

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Thursday, 19 October 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 19 October 2023 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Christopher Hayward (Chairman)
Deputy Keith Bottomley (Deputy Chairman)
Caroline Haines (Vice-Chair)
Deputy Randall Anderson (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Rehana Ameer
Mary Durcan (Ex-Officio Member)
Helen Fentimen
Deputy Marianne Fredericks
Jason Groves
Alderman Timothy Hailes
Deputy Ann Holmes (Chief Commoner) (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Shravan Joshi
Alderman Vincent Keaveny, CBE
Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli
Paul Martinelli
Catherine McGuinness
Deputy Brian Mooney
Alderman Sir William Russell
Ruby Sayed (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Sir Michael Snyder
James Tumbridge
Deputy Philip Woodhouse

In attendance (observing online):

Benjamin Murphy

Officers:

Ian Thomas, CBE	- Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Gregory Moore	- Deputy Town Clerk
Jen Beckerman	- Executive Director and Private Secretary to the Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee
Polly Dunn	- Town Clerk's Department
Benjamin Dixon	- Town Clerk's Department
Chris Rumbles	- Town Clerk's Department
Emily Slatter	- Town Clerk's Department
David Mendoza Wolfson	- Town Clerk's Department
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller and City Solicitor and Deputy Chief Executive
Caroline Al-Beyerty	- Chamberlain

Sonia Virdee	- Chamberlain's Department
Paul Wright	- Deputy Remembrancer
Dionne Corradine	- Chief Strategy Officer
Damian Nussbaum	- Executive Director of Innovation and Growth
Bob Roberts	- Executive Director, Environment
Emily Tofield	- Executive Director of Corporate Communications and External Affairs
Paul Wilkinson	- City Surveyor
Judith Finlay	- Director of Community and Children's Services
Deborah Bell	- Community and Children's Services Department
Chris Lovitt	- Community and Children's Services Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from The Rt Hon the Lord Mayor Nicholas Lyons, Deputy Andrien Meyers, Deputy Henry Colthurst, Tijs Broeke and Munsur Ali.

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

Alderman Tim Hailes declared an interest in item 7 as a Director of the Lord Mayor's Show Ltd; also an interest in item 14 as a Governor at King Edward's Witley School.

Marianne Fredericks declared an interest in item 14 as a Governor at Christ's Hospital School.

Caroline Haines declared an interest in item 14 as a Governor at King Edward's Witley School.

3. MINUTES

- a) The public minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 21 September 2023 were approved as an accurate record.
- b) The public minutes of the Communications and Corporate Affairs Sub-Committee meeting held on 6 September 2023 were noted.
- c) The public minutes of the Capital Buildings Board meeting held on 7 September 2023 were noted.
- d) The draft public minutes of the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee meeting held on 5 October 2023 were noted.

4. POLICY LEADS QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Town Clerk providing an update on the activities of the Policy Leads of 'rapporteurs' and seeking agreement on the future configuration of the Policy Lead programme.

Clarity was sought on the appointment process to the Policy Lead roles and whether these required Policy and Resources Committee's approval or if a final decision should sit with the Chairman. The Chairman responded stressing how he considered it important that an individual appointed as a Policy Lead would have the full confidence of Policy and Resources Committee and that that were not seen as his personal appointments but those of the entire committee.

A Member referred to the Sports Strategy and Sports Engagement Policy Lead role and suggested it may be worthwhile in looking to encourage sporting bodies to locate their head offices in London and engaging with them on this.

The Deputy Chairman responded confirming a clear commitment within the Sports Strategy was to focus on the Square Mile and with the Member's suggestion already being an area that was being actively pursued through various channels.

A Member remarked on how they considered there to be a key policy area missing and asked the Chairman to consider introducing a Policy Lead role for the Residential Reset. The Member added how the view of residents coming through was that they were not currently seeing actions in responding to the Residential Reset. The Member sought Policy and Resources Committee's agreement to this additional role.

