

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH 2024

Councillors Present:	Cllr Penny Wrout in the Chair
	Cllr Michael Desmond, Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Sheila Suso-Runge, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Jessica Webb and Cllr Sarah Young (Vice-Chair).
Apologies for absence:	Councillor Jon Narcross
Absent:	Cllr Michael Levy, Cllr Eluzer Goldberg, Cllr Fliss Premru and Cllr Steve Race
Officers in Attendance:	Sandra Farquharson, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development (joined remotely) James Gleave, Strategic Planning Manager Mario Kahrman, ICT support (joined remotely) Tyler Linton, Head of Streetscene Gerry McCarthy, Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation Tessa Mitchell, Team Leader, Governance Services (joined remotely) Tobias Newland, Senior Transport Planner (joined remotely) Jospehine Sterakides, Legal Officer (joined remotely) Keung Tsang, Policy and Infrastructure Team Leader John Tsang, Development and Enforcement Manager (joined remotely) Gareth Sykes, Governance Officer
Joined virtually:	Cllr Susan Etti Cllr Clare Joseph
Also in attendance:	Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jon Narcross.
- 1.2 Cllr Michael Levy, Cllr Eluzer Goldberg, Cllr Fliss Premru and Cllr Steve Race were recorded as absent.
- 1.3 Apologies for lateness were received from Cllr Clare Potter.
- 1.4 Cllr Cllr Sade Etti and Cllr Clare Joseph joined the meeting virtually.
- 1.5 Following recent changes in political proportionality, as agreed at the 28 February 2024 Council meeting, , Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock was no longer a

member of the Corporate Committee meeting. The Committee thanked the Councillor for this membership and work..

- 1.6 Currently there was one Conservative vacancy on the Committee.
- 1.7 Councillors noted that the meeting was the last Corporate Committee meeting of the current municipal year. The Chair thanked the Governance Officer for their help and support over the last few months.

2 Declarations of Interest - Members to Declare As Appropriate

- 2.1 None.

3 Consideration of Minutes Of The Previous Meeting and Actions list

- 3.1 The minutes of the previous Corporate Committee meeting, held on 12 December 2023, were, subject to one minor amendment, were approved as an accurate record of those meetings' proceedings.

RESOLVED:

The minutes of the previous Corporate Committee meeting, held on 12 December 2023, be approved, subject to one minor amendment, as an accurate record of those meetings' proceedings.

Matters arising

The Impact of school provisions on polling stations

- 3.2 The Committee Chair reported that they had further discussions with the Council's Assistant Director, Business Intelligence, Elections and Member Services. They confirmed that Baden Powell School, which was set to close, was used as a polling station. It was understood that this would not impact on the 2 May 2024 local elections. It was hoped before the General Election, whenever that may occur, that there would be a review of polling stations. The Committee noted that Hackney Council's preference was not to use schools as polling stations.

Action status: resolved

Dockless bicycles

- 3.3 An update on dockless bicycles had been circulated to the Committee on 5 March 2024.

Action status: resolved

- 3.4 Responding to a question about whether oversight of dockless bicycles fell under the remit of the Committee, the Head of Streetscene explained that the contract with Lime, the electric vehicle company, was discussed and agreed at the Council's Cabinet Procurement and Insourcing Committee (CPIC).

Strategic Plan update

- 3.5 Work on strategic partnerships and transformation was ongoing and that sign off from Council was pending. The Chair of the Committee understood that the Strategic Plan was due to go to Full Council in July 2024. There was an expectation that there would be an update on the Strategic Plan at the May Corporate Committee meeting.

Action status: ongoing

Peer review

- 3.6 The Committee noted that the Council's Director of Transformation was responsible for the Peer Review work and he was currently liaising with the Local Government Association (LGA) about the issue. An update would be provided next municipal year.

Action status: ongoing

Gender and Equalities Pay Gap report

- 3.7 The municipal year the report would come to the Corporate Committee for comments prior to going to Council.

