

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 7 JUNE 2023

THIS MEETING WAS LIVE STREAMED AND CAN BE VIEWED HERE:

<https://youtube.com/live/2yonPjX0U-8>

- Councillors Present:** Councillor Penny Wrout in the Chair
- Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Ifraax Samatar, Cllr Sheila Suso-Runge, Cllr Claudia Turbet-Delof, Cllr Jessica Webb, and Cllr Sarah Young (Vice Chair)
- Apologies:** Cllr Michael Desmond, Cllr Jon Narcross, Cllr Steve Race, and Councillor Ali Sadek
- Absent** Cllr Eluzer Goldberg and Cllr Michael Levy.
- Officers in Attendance:** Gerry McCarthy, Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation  
Gareth Sykes, Governance Officer
- Joined remotely:** Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Fliss Premru and Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas.  
Rob Miller, Strategic Director Customer and Workplace

### **1 Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Corporate Committee for the municipal year 2023/24**

- 1.1 The Committee noted the appointment of Cllr Penny Wrout and Cllr Sarah Young as the Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporate Committee respectively for the municipal year 2023/24.

### **RESOLVED:**

To note the appointment of Cllr Penny Wrout and Cllr Sarah Young as the Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporate Committee respectively for the municipal year 2023/24.

### **2 The Terms of Reference of the Corporate Committee for the Municipal Year 2023/24**

- 2.1 The Committee noted their Terms of Reference for the municipal year 2023/2024.

- 2.2 The Committee also noted that the Constitution, including the terms of reference for Committees was being reviewed by the Constitution Committee. Any changes to the terms of reference will be reported to a future Corporate Committee meeting.
- 2.3 The Chair briefly explained that two additional pieces of work would be added to Committee's work programme for 2023/24; the Strategic Plan and the Peer Review. The Council's Head of Policy and Strategic Delivery had updated the Chair on the Strategic Plan reporting that work was progressing to align delivery of the strategic plan to manifesto commitments and that Council would shortly undertake a piece of work looking to develop theories of change linked to the long term outcomes in the strategic plan.
- 2.4 The Chair was keen for the Committee to oversee the work on the Peer Review, however it was noted that might not be done until 2024.

**RESOLVED:**

To note the Corporate Committee Terms of Reference for the municipal year 2023/2024.

**3 Establishment and Composition of the Planning Sub Committee for the Municipal Year 2023/24**

- 3.1 The Corporate Committee approved the establishment and the composition of the Planning Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2023/2024.
- 3.2 The Chair reminded the Planning Sub-Committee members that if they had not done so already to ensure that they had undertaken the compulsory planning training. Cllr Samatar confirmed she had recently completed the training.

**RESOLVED:**

The establishment and the composition of the Planning Sub-Committee to be approved for the municipal year 2023/2024.

**4 Apologies for Absence**

- 4.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Desmond, Narcross, Cllr Race and Cllr Sadek.
- 4.2 It was noted that Cllr Potter and Cllr Premru had joined the meeting remotely. Councillors accessing the meeting remotely, were reminded that they were not counted as being 'present' for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972 and may not vote on any item under consideration. At the discretion of the Chair, the Councillors may however may participate in non-decision making capacity.
- 4.3 Cllr Fajana-Thomas had joined the meeting remotely in her capacity as the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services.

**5 Declarations of Interest - Members to Declare As Appropriate**

5.1 There were no declarations of interest.

**6 Consideration of Minutes Of The Previous Meeting**

- 6.1 The Corporate Committee considered the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 14 March 2023, subject to the following amendments:
- Cllr Maxwell was present at the meeting;
  - Page five Manor Park to be replaced by Manor House;
  - Cllr Potter agreed at the meeting to follow up, on behalf of the Committee, any updates relating to the Strategic Plan.

