

PORT HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 10 March 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Port Health & Environmental Services Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 12.00 pm

Present

Members:

Wendy Mead (Chairman)	Professor John Lumley
Deputy John Tomlinson (Deputy Chairman)	Andrew McMurtrie
Deputy John Absalom	Barbara Newman
Henry Colthurst	Ann Pembroke
Peter Dunphy	Henrika Priest
Kevin Everett	Deputy Richard Regan
Alderman John Garbutt	Delis Regis
Deputy Stanley Ginsburg	Jeremy Simons
Wendy Hyde	Deputy James Thomson
Vivienne Littlechild	Philip Woodhouse

Officers:

Susan Attard	Deputy Town Clerk
Chris Bartson-Umuliisa	Town Clerk's Department
Natasha Dogra	Town Clerk's Department
Laura Donegani	Town Clerk's Department
Jenny Pitcairn	Chamberlain's Department
Julie Smith	Chamberlain's Department
Paul Chadha	Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department
Doug Wilkinson	Department of the Built Environment
Steve Presland	Department of the Built Environment
David Smith	Director of Markets and Consumer Protection
Jon Averbs	Markets & Consumer Protection Department
Gary Burks	Superintendent & Registrar, City of London Cemetery & Crematorium

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy John Bennett, Karina Dostalova, Deputy Billy Dove, Deputy Bill Fraser, George Gilon, Brian Mooney, Hugh Morris, Deputy John Owen-Ward, Sherriff & Alderman Dr Andrew Parmley, Deputy Michael Welbank and Mark Wheatley.

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

There were none.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the last meeting held on 20 January 2015 be agreed.

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The Committee received the list of Outstanding Actions:

Heathrow Animal Reception Centre (HARC) Annual Review of Charges

The Schedule of Charges to be adopted by HARC from 1 April 2015 which were agreed by the Committee in January 2015 was approved by Court of Common Council on 5 March 2015.

Prudent Passage, EC2

Members were informed that Prudent Passage is currently swept once a day, it has cigarette bins fitted and signage in place and Street Environment Officers (SEO) patrol the area regularly and speak to smokers to encourage responsible behaviour, SEO's issue FPNs and request ad hoc sweeps from Amey when the passage is found to heavily soiled. Amey managers have been asked to monitor the passage for a month and advise if it requires extra scheduled sweeps.

Members asked officers about how often businesses in the City are spoken to about cigarette related litter.

Members also asked about enforcement on this issue, suggesting a joint approach combining traffic wardens and the City police to tackle this issue as they could not see why corporation officers were not enforcing corporation. The Transportation and Public Realm Director explained that the civil enforcement officers were the most effective and safest option when encouraging responsible behaviour. Deputy Regan was dissatisfied with this answer.

Members asked about the enforcement powers of the SEO's when dealing with litter. The Transportation and Public Realm Director explained that they were able to issue fixed penalty notices. He explained further that this method is actively enforced and that the City had received between 40 and 45K of income from these. SEO's are also able to report offenders for further prosecution.

Members enquired about possibly targeting officers to monitor specific areas and that local SEO's should be easily contactable by Member's as this would be beneficial in locating problem areas. The Transportation and Public Realm Director that resources were targeted using a combined method of surveys and street cleansers tasked with reporting back. It was agreed that contact information for SEO's be put into Ward newsletters, so that individual wards could liaise with their SEO so as to target resources more efficiently.

Members about whether TFL have a responsibility for cleaning any of the roads. The Transportation and Public Realm Director stated that TFL are not responsible for cleaning any of the roads.

5. **PUBLIC CONVENIENCES STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk investigating the possibility of providing a non-statutory service of Public Conveniences through City's Cash funding. It outlined the results of the investigation and sought Members views going forward.

Members raised questions over the toilet provision and that the increasing amount of bars and restaurants within the City, should equate to an appropriate amount of facilities. Members enquired further about whether night time provision should also come from the Community Toilet Scheme. The Transportation and Public Realm Director explained that concern over the safety of staff and the clientele that would want to use the facilities to engage in illicit behaviour, which had happened in the past. The Director of Built Environment answered queries on the Community Toilet Scheme explaining that although it was difficult to get feedback, they have used a 'Red, Amber, Green' system in order to gather data and have received a reasonable response so far. He went on to advise the committee who agreed that developing larger signage would help raise visibility of toilets in the scheme.

A Member asked the Director of Built Environment for a breakdown of the percentages of pubs and restaurants involved in the scheme, and enquired to how often participants facilities are assessed. The Director agreed to provide a breakdown of the figures and stated that the toilets were initially inspected quarterly and now were inspected monthly to maintain corporation standards. He further explained that when a business is joining the scheme, officers will judge if it's reasonable accessible considering the layout and location.