Action status: resolved

Edmonton Incinerator

- 3.8 The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Officer had reported on 17 January 2024 that the issue of the Edmonton incinerator would be put forward as a suggestion for the Hackney Council's Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission to look at the next municipal year.

Action status: resolved

Council Buildings Tour

- 3.9 The Chair of the Committee explained that there were several strands to this piece of work beyond the Hackney Service Centre (HSC). The Council's Strategic Director Customer and Workplace had made a presentation to the Corporate Committee in June 2023 looking at workplaces and future ways of working. At that time, it was mentioned that there were four sites outside of the HSC that the Committee may wish to visit in the future. The Chair of the Committee would liaise with the Governance Officer to identify those four sites.
- 3.10 The Committee noted that at the 18 March 2024 Skills, Economy and Growth Scrutiny Commission meeting they would be looking at the Strategic Property Services - Corporate Assets.
- 3.11 A preliminary meeting would be taking place on the 20 March 2024 between the Chair of the Corporate Committee, the Council's Strategic Director Customer and Workplace, Customer and Workplace and the Director HR and

Organisational Development looking at post-pandemic ways of working and its impact on the moral and wellbeing and performance of Council staff.

- 3.12 The Vice Chair recommended that the Committee should discuss with the Skills, Economy and Growth Scrutiny Commission the issue of the moral, wellbeing and performance of Council staff post-pandemic to see if they were undertaking any similar work in that area.

Action:

The Governance Officer to determine if the Skills, Economy and Growth Scrutiny Commission were undertaking any work into the issue of the moral, wellbeing and performance of Council staff post-pandemic.

Action:

The Chair of the Committee to update members at the next meeting following discussions with the Council's strategic Director Customer and Workplace Customer and Workplace and the Director Of Human Resources and Organisational Development on Council buildings tour.

- 3.13 Councillor Turbet-Delof reported that at the time of the June 2023 HSC visit they received some informal feedback, similarly at the IT building, that the air and light quality might not be the best. Cllr Turbet-Delof reported that she had received some informal feedback about the air and light quality in the HSC not being the best.

Action:

The Chair of the Committee would contact the Council's Strategic Director Customer and Workplace Customer for an update on the air and light quality in the HSC building.

Income received from Fixed Penalty Notice enforcement for the 2019/20 and 2021/22 periods

- 3.14 The Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation reported that he would provide figures for the 2019/20 period. Figures for the 2019/20 period were included in the report submitted to the June 2023 Corporate Committee meeting. The Committee would be provided with the figures for the expenditure for Fixed Penalty Notice enforcement for the 2021 to 2022 period.

Action:

The Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation would provide the Committee with figures for the expenditure for Fixed Penalty Notice enforcement for the 2021 to 2022 period.

4 Questions to the Committee

- 4.1 None.

5 HR Policy Review - Standing agenda item

- 5.1 The Council's Director Human Resources (HR) and Organisational Development (OD) explained that the work looking at the timeline and

sequence for the HR Policy review was still under way. That work would need to be considered by the Corporate Leadership Team and agreed and signed off by them. Work was currently under way to prioritise policies such as workplace working. It was noted that some policies had not been reviewed for some time and work on the schedule for the prioritisation of policies was currently underway. Discussions would also have to take place with the trade unions about the sequencing.

- 5.2 The Committee noted that the library review had concluded and the new positions had been filled. Any vacancies that arose were part of natural turnover.

6 Planning Service Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) (April 2021 - March 2023)

6.1 The Council's Strategic Planning Manager and Policy and Infrastructure Team Leader introduced the report. The Planning Service's Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) covered the two financial years 2021 and 2022 (FY2021/22 and FY2022/23) covering the period between 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023. The AMR provides monitoring information on planning-related activity and helps to monitor performance and the effectiveness of planning policy. It highlights the extent to which the policies set out in adopted planning policy documents have achieved their objectives, using quantitative indicators. Two years was being reported on to bring the AMR up to date.