Matters Arising

- 6.2 The Chair notified the committee that the update on the Public Realm and policies for tables and chairs on pavements, as outlined on the draft work programme 2023/24 (see agenda item 10) was expected at the next Committee meeting in September.
- 6.3 The Governance Officer agreed to seek updates Green Flag work, Chief Executive Pay report, Equalities Demographic data and higher bikes on pavement and notify the Committee members.
- 6.4 The Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation notified members that Dalston enforcement was included as part of item 9 on the agenda.
- 6.5 The Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation reported that currently they were unable to breakdown the Temporary Event Notice (TEN) data by type. When the new database was operational then the Council should be able to provide that data.
- 6.6 The Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation explained that he had asked Turning Point UK, the City of London and Hackney Substance Misuse Service, about the number of referrals to them. However, that data had not yet been provided because of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) related issues. The Council's Street Population Coordinator was looking into the matter and an update would follow shortly.
- 6.7 The Corporate Committee noted that Cllr Potter, Cllr Turbet-Delof and Cllr Young had attended the Hackney Service Centre (HSC) 10 May 2023 as part of a Corporate Committee and Council Joint Committee joint visit with Cllr Williams, Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities.
- 6.8 Cllr Suso-Runge suggested for future Corporate Committee meeting minutes if actions could be highlighted in bold with bullet points.

**Action:**

**The Governance Officer to:**

- **Seek updates from the relevant Council Officers on the Green Flag work, Chief Executive Pay report, Equalities Demographic data and higher bikes on pavements since the last Committee meeting; and**
- **Update the Committee members on the latest developments in those areas.**

**Action:**

**The Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation would contact the Council's Street Population Coordinator for an update on data on those people referred to Turning Point UK, the City of London and Hackney Substance Misuse Service.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 14 March 2023, subject to amendments, be agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

**7 Future Working and ways of Workplace Update**

7.1 The Council's Strategic Director Customer and Workplace gave an update on the future workplace and ways of working.

7.2 Following the update, Members of the Committee asked questions leading to the following points being raised:

- The releasing of assets to generate alternative income was part of a separate asset review process which the remit Strategic Property Services Team. That process carefully considered the different options. Workplace changes were separate to this process and would make available for the asset review process. It was not just about income generation but also about the need for accommodation in the borough. Council buildings were not just being vacated and sold off;
- The HSC had re-opened in early 2021 and it was noticeable that though some Council services had returned to being face to face it was understood that some local residents were still prefer to have available other means to them to contact the Council;
- Staff occupancy rates for Council buildings prior March 2020 was unavailable. It was noticeable that the peak days for occupancy for the HSC, for example, was Tuesdays to Thursday both pre and post pandemic;
- A keep aspect of remote working was to ensure that it continued to be a benefit for staff, Councillors and local residents;
- Cllr Potter briefly spoke about the recent visit to the HSC and recalled that her and her fellow Councillors had witnessed a productive, positive and dynamic workplace. The third floor of the HSC in particular was cited as an example of good balance of a flexible work space;
- The Committee agreed that they should undertake a follow up visit to Council buildings off campus;
- On the issue of how Neighbourhood Offices was currently operating it was felt that Council's Strategic Director Housing would be better placed to provide an assessment. However, they were very conscious of the

need to ensure officers were accessible and visible to leaseholders and local residents;

- It was clarified that the reference to no Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was only referring to the report to the wider service as a whole;
- Equalities was at the core of workplace arrangements. There had been significant staff engagement both with staff and also the various staff equalities groups to make sure the Council is listening and understanding their needs and that this was reflected in the plans. There was also active dialogue with the Trade Unions both during and after the pandemic;
- It was recognised that staff members' individual working arrangements differed significantly with the Council's flexible working policy. It provided a number of tools for managers and staff to manage family commitments and such alike, however, it was also recognised that it was about striking a balance and for managers to work with staff but the needs of the residents had to come first. It was felt that the flexible working policy was broad enough to provide a number of options to managers and staff;
- On the issue of health and indoor quality, the Council had undertaken extensive checks of the air quality in the buildings e.g. checks of the ventilation systems had ensured that the flow of fresh air into the buildings was adequate and this was in line with guidance both pre and post pandemic;
- On the disposal of IT equipment, processes had already been in place prior to the pandemic so when Covid happened the Council repurposed those computers that recently been refreshed to support those staff who had to work from home during the lockdowns if they did have their own IT equipment. Work had been undertaken with the Hackney Education team to ensure computer equipment got to schools. A large of computers went to schools partly through the Department of Education and the Council's own schemes as well as through donations;
- It was noted that steps had been taken to provide schoolchildren with 4g internet connection devices to those children who did not have internet at home. With the Council's Better Broadband scheme, a number of providers were coming into the borough to better value and other contributions such as free connections across the borough;
- The Council's transition to a new mobile phone SIM provider had been completed and there was an expectation that the contract would be short. It was significant effort to swap out the SIM cards for all mobile staff phones when there was a change in the network provider;
- On the issue of staff wellbeing and mental health, during the pandemic important conversations had taken place about how manage the welfare of staff. It was recognised that for those staff working from home and living on their own was a stressful time. The Council had approached staff's wellbeing needs in a number of broad ways from the promotion of the use of green spaces or changing the location of a meeting to a different building for example. The office environment since the pandemic had changed significantly with now more open and flexible work spaces and the removable of cupboards and to encourage more collaborative working;
- A significant amount of work had been undertaken on staff and wellbeing. It was noted that the Council's new Director of Human