The Chairman responded stressing how the Residential Reset was of great importance to him personally and confirmed that a recommendation would come forward in due course addressing a lead role with residents. The Chairman added how he considered it harsh to suggest that no action had been taken, with work having started in a number of areas, including a move to replace windows at Golden Lane. It would no doubt take time to change the culture through engaging with the residential community and being clear on the investment that was being made, with a lead in this area being able to add value.

A Member added how there was a need to consider a residential reset across a range of areas in the City including Destination City, night-time economy, cleanliness. Planning applications was another area of concern to residents, and it was questioned whether the City Corporation should look to provide a resource dedicated to helping and supporting residents in this area, as was being done by Westminster City Council.

The Chairman agreed on the importance of giving a voice to residents on a range of areas and confirmed that he would ask officers to review what was currently being done at Westminster City Council, with this allowing an opportunity to learn from what was being done elsewhere, and which he hoped would offer the Member a level of re-assurance.

The Chairman concluded the discussion by stressing how it was not always possible to do what every resident wanted, but with it being one City and residents being a very important part of this. The Chairman added how he considered it important to reach out to residents with them having a very important place at the table.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

- Noted the activities of the policy leads over the previous quarter.
- Agreed to extend the tenure of the existing policy leads for High Growth Markets, Advanced Markets, Innovation & Technology, SMEs and Sports Engagement to the end of the 2023 Civic year so that a revised structure will:
 - o Align with the usual civic appointment cycle.
 - o Align with the start of the new Corporate Plan.
- Agreed to advertise to all Members a vacancy for the Sustainability Policy Lead
- Agreed to consult with Members before decisions are taken on a revised structure.

5. **CITY ORIENTATION PROGRAMME FOR LONDON-BASED POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS**

The Committee considered a report of the Remembrancer proposing the establishment of, in collaboration with Goodenburgh College, a City of London orientation programme for selected cadre of overseas postgraduate students studying in London.

A Member, also Vice Chair, remarked the programme being an example of the City Corporation's soft power, using a small number of people to take a strong message back to their own countries or areas, with it fitting in well with a programme already being run by the Worshipful Company of Goldsmith's and the proposal having their full support.

There was a recognition of what can be achieved though soft power, with a number of Members speaking in support of the programme. It was suggested other institutions could be considered if the programme proved successful, looking at giving younger age children an opportunity in the City, linking up to the Mansion House Scholarship Scheme and looking at other areas to extend into.

RESOLVED: That Members:

- Agreed to establishment of an orientation programme in the terms stated.

6. **APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY WATER BAILIFF**

The Committee considered a report of the Remembrancer regarding the Lord Mayor Elect's Mayoral theme "Connect to Prosper", a number of planned initiatives relating to the River Thames and seeking approval of the appointment of an Honorary Water Bailiff.

A Member raised their concern that the proposal to appoint of a Water Bailiff was on an honorary basis only, with the River Thames requiring cleaning and with some of the extant duties of the role potentially being used to achieve this. The Deputy Remembrancer responded confirming that certain statutory functions of the role had been removed and were now being dealt with by the Environment Agency, with this proposal relating to extant functions in relating to provision of a salary to be paid and the appointee not being allowed to hold other office or employment.

A Member remarked on their disappointment at the City Corporation not having firmer powers relating to the condition of the Thames, but how they hoped the post would be used to attract attention to and highlight key issues in this regard.

A Member added how discussions continued with Thames 21, looking at holding a Thames Day and with the Lady Mayoress to lead litter picking on the Thames as part of this. Efforts continued at refocussing on a river that has made the City what it was today.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

- Agreed that the Lord Mayor may appoint an honorary Water Bailiff and that none of the extant provisions governing the now defunct office of Water Bailiff should apply in respect of such an appointment.

7. **POLICY AND RESOURCES CONTINGENCY/DISCRETIONARY FUNDS**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain providing a schedule of projects and activities which had received funding from the Policy Initiatives Fund, the Policy and Resources Committee's Contingency Fund and Committee's Project Reserve for 2023/24 and future years with details of expenditure in 2023/24.

The Chairman drew Members' attention to a request to approve an increase in the multi-year PIF cap.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

- Note the report and contents of the schedules.
- *Agreed to increase the multiyear PIF cap by £65,682 and £90,429 in 2023/24 and 2024/25 respectively should the Innovation and Growth Artificial Intelligence Workstream bid be approved at today's Committee.

