



KING, MAYOR

COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL

26th June 2025
MEMBERS PRESENT

ALDERMEN

Alexander Robertson Martin Barr (Alderman)	Timothy Russell Hailes (Alderman)	Christopher Makin (Alderman)
Professor Emma Edhem (Alderman)	Robert Charles Hughes-Penney (Alderman)	Bronek Masojada (Alderman)
Sir Peter Estlin (Alderman)	Gregory Jones KC (Alderman & Sheriff)	Jennette Rachel Newman (Alderwoman)
Alison Gowman CBE (Alderman)	The Rt Hon. The Lord Mayor, Alastair John Naisbitt King DL (Alderman)	Simon Pryke (Alderman)
Prem Goyal CBE (Alderman)	Elizabeth Anne King, BEM JP (Alderwoman)	Sir William Anthony Bowater Russell (Alderman)
Martha Grekos (Alderwoman)	Sir Nicholas Stephen Leland Lyons (Alderman)	Kawsar Zaman (Alderman)

COMMONERS

Joanna Tufuo Abeyie MBE	Anne Corbett, Deputy	Adam Michael Hogg	Anett Rideg
George Christopher Abrahams	Elizabeth Corrin	Ann Holmes, Deputy	Gaby Robertshaw
Munsur Ali	Karina Dostalova	Shravan Jashvantrai Joshi, MBE	David Sales
Shahnan Bakth	Peter Gerard Dunphy, Deputy	Florence Keelson-Anfu	Sushil Kumar Saluja
Jamel Banda	Susan Farrington	Philip Kelvin	Ruby Sayed
Brendan Barns	Anthony David Fitzpatrick	Helen Ladele	Hugh Selka
Matthew Bell	John William Fletcher, Deputy	Charles Edward Lord, OBE JP	Tom Sleigh, Deputy
The Honourable Emily Sophia Wedgwood Benn, Deputy	John Foley	Vasiliki Manta	Sir Michael Snyder, Deputy
Nicholas Michael Bensted-Smith JP	Dawn Frampton	Tessa Marchington	James St John Davis
Christopher Paul Boden, Deputy	Marianne Bernadette Fredericks, Deputy	Paul Nicholas Martinelli, Deputy	Mandeep Thandi
Keith David Forbes Bottomley, Deputy	Sarah Helen Gillinson	Tim McNally	Stuart Peter James Thompson
Leyla Boulton	Steve Goodman OBE	Wendy Mead OBE	James Michael Douglas Thomson CBE, Deputy
Tijs Broeke	Jason Groves	Andrien Gereith Dominic Meyers, Deputy	William Upton KC
Simon Burrows	Madush Gupta, Deputy	Sophia Mooney	Matthew Waters
Timothy Richard Butcher, Deputy	Mercy Haggerty	Alastair Michael Moss, Deputy	Jacqueline Roberts Webster
Dominic Gerard Christian	Caroline Wilma Haines, Deputy	Deborah Oliver TD	Mark Raymond Peter Henry
Lesley Cole	Josephine Hayes	Fraser Stuart Peck	Delano Wheatley
Melissa Rachel Collett	Christopher Michael Hayward, Deputy	Chief Commoner James Henry	Ceri Wilkins, Deputy
Henry Nicholas Almroth Colthurst, Deputy	Jaspreet Hodgson, Deputy	George Pollard, Deputy	Dawn Linsey Wright, Deputy
Bethany Coombs, Deputy	Stephen Hodgson	Jason Paul Pritchard	Irem Yerdelen
		Nighat Qureishi, Deputy	

1. Apologies The apologies of those Members unable to attend this meeting of the Court were noted.
2. Declarations There were none.

3. Minutes The Court was informed of an error in the minutes of the last Court relating to Alderman Christopher Makin's attendance. The Court was advised that the error had been amended accordingly.
- Resolved* – That the Minutes of the last Court, as amended, are correctly recorded.
4. Mayoral Engagements The Lord Mayor congratulated Alderman Robert Charles Hughes-Penney and Deputy Keith David Forbes Bottomley for their election as the next Sheriffs of the City of London at Guildhall's Common Hall on 24 June 2025. He continued to provide the Court with an update on his recent engagements, including the reopening of Finsbury Circus Gardens, the Annual Livery Weekend in Aberdeen, the annual gathering of London's international diplomatic community at Mansion House on 12th June, the Net Zero Summit as well as international trips to Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sweden and Finland.
- The Lord Mayor also took the opportunity to look ahead to the upcoming Financial & Professional Services dinner on 15 July 2025,
5. Policy Statement There was no statement.
6. Appointments The Court proceeded to consider the following appointments.
- (A) **Pensions Committee** (Two vacancies)
Nominations received:-
Alderman Simon Pryke
- Read.
- Whereupon the Lord Mayor declared Alderman Simon Pryke to be appointed to the Pensions Committee.
7. **FINANCE COMMITTEE**
- (Henry Nicholas Almroth Colthurst)**
- 4 June 2025
- Pan-London Sexual Health eService (SHL.UK)**
The Court considered a report setting out a procurement process to replace the Pan-London Sexual Health eService.
- Resolved-* that approval be granted for the procurement, via a Competitive Process under the Health Care Services Provider Selection Regime, of the replacement Pan-London Sexual Health eService, due to commence on 15 August 2026.
8. Freedoms The Chamberlain, in pursuance of the Order of this Court, presented a list of the under-mentioned persons, who had made applications to be admitted to the Freedom of the City by Redemption:

Bhai Sahib Professor Mohinder Singh Ahluwalia, OBE	a Civil & Structural Engineer, retired	Sandwell, West Midlands
<i>Ald. Michael Raymond Mainelli</i>	<i>Citizen and World Trader</i>	
<i>Revd Dr Alan William McCormack</i>	<i>Citizen and Cooper</i>	
Elizabeth Anne Annetts	a Librarian, retired	Maidenhead, Berkshire
<i>David James Sales, CC</i>	<i>Citizen and Insurer</i>	
<i>Caroline Wilma Haines, Deputy</i>	<i>Citizen and Educator</i>	
Andrew Ballam-Davies	a Secretary	Barnet, London
<i>Barry Spencer Laden, MBE</i>	<i>Citizen and Draper</i>	
<i>Bogdan Zaha</i>	<i>Citizen and Loriner</i>	
Andrew Philip Chambers Barratt	a Musician & Writer	Camden, London
<i>The Lord Smith of Finsbury</i>	<i>Citizen and Arts Scholar</i>	
<i>Christopher Robert Smith, PC</i>		
<i>Rafael Steinmetz Leffa</i>	<i>Citizen and International Banker</i>	
Dr Anies Rasyid Baswedan	a Politician	Cilandak, South Jakarta, Indonesia
<i>Ald. Alastair John Naisbitt King, DL</i>	<i>Citizen and Blacksmith</i>	
<i>Ald. Sheriff Gregory Percy Jones, KC</i>	<i>Citizen and Leatherseller</i>	
Catherine Elise Blanchett, AC	an Actor	Southwark, London
<i>Ald. Sir William Anthony Bowater Russell</i>	<i>Citizen and Haberdasher</i>	
<i>The Hon. Emily Sophia Wedgwood Benn, Deputy</i>	<i>Citizen and Common Councillor</i>	
Jonathan Michael Bond	a Royal Air Force Officer	Lincoln, Lincolnshire
<i>Wing Commander Simon Charles Meade, OBE</i>	<i>Citizen and Woolman</i>	
<i>Mark Sutherland Johnson</i>	<i>Citizen and Woolman</i>	
Dr Joanne Laura Bugg	an Investment Manager	Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire
<i>James Henry George Pollard, Deputy</i>	<i>Citizen and Skinner</i>	
<i>Ald. Robert Charles Hughes-Penney</i>	<i>Citizen and Haberdasher</i>	
Tabatha Dawn Bull	President of Canadian Council for Indigenous Business	Toronto, Ontario, Canada
<i>The Rt. Hon The Lord Mayor</i>	<i>Citizen and Blacksmith</i>	
<i>Ald. Robert Charles Hughes-Penney</i>	<i>Citizen and Haberdasher</i>	

Victoria Alice Markland Busby <i>James Henry George Pollard, Deputy</i> <i>Ald. Sir William Anthony Bowater Russell</i>	a Diplomat	Richmond Upon Thames, London
Richard John Byford <i>Gerald Michael Edwards</i> <i>Hannah Siobhan Moxon</i>	a University Lecturer <i>Citizen and Fruiterer</i> <i>Citizen and Wheelwright</i>	Takamatsu, Kagawa, Japan
Charles Edward Cashman II <i>Gina Blair</i> <i>Richard Leslie Springford</i>	a Marine Engineer, retired <i>Citizen and Master Mariner</i> <i>Citizen and Carman</i>	Southwark, London
Richard John Chamberlain <i>Helen Lesley Fentimen, OBE, JP. Deputy</i> <i>Randall Keith Anderson</i>	a Construction Projects Assistant Director <i>Citizen and Common Councillor</i> <i>Citizen and Information Technologist</i>	Essex
William James Clack <i>Elaine Irene Clack</i> <i>David John Tyrwhitt-Drake</i>	a Buying Assistant <i>Citizen and Fanmaker</i> <i>Citizen and Glazier</i>	Slough, Berkshire
Mark Clayton <i>Ald. Sir Charles Edward Beck Bowman</i> <i>Keith David Forbes</i> <i>Bottomley, Deputy</i>	a Manufacturing Company Chief Financial Officer <i>Citizen and Grocer</i> <i>Citizen and Pattenmaker</i>	Wan Chai, Hong Kong, China
Chief Tammy Cook-Searson <i>The Rt. Hon The Lord Mayor</i> <i>Ald. Robert Charles Hughes-Penney</i>	a Canadian Indigenous Chief <i>Citizen and Blacksmith</i> <i>Citizen and Haberdasher</i>	Lac La Ronge, Saskatchewan, Canada
Revd Andrew Moncrieff Crosbie <i>John Philip Warner</i> <i>Michael Vaughan Cooper</i>	a Clerk in Holy Orders <i>Citizen and Plumber</i> <i>Citizen and Butcher</i>	Kensington & Chelsea, London
Dr Terence Martin Cross, OBE <i>Vincent Dignam</i> <i>Jacqueline O'Donovan, OBE</i>	a Distillery Company Chairman <i>Citizen and Carman</i> <i>Citizen and Carman</i>	Lisburn, Co. Down, Northern Ireland
Adrian Charles Jude Dunbar <i>The Hon. Emily Sophia Wedgwood Benn, Deputy</i> <i>Ald. Sir William Anthony Bowater Russell</i>	an Actor <i>Citizen and Common Councillor</i> <i>Citizen and Haberdasher</i>	Camden, London

