

MINUTES OF MEETING CORPORATE COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY, 1ST FEBRUARY, 2022, 7.00 - 9.15 PM

PRESENT: Councillors: Peter Mitchell (Chair), Barbara Blake (Vice-Chair), Kaushika Amin, Dawn Barnes, Mark Blake, Mahir Demir, Joseph Ejiofor, Scott Emery, Emine Ibrahim and Preston Tabois

The following Councillors joined the meeting virtually: Councillors Zena Brabazon, Mike Hakata, Alessandra Rossetti, and Matt White.

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred to the notice of filming at meetings and this information was noted.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Alessandra Rossetti and Councillor Patrick Berryman. Councillor Alessandra Rossetti joined the meeting virtually but could not be considered to be present for the purposes of the attendance record.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair highlighted that there was one late report. Ayshe Simsek, Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager, said that the late report pertained to item 9, Proposed Renaming of Black Boy Lane.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Peter Mitchell, Barbara Blake, Kaushika Amin, Dawn Barnes, Mark Blake, Mahir Demir, Joseph Ejiofor, Scott Emery, Emine Ibrahim, and Preston Tabois declared an interest in relation to item 9, Proposed Renaming of Black Boy Lane as the subject had been discussed previously by the Committee. All members confirmed that they would consider the information in the reports and the issue with an open mind and would take part in the discussion and voting on this item.

5. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / PRESENTATIONS / QUESTIONS

The Chair said that there was a single deputation in relation to agenda item 9, Proposed Renaming of Black Boy Lane, from a representative of Stand Up to Racism. The Committee agreed that the deputation would be taken immediately before item 9.

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Corporate Committee meeting held on 16 November 2021 and reconvened on 23 November 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

7. EXTERNAL AUDIT APPOINTMENT

The Chief Accountant introduced the report which set out recommendations to recommend to the Full Council that Haringey Council opts in to the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) scheme to enable them to appoint the external auditor for the Council and for the Pension Fund.

It was explained that, in 2016, the Secretary of State specified the PSAA as the appointing person for local authority audits; this gave PSAA powers to appoint external auditors for every local authority. The appointing period was for 2018-19 to 2022-23. Local authorities had until 11 March 2022 to opt into the second appointing period which would run from 2023-24 to 2027-28. The Chief Accountant noted that the advantages and disadvantages of the scheme were set out in the report and that it was recommended that the Council opted in to the PSAA scheme.

In response to a question from the Committee, the Chief Accountant said that most, if not all, London Boroughs were expected to sign up to the PSAA scheme.

RESOLVED

To recommend to Full Council that Haringey Council opts in to the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) scheme to enable them to appoint the external auditor for the Council and for the Pension Fund.

8. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2022-23

The Head of Pensions and Treasury introduced the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2022-23 which provided an update on the council's treasury management activities and performance in the first half of the financial year to 30 September 2021 in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Treasury Management Code of Practice. It was explained that the report was for the Committee to note and that it would be presented to Full Council as required by the Code of Practice.

An overview of the document was given noting that it detailed the Council's borrowing and investment strategies for the next five years, while identifying risks and controls associated with these processes.

It was noted that the report had been reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee with no formal comments; however, they had asked questions that the officers had agreed to answer in writing to them. It was outlined that the code of practice stated that the strategy should be agreed annually setting out a three year position, but Haringey had decided to cover five years so that the document could be more accurately aligned to the medium term strategy and budget report.

It was noted that the Public Work Loans Board (PWLB), was no longer lending to local authorities who were planning to buy assets for yield. This new policy would not affect

Haringey as this was not a practice that Council had pursued previously, therefore allowing the Council to continue to access the PWLB loans going forward.

The context for the report was developed in conjunction with the Council's consultants Arlingclose and the assumptions for new loans were set at an average of 3%. The need for the Council to borrow were set out in the Capital Financing Requirement at Table 1 of the report. The borrowing strategy was set out at section 4, detailing how the Council intended to finance borrowing. The key issue was around meeting the affordability requirements and achieving cost certainty over the long term. The Treasury Investment Strategy detailed how investments would be made on income that was received in advance of expenditure. The Council's primary objectives remained achieving security and liquidity before seeking financial return, as required by the code of practice.