A Member stated that Westminster Council operate 24/7 toilet facilities and questioned why the City was unable to do this. The Director of Built Environment explained that there have been many cases where staff have been made to feel unsafe in these facilities. Furthermore, The Director informed the Committee that fundamentally, it was quite difficult to get businesses to join the Community Toilet Scheme and that was what the Corporation was working towards.

In response to a Member's concerns about public urination, The Director of Built Environment stated that the department were attempting to work closely with the police to enforce laws surrounding this activity.

The Deputy Chairman addressed the committee stating that the Committee did take a decision to reduce expenditure on public conveniences in November 2014, but that the points of enforcement surrounding public urination was a strong one which would be taken up urgently with the City Police. The Director of Built Environment agreed that liaising with police to coordinate enforcement action on this issue was the best course of action.

RESOLVED – That Members' receive an update in six months to review how effectively the actions being put in place were delivering the strategy.

6. **REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS**

Members were provided with the details of a delegated decision taken since the Committee's last meeting in January 2015, in accordance with Standing Order 41(b).

Members asked about what thought was given to giving concessions to cleaner vehicles operating in the City. Members were informed by the Town Clerk that the City of London Corporation was in talks with TfL about this matter and the potential of a scrapping scheme.

RESOLVED - That the contents of the report be noted.

7. **DRAFT CITY OF LONDON CONTAMINATED LAND INSPECTION STRATEGY 2015 - 2020**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Markets and Consumer Protection. The City's contaminated Land strategy fulfils the City of London's statutory obligation to set out its wider approach to contaminated land and its inspection duties within the Square Mile.

A Member asked a question about Crossrail's archaeological/contractors' dig across the 16th century burial grounds of Bedlam Hospital. Since many victims of the plague were buried with the disease following outbreaks over the centuries, cadaver's teeth would be examined for cause of death. In view of the findings of live plague bacteria in the burial ground of St. Luke's Church, Old Street in recent years, which was closed off whilst contamination was removed, the Member questioned at what stage was the City of London's involvement with this potentially dangerous site central to City activity and what was the programme in place to protect the public over the lengthy period of Crossrail's works there. The Member further asked whether Crossrail would be funding the related costs of officers' time and whatever precautionary safeguard measures were required.

The Port Health & Public Protection Director responded that plague contamination was not a problem and the Museum of London Archaeological Service, which carries this work regularly, had a licence. Furthermore, the bodies buried on the site were not in coffins which meant that any potential disease bacteria or viruses would not survive.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to the proposal for the contaminated land inspection strategy to undergo external consultation until 25th May 2015, subject to any comments received at the meeting. A further report would be presented to the Committee's meeting on 22 September 2015 to approve the subsequent new strategy.

8. **RECYCLING ACTION PLAN**

Members received a report from the Director of Built Environment on The City of London's 2013 Waste Strategy setting a local target to achieve a 45% recycling rate by 2015 and 50% by 2020. Initially, from 2013, the City's recycling rate had increased and was on track to achieve this. However, due to the introduction of the Materials Recycling Facility Code of Practice in October

2014, which set stricter quality standards for recyclable materials sent for reprocessing, it was necessary for officers to investigate the quality of the recycling being sent for onward processing. In addition to the issues detailed above, it was reported widely in the industry press that national recycling rates have flat lined.

The Renew on-street recycling bins and those maintained by Parks and Gardens were identified as having a consistently high contamination rate which affected the quality of the recycling. As a result, these two streams of recycling were removed from City's recycling and the recycling rate decreased accordingly to 30%.

A Recycling Action Plan has been devised setting out the actions the City will take to get back on track to reach its recycling targets.

Members highlighted the use of incentives to prompt participation in the Recycling Action Plan from businesses and amongst schools and young people. The Director of Built Environment explained that the City was utilising schemes looking for financial waste, as well as working towards reminding businesses that it is cheaper to recycle than to dispose of waste. The Committee were also informed that the corporation was working closely with educational establishments to increase Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR).

Members enquired as to why recycling bins have been taken away from particular areas within the City. The Director of Built Environment explained that the corporation only wanted to use recycling bins if waste was being recycled correctly as this was part of the contamination problem. Members followed this question by asking what exactly was contaminating the recyclable waste and whether it was possible to provide more options, such as dual bins. The Director stated that a complete list of recyclable materials would be going out with the next council tax form and that the corporation was looking into recycling commercial waste, trialling different bins and looking at using different bags in order to improve the process.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the implementation of the Recycling Action Plan.

9. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were none.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was none.

11. **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.

12. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

That the non-public minutes of the last meeting held on 20 January 2015, be agreed.

13. **DEBT ARREARS – PORT HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PERIOD ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2014**

The Committee received a report that informed of the arrears of invoiced income outstanding as at 31 December 2014.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the contents of the report.

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

There was one question.

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

There was none.

The meeting closed at 1:15pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Chris Bartson-Umuliisa
tel. no.: 020 7332 1408
chris.bartson-umuliisa@cityoflondon.gov.uk