

**PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**  
**Tuesday, 11 February 2025**

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee held at Livery  
Hall - Guildhall on Tuesday, 11 February 2025 at 10.30 am

**Present**

**Members:**

Deputy Shravan Joshi MBE (Chairman)  
Graham Packham (Deputy Chairman)  
Deputy Randall Anderson  
Mary Durcan  
Deputy John Edwards  
Deputy John Fletcher  
Deputy Marianne Fredericks  
Jaspreet Hodgson  
Alderswoman Elizabeth Anne King, BEM JP  
Deputy Natasha Maria Cabrera Lloyd-Owen  
Deputy Brian Mooney BEM  
Eamonn Mullally  
Deborah Oliver  
Alderman Simon Pryke  
Ian Seaton  
Hugh Selka  
William Upton KC  
Jacqui Webster  
Deputy Dawn Wright

**Officers:**

Isobel Tucker	- City Surveyor's Department
Fleur Francis	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Simon Owen	- Chamberlain's Department
Gudrun Andrews	- Environment Department
David Horkan	- Environment Department
Gillian Howard	- Environment Department
Ian Hughes	- Environment Department
Bruce McVean	- Environment Department
Gwyn Richards	- Environment Department
Peter Wilson	- Environment Department
Katie Stewart	- Executive Director, Environment
Polly Dunn	- Town Clerk's Department
Callum Southern	- Town Clerk's Department

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Ian Bishop-Laggett, Amy Horscroft, Charles Edward Lord, OBE JP, Alderwoman Jennette Newman, Deputy Henry Pollard and Tom Sleigh.

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

No declarations of interest under the Code of Conduct in respect of items on the agenda were made.

3. **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** – That, Members approved the minutes of the last meeting held on 21 January 2025 as an accurate and correct record of proceedings, subject to amendments on errors related to spelling and attendance.

4. **BANK JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS: EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC ORDER TO REINTRODUCE TAXIS**

The Committee received a Gateway 5: Complex Authority to start work report which considered the benefits and impacts of a change to the Bank restrictions and the operational and monitoring requirements for an experimental traffic order. The report also outlined an additional funding request for up to £750k to support the cost of installing new signage and enforcement cameras, data collection, monitoring, consultation, and officer time. An increased Costed Risk Provision was also included to minimise any potential delay if additional unplanned spend is required during the experiment.

A Member drew attention to the proposed success criteria and suggested that the views of those who used the public space in Bank Junction every day needed to be surveyed as there was an opportunity to consider the pedestrian view before the scheme began so their views could be monitored as the scheme unfolded.

It was queried by a Member, in addition to the east-west route, why no north-south route was proposed.

Another Member sought assurance in relation to when the scheme could commence as the traffic modelling had not yet been validated due to IT problems at TfL and queried whether it could be fast-tracked.

Concern was expressed by a Member in relation to taxis potentially using Cheapside given it had virtually become a shared space and expressed the need for pedestrian opinion to be measured. The Member also added that he thought the 18-month ETO would become permanent and expressed disappointment at this as he felt it was a retrogressive step away from pedestrianisation.

It was reiterated by another Member that valuable points had been made in relation to the measurement of pedestrian opinion and stated that she worried for the silent majority. The Member also suggested she would like to see a future paper that set out the full costs of the scheme from inception, along with a piece on lessons learned, as it had been hugely expensive and would allow Members to scrutinise the figures and considered whether there were robust reasons for change.

The Chairman stated that the question was not whether the Junction should be open to taxis, but a question of how the Junction could be opened up to taxis and stated one of the key reasons for Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee having settled on the east-west route was due to a need not to have any turning points on the Junction which was seen as a major safety issue and was seen as the safest possible option. The Chairman added that another point that convinced Members on the Sub-Committee was in relation to having no need to change the light signals on the Junction which would have flowed and created an impact on other junctions. He added, therefore, that the material impact and assessment needed to implement the scheme was relatively small compared to if other routes or traffic light sequencing needed to be adapted.

