

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Thursday, 17 October 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 17 October 2024 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Christopher Hayward (Chairman)
Deputy Keith Bottomley (Deputy Chairman)
Tijs Broeke (Vice-Chair)
Caroline Haines (Vice-Chair)
Munsur Ali
Deputy Randall Anderson (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Peter Dunphy (Ex-Officio Member)
Mary Durcan (Ex-Officio Member)
Helen Fentimen OBE JP
Steve Goodman OBE
Jason Groves
Alderman Timothy Hailes JP
Jaspreet Hodgson
Deputy Ann Holmes
Deputy Shravan Joshi MBE
Alderman Vincent Keaveny, CBE
Deputy Paul Martinelli
Alderman Sir William Russell
James Tumbridge
Philip Woodhouse

In attendance (Observing online)

Deputy Marianne Fredericks
John Griffiths
Deputy Madush Gupta
Deputy Brian Mooney
Benjamin Murphy

Officers:

Ian Thomas CBE	- Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Gregory Moore	- Deputy Town Clerk
Polly Dunn	- Assistant Town Clerk and Executive Director, Governance and Member Services
Jennifer Beckerman	- Executive Director and Private Secretary to the Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee
Peter Barlow	- Town Clerk's Department
Mathew Baird	- Town Clerk's Department
Benjamin Dixon	- Town Clerk's Department

Chris Rumbles	- Town Clerk's Department
Emily Slatter	- Town Clerk's Department
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller and City Solicitor, Deputy Chief Executive
Caroline Al-Beyerty	- Chamberlain
Sonia Virdee	- Chamberlain's Department
Daniel Peattie	- Chamberlain's Department
Dionne Corradine	- Chief Strategy Officer
Judith Finlay	- Executive Director of Community and Children's Services
Damian Nussbaum	- Executive Director of Innovation and Growth
Daniel O'Byrne	- Innovation and Growth
Katie Stewart	- Executive Director, Environment Department
Ruby Raw	- Environment Department
Paul Wilkinson	- City Surveyor
Peter Young	- City Surveyor's Department
Bruce Hunt	- Remembrancer's Department

The Chairman took the opportunity welcome Katie Stewart, Executive Director Environment, to her first Policy and Resources Committee since joining the City Corporation.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from The Rt Hon the Lord Mayor Michael Mainelli, Deputy Henry Colthurst, Deputy Brian Mooney, Deputy James Thomson, Deputy Andrien Meyers and Benjamin Murphy.

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

The Committee considered minutes as follows:

- a) The public minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 26 September 2024 were approved as an accurate record.
- b) The draft public minutes of the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee meeting on 18 September 2024 were noted.
- c) The draft public minutes of the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee meeting on 24 July 2024 were noted.

4. **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT**

The Committee considered the appointment to a Policy and Resources Sub-Committee as follows:

a) **Civic Affairs Sub-Committee**

The Town Clerk confirmed that there was one vacancy on Civic Affairs Sub-Committee that required appointing to for the remainder of the civic year.

Two expressions of interest were received from James Tumbridge and Steve Goodman to serve on the Sub-Committee. As such, a ballot was conducted for the one vacancy.

RESOLVED: That James Tumbridge was duly appointed to Civic Affairs Sub-Committee for the remainder of the civic year.

5. **ACT OF COMMON COUNCIL - ANNUAL ELECTION OF WARD BEADLES**

The Committee considered a joint report of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive, Comptroller and City Solicitor and Remembrancer regarding proposed changes to the mechanism relating to the appointment to the role of Ward Beadles and seeking approval of a recommendation to Court of Common Council the passing of an Act of Common Council to achieve this.

A Member welcomed the proposal and suggested that moving forwards Ward Beadle vacancies could be advertised to achieve greater transparency when looking to fill the post, with the Chairman responding confirming the Member's point had been noted.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

- Agreed that Policy and Resources Committee recommend to the Court of Common Council the passing of an Act of Common Council.

6. **CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION - BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (BIDS) PARTNERSHIP**

The Committee considered a joint report of the Deputy Town Clerk and Executive Director, Environment seeking approval for the Aldgate Connect and Cheapside Business Alliance to ballot businesses on a renewal of their BIDs.