Revd John Kenneth Tristan Eldridge	a Clerk in Holy Orders	Hove, East Sussex
<i>Barry John Frederick Theobald-Hicks of Danbury John James Tunesi of Liongarn, The Younger</i>	<i>Citizen and Scrivener Citizen and Scrivener</i>	
Samuel Edward Farmer	a Wealth Management Company Director	Buckinghamshire
<i>Graham John Peacock Richard Eaglesfield Floyd</i>	<i>Citizen and Loriner Citizen and Basketmaker</i>	
Michael Richard Francis	a Financial Services Company Director	Amersham, Buckinghamshire
<i>Ald. Sir William Anthony Bowater Russell Ald. Michael Raymond Mainelli</i>	<i>Citizen and Haberdasher Citizen and World Trader</i>	
Caizhuo Fu	a Financial Services Professional	Westminster, London
<i>Brendan Anthony Michael Barns, CC John Ross Foley. CC</i>	<i>Citizen and Cordwainer Citizen and Wax Chandler</i>	
Sonia Gul	a School Facilities Assistant	Newham, London
<i>Ald. Sir Andrew Charles Parmley Prof. John Crofton Harle</i>	<i>Citizen and Musician Citizen and Musician</i>	
Tara-Bella Devshi Halai	a Student	Harrow, London
<i>Steven Duncan Smith Rafael Steinmetz Leffa</i>	<i>Citizen and Pavior Citizen and International Banker</i>	
Alison Natalie Harle	a City of London Police Officer	Billericay, Essex
<i>Keith David Forbes Bottomley, Deputy Christopher Michael Hayward, Deputy</i>	<i>Citizen and Pattenmaker Citizen and Pattenmaker</i>	
Revd Mark Hatcher	a Clerk in Holy Orders	Greenwich, London
<i>Ald. Sir William Anthony Bowater Russell Peter Gerard Dunphy, CC</i>	<i>Citizen and Haberdasher Citizen and Draper</i>	
Barry Maurice William Hearn, OBE	a Sports Company President, retired	Essex
<i>The Rt. Hon The Lord Mayor James Richard Tumbridge, CC</i>	<i>Citizen and Blacksmith Citizen and Clothworker</i>	
Paul Michael Holmes	a Police Licensing Officer	Bexley, London
<i>Marianne Bernadette Fredericks, Deputy James Michael Douglas Thomson, CBE, Deputy</i>	<i>Citizen and Baker Citizen and Grocer</i>	

Melinda Hughes <i>The Rt. Hon The Lord Mayor</i> <i>Ald. Sheriff Gregory Percy Jones, KC</i>	an Opera Singer & Political Satirist <i>Citizen and Blacksmith</i> <i>Citizen and Leatherseller</i>	Kensington & Chelsea, London
Oghenemaro Miles Itoje <i>The Rt. Hon The Lord Mayor</i> <i>Ald. Sir William Anthony Bowater Russell</i>	a Rugby Player, Art Gallerist & Philanthropist <i>Citizen and Blacksmith</i> <i>Citizen and Haberdasher</i>	Barnet, London
Patrick James Johnson <i>Richard Thomas Roberts</i> <i>Richard Alexander Lawman</i>	a Timber and Builders Merchant Managing Director <i>Citizen and Girdler</i> <i>Citizen and Glass Seller</i>	Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire
Julian Charles Hugo Kennard <i>Gina Blair</i> <i>Richard Leslie Springford</i>	a Government Navigation Adviser <i>Citizen and Master Mariner</i> <i>Citizen and Carman</i>	Reading, Berkshire
Jamian Jason Lewis <i>The Rt. Hon The Lord Mayor</i> <i>Ald. Sheriff Gregory Percy Jones, KC</i>	an Executive Chef <i>Citizen and Blacksmith</i> <i>Citizen and Leatherseller</i>	Ealing, London
Lieutenant Colonel John Robert Longbottom, MBE QVRM VR <i>Ald. Sir William Anthony Bowater Russell</i> <i>Peter Gerard Dunphy, Deputy</i>	Chief of Staff, Armed Forces Parliamentary Trust <i>Citizen and Haberdasher</i> <i>Citizen and Draper</i>	Chesham, Buckinghamshire
Damian Simon David Madgwick <i>Rafael Steinmetz Leffa</i> <i>Fraser Stuart Peck, CC</i>	an Engineering Company Commercial Director <i>Citizen and International Banker</i> <i>Citizen and Apothecary</i>	Sutton, London
Lilidh Charlotte Matthews <i>Timothy James McNally, CC</i> <i>David James Sales, CC</i>	a Horticulture Industry Consultant <i>Citizen and Glazier</i> <i>Citizen and Insurer</i>	Westminster, London
Michael Barry Myers <i>David Lyndon Jones</i> <i>Olufemi Olugbenga Oresanya</i>	a Livery Company Beadle & Toastmaster <i>Citizen and Actuary</i> <i>Citizen and Chartered Architect</i>	Barnet, London
Alexandra Page <i>The Rt. Hon The Lord Mayor</i> <i>Ald. Sheriff Gregory Percy Jones, KC</i>	a Civil Servant <i>Citizen and Blacksmith</i> <i>Citizen and Leatherseller</i>	Bexley, London