Officers stated it was standard process as part of a traffic management application notice that TfL audited traffic modelling and added that, by taking the approach recommended, it minimised the need for wider traffic modelling. Officers also reported that TfL were still dealing with the consequences of a cyber attack that occurred last year and, if the Committee approved the recommendation, Officers would continue to engage with TfL to acquire some certainty as to when they would be able to audit the traffic modelling provided to them and suggested that was expected in the next two-to-three weeks.

Officers agreed that the largest users of the Junction at the moment were pedestrians and stated they needed to work hard to ensure their views were captured which the engagement and monitoring strategy in the report acknowledged.

Officers informed the Committee that that the totality of the cost for delivering the scheme would be included in future reports and sought to reassure Members that in funding the project, Officers were still subject to corporate governance procedures and applications for future funding would need to be requested through the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee. Officers added they had enough funding to implement the scheme and begin monitoring, but a pragmatic approach was being taken to flag the need for additional funding now so Members could see there was a funding strategy to fund the scheme to its conclusion.

In relation to the question as to whether a north-south route had been considered, Officers responded that it was reviewed as one of the routing options considered at Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee meeting in November and added that the addition of a north-south route would create queuing which was a safety concern and would also cause bad delays for bus journey times which would mean the signal timing around the Junction would

need to be increased. Officers further added that it would have led to an additional wait time for pedestrians to cross the road as well.

A Member queried why the monitoring of pedestrian views was not considered a key metric.

Another Member stated she had suggested the removal of the Princes Street access to reduce further turns and confusion on the Junction to make it as safe as possible and still believed that if one could drive straight across from Poultry to Cornhill and vice-versa, the use of Cornhill for other traffic was not really required.

The Member suggested that some of the success criteria and monitoring needed to be widened as she was aware that there were a number of taxis going through the Junction with no taxi light on with no one in the back of the vehicle who were using the route as a quick way to drive across the City. She added that she was keen to ensure taxis were deterred as much as possible from using the route to get across the City quickly and emphasised the need to understand whether taxi drivers were crossing the City with passengers. The Member also raised the impact of bus journey times in the monitoring area was not good enough as a bus being delayed in the centre of the City would have an impact further out of 10 minutes or more and stated that the Committee needed to be aware that people could be waiting for buses for a longer period outside of the City due to issues at Bank Junction.

The Member also raised the issue of the cost of the scheme, particularly in relation to the resource costs in additional workloads for Officers, as well as the loss of other safety projects that could have been rolled out across the City had the funding been available to them which she believed would have been more beneficial across the City. The Member added that while she appreciated Officers had the money to finish the scheme, she was disappointed at the loss of other safety schemes that could have been implemented.

The Deputy Chairman suggested there were two components to the cost, the substantial costs of the original scheme in relation to the landscaping, and the incremental costs to ensure cabs could get through the Junction which Members wanted to see.

The Deputy Chairman indicated he supported the raising of previous concerns in relation to the perception of the majority of users of the Junction both before and after implementation of the scheme as it needed to be done very carefully.

The Deputy Chairman also stated, in relation to bus journey times, that it was a key metric for TfL who, when they saw the figures, would factor in the severity of the impact of the scheme and the fact the measurement was included in the criteria would suffice for TfL. The Deputy Chairman added that TfL would not be shy in coming forward with concerns if the impacts were unacceptable.

A Member queried how a qualitative survey of pedestrians around Bank Junction, assessing the impact on them, would operate as it was difficult to get

hard numbers on that and queried how it would be presented alongside the key criteria and indicators outlined in the report.

In relation to air pollution, a Member considered whether a pollution measurement could be collected near Bank Junction to get an idea whether the reintroduction of taxis had a significant impact. Another Member flagged the issue of idling vehicles, particularly outside the Ned which may be a hotspot.

Officers informed the Committee that the key criteria, which was the hard numbers behind the scheme's measurement, and the consultation and engagement strategy were two separate things. However, they accepted it was important to understand people's views but added that it was difficult to count people's views in the same way as the monitoring criteria. Officers added they anticipated they would bring back hard figures in relation to the criteria, alongside feedback that had would be received from a number of sectors, including pedestrians, cyclists, the taxi trade and it would be for Members to judge what weight they gave to those views when decisions were made in the future. Officers added that the views of stakeholders would be monitored but was slightly different to a hard number-based success criteria.

