

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
- 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 members that the new substitute Planning Sub-Committee needed to ensure that they undertook the compulsory training before they could sit on the Planning Sub-Committee. Cllr Samatar reported, who had recently moved from being a substitute to a main Planning Sub-Committee member, had recently undertaken 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 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 hire 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:

- I. **Seek updates from the relevant Council Officers on the Green Flag work, Chief Executive Pay report, Equalities Demographic data and hire bikes on pavements since the last Committee meeting; and**
- II. **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. The future workplace team was continuing its work to provide modern, well designed space that supports effective, flexible and collaborative working and enables efficiencies across the Council's office estate.
- 7.2 Following the update, 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 was under the remit of the Council's Strategic Property Services Team. That process carefully considers the different options for use of the Council's assets. The workplace changes were separate to this, but through rationalising the use of Council office estate buildings can be released so that they were available for the asset review process. The Council's asset review process was not just about income generation / capital release but also considered other uses such as addressing the need for accommodation in the borough.
 - The HSC had re-opened in early 2021 and though some Council services had returned to being face to face, some local residents preferred to have available other means to contact the Council;
 - Data outlining staff occupancy rates for Council buildings prior to March 2020 was unavailable. The peak days for occupancy for the HSC, for example, were Tuesdays to Thursdays which remained unchanged from before the pandemic;

- A key aspect of remote working was to ensure that it was a benefit for both staff, Councillors and the delivery of services for residents;
- Cllr Potter briefly spoke about a recent visit to the HSC and recalled that her and her fellow Councillors had witnessed a productive, positive and dynamic workplace. The HSC's third floor (which has been used as the pioneer for a remodelled working environment) 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 those Council buildings off campus;
- Relating to questions about the current operation of Neighbourhood Offices, those were within the remit of the Council's Strategic Director Housing;
- It was clarified that the reference to no Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was only in the context of the report not the wider Council as a whole;
- Equalities were at the core of workplace arrangements. There had been significant staff engagement both with staff and also the various staff equalities groups to ensure the Council was listening and understanding their needs and that this was reflected in the plans. There was also active dialogue with the Trade Unions about those plans;
- The Council's flexible working policy provides a number of tools for managers and staff to make arrangements that help 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 local 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 air quality, the Council had undertaken extensive checks e.g. checks on 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 had recently been refreshed to support staff who had to work from home during the lockdowns if they did not have their own IT equipment. Work had been undertaken with the Hackney Education team to ensure computer equipment was provided to children in the borough's schools who needed IT equipment for learning. A large number of computers went to schools partly through the Department of Education and the Council's own schemes as well as through local donations;
- 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 this contract was let on a basis of relatively short contracts which enabled the Council to take advantage of price movement in the market. Members noted that it took a significant effort to swap out the SIM cards for all staffs' mobile phones;
- The Council has a broad number of ways in which to promote staff wellbeing, such as the use of green spaces or changing the location of a

meeting to a different building for example. The office environment post-pandemic was now more open and flexible and encourages more collaborative working;

- The Committee 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;
- An update on Carbon Monitoring would be provided after the meeting;
- The Better Broadband programme was linked to a Council manifesto commitment. One of the ways the Council had responded to the need for digital inclusion has been to create a boroughwide wayleave which makes it easier for new broadband providers to come into the borough through a more streamlined approach to regulatory steps providers need to work through. Providers involved in the scheme are required to sign up to a social value commitment. Three providers have signed up to the commitment and connectivity is being rolled out across the borough. The new fibre connections would become available to both local residents and Council staff.

Action:

The Governance Officer to arrange a tour for the Committee members of the Council's buildings off campus.

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 the 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 staff for all their hard work and it was recognised that the pandemic had affected lots of people's work burden, and some had perhaps gone unrecognised. The report highlighted how in Environmental Health, the Food Safety Team's work had increased massively to deal with all the changes to regulations which were brought into force at short notice and they had risen to the challenge. The committee added that it was good to see

that number of businesses with a rating of five stars had increased from 52% to 56%;

