of the report on the Golden Lane Leisure Centre, at agenda item 14 , if a Member does not have any particular financial interest in the leisure centre itself or in respect of the company being granted the lease extension and a management contract, then they would not have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

The following Members recused themselves during items 9(a) and 17:

- Mary Durcan
- Marianne Fredericks
- Alderman Ian Luder

Deputy John Fletcher is a Member of Planning and Transportation but decided to remain for the above items and recuse himself at the Planning and Transportation Committee, should they receive an application in the future.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 23rd January 2023 be approved.

5. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

A Member asked if actions could state 'by' for a target date, rather than 'to be confirmed'.

6. **ISSUES REPORT FOR THE FUNDING FOR 347 CRESCENT PILOT PROJECT AND WINTER MEASURES FOR THE GOLDEN LANE ESTATE - WITHDRAWN**

Members noted that this item had been withdrawn and replaced by item 9.1 in the Supplementary Pack under 'Items of Urgent Business: Major Works Refurbishment Programme - Golden Lane Estate'.

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

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services Committee in respect of the City of London Corporation Combined Relief of Poverty Charity (1073660). The report presented various matters for consideration, consistent with the City Corporation's duty as Trustee; ie - to keep such matters under review and to ensure that the charity is operating effectively. Specifically, decisions were sought in respect of a strategic grant proposal to Family Action, noting that this was seed funding and the applicant would still be able to apply to other funders.

Members noted the various funding pots available to new tenants for items such as white goods and furniture. The Chair advised that she is a Trustee of Housing for the Homeless, to which applications can be made via the Community and Children's Services Committee (CCS) on behalf of qualifying residents. Another similar Charity is the City of London Magistrates Fund, which also accepts referrals from CCS.

Members also noted that the First Love Foundation, which provided food delivery services in the City of London Corporation didn't reach as many City residents as expected but had been successful in reaching tenants on the City's borders.

The officer further advised that, three years ago, the City of London Combined Relief of Poverty Charity had been reviewed. The Chair advised that this would be the subject of a future informal Member Briefing in terms of how the charities and grants work together.

RESOLVED, that:

1. A grant of £82,790 be approved to Family Action, over 24 months, to deliver a food pantry service for City of London residents and those residing in bordering boroughs.
2. The finance update for the Charity be noted.
3. The work of the Charity Review be noted and officers be instructed to review and make recommendations on the funding criteria for the Charity, to be considered at a future meeting of this committee.

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

There were no questions.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

Members noted a leaflet, provided by Alderwoman Pearson, which had been posted through letterboxes on the Golden Lane Estate, and on the Golden Lane Website, in respect of the costs of major works. The Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services stressed that the information was incorrect, it had not originated from the City Corporation and its source was under investigation. The Town Clerk agreed to circulate the letter to Members after the meeting. DONE

The Chair then invited updates from the Chairs of the various Sub Committees and Lead Members, including the Health and Wellbeing Board, noting that this would be a standing item on future agendas.

Members were reminded that the agendas and minutes from the various Sub Committees are available on the Intranet and they are welcome to attend meetings as observers.

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub Committee (HRSSC) – Deputy Marianne Fredericks

The Chair (of the HRSSC) reported on the national Annual Count. London boroughs try to co-ordinate the date and, in 2022, it took place on 22nd November between midnight and 4 am. Officers, outreach workers and the Chair of the Sub Committee cover all the City's streets and walkways, looking for those who are rough sleeping. There was a significant increase in numbers in November but the December count was lower. The Severe Weather Emergency Plans (SWEPs) have been very successful; ie - when temperatures drop to zero, anyone found rough sleeping can come in immediately and have access to pathways to keep them off the streets. Rough sleeping generally is up by 26% across the country but the City Corporation has been very successful in keeping people off the streets, once they come in. The next meeting of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub Committee will receive a presentation from Homeless Link, who operate the Street Link network.

As there are a number of housing reports on this agenda, there would not be an update from the **Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee**.

City and Hackney integrated care board (ICB) – Helen Fentimen

The Deputy Chair (of CCS) advised that the Board had met the previous week and signed off the new Terms of Reference, which incorporated work on the place accountability framework. Officers agreed to circulate the final copy to Members for their information.

The Navigation Programme is based at a neighbourhood level and navigates residents of the City and Hackney to services such as befriending, voluntary services etc, which can be complex. The effectiveness of the programme will be monitored.