Resources (HR) and Organisational Development (OD) was developing a OD strategy with staff wellbeing being a key part;

- On the issue of Carbon Monitoring and the Council reaching a specific level for Council buildings, the Strategic Director Customer and Workplace would look into the matter and provide an update to the committee;
- The Better Broadband programme was linked to a Council manifesto commitment and opening up the broadband market. One of the ways the Council had responded was to create a wayleave; the Council would undertake a piece of work to make the regulatory barriers for new providers coming into the borough easier by having a single document and commitment that they could sign up to allowing them to operate in a more streamlined way. Those providers who signed up for the scheme had to ensure that they signed up to a social value commitment. The programme was ongoing and three providers had signed up to the commitment and connectivity was being rolled out across the borough. Those new fibre connections would become available to both local residents as well as Council staff.

**Action:**

**The Council's Strategic Director Customer and Workplace would provide an update on Carbon Monitoring to the Committee before the next meeting.**

**RESOLVED:**

There are no official recommendations arising from this report. This report is for information purposes and for Corporate Committee to note.

**8 Business Regulation Service Delivery Plans 2023/24**

8.1 The Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation updated the Committee on Business Regulation Service Delivery Plans 2023/24. The report relates to service delivery plans for three of these areas:

- Environmental Health Service: Food Safety
- Environmental Health Service: Occupational Health & Safety
- Trading Standards

8.2 Following the update, Members of the Committee asked questions leading to the following points being raised:

- Committee members thanked all the Council staff for their hard work in food safety especially during the pandemic and it was good to see number of businesses with a rating of five stars with an increase from 52% to 56%;
- It was noted from the risk matrix that extra resources was needed to address increased demand. An additional 800 registrations was expected in 2023 and in additional agency member of staff had been employed by the service and another agency member of staff role was currently being advertised. The situation would be reviewed quarterly with a review at the end of June and at the end of September 2023 and if it was found that additional resources was

required then the Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation would submit a bid to the Group Director;

- The Service already received notifications of food safety issues e.g. food poisoning through the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). The Council's own service would also investigate itself suspected cases of food poisoning in the borough. The Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation would provide figures for the number of service requests received in relation to food poisoning by members of the public and how many infectious disease notifications the service dealt with in the borough. That information to the committee would be supplied through the Governance Officer;
- It was commendable that no business in Hackney had a zero rating;
- The Committee noted that the re-inspection charge would increase from £170.00 to £320.00 in 2023/24. Businesses would have pay for a re-inspection because they would not automatically receive one from the Council without three months passing. The Council also provided businesses would advice whilst an inspection was being undertaken. Normally a business would get a lower rating because they would have wanted a food safety management system in place. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) were less likely to have in place than national chain store. The Service would work with businesses to make sure they get a better rating. The Council would not write the food safety management system for businesses only guide to them resources they required to do so in order to allow them to do that;
- A re-inspection would occur to give a business a better rating but as previously mentioned that could take place until three months after the previous inspection. However, that business could play to have re-inspection take place sooner;
- The service could information and resources in various languages to assist those business owners for whom English was not their main language;
- The Committee noted that the Service a full time member of staff who dealt with healthy food catering commitment to ensure that the food local residents was getting was healthy. The service was receiving a lot more enquiries about this area and the service was working with the Council's Public Health team to reply to these enquiries;
- The service's officers would provide to SME food hygiene training, however as a rule the service did not provide free training. This was provided to those SMEs who had signed up to the healthy catering commitment and were seeking to obtain a certain standard;
- The committee noted that the Food Standards Agency (FSA) was planning a fundamental review of the way that food safety was delivered within the UK and this would have a significant impact on the Council. The Service had not yet discussed with the Council team what impact this change would have on resources. Any changes national changes were not expected at until mid-2025 at the earliest;
- The Council was concerned about one of the possible future FSA changes where a high risk business was expected every two months which seems unnecessary and unreasonable. A consultation was currently under way and it was noted that the FSA was seeking to

undertake pilot schemes with some local authorities in the next financial year with a view to bringing it in nationally the following year. If there was no response in London to the consultation, then the Council would submit its own response;