Officers confirmed that they would be monitoring taxi movements through the Junction to analyse those taxis carrying pedestrians with their lights off and those who were not with their lights off as they wanted to gather as much information as possible in appreciation of the fact that they were two very different users of the Junction. They added that bus journey times further out than Bank Junction would also be considered as TfL would be very keen to ensure that their wider networks were not impacted.

In relation to funding, Officers stated that the organisation effectively determined what the priorities were that they were asked to consider, manage and spend funding on and added that there was no direct offset at present and the money had been ringfenced from a ringfenced account within the On-Street Parking Reserve. Officers added that there were long-term objectives as to what to use the funding for, but they were content that the priority that the project was given by Court was reflected in the way in which they had sought to draw down funds from Resource Allocation Sub-Committee and Policy and Resources Committee.

Officers informed the Committee that, in relation to air pollution, that they would continue to monitor pollution and, as far as the Junction was concerned, did not believe that it would be materially impacted by the scheme due to the small number of vehicles that were likely to be taxis, as well as the move of taxis to being powered by electric. Officers added they would engage with all the businesses directly impacted by the change.

A Member indicated his appreciation for key indicators that are measurable, shared the previous concerns raised in relation to Cheapside and queried whether traffic density could be monitored on the street.

Another Member cautioned against the potential feeling that the scheme could be imposed based on what a particular group wanted and stated that the

number of people impacted was not taken into account when the debate was had at Court of Common Council. The Member added that concern was raised for those with mobility issues and reiterated that the need for qualitative data was important.

The Member added he supported the concerns raised on air quality measurements as what was happening in the metre and a half of the pavement was important and felt there was an opportunity to address the PM 2.5 figure across the City.

Officers indicated that the analysis of transport and air quality impacts had been joined up and would continue to monitor them. They added they would also seek to provide balanced reports for a decision further down the line and traffic density could be measured on Cheapside. Officers added that while it was not as high a priority as the key criteria set out, a number of things would be monitored to analyse wider ripple effects and, with the change to the bus gates to allow taxis down Cheapside, that had already been monitored in the last year anyway, so would be included as part of the data sets.

The Chairman moved the meeting to a vote on the recommendations before the Committee.

The Committee proceeded to vote on the recommendations before them.

Votes were cast as follows:

IN FAVOUR – 15

OPPOSED – 0

There were five abstentions.

The recommendations were therefore carried.

**RESOLVED – That, Members:**

- Approved, subject to TfL's TMAN approval and the additional funding being approved, that an Experimental Traffic Order be implemented to allow taxis to travel the full length of Cornhill, Poultry, and Mansion House Street in both directions, Monday to Friday, 7am to 7pm. This included prohibiting taxis from turning into Lombard Street/King William Street from Bank junction.
- Agreed the success criteria for the experimental traffic order in paragraph 34.
- Approved, subject to Policy and Resources Committee approval, an additional budget of £750,000 to reach the next Gateway (explained in section 3).
- Noted that this would take the revised total Bank junction improvements project budget to £8,057,030 (including risk).
- Approved, subject to the approval of the bid of an additional £750,000, a Costed Risk Provision of £350,000 (to be drawn down via delegation to Chief Officer).
- Noted the proposed monitoring strategy (Appendix 3).

- Noted the draft outline communications and engagement plan (Appendix 4).
- Noted that the next planned report was a second Gateway 5 report presenting the outcome of the monitoring and considering whether to make the experiment permanent. This would be approximately 14-16 months after the launch of the experiment, depending on how Committee dates fall.

## 5. **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

The Committee received a report which noted that the new Local Development Scheme had been produced to meet the Government's deadline of 6 March 2025 which included the key dates for the final stage of the preparation of the City Plan 2040 and dates associated with planning Supplementary Planning Documents.

**RESOLVED** – That, Members:

- Agreed that the Local Development Scheme as at Appendix 1 and the accompanying dataset be submitted to MHCLG as the updated timetable for the preparation of planning policy documents.