In answer to questions from the Committee, the Head of Pensions and Treasury said that the Council would repay Lender's Option Borrower's Option (LOBO) loans in line with the Council's LOBO loans policy and in consultation with the Council's advisors, Arlingclose. It was important to find the optimum time for repayment; to date there had been no opportunities, that would materially benefit the Council, to repay these loans. In terms of short-term borrowing, 15% of the Council's debt was made up of short-term loans, which were used on an ad-hoc basis to make up any short-term liquidity needs, for example, for emergency payments. Short-term loans often came from other local authorities and these rates were commonly set lower than bank rates. With interest rates due to increase, there might be potential to repay some loans, if there was this would be reviewed by Treasury Advisors and brought back to this Committee. In addition, the assumption that the winter peak for CPI would be 6% was guidance from BoE, if CPI was higher than this there was a risk that the BoE would raise rates even further.

A Committee member noted that at paragraph 5.3 the wording of 'has increased' should be changed to 'had increased' due the risks around Covid-19 diminishing relative to other economic trends. The Head of Pensions and Treasury agreed with this, stating that these risks would likely increase if there was another variant.

RESOLVED

1. To agree the proposed updated Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2022- 23.
2. To recommend the proposed updated Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2022-23 to Full Council for approval.

9. PROPOSED RENAMING OF BLACK BOY LANE

The Committee heard a deputation put forward by Mr Vivek Lehal, supporting recommendation 2.1.3 in the report titled 'The proposed renaming of Black Boy Lane'.

The deputation began by emphasising his support for recommendation 2.1.3 in the report. He felt that the current socio-cultural climate was moving in favour of the recommendation and felt that it was not an issue that should be delayed. It was noted

that the name of the pub on Black Boy Lane had been renamed as a result of a campaign. He stated that the naming of a pub or street 'Black Boy' contradicted progressive values and the renaming of the street should be part of the Council's anti-racist agenda.

A Committee member asked the deputation if he was aware of other boroughs who had updated their names recently. The deputation did not have any specific examples of streets; he pointed out that the Albert Road Recreation Ground, had, as of 9 February 2021, been renamed to the O R Tambo Recreation Ground in memory of the South African anti-apartheid campaigner. He stated that the renaming of Black Boy Lane was in keeping with symbolic regeneration of the borough, which reflected the multi-cultural nature of the borough.

It was asked if the deputation agreed with the Mayor of London's establishment of the Commission on Diversity in the Public Realm and its brief to diversify the stories shared and commemorated across the city, and whether this was a progressive attitude. The deputation believed that the Mayor's stance was a progressive one, although there was debate around the idea of changing the names of streets and buildings as it could be considered as 'whitewashing' history. He felt that this was not the case as the process of renaming was a vital one as it was intended to reflect contemporary, multi-cultural London. Therefore, he said it was necessary to rename Black Boy Lane to reflect the diverse demography of Haringey.

The Assistant Director for Commissioning introduced the report which responded to the Committee's request for further consultation with Black Boy Lane residents, an Equalities Impact Assessment, and a support package for residents. The Assistant Director for Commissioning outlined the following about the consultation process:

- a statutory notice of intention was posted, in 12 languages, to every household and business on the street;
- an online survey was conducted;
- residents were given the opportunity to provide postal feedback;
- there were three engagement sessions, two of which were hybrid, and one was online;
- drop-in sessions were held through the local area co-ordinator; and
- plans for more door-to-door knocking sessions were cancelled due to the surge in Covid-19 case numbers caused by the Omicron variant.

The report set out the nature of the responses to the consultation. Overall, 78% of respondents were not in favour of the proposed name change and 22% were in support. When considering residents of Black Boy Lane, 81% were not in favour of the name change and 19% of resident supported the name change. The reasons for the objections to the name change were set out in the report at paragraphs 5.8 and 5.10. Appendices 3 and 4 (at Appendix 5 therein) set out the responses to the consultations which included the objections from residents and organisations which the Committee was required to consider.

It was noted that, if the Committee agreed to the name change, a package of support was in place to mitigate any negative effects of the name change to residents of Black Boy Lane. Residents would receive a voluntary payment of £300 per household. The Equalities Impact Assessment had been refreshed in light of further consultation. It

was thought that a change of street name would bring positive impacts for local residents such as those detailed in the deputation. It was acknowledged that there were negative impacts, particularly for those residents who were elderly, disabled, or from lower socio-economic backgrounds who might find it challenging to make necessary changes.

Regardless of whether the Committee decided to go ahead with renaming, it was recommended to move forward with the development of a Strategic Framework, through which the Council would engage with residents and stakeholders to explore and contextualise contested and inappropriate histories and examples of naming and commemoration, alongside ensuring the celebration of a diverse and representative set of figures and local history would mitigate any negative impacts of not proceeding with the renaming for local residents.