Edward John Page <i>Simon Victor Langton</i> <i>Paul Stephen Hollebone</i>	a Police Officer, retired <i>Citizen and Basketmaker</i> <i>Citizen and Chartered Accountant</i>	Worthing, West Sussex
Terrance James Paul <i>The Rt. Hon The Lord Mayor</i> <i>Ald. Robert Charles</i> <i>Hughes-Penney</i>	Chief Membertou First Nation <i>Citizen and Blacksmith</i> <i>Citizen and Haberdasher</i>	Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, Canada
Christopher Pearce <i>Colin Roger Titmus</i> <i>Ian Charles Drury</i>	Ralph a Distribution Manager, retired <i>Citizen and Air Pilot</i> <i>Citizen and Poulter</i>	Waltham Forest, London
Kateryna Polianska <i>Sir John Stuttard</i> <i>Lady Lesley Sylvia Stuttard</i>	a Senior Sommelier <i>Citizen and Glazier</i> <i>Citizen and Gardener</i>	Camden, London
Aniru Andrew Mohamed Shyllon <i>Ald. Timothy Russell Hailes, JP</i> <i>Timothy Matthew Wright</i>	an Energy Executive <i>Citizen and Pewterer</i> <i>Citizen and Glazier</i>	Enfield, London
Crystal Dawn Smith <i>The Rt. Hon The Lord Mayor</i> <i>Ald. Robert Charles</i> <i>Hughes-Penney</i>	an Elected Chief Councillor <i>Citizen and Blacksmith</i> <i>Citizen and Haberdasher</i>	Haisla, British Columbia, Canada
Nigel Charles Robin Smith <i>Jeremy Francis Hall James</i> <i>Gina Blair</i>	a Royal Air Force Officer, retired <i>Citizen and Air Pilot</i> <i>Citizen and Master Mariner</i>	Hampshire
Clive Rodney Snell <i>Michael Osborne</i> <i>Antonio Masella</i>	a Bank Manager, retired <i>Citizen and Basketmaker</i> <i>Citizen and Mason</i>	Suffolk
Michèle Magda Souris <i>Ald. Sir William Anthony Bowater Russell</i> <i>Peter Gerard Dunphy, Deputy</i>	a Civil Servant <i>Citizen and Haberdasher</i> <i>Citizen and Draper</i>	Redbridge, London
Georgina Helen Tall <i>Christopher Brian Coombe</i> <i>Mark Philip Ambrose Eyre</i>	a Paralegal <i>Citizen and Chartered Architect</i> <i>Citizen and Bowyer</i>	Merton, London
Matthew Charles Watts, TD <i>Gerald Michael Edwards</i> <i>Hannah Siobhan Moxon</i>	a Human Resources Manager <i>Citizen and Fruiterer</i> <i>Citizen and Wheelwright</i>	High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire

Peter Hedley	William	a Skipper & Marine Engineer	Reading, Berkshire
West			
<i>Gina Blair</i>		<i>Citizen and Master Mariner</i>	
<i>Richard Leslie Springford</i>		<i>Citizen and Carman</i>	

Read.

Resolved - That this Court doth hereby assent to the admission of the said persons to the Freedom of this City by Redemption upon the terms and in the manner mentioned in the several Resolutions of this Court, and it is hereby ordered that the Chamberlain do admit them severally to their Freedom accordingly.

9. Motions

(A) By Alderwoman Martha Grekos

Grekos, M,
Alderwoman,
Coombs, B,
Deputy

Motion - "That this Honourable Court resolves that the City Corporation explores liquidating investments held within City's Estate and using the proceeds to fund the acceleration of the renovation of its housing estates, as their continuing dilapidation is an ongoing scandal.

This Court accordingly further resolves that its relevant committees be instructed now to bring forward proposals as to how this can be achieved as soon as possible."