6.2 During a discussion on the report a number of points were raised including the following:

- The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Section 106 Board met quarterly and would oversee how funds were spent for the capital works programme. The Board was made up of officers;
- The Chair of the Committee suggested whether the work of the CIL Section 106 Board should come back to the Committee on a biannual basis for scrutiny? The Council's Strategic Planning Manager indicated that the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) report was a separate report. The annual AMR did to an extent already cover parts of the IFS.;
- On the matter of notifying local residents of the expansion of Conservation areas, the Council's Planning Service always carried out a public consultation for all conservation area designations, reviews or extensions. A letter would also go to the households in the extended or newly designated area. The letter would outline the proposals and would include a link to the conservation area appraisal. The Planning Service also held drop in sessions and advertisements were also placed in the local press;
- On post-Conservation Area designation, those households within the area were also written to by the Planning Service;
- On the growth in new businesses within the borough, the figure of 24,935 enterprises (as included in the report) in Hackney was taken from a statistic from the Office for National Statistics. The Council did do some comparative work against neighbouring boroughs. Work was currently underway to finalise the details of a study [Employment Land Study] to look at the amount of

employment land that was needed in Hackney up to 2040 which would inform the next stage of the Local Plan. This study would also look at the type of space. Shoredich would be a particular focus of that study;

- Issues relating to internal housing, affordable housing, right to buy and housing rent were not within the remit of the Corporate Committee;
- The S106 or unitary undertaking totalling around £11.88M, would be spent on Social Housing. The previously mentioned IFS report from the Planning Service would look at this area in more detail;
- On the issue of those large building projects that did not make a contribution to the CIL citing viability reasons, the Planning Service did have built into the agreement mechanisms the ability for both early and late stage review. So if viability does change then additional contributions could be provided;
- It was understood that because of the events of the Grenfell fire, along with the Council's prioritisation of climate change, an amount of funding could be used on existing housing stock and retrofitting those houses. It was accepted that there were a number of factors, outside the Council's control, that would impact on the number of Council housing stock and delivery;
- On the issue of affordability, the Planning Service did review the viability assessment that was provided which the Planning Service did not necessarily always agree with and pushed for additional contributions over and above what the applicant had set out. Affordability was a policy requirement for developers and also a policy requirement for the local plan. If there was departure from policy, there would need to be a robust case put forward. The policy threshold that was set was viability-tested;
- The tenure split in the local plan was based on housing need;
- The Corporate Committee wanted to see about how it would go about obtaining data relating to the demographic of new businesses specifically e.g. their ethnic and gender background;
- The Council was concerned, as highlighted at paragraph 4.3 of the report, the significant mode declines in bus and train use, however it was also noted the 12.9 percentage surge in walking. Both the declines in public transport use and increases in walking may be related to changes in working patterns post pandemic. Car use in the borough had decreased whilst cycle use had seen a slight increase;
- One of the concerns that the Council had during the pandemic was that with reduced demand there would be a decrease in Council services. The Council had undertaken some lobbying to ensure that bus services had remained at a level that was appropriate so that services would be there for the public to use post-pandemic. There was work for the Council to lobby Transport for London (TfL) to ensure that those transport services continue to be available despite decreasing demand;
- TfL owned the data relating to use of public transport, the Council was reliant on an enormous suite of information from them. The Council had a ten-year policy, the Hackney Transport Policy Strategy, which was currently being reviewed and

rewritten. The strategy would come to an end in 2025. Streetscene and the Council's Transport team were examining that data and there was an opportunity for those Council teams to analyse the various long term trends;

