

## PORT HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 2 JUNE 2025

# NOT FOR PUBLICATION

By virtue of paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

### 18. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

**RESOLVED**, That the minutes of the meeting of 07 January 2025 be approved as an accurate record of the proceedings.

### 19. ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICE - OPTIONS REVIEW

The Committee received the report of the Executive Director, Environment, noting these points in particular:

- That there is no change in respect of PHES (07/01/25) and RASC (03/02/25) supporting the focus on Options 2 [Continue with the service including delivering related services at new ports of entry, for Defra (Sevington) and Welsh Government (Holyhead)] and 3 [Review options for further commercialisation and cost reduction];
- On Government contracts: that Delegated authority was provided by PHES (24/09/24) and a further paper will be presented to PHES to seek approval to enter into a contract in due course;
- That two CoLC Committees (PHES (24/09/24) and RASC (30/10/24)) considered that ceasing the service was untenable from a wider Corporation perspective.

Members noted an amendment to section g (p.122): *The City cannot lawfully fully discharge their statutory duties a third party to deliver them:* to be amended to include the word 'to' after 'duties'.

The Committee noted the potential for profit to be made from Government contracts, and a Member commented that there is merit in explaining that competition may have distorted the BCP operation, emphasising also the importance of being explicit about the CoLC not being anti-competitive.

A Member asked whether bushmeat detection operations might strengthen a case for requests of further funds. The meeting noted that bushmeat detection highlights the importance of border controls.

Referencing section 23 of the report, a Member asked whether the CoLC's statutory responsibilities are shared with other parties. The meeting noted that the CoLC's statutory duties arise from the Animal Health Act 1981 and that all Local Authorities have functions related to animal imports among other things and that the reference to 'protecting the UK' relates to imports via London because the City is responsible for the whole of Greater London

Referencing section 6.2, a Member asked whether the exclusion of the corporate cyclical works made a material difference to the figures shown. The meeting heard that cyclical works costs vary from one year to another, and that in the current year the budget is £939K, as against c. £120K the previous year and that no annual average of the figures involved can be given.

On the creation of an earmarked reserve account for the AHWS, a Member asked how that would be seen in relation to cost recovery initiatives. The meeting noted that such an account would be compliant given that all income generated should be used to discharge costs.

A Member asked for further information on any mechanism to deal with the success of the Business Plan 2025-2030. The meeting heard that as an example the Port Health service has a reserve account that is used for reinvestment back into the service and for development to drive efficiencies.

**RESOLVED,** That the Committee:

- Continue to liaise with Defra for funding for statutory services and continue to promote a national BCP designation strategy;
- Approve the Business Plan 2025 – 2030 (Appendix 3) and ongoing commercial support;
- Retain the current License to Occupy with Airpets but keep under review; and
- Agree to explore the creation of an earmarked reserve account for the AHWS.

The Committee expressed its support of the overall report.

## 20. **WALBROOK WHARF FEASIBILITY 2027 AND BEYOND**

The Committee considered the report of the City Surveyor and Executive Director of Property and Executive Director of Environment.

A Member asked for further information on whether any accommodation would be used for AirBnB accommodation. The meeting heard that the space is for offices. The meeting heard that residential use has been explored.

A Member asked for more information on the Cory contract and whether any contract would need to be renewed. The meeting heard that such an extension is being prepared and that the requested approval for Option 1 is the first step to such an extension.

A Member asked whether raising the roof would allow lorries sufficient clearance. The meeting heard that incidents relating to roof clearance are rare.

**RESOLVED,** That the Committee:

- 1. Approve and instruct officers to implement Option 1 (defer project up to 2032) consisting of proceeding with ongoing CWP and works, exploring further investment interest from Cory through contract renewal negotiations;
- 2. Authorise officers to negotiate to extend Cory's contract on new commercial terms for a 5-year term to align with the 2032 timeline. In addition, endorse officers' approach to negotiate an extension to the Veolia service contract for a further 8 years with an 18-month break clause to accommodate the 2032 timeline, noting that the standard contract length for cleansing services is eight years - a duration is established to facilitate the depreciation of equipment and vehicle assets;
- 3. Authorise officers to negotiate an extension to Unity's leases of the offices, for a further term of 5 years to 2032 on new commercial terms or if terms cannot be agreed with a new occupier;
- 4. Instruct the Comptroller and City Solicitor if an offer is agreed to for the terms of Unity's occupation in the form of a 5-year Lease referred to above; and
- 5. Note the contract extensions with Cory & Veolia and potential interest from heat network developers will be covered in a separate report noting that a separate report will also be brought forward for Members approval of terms of Unity's occupation (late 2025) or another new terms with a new occupier.

*The meeting was extended at 1600.*

**21. PORT HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEBTORS - PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2025**

The Committee noted the report of the Executive Director, Environment informing Members that invoiced income outstanding as at 31 March 2025 amounted to £1,746,870, the analysis of that having been set out in Appendix 1, noting also that debts more than 60 days old account for 21.14% of total debts noting the further detailed analysis of aged debt by Division of Service in Appendix 2.

The Committee thanked the executive for working to ensure that the reports are now up to date.

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

There were no questions.

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

The Committee expressed its sincere gratitude to Robin Whitehouse, the Pollution Team Manager, for his work at the Corporation including his informative, detailed and timely reports and wished him a happy retirement.

**The meeting ended at 4.00 pm**

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Chairman

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