CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 1 July 2026

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held at Guildhall on Wednesday, 1 July 2026 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:
Florence Keelson-Anfu (Chair)
Anthony David Fitzpatrick (Deputy Chairman)
Simon Burrows
Deputy Timothy Butcher
Deputy Henry Colthurst
Steve Goodman OBE
Deputy Christopher Hayward
Stephen Hodgson
Sandra Jenner
Gregory Lawrence
Alderman Christopher Makin
Philip Woodhouse

Members Observing
Joanna Abeyie (Guildhall)
Benjamin Murphy (Guildhall)
James Tumbridge (online)

Officers:

Ian Thomas, CBE	-	Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Gregory Moore	-	Deputy Town Clerk
Polly Dunn	-	Assistant Town Clerk and Executive Director of Governance and Member Services
Christopher Rumbles	-	Town Clerk's Department
Oli Sanandres	-	Town Clerk's Department
Michael Cogher	-	Comptroller and City Solicitor
Caroline Al-Beyerty	-	The Chamberlain
Claire Corbett	-	Chamberlain's Department
Simon Gray	-	Chamberlain's Department
Mark Jarvis	-	Chamberlain's Department
Cliff Morton	-	Interim Chief People Officer
Wayne Donaldson	-	People and HR Department
Chris Fagan	-	People and HR Department
Gail Kyle	-	People and HR Department
Rachel Mackay	-	People and HR Department
Sarah Martin	-	People and HR Department
Dionne Corradine	-	Chief Strategy Officer
Greg Wade	-	Community and Children's Services Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from David Sales, Alastair Moss, Alderman Michael Mainelli and James Tumbridge.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the Corporate Services Committee meeting on 20 May 2026 be approved as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

Committee vacancies

The Town Clerk advised that a number of vacancies arising from appointments considered at the previous meeting remained unfilled. Members were invited to express an interest in serving in one remaining vacancy on each of the Joint Consultative Committee, the Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee, and the Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee. No further nominations were received at the meeting, and it was agreed that Members would be contacted following the meeting to seek expressions of interest in respect of the remaining vacancies.

Senior Officers - Register of Interests

The Committee received an update from the Chief People Officer regarding the declaration and publication of officers' interests. Members were advised that, in accordance with the City Corporation's statutory obligations under its local authority responsibilities, declarations of interest submitted by Chief Officers were published to support openness and transparency in decision-making. Whilst declarations were also collected from officers at Grade I and above, including interests relating to commercial and external organisations, these were maintained and monitored internally and were not subject to the same statutory publication requirements as Chief Officers.

4. **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee received a joint report of the Town Clerk and Chief People Officer and Executive Director of HR presenting a forward plan on the work of the Committee.

The Chair confirmed that a report relating to officer accommodation would be added to the agenda for the Corporate Services Committee meeting in September.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and its content noted.

5. **ACTION TRACKER**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk concerning the Committee's outstanding actions.

Members were advised that work remained ongoing to arrange a series of Member briefing sessions on the Employment Rights Act, Artificial Intelligence Transformation and the Performance Management Framework, with suitable dates currently being identified.

The Chief People Officer provided an update on an action relating to workforce planning and the HR function. Members were advised that the design of the HR structure had been approved in 2024 and that, rather than making further structural changes ahead of the appointment of the new Chief People Officer, work had continued to develop a clearer picture of the service offer across the City Corporation and its institutions. This included work to define the HR service catalogue and to capture the wider organisational position, with a view to ensuring that the incoming Chief People Officer would receive a clear and up-to-date briefing on arrival.

Members noted that a further update would be prepared for the September meeting, setting out the progress made during the Interim Chief People Officer's tenure, including the impact of work undertaken to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the HR function. Members were further advised that progress had been made in stabilising teams and improving service delivery, and that this work was intended to ensure the HR function was in a strong position to brief the incoming Chief People Officer without the need for them to start from scratch.

RESOLVED - That the report be received and its content noted.

6. **SENIOR REMUNERATION SUB-COMMITTEE - CHANGE TO COMPOSITION**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning proposed changes to the composition of the Senior Remuneration Sub-Committee, with a view to streamlining governance arrangements, reducing duplication and supporting the effective discharge of the Sub-Committee's responsibilities.