The timing of implementation of the proposed name change had been set out to mitigate any negative impact to local residents. There were also issues that affected the wider borough, such as the electoral register, which had been set out in the report. The appendices in the report pertained to information sent out to residents during the consultation process, the feedback from residents, and the report and appendices that went to the March 2021 Committee.

A Committee member noted that, in light of considering all resident feedback, the report had the option to change the name or not to change the name. The timescales given for the name change to come into effect were queried, it was asked if the proposed change could happen sooner. The Assistant Director for Commissioning explained that the timescales proposed would ensure that residents were consulted about how the change would take effect and understood the implications of it. There was the pre-election period to factor in which would affect resident engagement. Additionally, outreach work would need to be undertaken in order to engage residents who had not responded to either consultation.

In response to a question about the level of engagement at engagement sessions and the costing of the support package available to residents, the Assistant Director for Commissioning said that wider engagement was sought from residents and that posters advertising the consultation had been put up in the surrounding area about the consultation. Engagement was thought to have decreased due to the rise in case numbers caused by the Omicron variant. The timings of engagement had been varied to promote resident engagement; however, resident attendance had been low. The support package was a voluntary payment which was designed to recognise the time and disruption caused by the name change as much as any material costs incurred.

In response to a question about a comment received during local resident feedback, the Assistant Director for Commissioning said that there were contrasting views about the name change from the estate of John La Rose. From the Council's perspective, this was a neutral position. The Chair noted that the Trustees of the George Padmore Institute, which had strong connections to John La Rose, had resent their objections to the name change to the Leader of the Council to state that the renaming arrangements would not have been supported by John La Rose. It was also noted that members of John La Rose's family were in favour of the name change. The Assistant Director for Commissioning said that they had made the family aware that the matter

was before the Committee and invited any comments. The Assistant Head of Legal Services Legal Services said that there was no policy for consulting the family's estate; guidelines were referred to instead, which stated that it was at the Council's discretion if they would seek consent from the estate.

A Committee member said that the issue of the name change related back to The Commission for Diversity in the Public Realm, set up in 2010, by the GLA. It was clear that this issue was set to continue, was it possible to have a clear procedure set out in the for future for changing the names of public tributes. The Assistant Director for Commissioning referred the Committee member to recommendation 2.1.5, highlighting that the Committee was asked to acknowledge the importance of the development of the proposed Strategic Framework. This would provide a method, through resident consultation, of approaching renaming public tributes in the future, to agree other priorities and overall help residents have a tangible effect on their local area.

A Committee member commented that the decision before the Committee was an important one for the borough of Haringey and across London as it had implications for the renaming of other streets and public monuments. He understood that some residents in the borough wanted to retain the name Black Boy Lane; however, he felt that it was time to modernise the borough, while addressing historical wrongs.

At 8.04pm, due to technical difficulties, the meeting was briefly adjourned until the video link could be restored. The meeting resumed at 8.11pm.

A Committee member asked what the implications were for the Council's reputation in going against the general opinion of the local residents of Black Boy Lane to not change the name of the road. The Assistant Director for Commissioning outlined that it was up to the Council to give due consideration to consultation responses and to ensure that objections were considered by the Corporate Committee. Consultation responses were a way of testing the views of local residents. In this case understanding what the negative impacts for residents of Black Boy Lane were and mitigating these where possible; this was seen in the voluntary payment, dedicated support to individuals, and proposed Strategic Framework. It was important for the Committee to understand the range and strength of views of local residents, ultimately the decision to rename the road was a decision for the Committee to take.

The Chair thought that there was a need for the Council to have clear policy for street renaming. For example, there was a policy for how a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) was allocated or changed, this required over 50% local resident support. The Assistant Director for Commissioning and Assistant Head of Legal Services both confirmed that there was no threshold of local resident approval for a street renaming to go ahead, the decision was made by the Corporate Committee.

In response to a question about how the decision of the Committee would be communicated to residents, should the decision to change the name of Black Boy Lane be taken, the Assistant Director for Commissioning said that the Council would:

- contact residents with the decision outcome;
- detail the nature of support offered by the Council;
- what actions residents might need to take; and

- timeframes for the name change.

The Council would be looking to work with residents collaboratively to allay any worries or fears they may have around the change of a new road name, should the decision be taken.

The Chair highlighted that the Committee were required to consider objections of local residents and asked what amounted to the Committee considering objections. He commented that the response of the Council had not changed with objections and wondered if this was sufficient. A Committee member added that those in favour of the name change had not made detailed responses compared to those who were against the name change; how could both responses be considered equitably. The Assistant Head of Legal Services advised that the Committee approach the idea of consideration as they had been doing so far; that is to weigh and consider the objections, feedback, and results of the consultation.

