

COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Monday, 10 November 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Community & Children's Services Committee held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 10 November 2025 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Steve Goodman OBE (Deputy Chair)
Munsur Ali
Matthew Bell
Leyla Boulton
Simon Burrows
Lesley Cole
Deputy Anne Corbett
Deputy John Fletcher
Dawn Frampton
Sarah Gillinson

Sandra Jenner
Helen Ladele
Charles Edward Lord, OBE JP
Alderman Christopher Makin
Sophia Mooney
Leyla Ostovar
Beverley Ryan
Sushil Saluja
Stuart Thompson
Deputy Ceri Wilkins

Observing Virtually:

Alderman Tim Levene
Deputy Nighat Qureishi
Mark Wheatley
Philip Woodhouse

In attendance:

Gaby Robertshaw
Rory McCallum - City & Hackney
Safeguarding Children Partnership

Officers:

Judith Finlay	- Executive Director, Community and Children's Services
Beverley Andrews	- Community and Children's Services Department
Peta Caine	- Community and Children's Services Department
Simon Cribbens	- Community and Children's Services Department
Chris Lovitt	- Community and Children's Services Department
Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services Department
Gregory Wade	- Community and Children's Services Department
Ellie Ward	- Community and Children's Services Department
Frank Marchione	- Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
Ola Obadara	- Chamberlain's Department
Kate Doidge	- Town Clerk's Department

MATTERS ARISING

The Committee agreed to amend the agenda order, to receive Item 21, Investment in Social Housing Stock, following Item 16, Non-Public Outstanding Actions.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Helen Fentimen (Chairman), Joanna Abeyie, Deputy Christopher Hayward, Laura Jørgensen, Jason Pritchard, Deputy Nighat Qureishi, Deputy James Thomson, and Mark Wheatley.

In the absence of the Chairman, the Deputy Chair, Steve Goodman OBE, chaired the meeting.

Alderman Tim Levene, Deputy Nighat Qureishi, Mark Wheatley, and Philip Woodhouse observed the meeting virtually.

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

Dawn Frampton declared an interest as a resident of Fann Street.

There were no other declarations.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED: - that the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting, held on 17th September 2025, be approved as an accurate record.

4. PUBLIC OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The Committee received the public outstanding actions report.

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

5. YORK WAY ESTATE LIFT, LIFT LOBBY AND STAIRWELL REFURBISHMENT AND UPGRADE WORKS

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services, concerning York Way Estate lift, lift lobby and stairwell refurbishment and upgrade works.

A Member queried why consultants were recommended for the works. The response was that the consultants were specialists who could deliver the works on site and to the required specifications. They were also more cost effective, as historically other works had been delivered in-house and had not been the most successful.

To keep residents safe, additional parts had been purchased to keep on site, and the works would be kept under review and practice would be adapted to manage fire risks. The lifts would be registered as out of service with the London Fire Brigade. Information on vulnerable residents was kept on site, and additional staff would be deployed for residents that required extra assistance. This would be during working hours.

Officers could not yet provide information on the s20 process for the cost of recharge to leaseholders, but this could be provided when this information was available.

RESOLVED: - that Members of the Community and Children's Services Committee agree:

- That budget of £60,000 is approved for consultant fees to reach the next Gateway.
- Note the project budget of £60,000 (excluding risk).
- Note the total estimated cost of the project at £3,000,000.
- That a Costed Risk Provision of £0 is approved (to be drawn down via delegation to Chief Officer).

6. **CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY 2025-2028**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services, concerning the approval of the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025-2028, which outlined the refreshed vision, values, strategic priorities, and approach to embedding corporate parenting responsibilities across all departments and services.

A Member requested information on the involvement of young people in the governance and implementation of the strategy. The response was that the Children in Care Council was the main governing body in which the City Corporation consulted with and engaged on an ongoing basis. There was also an annual independent survey which informed the Strategy. Feedback was also provided via case work, social care workers, and complaints and compliments service.

The criterion for care leavers not feeling safe was queried, as the data showed that approximately 1 in 4 did not feel safe. The response that the primary area of safety concerned mental health, and support was provided in those cases. As the annual independent survey was anonymous this did present challenges when these issues were reported via that platform, but officers would work with its providers to help target areas of concern if they could be identified. Officers also met with the Children in Care Council on a regular basis and discussed a range of topics which included safety.

The Committee agreed that the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025-2028 should be submitted to the Court of Common Council, to raise awareness of the City Corporation and Elected Members statutory duties to act as a corporate parent for children in care and care leavers.

RESOLVED: - that Members of the Community & Children's Services Committee:

- Sign off the draft Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025-2028.
- Submit the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025-2028 to the Court of Common Council.

7. ALLOCATED MEMBERS TO THE VARIOUS HOUSING ESTATES

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk, concerning the endorsement of the appointments made to the Allocated Members Scheme to various housing estates.

A Member raised previous discussions on the options with Mansell Estate, noting that there had not yet been any action in this area, and expressed their concerns on the delay and the impact upon residents. The Committee were reminded that the Mansell Estate was the responsibility of Guinness Partnership, that the City Corporation would meet with to influence and explore the concerns raised by residents. The Committee were also then reminded that the Chairman of Policy & Resources Committee had committed that the Mansell Estate would be part of the remit of the review into housing governance, which would assist with establishing the City Corporation's rights and responsibilities in relation to the Mansell Estate. This review would be due to commence in March 2026.

RESOLVED: - that Member of the Community and Children's Services Committee endorse the appointments to the Allocated Members Scheme to the various housing estates, as set out in the report.

8. GOLDEN LANE LEISURE CENTRE - UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services, concerning an update on the project to refurbish the Golden Lane Leisure Centre, and a decision on the preferred approach to energy supply. It was noted to the Committee that the achievement of future energy needs was subject to approval by the Resource Allocation Sub Committee for allocation of Carbon Offset S106 funding.