- The Council noted that one of the FSA proposals was to have less qualified officers undertaking inspections which the Council was of the view did pose risks;
- Concerns were raised by the Service about FSA proposals to undertake virtual inspections. That was not recommended;
- Any response to the FSA consultation from the Committee would have to be through the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services;
- During food safety inspections of a business the Council Officers would check with them that they have a system in place for the correct method of disposal of food waste. Concerns raised by local residents about food waste being dumped outside a business would be within the remit of the Council's Enforcement team. If a member of the Committee had particular concern about a business dumping food waste, they should contact the Council's Enforcement team;
- Every business which sold fireworks was encouraged to sell quieter or less noisy fireworks;
- Officers responding to a complaint about a number of goats being kept in the borough the Service found nothing untoward.

**Action:**

**The Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation to provide to the committee figures on:**

- I. The number of service requests received in relation to food poisoning by members of the public; and**
- II. How many infectious disease notifications the service had dealt within the borough.**

**RESOLVED:**

- The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2023/24 was reviewed and agreed.
- The level and scope of the work being carried out to meet the requirements of the plan was considered and noted.
- The level and scope of work being carried out to meet the requirements of the Health and Safety and Trading Standards Service Delivery Plans was noted.

**9 Environmental Enforcement Annual Performance Report 2022/23**

- 9.1 The Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation updated the Committee on the Environmental Enforcement Annual Performance Report 2022/23. The published report set out the key areas relating to enforcement, the management arrangements and resources that had been allocated for this work by the local authority and the key targets.



- 9.2 The Chair reminded committee members that such was the nature of this type of work that the members' comments would be influenced by casework. However, the committee members must not go into specific details.
- 9.3 Following the update, Members of the Committee asked questions where a number of points were raised including the following;
- Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation agreed to provide for the committee an organogram of the Council's Environmental Enforcement Service;
  - Normally the service would provide statistics for the past three years but the Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation would provide enforcement spend figures for 2019-20;
  - In terms of the financial spend for the Late Night Levy (LNL) those details would be discussed and examined at the Council's Licensing Committee. It was recognised that a large number of projects were covered and funded by the LNL;
  - Regarding the prioritisation of services and resourcing, commercial noise and the Night Time Economy (NTE) were covered by specific NTE meetings and how many reports the service received the previous week relating to all the businesses in the borough. The service also had access to Police data which would reveal the number of incidents that had taken place inside and outside certain premises. There was also ongoing casework by officers. Cases could be prioritised for a number of reasons;
  - On closure orders, Hackney had one of the highest in London and the Council was effective in managing cases of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB);
  - Enforcement work was prioritised through a number of sources including enforcement officer patrols and noise reports. Case work was always ongoing and the work of the service was always intelligence-led;
  - The committee were reminded that the service had to adhere to a Council policy on enforcement which was a three stage process with communication being a key feature and then if an individual did not comply then the Council would take that person to court. It was a very small minority who would not comply;
  - The service had a good working relationship with police in undertaking closure orders and the police had supported the Council in court with evidence;
  - The committee noted that enforcement was achieved through multiple agencies working together and this was supported by an extensive 24/7 365 days a year Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) network across the borough;
  - Regarding ongoing specific issues in the borough, such as Manor House, there was the weekly Street Users Outreach meetings and through those meetings individuals would be identified who needed help. A Street Populist Coordinator had also been employed in which they work with individuals who have issues working with Turning Point UK. It was recognised that there were some very difficult cases to deal with. Council Officers were committed in pursuing cases but

unless incidents were reported to the Council officers would not be able to follow them up;

