

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 4 June 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held at Guildhall, EC2 on Tuesday, 4 June 2024 at 12.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Randall Anderson (Deputy Chairman)	Elizabeth Anne King, BEM JP (Alderman-Elect)
Deputy Rehana Ameer	Deputy Paul Martinelli
Nicholas Bensted-Smith	Deputy Andrien Meyers
Deputy Timothy Butcher	Hugh Selka
Alderman Professor Emma Edhem	Deputy Sir Michael Snyder
Steve Goodman OBE	James Tumbridge
Alderwoman Martha Grekos	Mark Wheatley
Deputy Madush Gupta	Philip Woodhouse
Michael Hudson	Deputy Christopher Hayward (Ex-Officio Member)

Officers:

Ian Thomas	- Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Caroline Al-Beyerty	- Chamberlain
Paul Wilkinson	- City Surveyor
Damian Nussbaum	- Executive Director, Innovation and Growth
Oliqur Chowdhury	- Chamberlain's Department
Lisa Moore	- Chamberlain's Department
Monica Patel	- Chamberlain's Department
Sonia Virdee	- Chamberlain's Department
Genine Whitehorne	- Chamberlain's Department
James Murray	- City Surveyor's Department
Robert Murphy	- City Surveyor's Department
Damon Ellis	- Community and Children's Services Department
Michael Gwyther-Jones	- Community and Children's Services Department
Ben Dunleavy	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the Chairman, Shahnaz Bakhsh, Brendan Barns, Deputy Keith Bottomley, Alderman Sir Peter Estlin, Alderman Tim Levene, Catherine McGuinness, Benjamin Murphy and James St John Davis.

In the absence of the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman took the Chair.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 7 May 2024 be approved as an accurate record.

Matters arising

In the Chairman's absence, the Town Clerk informed Members that the Chairman sought the Committee's support in nominating Deputy Randall Anderson, the Deputy Chairman, as the Chair of the Projects and Procurement Sub-Committee.

The Chairman also suggested, through the Town Clerk, that he would like to allow the Sub-Committee to choose its own Deputy Chair, by way of an indicative vote at its meeting on 10 June. He would exercise his rights of nomination based on the results of that vote.

RESOLVED, that – Members endorse the nomination of Deputy Randall Anderson as the Chair of the Projects and Procurement Sub-Committee, and the method of selecting the Deputy Chair through an indicative vote at the Sub-Committee meeting, to be confirmed by the Chairman of the Finance Committee.

4. **ACTION TRACKER**

Members noted the Action Tracker.

5. **FORWARD PLANS**

a) **Finance Committee Forward Plan June 2024**

Members noted the Committee's Forward Plan.

b) **Efficiency and Performance Working Party's Forward Plan**

Members noted the Efficiency and Performance Working Party's forward plan.

6. **EFFICIENCY AND PERFORMANCE WORKING PARTY**

Members received the draft note of the Efficiency and Performance Working Party meeting held on 18 April 2024.

Steve Goodman noted that the date of the meeting was incorrect, and that he had been in attendance.

7. **CENTRAL CONTINGENCIES**

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain which provided Members with information regarding the current balance of the Finance Committee Contingency Funds for the current year.

Several Members raised concerns over the mechanism of approving contingencies, and asked if there was a contingency policy. The Chamberlain

confirmed that the Finance Committee held contingencies for the entire Corporation, and all requests had to come through the Committee. She would always consider whether requests could be covered from local risks, and if the request was due to unforeseen circumstances. She was confident that it was prudent for contingency funds to be held, and good governance for their use to be overseen by the Finance Committee.

Following a question from a Member on action taken under urgency, the Chair confirmed that there were no unpaid service charges.

RESOLVED, that – Members agree to carry forward sufficient resources of £2,686,000 to meet existing allocations and £523,000 uncommitted balances to meet expected increased revenue pressures thereby providing sufficient contingencies for funding requirements that may arise during 2024/25.

8. PROPOSED APPROACH TO THE REVIEW OF PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

Members received a report of the Chamberlain concerning procurement and contract management.

Several Member, though noting that the scope of the review had been revised by the Projects and Procurement Sub-Committee, raised concerns over the review and the recruitment of an external consultant to undertake it, and asked for assurance that the requested allocation of funds would deliver value for money. The Chair said that he felt it was important to undertake the review and to seek outside support.

The Chamberlain said that the original proposal had been to use in-house resources, but the Projects and Procurement Sub-Committee felt that external consultants would add value to elements that could not be provided in-house.

Members noted that the Efficiency and Performance Working Party would be considering the use of consultants at an upcoming meeting, and the Town Clerk and Chief Executive said that there was a reduction in their use.

RESOLVED, that – Members approve the allocation of £150,000 from the Finance Committee contingency fund to deliver this review.

9. EMERGENCY AND TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PLACEMENTS - STAGE 1 STRATEGY REPORT AND STAGE 2 AWARD REPORT

Members received a Joint Report of the Chamberlain and the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services concerning a direct contract award.