A Member raised a query on whether the consultation on the Golden Lane Leisure Centre would include transportation and access to the Centre for users. The response was that transportation to the Centre was not included in the refurbishment, and if it was required, this would be considered in the operator contract which would need agreement from the Committee for additional funding. Access to the existing Leisure Centre were part of the refurbishment plans. The consultation primarily focused on the design of the Leisure Centre the facilities, use, and to weigh the appetite of its future users.

The study of the running costs of the Citigen network option were analysed against the use of gas boilers and other low carbon options. While it would not necessarily be a lower cost, it was comparatively lower than other low carbon options. There were plans to de-carbonise the Citigen network which could impact upon running costs in the long term. There were additional costs to connect to the Citigen network, and thus the request for the Carbon Offset S106 funding. The recommendation was also consistent with the City Corporation's environmental policies.

RESOLVED: - that Members of the Community and Children's Services Committee:

- Note the report and issues set out.
- Approve the recommendation that the future energy needs of the Centre are met through connection to the Citigen network, noting that the achievement of this will still be subject to approval by the Resource Allocation Sub Committee for the allocation of Carbon Offset S106 funding.

9. **CITY & HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (CHSCP) ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025**

The Committee received a report of the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership Board, concerning their Annual Report for 2024/25 which provided an overview of the partnership's activities, progress, challenges, and future priorities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the City of London and London Borough of Hackney.

A Member requested that the Annual Report for 2025/26 include comments on the City Corporation's Housing Service. It was also requested that it include reflections on the impacts of Awaab's Law, and actions taken by the City Corporation and London Borough of Hackney. Members were reassured that the City Corporation's response to Awaab's Law had been tested by the Board, and the report next year could look to strengthen the narrative in this area.

The accuracy of the figure of 23.2% of children in primary school in receipt of free school meals was queried, as all children in a primary state school in London were eligible for free school meals. The response was that data was provided by the Board's partners, in this case, from the Aldgate School census. The data likely reflected those children who were eligible for free school meals under a certain criterion, but it was acknowledged that it should be caveated that this figure may be for children who had applied for the free school meals but did not necessarily cover all who were eligible.

It was noted that there had been an increase in contact of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), who was responsible for any allegations made against any professional working with children. This was in part consequence of the LADO's extended reach, raised level of awareness, and stronger profile in the City of London, as not all reports resulted in formal action. It was acknowledged that the timescales of some assessments had gone beyond the 45 days, but these were small numbers and had been signed off to go beyond this timeframe given the particular circumstances of the families involved.

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

10. ***STRONGER COMMUNITIES FUND - ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25 AND ANALYSIS OF FUND'S IMPACT OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS**

The Committee received a report of the Interim Managing Director, City Bridge Foundation, concerning the Annual Report 2024/25 for the Stronger Communities Fund and analysis of the fund's impact over the last five years.

A Member wished to express their thanks and highlight the importance of the Stronger Communities Fund to the local community in Portsoken Ward, especially for organisation of events.

RESOLVED: - that Members of the Community & Children's Services Committee:

- Note the criteria for the Stronger Communities Fund at Appendix 1.
- Note the recent grants awarded from the Stronger Communities Fund 2024/25 at Appendix 2.
- Note the analysis of the Stronger Communities Fund over the last five years, 2020/21 to 2024/25 inclusive, and its impact for City of London communities at Appendix 3.

11. UPDATES FROM SUB COMMITTEES, ALLOCATED MEMBERS AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

The Committee received a verbal update from the Allocated Member for Middlesex Street. It was noted to the Committee that since the snagging issues that had been raised in their previous report, officers had produced an itemised list that was being worked through, with works being programmed in for the future.

The Committee agreed that future reports from the Allocated Members should be received by the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee.

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

A Member appreciated that it was not cost effective for all repair and maintenance jobs, particularly the smaller ones, to be physically inspected by an officer before the contractors were paid. However, the Member asked if it was a requirement for contractors to send photographic evidence that the task had been properly completed before payment, for works in common parts and flats.

The response was that it was a pre-existing process for all contractors to submit photographic evidence alongside their invoice. The works were then inspected on a desktop using the photographic evidence, which meant that officers did not have to visit the works on site. For cases of non-compliance with this process, officers would return and request the information from the contractor.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no public items of urgent business.

14. 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 involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

15. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED: - that the non-public minutes of the previous meeting, held on 17th September 2025, be approved as an accurate record.

16. **NON-PUBLIC OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The Committee received the non-public outstanding actions report.

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

17. **INVESTMENT IN SOCIAL HOUSING STOCK**

The Committee received a joint report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services and the Chamberlain, concerning the investment into social housing stock.

18. **GOLDEN LANE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (PHASE 1: CRESCENT HOUSE)**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services, concerning the Golden Lane Estate Investment Programme, for Phase 1 – all Crescent House.

19. **GOLDEN LANE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (PHASE 2: ALL BLOCKS EXCLUDING CRESCENT HOUSE AND GREAT ARTHUR HOUSE)**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services, concerning the Golden Lane Estate Investment Programme, for Phase 2 – all blocks excluding Crescent House and Great Arthur House.

20. **GREAT ARTHUR HOUSE FIRE SAFETY AND INVESTMENT WORKS**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services, concerning Great Arthur House fire safety and investment works.

21. **GEORGE ELLISTON AND ERIC WILKINS HOUSES REFURBISHMENT**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services, concerning the George Elliston and Eric Wilkins Houses refurbishment.

22. ***REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN**

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

23. **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**

One item of non-public urgent business was raised.

The meeting ended at 3.13 pm

Chairman

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