- On the breakdown of statistics between cycling and walking and their relationship in shared areas, there was a strong historic policy to allow cycling in parks. Streetscene were responsible for the public highway and their historic position was that they wanted to create a public highway that created good conditions for both walking and cycling. Streetscene recognised that there was a high rate of cycling and walking in the borough because of strong Council policies to promote those two modes. Streetscene had a shared responsibility to promote use of the paths in the parks. The Chair of the Committee suggested that as cycling and walking was increasing in the borough that some work would need to be undertaken into instances of pedestrian/cycle conflict. It was about ensuring that going forward both cycling and walking were safe and comfortable;
- The Committee recognised that further discussions were required about the relationship between cycling and walking in the borough;
- On the number of people walking some of the Committee members felt it would be useful to have some further data;
- The 8.5 percentage cycling trips figure, at paragraph 4.29 of the report, was part of the statistics from the latest London Travel Demand Survey. It was based on the percentage of trips that were started in the borough;
- The Hackney Transport Strategy had a hierarchy of modes of transport with pedestrians and walking first, followed by cycling and then public transport, goods vehicles and then private cars. The Council's approach to Electric Vehicles (EVs) was specifically designed within the aforementioned hierarchy. The EV charging point network was set up in a manner that anticipated a reduction in motor vehicles by 2041. The network had been set up in such a way that did not allow for second car ownership or where demand was highest in the borough. It was evenly distributed across the borough. Installing EV charging points on estates in the borough now, when economically it was currently out of reach of many residents, was about future proofing for when the majority of the cars in the borough would be electric and that residents could charge their cars near to their homes at a good rate;
- The reclassification of certain areas to planning use class E (commercial, business or service) and Article 4 Directions, on the former, Council Officers explained that was seen as a 'super class' but what could not happen, for example, was that a former high street bank could not be converted into a café or a restaurant as they were a different class. The Committee noted from Council Officers that it was now the case in planning that uses for premises could change e.g. a bank to a shop or a shop to a café. There was little the Council could do about changes between uses falling within class E. The Article four directions meant that a use in class E that the owners want to change to

residential would require full planning permission, and would not be able to use the 'prior notification' process. This was to ensure that town centres remained vibrant. However, it was noted in March that the Central Government had changed the amount of square metres limit. Council surveys were undertaken to monitor the state of the town centre as well as managing Article four directions. Further controls would be part of the Council's Local Plan.

Action:

The Corporate Committee recommended ongoing liaison between Street Scene and the Parks Team, to ensure measures to minimise the potential for conflict between cyclists and pedestrians in park areas. The team drawing up the Hackney Transport Policy Strategy to be informed of this as something to keep in mind, since both walking and cycling have increased in the borough.

Action:

Corporate Committee to inquire about how to obtain data on new businesses and specifically details of their demographic e.g. their ethnic and gender background.

RESOLVED:

The Corporate Committee approved the Authority Monitoring Report FY2021 and FY2022 (FY2021/22 and FY2022/23) covering the period between 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023 (as set out in Appendix 1).

7 Annual Performance Report Of The Noise Service 2023/22024

7.1 The Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation introduced the report for noting which set out the noise nuisance for the period 1st January-31st December 2023. Noise nuisance in Hackney continues to receive an approach that looks at statutory noise nuisance and noise arising from anti-social behaviour together, so that the most appropriate action can be taken based upon the individual circumstances of the case. The service area brings together a range of enforcement services, providing the opportunity to apply greater resources to a particular problem area and a better ability for specialists to collaborate and cases to be prioritised. The report before the Committee provides an update on the volume of noise reports, a breakdown of the individual types of noise within the services workload, including Temporary Event Notices (TENs), which continue to place significant demand on existing Council resources.

