

COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Friday, 12 June 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Community & Children's Services Committee held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 12 June 2015 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Dhruv Patel (Chairman)	Professor John Lumley
Gareth Moore (Deputy Chairman)	Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Randall Anderson	Barbara Newman
Alex Bain-Stewart	Deputy Joyce Nash
Deputy John Barker	Adam Richardson
Deputy Billy Dove	Delis Regis
Emma Edhem	Elizabeth Rogula
John Fletcher	Virginia Rounding
Deputy Bill Fraser	James Tumbridge
Marianne Fredericks	Michael Welbank
Alderman David Graves	Mark Wheatley
Deputy the Revd Stephen Haines	Philip Woodhouse
Deputy Henry Jones	

Co-opted Members:

Laura Jørgensen

Officers:

Natasha Dogra	Town Clerk's Department
Laura Donegani	Town Clerk's Department
Ade Adetosoye	Director, Community and Children's Services
Neal Hounsell	Department of Community and Children's Services
Chris Pelham	Department of Community and Children's Services
Jacquie Campbell	Department of Community and Children's Services
Karen Tarbox	Department of Community and Children's Services
Gerald Mehrrens	Department of Community and Children's Services
Simon Cribbens	Department of Community and Children's Services
Sharon McLaughlin	Department of Community and Children's Services
Mike Kettle	Department of Community and Children's Services
Nina Bhakri	Department of Community and Children's Services
Mark Jarvis	Chamberlain's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Revd William Campbell Taylor, Kevin Everett, Ann Holmes and Chris Punter.

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

Mr Gareth Moore declared an interest in housing matters, due to his tenancy on the Golden Lane Estate

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as an accurate record.

Matters Arising:-

Housing Gateway 2 Projects

Members had previously queried the number of flats positioned above shops within the City which were not inhabited. Officers informed the Committee that there were no uninhabited flats above shops owned by the City of London Housing Revenue Account.

4. **PRESENTATION: FUSION LIFESTYLE**

The Committee received a presentation from Ian Cooper (Fusion Regional Business Manager) and Allan Rae (Centre Manager) of Fusion Lifestyle and were informed that this year saw recorded resident usage which was up 28.4% compared with the previous year. The number of individuals participating in health and wellbeing programmes was also up 35% compared to the previous last year.

Members noted that the Sports Strategy, passed through Health and Wellbeing board, covered all service delivery partners and encouraged use of shared resources and cross borough working. The Fusion 5 year plan had been developed to drive aspects of the Sports Strategy as well as track core function of the contract.

Officers informed Members that the Kings Cross Pond Club facility opened on 22 May 2015 and provided additional links for community sports development. Members agreed that the facility should promote community engagement by involving residents of the nearby York and Holloway estates. Officers informed Members that they were investigating ways of promoting social inclusion by hosting monthly free visits for estate residents.

In response to a query regarding outdoor gym equipment, Officers informed Members that residents of some City estates, such as Middlesex Street and Avondale Square were being consulted on the installation of such equipment. If there proved to be demand for it, Officers would investigate the type of suitable equipment. Members were informed that the resurfacing of the tennis courts close to St Botolph Church would be funded from S106 money and that current bookings were managed by the church.

Resolved – that the presentation be received.

5. **DEVELOPMENT OF A PROCESS FOR ASSESSMENT OF NEW EMPLOYABILITY INITIATIVES**

The Committee received a report regarding the City Corporation's support to a wide range of activities that help people in wider London into employment. The proposed process focused explicitly on work to support employment and employability in wider London and excludes the following: any work undertaken by the City Corporation in its capacity as a local authority for the City; HR

aspects of the role as an employer; support for City Corporation academies specifically or education more broadly; and City Bridge Trust's grant making activity.

The Committee noted that the proposals had been agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee at their meeting in June.

Resolved – that the proposed process for assessing proposals for new employability activity be received.

6. THE CITY OF LONDON EARLY HELP STRATEGY (2015-18)

The Committee received the draft City of London Early Help Strategy 2015–18 which had been developed with the City's Early Intervention and Prevention Sub Group alongside internal and external consultation with partners and key agencies in the City. The Children's Executive Board had approved the draft strategy. The strategy set out the Early Help offer for the City's children, young people and their families and how the City would deliver its offer through a cohesive and coherent, multi-agency, partnership approach.

In response to a question from a Member, it was noted that the Early Help referred both to help in the critical early years of a child's life, when the fundamental building blocks of future development were laid, and to help throughout children's, young people's and families' lives. Members noted that Early Help may occur at any point from pre-birth and foundation stage through to the teenage years (up to the age of 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities).

Resolved – that the draft Strategy be approved.

7. TENANCY AND RENTS POLICY

The Committee received a report outlining the new Tenancy and Rents Policy, which had been developed in order to bring the City's policies in relation to tenancy and rent in line with its Tenancy Strategy and updates policy in the light of changes to government legislation. The policy set out the types of tenancy the City would offer, the policy for increasing rents and covered issues such as succession, fraud and tenancy demotion.

Members noted that the key changes were the addition of 'flexible tenancies' as a type of tenancy available for use by the City, the City's willingness to apply to the court to 'demote' tenancies in response to anti-social behaviour and threats to staff, the reduced entitlement to succession for new tenants, and the approach to increasing rents that was in line with the Government's policy of inflation plus 1%.

Resolved – that the policy be received.