During the discussion that followed a number of points were raised. A concern was raised that the City Corporation was acting as BID proposer and also BID body for all BIDs in the Square Mile. It was suggested that BID governance would benefit from a review; a letter could be sent to all BID Boards clarifying their responsibilities and the governance structure. An opportunity should be taken to rethink the BID model with the Riverside partnership coming through. It was questioned whether 75 BIDs in London was the right approach; the City Corporation could look to engage with London Councils to review BID structures across London. The expansion of BID boundaries was highlighted as an area that would benefit from Member consultation. Staffing resources within departments working in support of BIDs was highlighted as an area that needed addressing.

A point was raised regarding BIDs needing to deliver value for money and with there being a need for radical reform where they were not delivering. Tangible benefits and added value of a BID was not always understood and there was a need for measurable targets to understand what was being delivered. The effectiveness of the Member observer role was raised and of there being a need for longer terms to achieve consistency in these roles. It was stressed that good governance should include diversity as a key consideration and the importance of this being addressed by the BIDs. The City Corporation should look to support and influence BID Boards to help them improve their diversity, whilst accepting that any final decision on Board membership rested with the Boards themselves. Micro businesses and residents were highlighted as key areas with which to engage and in looking to ensure these areas were adequately represented and supported.

In response, there was an acknowledgement of the City's unique position as BID Body and BID promoter, with there being agreement over a need for better governance and scrutiny of service delivery companies. There was a recognition of the benefit that additional resources and more officers working in support of BIDs would offer. There was agreement to write to BID boards clarifying their responsibilities. A commitment was given to improving engagement and communications with Members relating to the Riverside Partnership. It was clarified that the process of extending BID boundaries was primarily managed by the BID Boards themselves, with formal Member consultation occurring closer to the BID ballot.

The Chairman confirmed that he would engage with London Councils to look at how BIDs were working across London, exploring options to improve their co-ordination and structure. The Chairman further committed to writing to BID Chairs to clarify BID Boards' responsibilities and governance structures whilst also taking the opportunity to address these issues in upcoming meetings with BID Chairs.

The Deputy Chairman, as Chair of the Strategic BID Board, stressed the importance of approving the business plans today to provide a platform. Approval should be granted today whilst asking officers in approving these to progress a range of work in other areas.

The Chairman accepted that more work was needed. It was agreed that an interim report would come back to Policy and Resources Committee later in the civic year providing an update before the current Court was dissolved. This would allow for existing Members familiar with the discussions being able to review progress.

RESOLVED: That Members

- Agreed for a renewal ballot to commence in the Cheapside Business Alliance BID area, on the basis of the draft Business Plan at Appendix 1.

- Agreed for a ballot to commence in the Aldgate Connect BID area, on the basis of the draft Business Plan at Appendix 2 (including an alteration to extend BID Boundary as set out in Appendix 3).
- Agreed proposals to support the City Corporation's evolving relationship with the City BIDs, based on external advice (Summary included as Appendix 4).

7. ANNUAL PROGRESS UPDATE ON YEAR 3 OF CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY, AND UPDATE ON YEAR 4 QUARTERS 1 AND 2

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Innovation and Growth providing an update on progress on Climate Action Strategy targets to the end of Year 3 (2023/24).

During the discussion that followed, reference was made to the recommendations not being clearly structured and with it being difficult to understand what Members were being asked to approve; the report format should be aligned to other departments and offer clarity. The importance of not working in silos was stressed and with there being a need to integrate the Climate Action Strategy to the Social Housing Strategy, thereby ensuring that the City Corporation would not be chasing targets that might overlook the opportunity to align to housing needs, particularly in terms of financing and political considerations. It was stressed that the City Corporation should be ambitious with its climate actions, exploring further opportunities such as solar panels and other renewable energy sources, especially in social housing estates and the Barbican.

In response the Executive Director of Innovation and Growth acknowledged the need for clearer recommendations moving forward. It was confirmed that the Climate Action Strategy pathway to net zero was being revised to reflect realistic interim targets. It was further clarified that a fundamental approach to the Climate Action Strategy involved all areas across the City Corporation working collaboratively in support of the targets, with this including working in support of key areas focussed on social housing.

The Chairman concluded the discussion, noting the recommendations were asking Members to endorse, with only one recommendation seeking approval. The Chairman asked that future papers offered clarity so Members could understand exactly what they were approving.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

- Noted the paper.
- Endorsed continued authority to the CAS Senior Responsible Officer for approval of capital expenditure up to £1m outside of the usual Project Procedure (i.e. gateway reporting), and revenue expenditure from the approved Climate Action budget (paragraph 7).
- Endorsed mitigating actions to help bring the Corporation back on track to achieve net zero in our own operations by 2027 (paragraphs 23 and 24).