Alderwoman Martha Grekos spoke to introduce the Motion, informing the Court of the conditions experienced by tenants in the City of London Corporation's housing estates and proposing that Members should consider liquidating investments held within City's Estate in order to fund the acceleration of the renovation of those housing estates. She felt that this would be a more appropriate use of City's Estate resources, arguing that these were currently misdirected to the promotion of the financial City and for hospitality and dining privileges of the City Corporation's elected Members. The Alderwoman expressed the view that the City's Estate was a quasi-public fund with no private interests and should, therefore, be used for the public's benefit. She ventured that the decision before Members was, therefore, between continuing to fund their own privileges, or voting for a Motion that would benefit the public.

Seconding the Motion, Deputy Bethany Coombs suggested that there were no legal restrictions on how the City Corporation could use City's Estate, contrary to arguments that might have previously been made against utilising it to fund local authority functions. She stated that she did not think it likely that the Government would reduce its housing grants to the City Corporation if it used City's Estate to supplement its Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and, as taxpayers were ultimately the source of all government grants, she felt that the public should not be expected to fund an institution like the City Corporation which possessed sufficient wealth to discharge its functions as a public authority. She also highlighted the establishment of a pandemic recovery fund for small businesses in the Square Mile, using City's Estate, in 2021 as a precedent for the City Corporation using its private resources to fund public functions.—Following this, Deputy Coombs argued that it was now the residents' turn to benefit from City's Estate.

Members proceeded to debate the Motion.

The Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee spoke in opposition the Motion, underscoring his commitment to finding a solution to investment in the City's housing stock but contending that this must be done in a serious and fiscally prudent way. He highlighted the work already underway: a 10-year investment programme of major works had been identified that would address much-needed repairs and maintenance across the City Corporation's estates, including windows, roofing, fire safety and electrical compliance. It was estimated that this would cost £205 million over that 10-year period, with £105 million being required on the Golden Lane Estate alone and smaller amounts required on the other housing estates. £121 million could be funded through the HRA through prudential borrowing and leaseholder recharge. The Town Clerk had also been tasked with running a viability assessment of all the City Corporation's housing estates and with exploring the scope for intensifying the new housing supply joint venture and applying for government grants. The Chairman hoped that there would be scope for this work to begin in July 2025, and that it could be completed by the end of September 2025.

The Chairman also highlighted how income from the City's Estate was used to fund many of the City Corporation's contributions to London and the United Kingdom, including its Open Spaces, the City of London Academies Trust, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and the integral role in promoting the financial and professional services sector. The Chairman warned that assets could only be liquidated once and, if the Motion were supported, the City Corporation would be exploring options which meant the City's Estate income would be reduced by around £7 million per year. As a result, the City Corporation would be forced to reduce the aforementioned services to its communities, ultimately leading to a situation that the Chairman asserted was neither desirable, necessary, nor fiscally responsible.

During debate, a number of Members spoke in support of the Motion, arguing that it was right to use City's Estate to address the legacy of damage caused by historic underinvestment in the housing estates, especially given the financial pressures facing City Fund and the HRA. It was suggested that, given those pressures and the potential to use the investments within the City's Estates, the logical conclusion would be to liquidate a small part of those investments to remedy the situation which, otherwise, would be unachievable from alternative funds. Some Members reflected that they were accountable to the tenants, residents and voters and it was necessary to explore the possibility of seeking alternate funding to tackle the situation on their behalf.

Several other Members spoke to oppose the Motion. While they echoed the concerns and regret over past lack of investment in the City Corporation's housing estate, they also highlighted the City Corporation's fragile financial position across all its funds, with the Chairman of Finance articulating the challenges facing housing estate maintenance and repair at a national level: as such, the Corporation must continue its pressure on the central Government for reform in this area and the constraints on HRAs. Attention was drawn to the capabilities of other funding sources, such as Section 106 or grant funding, which were being explored and which had the capacity to support housing, with it argued that liquidating investments was not required to meet the funding commitments necessary. A number of Members observed that the income from City's Estate supported key areas of the City Corporation's activities for the benefit of London and the nation, cautioning that liquidating assets now risked

impairing the ability to support them in future, which would have negative consequences for critical areas such as education, culture, and the operation of the open spaces across London and the South-East, which were maintained from the City's private funds. It was also cautioned that the timeframes associated with the remedial works required were driven primarily by the complexity of the works, rather than any lack of funding necessarily.

A number of Members also argued that the Court should not limit itself to only exploring the use of City's Estate to address the issues facing the housing estates, suggesting that the binary decision imposed by the Motion was an artificial one. A suggestion was also made that a working party should be set up to explore whether it was possible to develop a strategy for the potential use of non-local authority funds on local authority matters, thereby enabling proper risk analyses to be carried out and priorities and criteria to be developed.

A Member asked the Chairman of Policy & Resources for further information on how the funds for the renovation of the housing estates would be acquired, if not from City's Estate. In reply, the Chairman reiterated that the renovations to the Golden Lane Estate would be funded through credential borrowing and lease holder recharges. In terms of the wider funding, the viability assessment would explore options for partnerships with private sector regeneration partners and opportunities for applying for grants. The Chairman informed the Court that he was reassured by conversations with officers that the funding gap could be closed and the necessary amount reached without the need for supporting the Motion.