Finances are still at a City and Hackney level but delegations are not yet clear. Once North East London are in a position to analyse their final allocation from the Department of Health, and agree as to how it will be shared amongst Integrated Health and Care Boards in North East London, the ICB will receive an update.

Members were asked to note the report in the 'For Information' pack; Consultation: 2023-2027 Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategic Priorities. The City and Hackney Health and Wellbeing Board are instrumental in informing the City and Hackney Health Partnership Strategy. Objectives are set out in this information report and Members were invited to contact the Deputy Chair, should they have any comments to feed into the joint discussions.

Members noted that a briefing session on the City and Hackney Care Board's Financial Arrangements, and how they apply to local priorities, had been re-arranged

and invitations sent to HWB and CCS Members for 15th March at 11.30 am. The session would be a hybrid and recorded for those unable to attend.

Safeguarding Sub – Ruby Sayed

The Chair advised that the recent focussed Ofsted Visit for Children’s Social Care and Early Help had been very positive and the been circulated to all Members of the Court.

The Sub Committee had received the Annual Report of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership, Corporate Parenting Annual Report and Strategy updates and the Annual Report on Adult Social Care. A new Virtual Head Teacher was in post.

Further assistance would be provided for care experienced young people in terms of travel cards during school holidays and dentistry services. The young people were keen to attend a black tie event or ball.

Lead Members

Carers – Anne Corbett

The Lead Member for Carers advised that the City’s Connections contract, which is run by Age UK East London, had been extended in April 2022 to run until March 2024. Members noted that City Connections provide early intervention and prevention but not specialist advice to carers.

Since October 2022, the City has provided funding for a special carers project and the Tower Hamlets Careers Centre has been sub contracted by Age UK East London. They have a full-time employee and provide drop in centres twice a week at Portsoken and Golden Lane. This service has been very well received and found a further 28 new carers. The City are now aware of 60 carers, representing 10% of the census count. Plans are underway for a carers week between 5 and 11 June 2023. The Lead Member will be helping with fund raising for special events and the Lady Mayoress has offered to host an afternoon tea at Mansion House. Members were very supportive of continued funding for this project and asked for a further update at the next meeting.

Young People – Florence Keelson-Anfu

The Lead Member had been working with the Chair (of CCS) and would be attending a meeting at the DfE this week in respect of care leavers. The Lead Member had also met with the Chief Constable at the British Transport Police and the team at Kings Cross Station about their operations in respect of county lines, stop and search and the prevention of violence against women and girls. (VAWG). The BTP officers offered to provide a briefing for Members in terms of how the City can offer support across its rail network.

Updates from the Housing Estate’s Allocated Members

The Chair reminded the Committee that all Members of CCS can be Allocated Members, not just members of the Housing Sub Committee, and each estate can have more than one member, given the volume of live housing projects.

The Town Clerk reminded Members that there will be re-elections to this and the above positions at the May meeting of the Committee.

Chair thanked all Members of the Sub Committees and Lead and Allocated Members for their input.

Sydenham Hill – Ruby Sayed

This project had been the subject of a protracted planning application and appeal. The Chair (of CCS) had chaired a meeting with the resident liaison group, attended by developers and stakeholders, which had enabled residents to set out their grievances. The Chair has asked for a reset to work together going forward and there was confidence that works would commence soon.

Avondale Estate – Tim McNally

A fire on the Estate was being investigated by the London Fire Brigade. There had been a 6-month delay to the sprinkler project, as one of the sub contractors had gone into liquidation. Walkabouts on the Estate were continuing, with one planned for 14th March.

Golden Lane – Marianne Fredericks

Fallen masonry from the roof of Great Arthur House had been reported to officers.

Middlesex Street – John Fletcher

Members noted that the space had been declared as surplus and the next phase would involve the planning application and City of London Police move. Residents welcomed the resealing of the podium, as it would present an opportunity to redesign from scratch. The Chair thanked Portsoken Members, Members of the Committee and officers for their work in rebuilding relationships between residents and the City Corporation.