- The example was cited of the process when a local resident made noise complaint; local residents making a complaint would be given a specific reference number and when following it up they would be asked to quote that number. A Council Officer would be allocated to that reference number to chase up the matter, however, it was recognised that the system was reliant on reporting the details of the issue to the Police for example and it was acknowledged that could be at times a slow process;
- While it was welcomed that Councillors, on behalf of local residents, were reporting incidents of ASB, ultimately it was the responsibility of the Police;
- The work of the enforcement team was acknowledged but it was noted that over the last ten years of cuts in central government had impacted by shrinking of resources;
- As part of the Council's Night Time Economy initiatives a huge number of resources were dedicated to measures to prevent attacks against women and girls. The committee noted that currently a bid had been submitted to get permanent funding for CCTV in four areas of the borough to assist in improving women and girls' safety;
- Issues around Garage working late at night Councillors should email the relevant Council department e.g. Planning, however if they directly in the remit of enforcement they would be dealt with;
- Additional resources was to be allocated to out of hours' noise abatement measures at the weekend as well as Friday nights. This was expected to begin from July 2023;
- If the service was made aware of particular dog fouling hotspots in the borough the service would seek to increase Fix Penalty Notice (FPN) signage and additional officer patrols in those areas. The service had had some successes in catching persons and fining them;
- Committee members were encouraged to report cases of dog fouling on the service's portal so that an officer could be allocated and the matter investigated;
- Payday lenders was an issue for Trading Standards. If the activity in question was based in the borough, then the service would look into it but online was not within their remit;
- It was reiterated that how LNL funding was spent was reported to the Council's Licensing Committee, however, if all the money was not spent it would be carried over to the next financial year. The example of Hackney Medics was cited where they had been given a year's contract because late additional money had come in. It was acknowledged that initiatives relating to welfare required funding. Another example of money being carried over to use on other services was with the Mobile Messaging Vehicle which put out messages about violence against women and girls and thefts. This was big piece of work being undertaken in Shoreditch;
- There were a considerable amount of enforcement patrols across the breadth of borough and they could be allocated to a particular part of Shacklewell based on concerns raised by Committee members, however they were principally based in Dalston;

- Where ASB were reported enforcement patrols would be undertaken. Weekly tasking meetings would also identify where there were particular problem areas of the borough the patrols should patrol. Other stakeholder groups, such as housing association would participate in those tasking meetings and where necessary patrols would be allocated to specific areas. Those patrols would be take place all hours of the night – officers would investigate the stairwells of flats for example to investigate if anyone was drug dealing or other incidents of ASB for example;
- Committee members noted that closure orders could not be initiated by the service unless they evidence and only then could they take action;
- Regarding raising awareness of prevention of violence towards women and girls such as in Shoreditch, for example, the Service provided for local business, for example, Welfare And Vulnerability Engagement (WAVE) training and there were also various campaigns schemes to raise awareness such Ask for Angela that was used by bars and other venues to keep women safe from sexual assault;
- As set out under Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 70% of funds had to be used for policing. It had been recognised nationally what Hackney Council was doing to tackle violence against women and girls and the borough had the highest record nationally of detention and conviction rate against those committing violence against women and girls. The Council also had the Domestic Violence Abuse and Intervention Service, which was multi-agency which supports measures to prevent violence against women and girls. A campaign had recently started, run by the London Borough of Hackney, Town Hamlets and City of London to raise awareness of violence against women and girls in the night time economy.

**Action:**

**The Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation would provide the Committee with an organogram of the Council's Environmental Enforcement Service.**

**Action:**

**The Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation would provide enforcement spend figures for 2019-20.**

**RESOLVED:**

There are no recommendations set out in this report, it is for informative purposes only. The Corporate Committee noted the annual performance report for the service.

**10 Draft Work Programme 2023/24**

10.1 The Committee noted the draft work programme for 2023/24.

10.2 An update on Public Realm would be provided at the next Committee meeting along with the Strategic Review. As previously mentioned, an update on the Peer Review was expected in early 2024.

**RESOLVED:**

There are no official recommendations arising from this report. This report is for information purposes and for Corporate Committee to note.

**11 Any Other Business the Chair Considers to be Urgent**

11.1 There was no urgent business for consideration.

**END OF MEETING**

**Duration of the meeting: 6.30pm - 8.39pm**

Date of the next meeting – 12 September 2023

Cllr Penny Wrout  
Chair of the Corporate Committee

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