A Member, noting the concerns raised during the debate, suggested that the movers of the Motion should consider amending or deferring the Motion to allow exploration of additional wording. Noting that the 60-minute time limit for debating a Motion was nearing, the Member also moved to suspend Standing Orders to allow the debate to continue.

Fitzpatrick, A.;
Fredericks, M.
B., Deputy

Motion – That, pursuant to Standing Order 2, Standing Order 12(6) be suspended in order to extend the debate on the substantive Motion.

Upon the Motion being put, the Lord Mayor declared it to be lost.

An amendment to the substantive motion was then moved.

Fitzpatrick, A.;
Snyder, M., Sir

Amendment – That the Motion be amended to remove the proposal to liquidate investments held within City's Estate and expanded to allow for all options, such that the Motion would read as follows:

'That this Honourable Court resolves that the City Corporation explores all options to fund the acceleration of the renovation of its housing estates, as their continuing dilapidation is an ongoing scandal.

This Court accordingly further resolves that its relevant committees be instructed now to bring forward proposals as to how this can be achieved as soon as possible.'

Ruling on a Point of Order regarding the admissibility of the Amendment under Standing Order 11(5), the Lord Mayor ruled that it was not negatory and did not uphold the Point of Order.

Upon the Amendment being put, the Lord Mayor declared it to be carried.

Closing the debate on the substantive Motion, as amended, Alderwoman Martha Grekos said that the Amendment sought to draw attention away from the use of City's Estate to fund the acceleration of the renovation of the City Corporation's housing estate, which she maintained constituted the only credible source of funds available, given that the pressures faced by City Fund. The financial City could sufficiently fund itself and did not need support from the City Corporation.

Ruling on a Point of Order regarding the use of language, the Lord Mayor reminded Members of the provisions of Standing Order 11(15) and upheld the Point of Order

Members proceeded to vote.

Upon the Motion, as amended, being put, the Lord Mayor declared it to be carried.

Resolved – That this Honourable Court resolves that the City Corporation explores all options to fund the acceleration of the renovation of its housing estates as their continuing dilapidation is an ongoing scandal.

This Court accordingly further resolves that its relevant committees be instructed now to bring forward proposals as to how this can be achieved as soon as possible.

10. Questions

*Hughes-Penney,
R.C., Alderman
to the Chair of
the Investment
Committee*

Environmental, Social, and Governance Investment

Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney asked the Chair of the Investment Committee for an update on the economic costs of green and Net Zero priorities and whether defence stocks should continue to be excluded as part of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) filters. He also asked for further information on how ESG policies were being dealt with in relation to the City Corporation's aerospace and defence stocks.

Congratulating the Alderman on his recent election as Sheriff, the Chair acknowledged the views on the cost of energy transition but said that well-governed companies should view ESG as a path to long-term value creation. While the Investment Committee was responsible for setting the long-term strategy, it would look to its appointed fund managers to make the specific choices and deliver investment performance. Fund managers were expected to carefully factor ESG risks and opportunities into their decision-making. The aerospace and defence sector would not be excluded by fund managers, which was consistent with market trends with national security being increasingly linked with sustainability.

As a supplementary question, Alderman Hughes-Penney asked whether the investment managers and the bankers employed by the City Corporation had any policies which excluded lending or otherwise servicing aerospace and defence companies. In response, the Chair said he planned to take an active role in engaging with fund managers on topics like defence strategy. The City Corporation's core banking partner, Lloyd's Banking Group, had bank defence stocks, but also had

ethical considerations. For example, it did not fund companies linked to prohibited weapons and would only finance projects that were tied to UK, US and French national defence in relation to nuclear weaponry.

As a supplementary question, Tijs Broeke asked whether the Chair would join the Policy Chairman in his support for exploring initiatives for a multilateral defence bank. In response, the Chair confirmed his support for this initiative.

Jason Groves asked a supplementary question stating that, following the Government's recent Strategic Defence Review, there was a shift in the UK's deterrence and defence, with moves towards warfighting readiness to deter threats to the UK's national security. He accordingly asked whether the Chair would encourage investment managers to revisit their policies. In reply, the Chair said that he was pleased to see the City's core banking partner, along with many other prominent investment banks in the Square Mile, actively pushing to provide capital to defence-related supply chains. He confirmed that the Investment Committee would continue to be involved in this dialogue as it progressed.

As a supplementary question, Josephine Hayes asked the Chair if he agreed that that Green and Net Zero policies were not detrimental to economic growth. The Chairman confirmed that his agreement with this statement and his commitment to the green agenda.

Blue Plaques

*McNally, T to the
Chairman of
Culture, Heritage
and Libraries
Committee*

Tim McNally, noting that a future review of the City Corporation's Blue Plaque scheme's resourcing, funding and criteria had been promised, asked the Chairman of Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee for an update on when this would commence.