Update on the Green Box

Members noted that this had once been a Community Centre and it had been moved to an interim site in Newham, working with West Ham Sea Cadets. This interim move would cost considerably less than the six figure sum originally expected for restoring the site. The Assistant Director, Commissioning and Partnerships, was thanked for his tenacity in this project, given that the Green Box had originally been considered beyond salvage. The Deputy for Portsoken Ward, also a Member of this Committee, further advised that the removal of the Green Box would open up the stairway to Little Somerset Street, reducing the walk from the houses and flats to the station. The Guinness Trust had enquired as to who would be paying for the security gate and asked to meet with the Grants Officer in terms of CILF funding. The Chair offered her assistance in this matter.

The Assistant Director, Commissioning and Partnerships had also been working with the Barbican Association in respect of the Barbican Community Room. A funding bid had been submitted and the outcome would be reported to Members.

Savill Review

The Chair advised that, although Savill Report was for information, she had asked for it to be placed on the Committee's main agenda. Members noted that the Chair would

speak to the Chair of Policy and Resources in respect of arranging a breakfast briefing for all Members, noting its close alignment with the HRA and lessons learnt from other major projects. If not, then there would be a briefing for CCS Members, after the next meeting scheduled for 3rd May 2023. The Chair of HMASC also asked if the report could go to the next meeting of HMASC.

The new Department of Community and Children's Services Handbook had been tabled and would be available to all Members of the Court.

9.1 Major Works Refurbishment Programme - Golden Lane Estate

Members noted that item 6 on the published agenda had been replaced with this new item of urgent business. As this report had been circulated very close to the meeting, copies were also around the tables. The Chair and Town Clerk apologised for the late circulation of papers but this had enabled the Chair of Policy and Resources to provide input and for the most up to date information to be included.

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which sought approval of an expedited Major Works Refurbishment Programme for the Golden Lane Estate, to include an agreed expanded option for the repair/refurbishment of existing window frames and associated roofing, heating and ventilation works.

Members were also asked to note Item 17 on the non-public agenda, in respect of Windows and Common Parts Redecorations - Golden Lane Estate (Phase 1 Crescent House) and officers advised that they would batch reports together in future, to reduce the number of decisions required. Members noted that this project does not include fire safety works; they are part of a separate budget approved by the Policy and Resources Committee. The Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services, advised of ongoing issues with recruitment and was working with HR in terms of improving the City's offer, when compared to similar employers.

The Deputy Chair of the HMASC asked about recent communications, which might have caused concern to residents. Members noted that all costs are estimates at this stage and further communications, with more accurate figures, will take place before the Section 20 Consultation. The officer advised that all of the consultation reports are on the City Corporation's website and will be updated with cost information as the 'Gateway 4' reports are approved.

The Chair asked for 6 monthly updates on this report.

RESOLVED, that :

1. Option 4 in the report be approved; ie - an expedited Major Works Refurbishment Programme for the Golden Lane Estate, that includes an agreed expanded option for the repair/refurbishment of existing window frames and all associated roofing, heating and ventilation works.

2. Option 2 in the report be approved; ie - for repairing/refurbishing the windows and installing new vacuum glazing as part of the expedited Major Works Refurbishment Programme on the Golden Lane Estate
3. The overall estimated cost of £29,054,000 be approved for the Major Works Refurbishment Programme for the Golden Lane Estate, to be funded from the current provision for the HRA Major Works Programme. NB. Affordability is subject to making ongoing revenue savings from 2025/26 and will need to be kept under review.

AT 4.25pm Members agreed to extend the meeting to conclude the business on the agenda

10. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

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

Item no(s)	Para No(s)
11 – 18	3

11. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2023 be approved.

12. **NON-PUBLIC OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The Committee received the actions list.

13. **REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk.

14. **GOLDEN LANE LEISURE CENTRE**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children’s Services.

15. **MIDDLESEX STREET ESTATE (MSE) COMMERCIAL TENANTS RENT ARREARS**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the City Surveyor and the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children’s Services.

16. **PROPOSED EASTERN BASE FOR COLP -VACANT POSSESSION STRATEGY - PROPOSED VARIATION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO COMMERCIAL TENANTS**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the City Surveyor.

17. **WINDOWS AND COMMON PARTS REDECORATIONS - GOLDEN LANE ESTATE (PHASE 1 CRESCENT HOUSE)**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children’s Services.

18. **RETROFIT SPRINKLERS**

The Committee Considered and approved a report of the Interim Executive Director, Community and Children 's Services.

At 4.25 pm Members agreed to extend the meeting to conclude the business on the agenda.

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

There were no questions

20. **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 4.40 pm

Chairman

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