7.2 During a discussion on the report a number of points were raised including the following:

- The Council was not aware of any grants that could assist local residents to insulate their homes from intrusive noise from their next door neighbours. Moreover, a lack of insulation would not classed a statutory nuisance;
- Compared to previous years the Council was receiving lots of reports particularly from residents in relation to commercial properties. The service was being proactive in attempting to prevent such instances taking place;

- On the issue of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in housing, the Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation would contact the Council's Housing team for figures on ADR. Currently the letting system did not take into account who your neighbour was when someone was taking on a property;
- Some of the Committee members understood that grants maybe available for carpets;
- In individual cases of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), specifically ones involving children, the noise team would work with the relevant Housing Officer and other relevant departments of the Council such as Children Services to assess the situation;
- On the issue of noise generated from unlicensed musical events there was in place a London-wide policy. Where possible names and addresses would be obtained and the Council would issue an ASB warning or a Community Protection warning for example. A further step for the Council may be to issue a court injunction. Hackney Marshes and London Fields were cited as an example of these types of occurrences. It was understood that Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) had also been issued. The Committee noted that the PSPOs had been revised with extensions into other areas such as Millfields Park and a plot of Transport for London (TfL) land;
- On the issue of noise emanating from over the boundary, from Finsbury Park for example, the noise team had an officer who would sit on the advisory committee with the organisers of the music festivals for example. The organisers of the Wireless Festival would produce for example a Noise Management Plan which had to be approved and Council Officers would also be on duty on the weekend of the festival. However, the guidance available dated back to 1985 which did not take into effect the impact of low frequency noise and advances in music amplification equipment since 1985. It was suggested that the current code of practice needed to be changed to allow the Council noise team to undertake additional measures;
- Some of the Committee members recalled their experience with the impact of last years' Wireless festival and in particular the vibrations from the music on nearby local residential properties. They spoke of their first-hand experience of the vibration effects and it was felt unacceptable. It was felt that more direct pressure was required from Council Officers on the festival organisers. It was suggested that some kind of vibration limit be put in place and should be part of the licence. The formal process to do this would have to be through a review of the licence;
- The Chair of the committee suggested whether the committee could receive a report from Council Officers, both in Hackney and those neighbouring boroughs also affected by the festival. The Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation explained that up to the festival being held in July Council Officers would attend various advisory committee meetings in preparation for the festival. A brief report on the work undertaken so far, in preparation for the 2024 Wireless Festival would be submitted to the next Committee meeting;

- The Chair of the committee voiced her concerns about resources and whether in the busier periods, specifically in the summer, whether extra staff could be employed. It was understood that a lot would be dependent on the funding available and like many other departments currently savings had to be made;
- The Chair of the Committee explained that she always encouraged local residents to report incidents online rather than by phone because contrary to popular assumption, online reporting can be more efficient with enforcement officers readily able to access the information while out and about. The Chair encouraged committee members when discussing issues of noise complaints with their constituents to encourage them to use the Council's online reporting tools.

Action:

The Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation would contact the Council's Housing team for figures on Alternative Dispute Resolution.

Action:

The Council's Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation would submit to the next Corporate Committee meeting a brief report on the work undertaken so far in preparation for the Wireless Festival on 12 - 14 July 2024 in Finsbury Park.

RESOLVED:

There were no official recommendations arising from this report. The Corporate Committee noted the annual performance report for the service.

8 Report of the Public Realm including policies for tables and chairs on pavements

8.1 The Head of Streetscene introduced a Keep Hackney's Pavements clear and accessible report which was a response to a keen interest from the Corporate Committee into the impact that temporary obstructions have on the pedestrian environment and how these are managed by the Council. This report explained to members what enforcement activities were undertaken within the directorate, and the areas in which the enforcement responsibility can be located.

8.2 During a discussion on the report a number of points were raised including the following:

- On the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) that had been issued and the amount of revenue the Council had received as a result, the Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation explained that he would provide that data for the next Committee meeting. The Chair of the committee felt it would be useful to see the data in order to ascertain how much transgression there was in relation to the obstruction of the pavements;
- The Council's highways team did not issue many FPNs, the service would seek compliance, the issuing of a FPN would be a

third step of the process. For example only two for overhanging vegetation were issued in a year. It was found that persons were more responsive to other forms of communication;

