

DIGITAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, 15 May 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Digital Services Committee held at Guildhall, EC2 on Thursday, 15 May 2025 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

James Tumbridge (Chairman)
Deputy Dawn Wright (Deputy Chair)
Simon Burrows
Deputy Timothy Butcher

Observing Virtually:

Deputy Caroline Haines
Susan Farrington

Officers:

Caroline Al-Beyerty	- The Chamberlain
Sam Collins	- Chamberlain's Department
Zakki Ghauri	- Chamberlain's Department
Simon Grey	- Chamberlain's Department
Christopher Bell	- City of London Police
Gary Brailsford-Hart	- City of London Police
Matthew Cooper	- Town Clerk's Department
Kate Doidge	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman Sir William Russell and Deputy James Thomson.

Deputy Caroline Haines and Susan Farrington observed the meeting virtually.

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

There were no declarations.

3. COURT ORDER

The Committee received the Order of the Court of Common Council dated 25th April 2025, appointing the Committee and setting its Terms of Reference.

4. ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN

The Committee proceeded to elect a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 28. The Town Clerk informed the Committee that James Tumbridge, being the only Member expressing their willingness to serve, was duly elected

Chairman of the Digital Services Committee for the ensuing year and took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

RESOLVED – That James Tumbridge be elected Chair of the Digital Services Committee for the ensuing year.

5. **ELECTION OF A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 29. The Town Clerk informed the Committee that Dawn Wright, being the only Member expressing their willingness to serve, was duly elected Deputy Chair of the Digital Services Committee for the ensuing year.

RESOLVED – That Dawn Wright be elected Deputy Chair of the Digital Services Committee for the ensuing year.

James Tumbridge moved a Vote of Thanks to Deputy Dawn Wright, the past Chair of the Committee.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY - That - at the conclusion of her three year term of office as their Chair, of the Digital Services Committee, the Committee wish to extend to:

Deputy Dawn Wright

their sincere thanks and appreciation for the manner in which she has presided over their deliberations and the detailed care and interest she has shown in all aspects of the work of the Digital Services Committee.

DAWN'S UNWAVERING COMMITMENT began with the then-Digital Services Sub (Finance) Committee, serving as a Member of the Sub Committee. Following the transformation of the Sub Committee into a Grand Committee, Dawn was elected as its first-ever Chair in 2022 and has since consistently provided excellent leadership and support to colleagues during an exciting and frequently challenging period of digital transformation.

AS CHAIR, Dawn has been instrumental in the development and approval of the City Corporation's first-ever Digital, Data and Technology Strategy. This comprehensive strategy encompasses the entire City of London Corporation, including the City of London Police, Barbican Centre, GSMD and City Schools and Freeman's School. It has set a solid foundation for the City of London Corporation's digital transformation journey, moving toward a data-driven organisation and hopes to drive greater automation and responsible use of AI.

UNDER DAWN'S CHAIRSHIP, the successful insourcing of the IT Managed Service has transitioned to a model where 90% of the service is managed in-house, a strategic move which not only results in an impressive £900k per annum saving but has also improved the quality, flexibility and delivery of the Digital, Information, and Technology Service, allowing the organisation to shape the service offering and allow for greater collaboration.

WITH DAWN'S SUPPORT, the first-ever AI Policy was approved, in conjunction with the rollout of Copilot for Microsoft 365 to over 300 staff members across the City of London Corporation. This initiative has resulted in the organisation taking over 4,000 Copilot actions and benefitting from 250 Copilot-assisted hours every week.

DAWN HAS PLAYED A PIVOTAL ROLE in the approval of the Future Network Strategy and the initiation of the Future Network Programme, which aims to transform the IT Network by moving to a WiFi-first, cloud-based solutions, providing seamless access to resources from anywhere, providing greater resilience for the organisation. Further, Dawn's support has also mitigated a significant corporate risk posed by the decommission of the Public Switched Telephony Network by 2027 and ensuring that the Corporation is well-prepared for this transition.

DAWN WAS INSTRUMENTAL in the installation of the Technology Support Desk at Guildhall, and requested a similar desk be installed and set up for the City of London Police's New Street office – a highly visible support desk looking after the technology needs of Police colleagues, which was very well received.

UNDER DAWN'S CHAIRSHIP, the City of London Corporation has appointed an award-winning Director of Digital, Information, and Technology, bringing in expertise and innovation and further strengthening the City of London Corporation's digital capabilities. Dawn has also been fully supportive of the promotion of 'Women in Tech', an initiative which brings together women to discuss how to attract more representation from women in senior technology roles.

FINALLY, THE COMMITTEE WISHES TO PLACE ON RECORD its recognition and sincere thanks to Dawn for her great passion and commitment as Chair of the Digital Services Committee, which has been greatly appreciated by the Members and staff alike, recalling her substantial body of achievements over the past three years, and convey to her their very best wishes for the future.

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED: - That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 30th January 2025 be approved as an accurate record.

7. APPOINTMENTS TO OTHER COMMITTEES

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk relative to the Committee's appointments to other Committees.

The Committee considered the appointment of one Member to the Projects and Procurement Sub-Committee. The Town Clerk informed the Committee that no expressions of interest were received ahead of the meeting and invited any expressions of interest to the position. Simon Burrows, being the only Member willing to serve was duly appointed to serve on the Sub-Committee for the ensuing year.