## 6. **REDEVELOPMENT OF BANK OVER STATION DEVELOPMENT - SITE BOUNDED BY KING WILLIAM STREET, CANNON STREET, ABCHURCH LANE & NICHOLAS LANE, LONDON EC4**

The Committee received a report which sought approval, in principle, for the acquisition of land for planning purposes by agreement under section 227 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 enabling the operation of powers under section 203 of the Housing & Planning Act 2016 to facilitate the carrying out of the redevelopment of the Bank Over Station Development (Site Bounded by King William Street, Cannon Street, Abchurch Lane & Nicholas Lane, London EC4).

**RESOLVED** – That, Members:

- Authorised the acquisition of an interest in the Redevelopment Site by the City under S227 in order to engage powers under S203 for the planning purpose of facilitating the carrying out of the development and subsequent disposal of that interest to the Owner under Section 233 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, **SUBJECT TO** The Town Clerk determining, in consultation with the Planning and Development Director, City Surveyor, and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Planning and Transportation Committee that:
  - adequate attempts have been made by the Developer to remove injunction risks by negotiating release of relevant rights and interests by agreement and that those entitled to the rights are not prepared, by agreement (on reasonable terms and within a reasonable timeframe) to permit infringements of those rights in time to achieve the development programme;

- a suitable Deed of Indemnity is in place; and
- suitable terms for the acquisition and disposal referred to above have been entered into between the City, the Owner, and the Developer.

**7. DELEGATION REQUEST - 75 FARRINGDON STREET EC4, HIGHWAY DECLARATION (CITY FUND)**

The Committee received a report which recommended that Members agreed to delegate authority to the Town Clerk under Standing Order 41(b), in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, to approve that a decision could be taken in respect of declaring a volume of City Fund-owned airspace to be surplus to highway requirements, enabling its disposal in connection with a permitted development of Stonecutter Court, 75 Farringdon Street, EC4. The report noted that planning permission had been issued on 28 March 2019.

**RESOLVED** – That, Members, delegated authority to the Town Clerk under Standing Order 41(b), in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, that a decision could be taken to approve declaring a volume of City Fund owned airspace to be surplus to highway requirements, if appropriate, enabling its disposal in connection with a permitted development of Stonecutter Court, 75 Farringdon Street, EC4.

**8. \*FINANCE PROGRESS REPORT (Q3 OCTOBER - DECEMBER) 2024/25**

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the Committee's 2024/25 local risk revenue budget position as at the end of December 2024.

**RESOLVED** – That, Members:

- Received the report and noted its contents.

**9. \*RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee received a report which provided the Planning and Transportation Committee with assurance that risk management procedures in place within the Environment Department were satisfactory and met the requirements of the Corporate Risk Management Framework.

**RESOLVED** – That, Members:

- Received the report and noted the report and the actions being taken by the Environment Department to identify, mitigate and effectively manage risks arising from their operations.

**10. \*TO NOTE THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STREETS AND WALKWAYS SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 NOVEMBER 2024**

The Committee received the minutes of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee meeting held on 19 November 2024.

A Member sought confirmation that the Aldersgate side of Fann Street was also part of the consultation process. The Chairman suggested that a written response from Officers could be provided.

Another Member, in relation to concerns raised at Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee around the expenditure on Golden Lane Leisure Centre and access to the Leisure Centre, that access was a huge issue in ensuring people had access to good facilities, felt welcome and could find their way there and added she had absolutely no doubt that wayfinding and access would be a big part of the consultation.

**RESOLVED** – That, Members:

- Received the minutes and noted their content.