In response, the Chairman informed Members that the City's Blue Plaques programme was operated across various City Corporation departments. The programme was administered, implemented and maintained by the Heritage Estates Team, part of the City Surveyors department, while the Town Clerk's department was responsible for assessing applications and making recommendations; the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee had the final decision-making authority. The Chairman regretted that the programme was suspended due to an oversubscription of applications and a lack of resource to clear the subsequent backlog. Unless new resources and budget could be identified, the current backlog would take five years to clear. This required a fundamental rethink about what the plaques were trying to achieve, how the scheme should be funded and how new plaques would fit into the City Corporation's wider cultural offer. The Chairman felt that heritage should form an integral part of the City Corporation's new Cultural Strategy and that a refreshed and revitalised Blue Plaque scheme would constitute a key part of this.

As a supplementary question, Mr McNally asked whether the Chairman felt it was consistent with the promotion of arts, culture and history for the City Corporation to seemingly dissuade people from applying for blue plaques through the financial cost of doing so, suggesting that a charge closer to the national average might be more reasonable and promote more applications. He also highlighted the tourism benefits and additional trade for the hospitality sector that Blue Plaques would help generate. The Chairman acknowledged that for various reasons the City Corporation had fallen

into a blockage on processing plaques, but assured Members of his commitment to solving this issue and encouraging people to tell stories of the City of London.

Jason Pritchard asked if the Chairman could look to the east of the City when considering the locations of plaques in the future. The Chairman said that he would prioritise this as part of the relaunch of the City's cultural strategy.

Mobile network connectivity in the City of London

*Gupta, M,
Deputy to the
Chairman of the
Policy and
Resources
Committee*

Deputy Madush Gupta asked the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee if he would hold mobile network operators to account to deliver the connectivity appropriate to the world's leading financial sector. In reply, the Chairman agreed that the City of London should enjoy world class connectivity. The City Corporation had deployed 5g equipment across the Square Mile that could be used by all mobile operators to improve network coverage. The rollout was ongoing, and it would likely take another 12 to 18 months to complete. If all the networks were to use this equipment, 5g speeds would improve across the Square Mile. The Chairman confirmed that officers would write to each of the four network providers informing them of the new infrastructure once it was available.

Ruby Sayed requested that Farringdon Without and, in particular, the Temples be included as part of this update, as these locations were overlooked when the last update occurred. In response, the Chairman assured the Member that officers would make specific reference to the Temples to ensure that they were not overlooked again.

Tom Sleigh, also the Chairman of Planning and Transportation Committee, asked whether the Policy Chairman agreed that the City Plan, which was due to be approved soon and would allow for digital telecommunications infrastructure to be installed in new developments, would be a huge step forward in respect of mobile network connectivity. The Chairman thanked the Chairman of Planning and Transportation for his work and agreed that the new City Plan would make it easier for telecoms providers to install 5g infrastructure.

Jason Groves requested that the Chairman prioritise areas around sites of particular tourist importance, such as the Tower of London. In response, the Policy Chairman confirmed that he would work to ensure that all 25 City Wards would benefit from the installations, and noted that the importance of Wards that housed tourist attractions.

Victory over Japan 80th Anniversary Celebrations

*Foley, J. R., to
the Chairman of
the Policy and
Resources
Committee*

John Foley asked the Chairman of the Policy and Resources whether the City Corporation had plans to commemorate the 80th anniversary of Victory over Japan Day (V-J Day) on 15th August 2025.

The Chairman agreed that the British Commonwealth and Allied personnel who fought and who died in the Pacific theatre of the Second World War must not be forgotten and assured the Court that celebratory events would be taking place across the country. Residents were also encouraged to organise street parties and community gatherings, and the Court was advised that a church service would likely take place at St Bartholomew's Church in the City of London, with further information due to be communicated with all Members.

Conflict in the Middle East

*Ali, M to the
Chairman of the
Policy and
Resources
Committee*

Munsur Ali asked the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee if he agreed that the City Corporation risked being complicit as an organisation by failing to condemn the killings of Palestinians in the ongoing conflict with Israel.

In reply, the Chairman said he did not agree that the City Corporation was complicit in the situation in the Middle East. The City Corporation had donated £50,000 to the Disaster's Emergency Committee's Middle East Appeal, which provided food, medicines and shelter in Gaza, Lebanon and the West Bank. The Chairman indicated that this was a matter in which the City Corporation would follow the direction of the UK Government, which was responsible for decisions on UK foreign policy. He also added that, as Members would undoubtedly hold a range of views on this difficult and highly emotive issue, it would be unfair to claim to speak on behalf of all Members.

As a supplementary question, Munsur Ali asked the Chairman to assure the Court that, in raising questions such as this, Members would not be labelled as antisemitic. In reply, the Chairman indicated that it was not his place to tell individual Members what they could or could not say. He also reminded Members that the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism had been adopted into the Members' Code of Conduct and stressed the importance for Members to familiarise themselves with its content.