RESOLVED – That Simon Burrows be appointed to the Projects and Procurement Sub-Committee.

8. **DRAFT CHAMBERLAIN'S BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2025/26**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain, for the approval of the Business Plan for the Chamberlain's Department for 2025/26.

RESOLVED: - That the Digital Services Committee:

- Note the factors taken into consideration in compiling the Chamberlain's Department Business Plan; and
- Approve the parts of the Chamberlain's Business Plan for 2025/26 referring to the Digital, Information and Technology Service subject to the incorporation of any changes sought by the Committee (all other parts are to be approved by the Finance Committee).

9. **DIGITAL, INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICE (DITS) - SERVICE DELIVERY SUMMARY**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain, concerning the service delivery summary for the Digital, Information and Technology Service.

RESOLVED: - That the report be received, and its contents noted.

10. **DIGITAL, INFORMATION, AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICE (DITS) - BUSINESS PLAN END OF YEAR UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain, concerning an end of year update on progress against the 2024/25 Business Plan for the Digital, Information and Technology Service.

A Member queried the procurement of the Managed Print Solution. The Committee heard that the initial procurement exercise was for a single tender, but following concerns raised on the solution being fit for purpose, a new procurement exercise with the Print Room and Managed Print Service being split into two lots.

RESOLVED: - That the report be received, and its contents noted.

11. **QUARTERLY PROGRAMME SAPPHIRE (ERP) UPDATE REPORT - Q4 2024/25**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain, concerning the quarterly update on Programme Sapphire (ERP).

A Member raised a query relating to Wave 2 (HR & Payroll), which was received in non-public session.

Questions were raised on lessons learned in the post-implementation review, following the go live of the Learning Management System. The response was that officers had identified that communications on the changes to staff needed to be sharper, which would be incorporated into upcoming milestones. On the Learning Management System, initial data demonstrated the number of

escalated queries had been fewer as it was now a self-serve system, which could indicate an improved user experience. The next steps were to identify the level of user expectations, and measure this against feedback on user experience to track progress to report back to Members.

The Chairman requested that the Chamberlain share their thoughts on how the Committee and the Finance Committee work together to ensure the delivery of Programme Sapphire. The Chamberlain responded that the governance of the Programme needed to balance swift decision making and informing the interested stakeholders. There was a working party for the Programme, which discussed issues and challenges, which Members were encouraged to join. There was also a close working relationship between the Chamberlain and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of Finance Committee to manage and run the delivery of the Programme concurrently with the Digital Services Committee.

The Chairman requested that future updates on Programme Sapphire track lessons learned and capture position impacts to understand the value of the new system.

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

12. **CO-PILOT PROOF OF VALUE REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain, concerning a report that summarised the findings of a recent discovery exercise completed by Pheonix Software Limited into the use of Copilot for M365 across several City of London Corporation departments.

Members queried the purpose of the report and whether it demonstrated value for money for the Copilot license, such as departmental cost savings. Officers responded that it had taken a departmental funded approach for Copilot licenses, and thus each department funded its own Copilot license. These departments may have been careful in its selection of roles that would benefit from the use of AI. The report itself sought the possibility and value for the wider organisation in the future.

Members requested more quantitative data on the benefit for Copilot, especially in future reports, as this would be useful for Members understand how success was being measured. The Committee heard that data was available which broke down use of Copilot, such as Copilot assisted hours, but again the report concerned itself was a more qualitative-based assessment and discussed the difference it has made to various roles across the City Corporation.

Following a concern raised, it was confirmed that Power BI formed part of the license with Microsoft and thus was not an additional cost.

Lastly, the Committee heard that, in relation to Copilot being used for FOIs and document discovery, officers in the Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department were trialling using Copilot, the outcomes of which were yet to be understood.

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

13. REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk, concerning details of decisions taken under urgency between Committee meetings.

The Chairman queried the Comptroller and City Solicitor's reasoning for the insertion of the word 'appropriate' into the Committee's Terms of Reference. It was agreed that this would be followed up with the Chairman outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED: - That the report be received, and its contents noted.

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

There were no public questions.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no public items of urgent business.

16. 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.

17. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED: - That the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 30th January 2025 be approved as an accurate record.

18. QUARTERLY PROGRAMME SAPPHIRE (ERP) UPDATE REPORT - Q4 2024/25

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain, concerning the quarterly update on Programme Sapphire (ERP), in non-public session.

19. DIGITAL, INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICE (DITS) - RISK UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain, concerning an update on the risks faced by the Digital, Information and Technology Service (DITS).

20. CYBER SECURITY UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Chief Information Security Officer, concerning an update on cyber security.

21. PHEONIX SOC SERVICE

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain, concerning the Pheonix SOC Service.

22. CITY OF LONDON POLICE ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL AGREEMENT

The Committee heard a verbal report concerning an update on the City of London Police (COLP) Organisational Level Agreement (OLA).

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

There were no non-public questions.

24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There were two items of other non-public business.

The meeting ended at 3.10 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Kate.Doidge
Kate.Doidge@cityoflondon.gov.uk