#### **11. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

A Member noted there were a number of approved applications which included cultural and/or community benefits such as roof gardens, museums, theatres and performance spaces, and queried whether Officers gave guidance to developers on cultural offerings which could be beneficial in the City, and if that guidance was given, what was it based upon and could it be shared. If such advice guidance was not given, the Member also asked if it was an area which could be developed with the Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee. Officers responded that, as part of any negotiation of the development of any planning scheme, they were on the lookout for cultural opportunities that arose, and each one had to be considered on its own merits. They added such opportunities tended to exist primarily in major schemes and it was important to note that the Local Plan that had been adopted included no requirement for a culture use, but there was an aspiration that they should be sought after. Officers further stated that the replacement plan, which was to set up be examined in public imminently, would have a requirement for cultural space commensurate to the scale of the development, but given that the current Local Plan did not include such a requirement, planners had been creative in seeking out opportunities that arose in schemes as part of the wider planning package under the development scheme.

Officers, in relation to the guidance given, told the Committee that a lot of the cultural spaces were defined by the natural of the site and cited an example of archaeological remains where Officers worked with an archaeologist to celebrate those finds, having previously covered them over. Officers added that the requirement for elevated public areas was part of the London Plan and were applying planning policy to deliver them where they would be appropriate. Other instances where there was a natural cultural use, for example, were 65 Fleet Street and the print museum which was delivered had a site specific dynamic.

Officers, in reference to guidance to developers, indicated that each case was considered on its merits and prioritised inclusivity, education, celebrating heritage, while also seeking to deliver cultural spaces which were relevant and welcoming to all communities and backgrounds. Officers added, in response to a previous request to better define the cultural offer, they were focused on ensuring that a cultural consultant, employed by the developer, was on board for every scheme to engage with Officers to understand what demand of communities around the City was and to scope opportunities out there. They further stated that the approach was governed by the Committee and cultural consultants worked closely with Officers to develop a strategy, and that engagement included ward members. Officers further added it was important to point out that all significant cultural uses were included within major planning applications, and all major planning applications came to the Committee and the cultural offer would be presented to Members, including in the briefing before the application was heard. Officers indicated, going forward, that they were working collaboratively with the culture lead as they developed the cultural strategy and would be carried out in line with the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee, and a Supplementary Planning Document would be developed to put a much more coherent framework around cultural offers.

The Member responded that she was reassured that collaboration was taking place with the cultural lead and noted that education was something that also needed to be taken into account, particularly as there were schemes that included a 'classroom in the sky', as well as community needs as there were other aspects that need to be drawn together. She added that an understanding of the need was missing, considered whether there was an evidence base behind the cultural offers, and suggested Officers look at identifying some of the needs to be built into future developments with the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee. The Member also raised concerns as to whether there was a steer on situations when organisations, who had been granted access to the facilities, could struggle to maintain funding to stay in the building and considered whether the owners of the new buildings could be expected to support organisations in some way.

Officers apologised for the delay in sending the 99 Bishopsgate cultural management plan that was part of the public submission for the 99 Bishopsgate development which set out the evidence base and public consultation that informed the development of the scheme which was shared with the Committee. They also noted that the education uses were all supported by evidence and engagement as well and acknowledge the Member had raised a good point on sustainable business models for a lot of organisations providing a cultural offer. They added that a lot of the cultural offers came about as a result of a very reciprocal relationship with the owner or development of the building and suggested it was right to say that there was often a shortfall in maintaining business sustainability which was why Officers were in active discussions on the use of CIL, Neighbourhood CIL to see if that could prove helpful.

A Member expressed concerns about the sustainability of 'classrooms in the sky' if they came in application by application and considered what it meant strategically and whether there was a need for the same thing, and what that

meant for the Destination City programme. The Member added it would be useful to produce a map that showed applications with the schemes attached to them as it would provide clarity on what might be needed in specific spaces and suggested it would be worth reviewing a scheme granted a few years ago to examine whether it had been sustainable and whether there were any lessons to be learned. The Member added that, as a cultural offer had been a big emphasis in recent applications considered at the Planning Applications Sub-Committee, it would be helpful for Members to be able to consider the reliability of the schemes.

Officers responded that a lot of the cultural schemes consented had not been built yet, but the ones that had been built, such as the Vine Street Roman Wall exhibition, and the elevated public areas, were having their footfall monitored to measure the success of those spaces and it did not indicate any issues at present. Officers further noted they asked for developers and organisations to be realistic about how they could sustain such spaces in early discussions and 'classrooms in the sky' were built to be multifunctional spaces for various different groups, including schools and the community, were considered in the cultural management plan and visitor management plan, and were based on evidence of what else had been proposed as part of the cultural management plan which tried to make such spaces as flexible and adaptable as possible.