- On the pricing of FPNs and whether it was a sufficient enough deterrent it was noted that the amount of the fine was set in statute. It was felt that it was better to use Council time to encourage persons to use the Council's Licensing regime. It brought income into the Council and there was a degree of control. Enforcement was often seen as a last resort;
- The Committee noted that the London Councils did produce a document on the penalties set for London-wide in relation to highway obstructions etc;
- In relation to Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) for traffic infractions made by motor vehicles would be issued by the Council's Parking team. The budget for the PCNs would be included as part of the Council's overall budget;
- Streetscene did have the power to issue fines for other types of infractions such as leaving a skip on the public highway for example, however the service would prefer to issue a permit rather than a fine in the first instance;
- Some of the Committee members suggested that a campaign could be started to encourage people to remove their bins from the public highway to prevent causing an obstruction. It was understood that Streetscene did not have the power to enforce against bins as an obstruction. It was understood that the Council's Environmental Services did have powers to investigate the matter. It was understood that there had been a piece of work in Stamford Hill with the Council's waste team. Some of the Committee members inquired about whether there was currently any funding available. The Chair of the Committee suggested whether the Council's Communication team could be contacted about raising awareness of the need to remove bins from the pavement where possible, while notifying residents of the forthcoming changes in the collection of bins. The Committee's legal officer highlighted that there were time bands in the borough where persons were time-banded for putting out their rubbish which was for commercial properties. Some other Committee members stressed the need for discussions to take place with the Council's Waste Management Team as some elderly residents were concerned that their rubbish would not be collected;
- Some of the Committee members emphasised the need to prioritise cycling on the pavement as it appears to be increasing. Committee members were reminded that issue would fall under the remit of the Police;
- The Chair of the Committee would write to the Council's Waste Services and the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport about the issues raised at the Corporate Committee meeting and communicating to local residents about taking their bins in;
- On the issues of tree roots creating uneven pavements, the head of Streetscene clarified that the issue would fall under the remit of highway maintenance. Highway Inspectors would go around

the borough using a criteria based on the type of road involved with certain types of road being inspected more frequently than others e.g. roads used for emergency services and principal bus routes. Residential roads would be further down the list of prioritisation. It was understood that the least frequent inspection was every three months. Every road would be inspected four times a year and the pavement would be included as part of the highways inspection. Any repairs that would be undertaken would be through the industry standard way without damaging the tree;

- There were five Highways Inspectors employed by the Council who would work within an intervention threshold based on insurance claims.

Action:

The Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation to provide details on the number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued by, and the amount of revenue received for the Council, as a result, at the next Committee meeting.

Action:

The Chair of the Committee would write to the Council's Waste Services and the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport about the issues raised at the Corporate Committee meeting (e.g. bins obstructing the public highway) and communicating to local residents about taking their bins in.

RESOLVED:

The 'Keep Hackney's Pavements clear and accessible' report is for information only and there are no recommendations. The exercise to clarify and collate all the enforcement areas and clarify what is enforceable/not enforceable, and by whom is an ongoing duty, and is reviewed annually. The Corporate Committee noted the report.

9 Draft work Corporate Committee work programme 2023/24

- 9.1 The Committee briefly discussed the latest version of their work programme. It was recognised by members that as of the 13 March 2024 meeting, the last Corporate Committee meeting of the current municipal year, that certain items on the programme would carry over to the 2024-2025 municipal year.
- 9.2 One of the Committee members raised an issue about FPNs for parking offences and whether the Committee could include the issue on their work programme for 2024-25. The Legal Officer responded that decisions relating to parking and parking strategy would fall under the remit of Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

The Corporate Committee noted the latest draft of their work programme for 2023/2024.

10 Any Other Business the Chair Considers to be Urgent

10.1 The Committee noted that the next meeting was proposed for 20 May 2024.

Duration of the meeting: 6.30pm - 9.18pm

CLOSE OF MEETING

Chair of the Corporate Committee meeting - Cllr Penny Wrout

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