Mercy Haggerty asked the Chairman if he agreed with Hamish Falconer MP who recently in Parliament had urged Israel to change course. She said that it was incumbent on the Court to back the UK Government on this matter. In reply, the Chairman repeated that matters of government foreign policy were for the House of Commons to debate and stressed that the Court was not party political. As such, it would not be helpful for independent Members of the City Corporation to take a specific policy line.

Philip Kelvin asked a supplementary question, asking the Policy Chairman if he agreed that the Court was an independent body which would not take views on sensitive matters related to foreign affairs, which were reserved for the UK Government. In reply, the Chairman reiterated that it was the role and responsibility of the Foreign Secretary to determine policy on the UK's approach to foreign affairs, which the City Corporation would follow. While the City Corporation condemned all atrocities across the world, the Chairman said it was not his position to make these statements.

A supplementary question was asked by Josephine Hayes who asked the Chairman to confirm that he was not suggesting that the City Corporation was wrong in its support for Ukraine. The Chairman responded that the City Corporation had followed the Government's lead on this matter.

11. Legislation

The Court received a report on measures introduced by Parliament which might have an effect on the services provided by the City Corporation as follows:-

Act

In Force

Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (Transfer of Functions etc) Act 2025 15th May 2025

Abolishes the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, and transfers the former institute's functions (such as

those relating to approval or supervision of apprenticeship plans) to the Secretary of State.

Read.

12. Ballot
Results

The Town Clerk reported the results of the several ballots taken at the last Court, as follows:-

Where appropriate:-

** denotes a Member standing for re-appointment by the Court of Common Council.*

^Denotes a Member who currently serves on the Committee in either an ex-officio capacity or as a representative of another Committee with appointment rights.

★ denotes appointed.

(A) One Member to the **Capital Buildings Board.**

	Votes
James Tumbridge	38
Philip Woodhouse	67 ★

(B) Two Members to the **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Sub-Committee.**

	Votes
Dr Joanna Abeyie	82 ★
Josephine Hayes	31
David Williams	58 ★

(C) Two Members to the **Board of Governors of the London Museum.**

	Votes
Elizabeth Corrin	59 ★
Sarah Gillinson	61 ★
Gaby Robertshaw	36

(D) Eight Members to the **The Honourable The Irish Society.**

	Votes
Matthew Bell	61 ★
Deputy Keith Bottomley	60 ★
*Deputy Anne Corbett	68 ★
Anthony Fitzpatrick	58 ★
Dawn Frampton	55 ★
*Shravan Joshi	59 ★
Fraser Peck	39
Gaby Robertshaw	49
*Philip Woodhouse	71 ★
*Deputy Dawn Wright	80 ★

13. *Resolved unanimously* – That the sincere congratulations of this Court be given to:-
Resolutions

Pollard, J. H. G.,
Deputy;
Colthurst, H. N
A., Deputy

Alderman Prem Goyal, CBE

on his recent appointment by His Majesty the King as a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for public service.

Ian Dyson, CBE

Formerly Commissioner of the City of London Police, on his recent appointment by His Majesty the King as a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for his charitable and voluntary services, and services to policing.

Helen Read, MBE

Conservation Officer at Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common, on her recent appointment by His Majesty the King as a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for her services to conservation and arboriculture.

Danny Lopez, MBE

a Member of the City Corporation's Competitive Advisory Board, on his recent appointment by His Majesty the King as a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for services to International Trade and the City of London.

14. Awards There was no report.

15. Hospital There were no docquets to be sealed.
Seal

16. Exclusion of the public *Resolved* - That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business below on the grounds that they either involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972; relate to functions of the Court of Common Council which are not subject to the provisions of Part VA and Schedule 12A of that Act; or relate to matters treated in confidence at the request of His Majesty's Government.

Pollard, J.H.G.,
Deputy;
Colthurst, H.N.A.,
Deputy

Summary of items considered whilst the public were excluded:-

17. Non-Public Minutes *Resolved* – That the non-public minutes of the Court held on 9 January 2025 are correctly recorded.

18. **Policy & Resources Committee and Finance Committee**
The Court considered a report of the Policy & Resources and Finance Committee relating to proposals for the resourcing of the Markets Sites Regeneration Programme.

19. **Policy & Resources Committee**
The Court considered a report of the Policy & Resources Committee relating to the future strategic asset management of Leadenhall Market.
20. **Finance Committee**
The Court considered a report of the Finance Committee relating to the award of a catering contract at the City of London School and the City of London School for Girls.
21. **Corporate Services Committee**
The Court considered a report of the Corporate Services Committee relating to the creation of a Grade I post within the Environment Department.
22. **Corporate Services Committee**
The Court considered a report of the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee relating to the provision of hospitality.
23. **Finance Committee**
The Court received a report of the Finance Committee relating to an action taken under urgency procedures concerning a contract award for the Connect to Work Programme.
24. **Investment Committee**
The Court received a report of the Investment Committee on action taken under urgency procedures concerning property transactions within the City Fund portfolio.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and ended at 3.15 pm

THOMAS