Officers also advised caution as the schemes coming through the system were not necessarily considering specific end-user occupiers, but were mindful that they were to encourage greater cultural occupancy in the City and had a duty to see how the City could support individual cultural occupiers. Officers added they were happy to formulate a list of schemes coming through the system that would be informing both the supplementary planning document and would look at that spatially. Officers further noted they had done some work previously with Publica examining the cultural planning framework which would be included in the SPD and consulting on that to gather stakeholder thoughts, as well as working with culture colleagues to ensure the SPD was informing the cultural strategy so the two documents worked collaboratively.

Another Member expressed concern that they were asked to apply weight to the cultural community officer without knowing how to value that and expressed the need for a strategic view, specifically into how the cultural planning framework was being used and how it was being used in discussions with developers to determine what the City wanted to see.

The Deputy Chairman drew attention to the new home of the Shoe Lane Library and Community Centre and stated that it met numerous needs, such as education for children, adult education, well-being classes, support for elderly residents, access to other activities and had provision of facilities for income generation to ensure the library would be sustainable. He added that the Committee could be proud of what it had accomplished over the last three or four years.

Another Member noted a discussion had taken place at Health and Wellbeing Board as the Director of Public Health's annual report on the role of social

capital and improving health and wellbeing which the Member stated had considered the role of physical spaces in buildings. The Member added that there were a large number of groups looking for usable space and there was a need for the Corporation to map space to match it with the local community. She told the Committee she was keen to ensure that such space remained public benefits space and not space offered just to secure a planning application and, in the long-term, such spaces were expensive to run and valuable to the developer, so it was important that the public used them. The Member added she agreed that there needed to be mapping of existing and proposed community schemes across the City, and there was a need to ensure developers were introduced to existing local groups as there was already a lot of need out there. The Member suggested that the Health and Wellbeing Board, and Officers, work with the planning department to carry out the work so it could be built into the Director of Public Health's report going forward and expressed a need for all departments to discuss what spaces were available and how they were matched against groups within the local community.

Officers responded that they had previously mapped out the cultural ecosystem of the City and suggested it needed to be looked at again and shared more widely. They added that they understood the need to identify community groups and felt that was being done when Officers were made aware of a group looking for space. They further noted it was ongoing work that Officers had hoped to pull together as part of the supplementary planning document which would be presented to the Committee, and the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee.

The Member suggested that all the community schemes needed to be published on the website so occupiers could be approached to see if premises could be used. The Chairman suggested it was not a problem provided it was not commercially sensitive information.

Officers clarified that the cultural planning framework contained a lot of information that could be shared with Members again and, as it was taken forward, the SPD could be made clearer as to what it required from the cultural offering of the City. Officers added that the Committee needed to be careful in considering the nature of such offers, including their accessibility, the inclusion, the extended developer support rather than necessarily specific offers on the table and encouraging developers to work closely with potential occupiers as well. Officers confirmed they would also speak to the Health and Wellbeing Board with regard to issues raised as it was not a standalone piece of work, but cautioned that not every single issue could be solved at the same time through one lens. Officers also informed the Committee they sought to update the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which would come to the Committee following the Court of Common Council elections, and was an opportunity to address some of the wider infrastructure needs of the Square Mile.

A Member suggested conditioning in permanent use of any ground floor space for meanwhile use in the upcoming cultural SPD as it could often be better for developers to leave it vacant, even if only for a short period, and there could be cultural offerings going on in such spaces that did not need to be permanent.

The Chairman suggested the question needed a written response from Officers.

Another Member queried whether Officers' notes from meetings with developers, both with and without Members in attendance, were stored on the planning portal and made visible to the public. Officers explained that Members would take notes, with Members present or otherwise, for their own purposes. Officers added, given the nuances of the response and the Planning Protocol and its precise wording, that it may be best to provide a written response, subject to the agreement of the Chairman, following further discussion with colleagues. Officers further added that there was no requirement for such notes to be published automatically to the planning portal.