- It was noted from the risk matrix that extra resources were needed to address any increased demand.
- An additional 800 registrations was expected in 2023 and an additional agency member of staff had been employed and another agency member of staff role was currently being advertised. A review would be undertaken quarterly. If additional resources were required then a bid would be submitted to the Group Director;
- The service received notifications of food safety issues, such as food poisoning, through the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). The Council's own service would also investigate suspected cases of food poisoning in the borough. After the meeting the committee would be sent data on the number of service requests received in relation to food poisoning by members of the public and how many infectious disease notifications the service had dealt with in the borough;
- The Committee noted that the re-inspection charge would increase from £170 to £320 in 2023/24. Businesses would have to pay for a re-inspection because they would not automatically receive one from the Council without three months passing. The Council also provided businesses with advice while an inspection was being undertaken. Normally a business would get a lower rating because they would want a food safety management system in place. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) were more likely to have a system in place than national chain stores. 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 to 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 pay to have re-inspection take place sooner;
- The service could provide 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 had a full time member of staff who dealt with a healthy food catering commitment to ensure that the food local residents were 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 would provide 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 what impact this change would have on resources. Any 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 to be inspected

every two months. A consultation was currently under way and it was noted that the FSA was seeking to undertake pilot schemes with some local authorities next year with a view to bringing it in nationally the year after that. If there was no response from the London local authorities to the consultation then the Council would submit its own response;

- The Council noted that one of the other FSA proposals was to have less qualified officers undertaking inspections. It was felt that this posed some risks;
- Concerns were raised by the Service about FSA proposals to undertake virtual inspections. That was not recommended;
- Any response from the Committee to the FSA consultation would have to be through the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services. The Head of Service should keep an eye on responses to the FSA consultation and liaise with the relevant cabinet member to ensure the Government was aware of Hackney's perspective on the proposed changes;
- During food safety inspections 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 fall under the remit of the Council's Enforcement team. If a Committee member had a specific 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 fireworks;
- Officers responding to a complaint about a number of goats being kept in the borough had 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;**
- II. How many infectious disease notifications the service had dealt with in the borough.**

Action:

The Head of Service should keep an eye on responses to the FSA consultation and liaise with the relevant cabinet member to ensure the Government was aware of Hackney's perspective on the proposed changes.

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;
- An organogram of the Council's Environmental Enforcement Service and enforcement spend figures for 2019-20 would be sent to the Committee after the meeting;
 - The financial spend for the Late Night Levy (LNL) fell under the remit of 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 was 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 the 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 at Manor House, there were 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;

- Council noise reports were cited as a specific example, wherein when a local resident was following up a previously made complaint the system online would ask them to quote the unique reference number that they were given the first time that they made a complaint in order to trace the status of the complaint. A Council Officer would be allocated to that reference number to chase up the matter. However, a lot of complaints were being put into the system and that the information would also be reported to the Police but it was acknowledged that it was a slow process; ;
- Committee members were reminded that while it was important for Councillors to report incidents ultimately incidents of street ASB was the responsibility of the Police to investigate;
- The work of the enforcement team was acknowledged but it was noted that over the last ten years, because of cuts by central government, resources had shrunk;
- 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. 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 garages working late at night Councillors should email the relevant Council department, for example Planning, however if it fell directly under the remit of enforcement they would be dealt with;
- Additional resources were 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 then they would increase the 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 the matter could be investigated;
- Payday loan lenders were an issue for Trading Standards. If the activity in question was based at a location in the borough then the service would look into it but any activities online were not within the Council services' remit;
- Money not spent under the LNL would be carried over to the next financial year. The example of Hackney Medics was cited where they had been given a years contract because late additional money had come in. 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;

- Where incidents of ASB were reported, enforcement patrols would be undertaken. Weekly tasking meetings would also identify where there were particular problem areas in the borough. Other stakeholder groups, such as housing associations, would participate in those tasking meetings and where necessary patrols would be allocated to specific areas. These patrols would be take place all hours of the night and officers would investigate the stairwells of flats for example to investigate if anyone was drug dealing or example;
- Committee members noted that closure orders could not be initiated by the service unless they had evidence;
- On raising awareness of prevention of violence towards women and girls such as in Shoreditch, for example, the service provided for local businesses, for example, Welfare And Vulnerability Engagement (WAVE) training and there was also various campaigns to raise awareness such Ask for Angela which was used by bars and other venues to keep women safe from sexual assault;
- Under Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 70% of LNL funds had to be used for policing. It had been recognised nationally what Hackney Council had done to tackle violence against women and girls. The borough had the highest record nationally 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 a multi-agency service which supported 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.

RESOLVED:

There are no official recommendations arising from this report. This report is for information purposes and for the 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

Date of the next meeting – 12 September 2023

Duration of the meeting: 6.30pm - 8.39pm

Cllr Penny Wrout
Chair of the Corporate Committee

Contact:
Gareth Sykes
Governance Officer
Email: governance@hackney.gov.uk

DRAFT