- iv. Approved updated interim targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26, setting out a revised pathway to net zero in March 2027 (paragraph 30).
- v. Endorsed the need to collaborate in finding solutions to barriers and challenges in delivery of the Climate Action Strategy.

8. **LONDON GROWTH PLAN SUBMISSION**

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain providing an update on a London Growth Plan being developed by the Greater London Authority and London Councils and seeking approval of the City Corporation's submission.

During the discussion that followed, a number of points were raised. These included:

- Concern over some of the language included in the paper, particularly reference to a 'super CAS' (Central Activity Zone) to include the West End, the City and Canary Wharf; this could potentially dilute the unique policies and successes of the Square Mile.
- Given the Government's Industrial Strategy policies were now clear, the submission could include more detail on how the City would support SMEs, startups and fintech; including areas within the submission where the City Corporation has a focus.
- The impact of Artificial Intelligence on the Square Mile should be recognised and brought out.
- There was an opportunity to say more on contributing to the housing crisis across London. The City could follow other major cities around the world through providing housing for key workers.
- Buffer land and opportunities it presents for house building should be considered.
- Growing skills and getting people into the right job; giving individuals the skills they need when they come from an economically deprived family was an important area of consideration.

In response, there was agreement on the points raised and for reference to these to be included within the City Corporation's final submission. Use of buffer land for housing was not considered appropriate for inclusion in the City Corporation's response to the London Growth Plan submission, with this point being noted.

The Town Clerk referred to changes that may be required to the document following the meeting today and in advance of its final submission. The Town Clerk put forward a proposal that Members agreed to authorise the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman to make any final relevant changes, with Members agreeing to this approach.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

- Approved the submission to the London Growth Plan;
- Authorised the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman to make any relevant final changes that may be required in advance of the City Corporation submitting its response to the Mayor of London and London Councils.

9. **TRANSFORMATION FUND 2024-25**

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain providing an update on funding from the Transformation Fund and seeking approval of a framework for bids and future oversight of the Fund being through Resource Allocation Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED: That Members:-

- Approved the delegation approval framework for bids as outlined in paragraph 5.
- Agreed to delegate future oversight of the Fund to the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee.

10. **MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT 2024-2029**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Town Clerk seeking approval of a refreshed Modern Slavery statement made pursuant to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

A Member highlighted the GIG economy as an area that had the potential to present modern slavery issues. It was suggested including the GIG economy within paragraph 62 as an area of highest risk of modern slavery. A Member referred to the statue of John Cass in Guildhall and suggested this should have a plaque giving more information on his background, similar to information provided on the Beckford statue.

The Town Clerk responded and noted the concern raised regarding the GIG economy. With this being more of an operational matter, it would be taken forward to relevant officers to provide a formal response and reflected in the statement if Members were in agreement with this. A Member concern was raised regarding the Cass statue labelling, and was assured this would be directed to the appropriate officer but with it being hoped that the statement goes some way to show that the City Corporation was taking the issue very seriously.

The Chairman concluded the discussion, thanking Members for their comments and asking them for their approval of the statement based on the responses that had been given.

RESOLVED: That Members:

- Approved the draft Modern Slavery Statement 2024-2029.
- Approved the publication of the draft statement both on the City Corporation website and the HM Government's Modern Slavery Statement registry.

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

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain providing a schedule of projects and activities which have received funding from the Policy Initiatives Fund (PIF) and the Policy and Resources Committee's Contingency Fund.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

- Received the report and noted its content.

12. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
There were no questions.

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
There were no additional items of business.

14. **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.

15. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
The Committee considered minutes as follows:

- a) The non-public minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 26 September 2024 were approved as an accurate record.
- b) The draft non-public minutes of the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee meeting on 18 September 2024 were noted.
- c) The draft non-public minutes of the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee meeting on 24 July 2024 were noted.

16. **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR REVISED DESTINATION CITY PROGRAMME AND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR NEW DESTINATION CITY HUB**
The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Town Clerk regarding implementation for a revised Destination City Programme and organisational structure for a new Destination City Hub.

17. **VAT ON SCHOOL FEES**
The Committee received a joint report of the Chamberlain, Remembrancer and Comptroller and City Solicitor providing an update on VAT on school fees.

18. **UK INSURANCE EVENT MAY 2025**
The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Innovation and Growth providing an update on a UK Insurance Event 2025.

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 additional items of business.

The meeting ended 3.42pm

Chairman

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