*The Innovation and Growth Artificial Intelligence Workstream bid was not approved when it was subsequently considered item 16 on the agenda and with this recommendation falling away as a result.

8. **SUICIDE PREVENTION IN THE CITY OF LONDON ANNUAL UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Public Health providing an update on progress made on the Suicide Prevention Action Plan and providing the most recent data for suicide in the City of London.

A Member remarked on her request that the report be presented to Policy and Resources Committee to allow an opportunity to show the huge amount of work that had taken place in relation to suicide prevention, with the Member thanking the Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board and officers in looking to address concerns on this issue.

The Member added how they had raised previously the importance of Mental Health Street Triage and the huge support this role offered to City of London Police. An assessment can be carried out quickly, thereby reducing the time a Policer Officer has to spend with an individual when it has been identified that they need to go to hospital; Mental Health Street Triage also allowed an opportunity to follow up with an individual in looking to prevent people from attempting suicide again. The Member stressed a need to resource a Mental Health Street Triage service moving forwards and to resource it long term.

The Chairman acknowledged the main cost being human cost, with any financial cost being secondary. The Chairman thanked the Member for all her work in this area and for bringing this important issue to the attention of Policy and Resources Committee.

The Executive Director, Environment referred to a number of experts due to meet next week at conference to look at next steps and what can be done to further address this issue, with proposals to follow. The Director added how all were sympathetic to the issues raised by the Member.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

- Note the progress made on the Suicide Prevention Action Plan
- Note the most recent data for suicide in the City of London

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

The following questions were raised:

City Corporation Culture – Rehana Ameer

If you agree that good organisational culture within the elected Members and the Officers was vital for the success of the City's vision for Economic growth and for us to assess how fit our culture health was, can you urgently call for an independent review of the Corporation to do a health check on the organisation's culture in relation to racism, bullying, bad behaviour, discrimination, harassment, and islamophobia, and whether we have the right policies, procedures, and support systems in place to record and address these issues for elected Members. Please can a report be presented by the December Committee meeting on the plan of action to undertake this review, budget requirements and timelines to undertake this review.

The Chairman responded noting there were two aspects to the question posed. Firstly, bad behaviour of Members which was being addressed through a Local Government Association Independent Review of Member Behaviour at the City Corporation, with a second part around racism and islamophobia being addressed through Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee.

The Chairman reminded Members that Policy and Resources Committee had created a Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee, with Chief Commoner as its Chair, with a remit over Member behaviour. Sight of a framework and plan around “Members’ behaviour” would be coming back to Policy and & Resources Committee once Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee had completed its consideration of this area of work, in line with agreed procedures.

On the specific question of a wider Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Review, the Chairman confirmed that he had met with the Chair of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Sub Committee and the Chief Commoner, during which he had expressed his view that there needed to be a proper scoping of such a review, putting forward a business plan, a purpose, any costs associated with it and how it would be managed. Once a review had been scoped and completed by Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee a recommendation would come back to Policy and Resources Committee for Members’ consideration. The Chairman added how Equality Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee were well placed to take this area of work forward in the first instance, working with the new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Director once they were appointed.

The Chairman concluded confirming that work was already underway on both areas and with reporting due to come back to Policy and Resources Committee at an appropriate point.

Assistant Director of Housing – Marianne Fredericks

It was now eighteen months since the Court meeting when it was decided to look at a Grand Committee for housing that would merge Housing Sub-Committee and Barbican Residential Committee, with there now being a need to move forward and be in a position to deal with housing project issues. It was questioned when a report would be coming forward to allow for a decision to be taken on proposals for a Grand Committee to oversee the City Corporation’s housing stock.

The Assistant Director of Housing would be leaving the City Corporation at the end of the month and the Member thanked them for all they had done and with this being an important moment in the department’s history to be able to resource this area of work up and to ensure they have the support required to deliver on important housing projects.