The Member queried how notes being kept private from such meetings ensured transparency and sought to understand why such notes being published would be a problem. Officers explained that a lot of those discussions were not only commercially sensitive, but if one included meetings with developers, meetings with potential objectors would also have to be included who, in the knowledge that their views would be recorded onto a public portal, could feel they could not express their views openly. Officers added they would take the question away but stated that no other planning authority published their notes onto their planning portal and the question did raise procedural and legal issues. Officers suggested the question could be better taken as a written response.

The Chairman stated that there were conceptual conversations at the early stages of the planning application with developers and sometimes there was a need for confidential meetings between Officers and developers. He added that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman was sometimes called into such meetings at an appropriate time to provide a political steer to developers on how schemes would come forward. He added he did not see a need for such notes of private meetings to be published and a response would be provided.

Another Member suggested the question was in reference to meetings that Members had with developers' pre-application with Officers present and stated that she felt the notes could be published provided everyone in the room had no issue with it and the applicant was discussing the scheme with the Common Councillor.

The Member raised a query on the Local Plan enquiry and queried, given the Committee had twice rejected a scheme due to the obscurity of the sky from the Bevis Marks Synagogue and the courtyard, whether wording in relation to that issue could be agreed by Officers with the Planning Inspector to be added to the Local Plan. Officers told the Committee that decisions on individual applications would not necessarily dictate the outcome of the Local Plan process as the Local Plan was an overarching document, contained a plethora of different policies for different schemes to come forward, and acknowledged that many of the issues raised would be discussed at the examination in public. Officers added they were happy to make the Inspector aware of the decision of the Sub-Committee's decision on the Bury Street application and suggested the Inspector may well ask for information on that case anyway. However, Officers

further noted, it was up to the inspectors to look at the plan as a whole to hear the views of different respondents who may have differing views on that issue, and many other issues as well.

It was questioned by the Member whether Officers had delegated powers to agree recommended wording with the inspector in relation to the protection of a view of the sky, or whether it would need to come back to the Committee for decision. The Chairman stated the Grand Committee was not in a position to unwind a Court of Common Council-approved Local Plan. Officers added that there was a delegated authority in place, but stated that it was not in relation to agreement on policies, but related to enabling the Inspector to have a discussion with Officers in relation to it, Officers would then inform that discussion and represent the position of the City of London Corporation. The Inspectorate would then consider what main modifications they considered, if any, necessary for the City Plan which would return to the grand committee for consideration before they went out to public consultation. Officers further added the Plan would also need to go to the Policy & Resources Committee and the Court of Common Council as well.

Another Member suggested there was an aspect of organisational learning that could be done in relation to planning applications that returned for decision, and were consistently rejected by the Sub-Committee, in relation to the Bevis Marks Synagogue that advised it would be very unlikely to be accepted due to previous decisions. The Chairman sought clarification that the planning authority was not in a position to override a developer submitting a planning application. Officers confirmed that each application had to be decided on its merits and stated that the second application was very different to the first one. While Members may reach the same conclusion, applications still had to be considered, and developers could not be banned from submitting applications.

## **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

The Chairman formally thanked Members for their commitment to the Committee.

Alderman Simon Pryke noted his name had been missed off the minutes of the previous meeting on 21 January 2025 and asked for it to be added.

## **13. 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 involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

## **14. DELEGATED AUTHORITY REQUEST – DECLARATION OF CITY FUND LAND SURPLUS TO HIGHWAY REQUIREMENTS – 1 UNDERSHAFT, LONDON, EC3A 8EE**

The Committee received a report of the City Surveyor.

**15. NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

No non-public questions on matters relating to the work of the Committee were received.

**16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was no other business that the Chairman considered urgent and which the Committee agreed should be considered whilst the public were excluded.

**17. \*PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A CITY BUSINESS INVESTMENT UNIT**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Environment.

**The meeting ended at 1.15 pm**

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Chairman

**Contact Officer: Callum Southern**  
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