RESOLVED, that – Members authorise the Community and Children's Services Director to approve the extension, if required, and delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Finance Committee and following the decision of the Projects and Procurement Sub-Committee, to recommend that the Court of Common Council approves the procurement strategy via a direct award call-off from the YPO framework

(Commissioning Solution ref 1017 / Commissioning Solution 2 ref 001231), to the Access Group.

10. UNIVERSAL SUPPORT – GRANT FUNDING FOR NEW CLF EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME

Members received a report of the Executive Director, Innovation and Growth, concerning new funding for an employment programme.

During discussion, a Member said it was important to question the outcomes of programmes such as Universal Support when appropriate. Another Member acknowledged that that it was right to be sceptical, but reminded the Committee that Central London Forward (CLF) had benefited the City Corporation's relationships with local authorities in London.

RESOLVED, that – Members recommend that the Court of Common Council approves:

- CLF acting as the accountable body for Universal Support, and managing the programme on behalf of member authorities, including the development of the procurement strategy, as approved by CLF Board;
- The signing of any associated grant agreements with DWP to enable receipt of the funding, as approved by CLF Board;
- The delegation of funding to member authorities that want to deliver the programme direct;
- The signing of associated grant agreements with these member authorities;
- That the Court delegates to the Finance Committee the authority to vary the grant agreements with DWP. Vary grant agreements with member authorities delivering the programme. And vary the contract with the provider commissioned to deliver the programme. Subject to approval by CLF Programmes Board
- Subject to the above being approved by the Court, Members also approved a standing delegation to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, to consider any such variations.

11. PIONEER SUPPORT - ADDITIONAL GRANT FUNDING AND INCREASE IN CONTRACT VALUE

Members received a report of the Executive Director, Innovation and Growth, concerning additional funding for an employment programme.

RESOLVED, that – Members recommend that the Court of Common Council approves:

- The signing of an addendum to the Finance and Costings Framework with DWP to enable the receipt of additional funding up to the value of £1.5m.
- Increasing the contract value of Pioneer Support to reflect the additional funding.

12. **RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT IMPACT REPORT FY23-24**

Members received a report of the Chamberlain concerning the Responsible Procurement Policy.

Members provided feedback on the format and presentation of the report. It was noted that this was the first such report and would be used to inform future iterations. A video report would also be produced.

A Member raised their concerns about the decision being sought of Members – they felt that the recommendation to publish the report should have been the initial decision sought of the Committee.

RESOLVED, that – Members:

- endorse the Responsible Procurement Impact Report 23-24 and the proposal to publish it with the Responsible Procurement Policy.

13. **PRODUCTIVITY PLANS**

Members received a report of the Chamberlain concerning a request for delegated authority.

RESOLVED, that - Members approve delegated authority to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Finance Committee to approve the submission of the Productivity Plan.

14. **BUSINESS RATE PREMIUM**

Members received a joint report of the Chamberlain and the Commissioner, City of London Police, concerning the Business Rate Premium.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

15. **UPDATE ON HRA/BARBICAN ESTATE RESPECTIVE REPAIRS CONTRACTS**

Members received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services concerning contracts.

Several Members, referencing the difficulties that the Golden Lane Estate had recently faced, welcomed the information set out in the report but felt it might present a slightly optimistic view of the status of the contracts.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

16. **CHAMBERLAIN'S DEPARTMENTAL RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Chamberlain concerning risk management.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

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

A Member asked for further information on the background of negotiations between the City Corporation and the Worshipful Company of Ironmongers on

the acquisition of Ferroners House, and how Members had been kept informed of these. In reply, officers said that talks with the Ironmongers had started during the initial proposals for the Centre for Music, continued as the project had evolved into a commercial proposition and been reported to Committees.

18. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
The Chairman informed Members that the City Fund Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 had been published, and commended the Chamberlain's department for their efforts in achieving this.
19. **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.
- | Item No. | Paragraphs in Schedule 12A |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 16-24, 26, 27 | 3 |
| 25 | 1 and 3 |
20. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
The non-public minutes of the meeting held on 7 May were approved as an accurate record.
21. **HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS - PROCUREMENT STAGE 1 REPORT**
Members received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, concerning contract procurement.
22. **CITY FUND - LONDON WALL WEST DEVELOPMENT - DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT, ACQUISITION OF FERRONERS' HOUSE AND LAND TRANSFER WITH IRONMONGERS COMPANY**
Members received a report of the City Surveyor concerning the London Wall West development.
23. **MAJOR PROJECT DASHBOARD - PERIOD 1 2024/25 ("P1")**
Members received a report of the Chamberlain concerning major projects.
24. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
Members considered one non-public question relating to the work of the Committee.
25. **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 of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 2.06 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Ben Dunleavy ben.dunleavy@cityoflondon.gov.uk