The Chairman responded confirming he was sympathetic to concerns raised that housing governance and strategy had not moved at the pace wanted, but with there being an excellent new Director of Community and Children’s Services in post who would now be able to take this area of work forward. It had taken much longer than envisioned when it was first discussed as part of the Lisvane Review, but it would be wrong to say no work had taken place. Three reviews had been conducted through a Savill’s Review looking at funding and delivery of housing investment in responding to the decent homes compliance, a Pennington Review of the social housing management function and an Altair Review of the Barbican

Estate Office. These all being important reviews in their own right and taken together to help inform thinking on a housing strategy moving forward.

It was now at a stage for a fourth piece of work to bring together the components of each of these reviews into a coherent housing strategy, following which consideration would be needed as to whether to change the governance to create a Grand Committee.

The Chairman asked officers to bring an update and timeline to Policy and Resources Committee including an assessment of how quickly it will get to a decision on a new committee structure. The Chairman accepted Members' legitimate concerns relating to housing governance at the City Corporation and their frustration at the time it had taken to implement new governance arrangements.

The Chairman offered the Member his assurance, through a request to officers that they now move forward on this area of work, pulling it all together, getting a strategy in place and with new governance arrangements being implemented. The Chairman handed over to the Director of Community and Children's Services.

The Director of Director of Community and Children's Services added how the three reviews had recommendations around consistent themes of customer focus, a need for stronger performance management, increased ownership and contract management of external providers along with a number of recommendations on policies and procedures. These areas were being acted upon already in responding to the three reviews, with the housing strategy to be completed that would encompass an asset management strategy also.

The Director added how the residents' voice was very important, with a meeting due to be held with 150 residents to discuss their concerns and to offer them an assurance that views were being taken very seriously.

The Town Clerk echoed comments on the importance of residents' voices, adding how a replacement Assistant Director of Housing was due to start at the end of the month to ensure there was continuity of leadership in this important area of work.

Members noted the position.

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

There were no additional items of business.

11. **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.

12. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

- a) The non-public minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 21 September 2023 were approved as an accurate record.
 - b) The non-public minutes of the Capital Buildings Board meeting held on 7 September 2023 were noted.
 - c) The draft non-public minutes of the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee meeting held on 5 October 2023 were noted.
13. **NOMENCLATURE OF THE CITY OF LONDON'S CORPORATE FUND, COMMONLY KNOWN AS CITY'S CASH**
The Committee considered a joint report of the Chamberlain, Remembrancer and Comptroller and City Solicitor relating to nomenclature of the City of London's Corporate Fund, commonly known as City's Cash.
14. **ALLOCATION OF FUNDING TO KING EDWARD'S WITLEY SCHOOL**
The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Town Clerk relating to allocation of funding to King Edward Witley's School.
15. **SCHOOLS FAIR FUNDING REVIEW**
The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services providing an update on the Schools Fair Funding Review.
16. **INNOVATION & GROWTH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE WORKSTREAM**
The Committee considered a report of the Director of Innovation and Growth relating to an artificial intelligence workstream that was being developed.
17. **CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT PLANT REPLACEMENT: PHASE 4**
The Committee considered a report of the City Surveyor providing an outcome report for a Central London Criminal Court Plant Replacement project.
18. **CITY OF LONDON SUICIDE AUDIT**
The Committee received a report of the Director of Public Health presenting findings of a "suicide audit" in order to identify high-risk groups, locations of concern, patterns and trends and providing evidence for targeted interventions and contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of outcomes.
19. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
A question was raised relating to the following:
- **City Corporation Flag Raising Policy**
20. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED.**
There were two urgent items of business as follows:
- **Vacant Possession of London Wall Site**

- **City of London Academies Trust**

21. MINUTES

- a) The confidential minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 21 September 2023 were approved as an accurate record.
- b) The confidential minutes of the Capital Buildings Board meeting held on 7 September 2023 were noted.
- c) The confidential minutes of the Freedom Applications Sub-Committee meeting held on 11 July 2023 were noted.
- d) The draft confidential minutes of the Freedom Applications Sub-Committee meeting held on 25 September 2023 were noted.

The meeting ended at 4.22pm

Chairman

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