8. RIGHT TO BUY SOCIAL MOBILITY FUND (CITY HOME PURCHASE GRANTS)

The Committee received the report informing Members of the outcome of the City of London's bid to the Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund. The fund invited

bids to provide a local cash incentive scheme to Right to Buy eligible tenants, to enable them to purchase a property on the open market.

Members noted that the City of London was one of 42 successful bidders, and was allocated £600k to support 20 grants of £30k. The City's scheme (City Home Purchase Grants) would prioritise older tenants, those seeking to move for employment opportunities and those who could only fulfil their ambition of home ownership with a Home Purchase Grant.

Members were informed that only tenants of the City of London were eligible, and purchases must complete or exchange contracts in the 2015/16 financial year.

Resolved – that the report be received.

9. COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN: QUARTER 4 UPDATE

The Committee received the progress report for Quarter 4 (Q4 – January to March 2015) against the 2014–17 Community and Children's Services Business Plan.

Members noted that the departmental performance and progress for Q4 were overall good with some areas of outstanding performance. A total of 8 out of 16 measurable performance indicators for this quarter achieved or exceeded their set target. The remaining 8 were within the tolerance of -10% of the set target.

Resolved – that the report be received.

10. UPDATE ON ROUGH SLEEPERS

The Committee received an update regarding rough sleepers in the City of London and noted that the counts of rough sleepers during the last three months were as follows: March: 39; April: 27; and May: 25. The counts continued to fluctuate but there appeared to be on average between 25 and 30 rough sleepers on any given night.

Members noted that the count total was driven by a range of factors, many beyond the control of the City, and in itself does not reflect how long people are on the streets, what their complex needs are or the services they may have received.

Discussions ensued regarding the Rough Sleepers Working Party and the inclusion of an Officer from the City of London's Police Committee, and representatives from the Church and Broadway. The Chairman agreed to discuss this matter with the Director of Community and Children's Services outside of the Committee meeting and would update Members on any progress made.

Resolved – that the update be received.

11. **COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES POLICY UPDATES (MARCH 2015 TO MAY 2015)**

The Committee were presented with an overview of key policy and legislative developments of interest to Members of the Community and Children's Services Committee. The areas covered were:

- Children's Social Care
- Education
- Children's Health and Wellbeing
- Adult Health and Wellbeing
- Adult Health and Social Care
- Housing
- Post-16 Education and Training.

Members agreed that the update report was useful and should be considered by the Committee on a quarterly basis.

Resolved – that the update be received.

12. **SIR JOHN CASS EXPANSION**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and were informed of the recent decision by the Sir John Cass's Foundation Board to not support the expansion, as freeholder of the site.

Members requested further details from the Officers regarding the background to the expansion project. The proposal to expand Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School to a 2 form entry (2FE) was first raised at the full governing body meeting of the school on 27th March 2013 following the ending of the soft federation between the school and Christ Church Primary School in Tower Hamlets, the expansion being seen as a way the school would continue to be an outstanding school, and to meet the City's statutory duty as a local authority to ensure sufficient primary school places for City residents.

On 24 September 2014 the full governing body passed a resolution committing them to becoming a 2FE school from September 2016. Throughout this period there had been no communication or indication that the Foundation would not support the expansion. Officers informed the Committee that the Foundation was fully informed and involved and that there were several meetings of the Sir John Cass Tripartite Committee, and exchanges in the course of which they indicated support for the expansion.

Members were disappointed to hear that despite a letter dated 9th January 2015 from the then Chief Executive of the Foundation stating the Foundation's Board held in October 2014 had agreed in principle to the capital development, a subsequent letter from the Foundation dated 4th June 2015 stated the Foundation's Board had resolved not to give its consent to grant a licence to build, or give the 10% contribution towards capital costs. The letter gave no specific details of the reasons of how this decision was reached.

Officers informed Members that given the City's statutory duty to ensure sufficient pupil places for City residents, the Director of Community and

Children's Services had subsequently written to the Foundation seeking clarifications on the reasons for this reversal by the Foundation and was awaiting a response.

The Committee placed on record their disappointment and frustration with the Foundation's decision. Members agreed that this behaviour was unacceptable and showed a total disregard for the education of City of London children. Members agreed that this posed a real threat to the City's ability to provide primary school places for City children. The Sir John Cass School had twice received an 'outstanding' rating and it was the City of London Corporation's duty, under its Education Strategy, to ensure children had access to high achieving education in the City.

Committee Members queried the role of Common Councilmen on the School's Governing and Foundation Boards. The Town Clerk informed Members that two Common Councilmen were currently co-opted on to the Foundation's Board, and two Common Councilmen were appointed by the Community and Children's Services Committee as Members of the Board of Governors of Sir John Cass School. Discussions ensued regarding the role of Members on outside bodies and their right to vote. Members noted that a review of the City Corporation's Outside Bodies would be undertaken by the Outside Bodies Working Party, and the Town Clerk would make this issue known to the Chairman of the Working Party, once he or she had been appointed.

At this point, Members agreed to continue discussions in the non-public part of the meeting.

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

There were no questions.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no urgent business.

15. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

MOTION - 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.

16. DRON HOUSE NEW FLAT

The Committee received the report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

17. SIR JOHN CASS SCHOOL - EXPANSION

The Committee received the report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

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

There were no questions.

19. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 1.20 pm

Chairman

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