In response to questions concerning the proposed appointment of independent advisors, Members were advised that Corporate Services Committee would have a role in their selection following an appropriate recruitment process. Members discussed the balance between maintaining Member oversight and ensuring that the Sub-Committee was sufficiently focused and effective. Some Members expressed support for a smaller and more agile Sub-Committee, supplemented by independent, non-voting expertise, while others raised concerns regarding the reduction in Member representation and the principle of appointing independent advisors in this area.

Members noted that independent advisors would not be decision-makers and that they would be appointed to provide specialist advice. The Chair expressed support for the inclusion of independent advisors, noting that this reflected standard practice elsewhere and would provide additional independent scrutiny of arrangements for the remuneration of the most senior officers of the organisation. It was further noted that any advice provided by independent

advisors, and any departure from that advice by the Sub-Committee, could be recorded as appropriate.

During the discussion, an amendment was moved by the Deputy Chairman, seconded by Deputy Chris Hayward, that the Deputy Chair of the Corporate Services Committee and the Deputy Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee should be included as standing Members of the Senior Remuneration Sub-Committee. The amendment was put to a vote and carried by a majority of Members supporting it.

The Committee then considered the substantive proposal as amended. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the amended composition would comprise the Chair of the Corporate Services Committee, the Deputy Chair of the Corporate Services Committee, the Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee, the Deputy Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee, the Chair of the Finance Committee and the Chair of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen, with two independent advisors attending in a non-voting advisory capacity.

The substantive proposal, as amended, was put to a vote and carried. Members noted that a further report would be brought back setting out the proposed recruitment process for the independent advisors.

RESOLVED - That Members: -

- Approved the revised composition of the Senior Remuneration Sub-Committee, as amended, to comprise:

  Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee;
  Chair of the Corporate Services Committee
  Chair of the Finance Committee
  Chair of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen
  Deputy Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee
  Deputy Chair of the Corporate Services Committee
  2 Independent Advisors (non-voting)

- Agreed that the appointment of Independent Advisors be progressed in accordance with the arrangements set out in the report.

- Agreed the Senior Remuneration Sub-Committee Terms of Reference.

7. **ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE GUIDE**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief People Officer concerning proposed amendments to the Organisational Change Guide and associated approval thresholds.

During discussion, Members were supportive of the principle of modernising the arrangements. Clarification was sought on whether the revised thresholds would also apply to contractor appointments, with a Member noting that some

contractor engagements could exceed the proposed financial thresholds for permanent posts. The Chief People Officer confirmed that further consideration would be required relating to contractor appointments, noting that some contractors were engaged and appointed directly through commercial arrangements rather than through HR processes. The Chief People Officer committed to reviewing the matter and providing clarification.

During discussion, it was suggested that the wider organisational change document appeared lengthy and could potentially be difficult for managers to navigate, and that it might benefit from simplification and streamlining. In response, clarity was provided that the immediate purpose was to seek approval for the revised approval levels and that the content of the wider policy documentation would be reviewed in due course to consider whether it could be simplified and streamlined for users.

The Chair expressed her support for the revised thresholds, noting that the Committee had repeatedly considered redundancy and organisational change matters at an operational level and that the proposed arrangements would provide a more proportionate approach to governance and the Committee's strategic level of focus.

RESOLVED - That Members: -

- Approved revision of the Organisational Change Guide to introduce updated approval thresholds for organisational change proposals;
- Agreed that Corporate Services Committee approval would be required only where proposals involve:
    a) an increase in recurrent establishment cost of £200,000 or more; or
    b) large-scale workforce impact affecting 20 or more employees or multiple departments;
    c) the creation of senior posts; (Grade I and above or roles exceeding £100,000);
- Agreed that all other organisational change proposals were subject to Chief Officer approval, in consultation with the Chief People Officer;
- Agreed that Chief Officers may, at their discretion, refer any proposal to the Corporate Services Committee where it is of significant complexity, sensitivity, or wider organisational impact;
- Authorised the Chief People Officer to approve organisational changes on the terms stated, while ongoing governance processes and changes to the Employee Handbook and policy guidance are updated accordingly, including consultation with the recognised Trade Unions.

