

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 16TH DECEMBER, 2020

Councillors Present: Councillor Jessica Webb in the Chair

Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas (Vice-Chair), Cllr Brian Bell, Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ajay Chauhan, Cllr Katie Hanson, Cllr Peter Snell, Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Vincent Stops and Cllr Carole Williams

Officers in Attendance: Gerry McCarthy (Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulations, Neighbourhoods and Housing),
Stuart Thorn (Head of HR Business Partnering)
Josephine Sterakides (Legal Services),
Rabiya Khatun (Governance Services)

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Race and Levy.

2 Declarations of Interest - Members to Declare As Appropriate

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3 Consideration of Minutes Of The Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 September 2020 were approved as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

- Cllr Potter to be included in the list of apologies for absence.
- Paragraph 5.4 - To add the sentence 'Cllr Bell was of the view that having a TENs does not exempt the applicant from any planning law requirements.'

Matters arising

Cllr Stops requested that Ms Sterakides' legal advice clarifying the planning and licensing rules relating to a TEN be circulated to relevant Council officers and Members.

ACTION: The legal advice concerning TENs to be circulated to Licensing Services Officers and relevant Members. Gerry McCarthy to forward advice to Enforcement Services.

4. Pay Policy Statement 2021/22

4.1 Members noted the error at paragraph 3.3 of the report, which should be amended from £18,061 to £180,061.

4.2 Stuart Thorn outlined the contents of the report that included officer pay and remuneration, bonus payments, redundancy and flexible retirement. He highlighted the legislative changes that had impacted on the pay policy and future proposals if implemented into legislation could impact on remuneration such as capping redundancy.

RESOLVED to agree the Pay Policy Statement and recommend Council approve it.

5. Annual Enforcement and Environmental Protection Service Delivery Plans 2020/21

5.1 Gerry McCarthy emphasised that this report had been delayed due to the impact of Covid-19 and the cyber attack in October 2020, which had resulted in the loss of the Service's database and historical data.

5.2 Mr McCarthy introduced the report and the Environmental Service Delivery Plan, which set out the objectives of the service and demonstrated how they were linked to the Mayor's priorities and Hackney's Sustainable Community strategy. The plan set out the key areas relating to Environmental Enforcement, addressing anti-social behaviour including Night Time Economy (NTE) and statutory nuisance, the management arrangements and allocated resources, and key targets. The Environmental Protection plan set out the key areas relating to environmental protection, addressing statutory nuisance including commercial noise and odours, artificial light nuisance and construction noise, the management arrangements and allocated resources, key targets and performance indicators.

5.3 Mr McCarthy highlighted the key areas within the report and added that deployed staff had assisted the team with their workload as the volume of complaints had increased year on year. Compared to similar months in 2019 the number of noise complaints increased by 79%, 110% and 111% in April May and June. Two officers on fixed term contracts had been employed on permanent contracts but the resources were not sufficient to deal with the increased demand on the service.

5.4 In response to questions from Members relating to the report, Mr McCarthy replied as follows:

- Green areas in the table at paragraph 4.5.13 represented Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued using mobile technology and the grey areas represented FPNs issued on paper.
- Dog fouling was one of the three main issues affecting residents in the borough. It was confirmed that the service's capacity to enforce breaches remained unchanged, however, officers had not witnessed any dog fouling during their patrols in order to issue a FPN.
- The issue of redeploying officers from the service to assist in the Covid-19 response would be addressed at agenda item 6 and its potential impact on the service in the year 2021/22

5.5 In response to a question from the Chair, Ms Sterakides clarified that changes within the recommendation followed a review of the governance processes that had identified that Council's Committees could not technically note a report.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee considered both the level and scope of work being carried out to meet the requirements of both the Enforcement and Environmental Protection Service Plans.

6. Business Regulation Service Delivery Plans 2020/21

6.1 Gerry McCarthy introduced the report on the Service Delivery Plans for 2020/21 for the Business Regulation Service and highlighted the key areas. He summarised the service delivery plans for three areas: Environmental Health Service Food Safety, Environmental Health Service Occupational Health & Safety and Trading Standards. Mr McCarthy emphasised that no inspections would be undertaken while goernmen restrictions were in place.

6.2 In response to questions from Members relating to the report, Mr McCarthy replied as follows:

- The Council had been supporting local businesses ensuring they were aware of the Covid-19 guidance, understanding the rules and their responsibilities. The Council had published information on the restrictions on the Councils webpage and in the Hackney Business news. Mr McCarthy had also attended a business forum meeting regarding the government's restrictions. The legislation introduced in 2019 had awarded Councils greater powers including issuing prohibition orders for any business not operating in a Covid secure environment. Mr McCarthy undertook to review the Council's webpage and include further information on the guidance that would assist businesses.
- Mr McCarthy would assist Councillor Fajana- Thomas on a document that she was producing for businesses on the Covid-19 guidance.

RESOLVED:

- 1 Approve the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2020/21
- 2 That the Committee considered the level and scope of work being carried out to meet the requirements of the plan.
- 3 That the Committee notes the level and scope of work being carried out to meet the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety and Trading Standards Service Delivery Plans.

7 Draft Work Plan 2020/21

The Chair advised that Covid-19 and the cyber attack would impact on the Committee's draft work programme for 2020/2021.

8. Any Other Business Which in The Opinion Of the Chair is Urgent

Councillor Stops and Snell raised the issue of highways management, in particular skips including licensed skips being placed on public highways and bus lanes and not being collected for many months and years, which had caused disruption for passengers and pedestrians. Councillor Snell highlighted that he had observed a skip placed on a bus lane for over a year, which had significantly impacted on Graham Road.

The Chair emphasised that the Council needed to take a more proactive approach in keeping public highways and roads clear of any obstructions. Members indicated that

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clarity was needed regarding skip licences, the criteria, what amounted to exceptional circumstances, its connection in particular to planning and construction management and developers, and that the issue of skips needed to be looked at more holistically.

Members requested an update on the Council's skip licence including the duration of a licence, enforcement action for any skips causing an obstruction.

ACTION: Andy Cunningham to attend a future meeting to discuss the issue of skips within the borough.

Duration of the meeting: 6.30-pm 7.35pm

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