8. **GENDER, ETHNICITY AND DISABILITY PAY GAPS (MARCH 2025 SNAPSHOT)**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief People Officer concerning the City Corporation's Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap position as of March 2025.

During discussion, Members welcomed the positive progress reported in relation to the City Corporation's gender and ethnicity pay gaps, but with a concern being expressed regarding the comparatively low declaration rates for social mobility data. It was questioned whether staff fully understood the purpose of the data collection exercise and how the information would be used, and with it being suggested that opportunities should be explored to further promote participation through Employee Resource Groups and wider staff engagement activities. Members also queried the suitability of certain social mobility questions, noting that some could produce misleading responses or fail to capture individual circumstances accurately.

Members were advised that declaration rates were improving through the wider Equity, Diversity and Inclusion programme. A forthcoming communications campaign would seek to build confidence and encourage colleagues to update their diversity information. It was noted that the current social mobility questions followed an externally recognised framework, with supplementary local questions being considered while maintaining national benchmarking consistency. The City Corporation's approach remained focused on understanding social mobility and inclusion rather than creating a hierarchy of backgrounds.

A Member sought clarification regarding the workforce figures used within the report, with it being explained that reported headcount included a wider population than the core employee establishment, including casual employees, teachers and professors, which accounted for the difference between the figure shown in the report and workforce figures reported elsewhere.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and its content noted.

9. **PROGRAMME SAPPHIRE**

The Committee received a report and presentation of the Chamberlain providing an update on Programme Sapphire and progress towards implementation of the new payroll solution.

During discussion, Members sought assurance on payroll testing, including parallel run results and readiness for implementation. The Chamberlain advised that testing against approximately 4,940 employees had produced an exact or acceptable match in 83% of cases, with remaining discrepancies linked mainly to identified defects or data issues being addressed. It was also questioned whether the programme remained on track given the ambitious timetable and previous payroll team resource constraints. It was confirmed that additional support had been introduced and that the programme remained focused on the planned implementation timetable. Reference was made to expected benefits from the new system, including improved self-service functionality and greater payroll efficiency.

An assurance was sought on pensioner access and on whether existing payroll processes were being improved rather than replicated in the new system. The Chamberlain undertook to provide a further update on pensioner access and confirmed that a benefits realisation process was in place to address service issues through system improvements and changes to working practices. The Committee welcomed the progress reported and noted that further updates would follow as implementation milestones were reached.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and its content noted.

10. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2025-26**
The Committee received a joint report of the Deputy Town Clerk, Chief People Officer, Chamberlain and Comptroller and City Solicitor concerning the 2025-26 revenue outturn.

In response to a question concerning the distinction between local risk and central risk budgets, Members were advised that the drawdown against central risk reflected approved expenditure for matters properly chargeable to that budget and did not indicate an overspend against local risk budgets.

RESOLVED – That Members: -

- Noted the revenue outturn for 2025/26 showing an overall favourable variance to final budget of £1.244m; and
- Noted agreed carry forward requests on Central and Local Risk of £0.754m to 2026/27.

11. **DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY PROCEDURES**
The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk advising Members of action taken outside the Committee's meeting schedule, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman, in accordance with Standing Order Nos. 40(a) and (b).

RESOLVED – That the report be received and its content noted.

12. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
There were no questions.

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**
There were no items of urgent business.

14. **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.

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

There was one non-public question raised as follows:

City Corporation Enhanced Recruitment Controls

16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
There were no items of urgent business considered whilst the public were excluded.

17. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**
RESOLVED – That the confidential minutes of the Corporate Services Committee meeting on 20 May 2026 be approved as an accurate record.

18. **MAJOR WORKS TEAM (HRA), DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES**
The Committee considered a confidential report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services relating to the Major Works Team.

PROGRAMME SAPPHIRE
The Committee received a confidential update relating to Programme Sapphire.

19. **HR UPDATE**
The Chief People Officer was heard.

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At this point in the meeting, having reached the two-hour point in the meeting and in accordance with Standing Order 39, the Committee agreed to extend the meeting.
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20. **TOWN CLERK'S UPDATE**
The Town Clerk was heard.

The meeting ended at 4.07pm

Chair

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