With the consent of the Chair, Cllr Hakata spoke as ward councillor. He stated that Haringey was an anti-racist borough, with an extremely diverse population. The Council was currently undertaking a review on monuments buildings, places, and street names; it was important to develop a strategic approach to this process, rather than an ad hoc one. Personally, he found the road name Black Boy Lane offensive and thought that it was important to not celebrate histories that related to slavery. There were other road names in the borough that would also benefit from modernisation. He set out two issues: firstly, that the process of the renaming of Black Boy Lane was not strategic. Secondly, the change of name to La Rose Lane was contested by the George Padmore Institute, who found the change of name 'tokenistic', he felt that this challenge should be heeded by the Council. He asked the Committee to vote against the proposal to change the name of Black Boy Lane, looking instead to change the name in the context of the Strategic Framework. The Assistant Director for Commissioning said that whatever the decision of the Committee it was important to take forward the Strategic Framework.

Cllr Emery illustrated that Cllr Rossetti was not in attendance at the meeting due to her fears around contracting Covid-19. He queried why she had not been allowed to speak via the video link, yet Cllr Hakata, who was not part of the Committee, was allowed to do so. The Chair explained that Cllr Hakata was speaking as a ward councillor outlined in Standing Order 50 of the constitution. The Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager added that, as the items on the agenda were decision-making, members of the Committee were not permitted to join virtually as they were required to be physically present in order to vote on a decision. It was noted that the rules on member voting had been determined by a court decision and it was highlighted that this was replicated across Council meetings.

The Assistant Director for Commissioning responded to a question about the method of consultation saying that her team followed up the decisions of the Committee about a method of consultation, the first consultation being borough wide and the second being the businesses and residents of Black Boy Lane. The Assistant Head of Legal Services explained that the statutory provision stated that the Council consult with residents. This involved processes such as posting the notice of intention and sending circulars to all households. For this consultation the Council had created a dedicated

webpage which invited a breadth of responses across the borough. He emphasised that the primary consideration for the Committee was the responses of residents of Black Boy Lane. Several Councillors outlined that they had considered the comments given through the two consultations. They felt that these should be contextualised and balanced with the views throughout the borough, as well as visitors to the borough.

The committee resolved the following:

1. To consider the feedback from the further consultation from 1 December 2021 to 19 January 2022 and the previous consultation from 15 January to 19 February 2021 on the renaming of Black Boy Lane to La Rose Lane, in particular, the objections from residents and organisations directly affected by the proposed renaming;
2. To consider and take into account the Equalities Impact Assessment (at Appendix 1) of the proposed change on protected groups and the actions proposed to mitigate the impact including a commitment to provide support, a dedicated staff resource and resident/organisation payments; and
3. To make an Order under the London Building Acts (Amendment) Act 1939 Section 6(1) to rename Black Boy Lane to La Rose Lane.

Cllr Ejiofor moved to amend resolution 4a and 4c so that the implementation date could be brought forward. He proposed that the amendment read thus (strikethrough refers to previous wording of the recommendation and bold shows the amendment):

4. The Committee having decided to make an:
 - 4a. the Order to take effect from 1 February 2023 but officers to use best endeavours to achieve an earlier implementation date of 1 December 2022;
 - 4b. the Committee recommends to the Executive that a support package including a 'voluntary payment' of £300 and administrative assistance be made available to all households and businesses of Black Boy Lane to minimise any inconvenience resulting from the processes required to reflect the renaming; and
 - 4c. that officers would bring back a progress report to the Committee in September 2022.

The Chair suggested amending the wording of resolution 5 to reflect the fact that the Committee had decided to make an order:

5. ~~If the Committee decides not to make an Order or to make an Order,~~ That the Committee acknowledges the range and strength of opinions expressed during the consultation and the continued need to address identity, history, heritage and community through the development of the proposed Strategic Framework. This will provide a comprehensive approach to engaging with residents and key stakeholders on diversity in the public realm and will be led by the Council's Cabinet working alongside local residents.

The Assistant Director for Commissioning said that officers would undertake their best endeavours to achieve implementation by 1 December 2022 and was happy to provide a progress report for the September 2022 Committee meeting. Cllr Barnes asked if the 1 December 2022 was an appropriate date, particularly with the run up to Christmas and the change of road name impacting postal delivery. The Assistant Director for Commissioning explained that this would be negated through running both road names concurrently for a year to ease transition. It was highlighted that changing the name at this time had the added advantage of syncing with the electoral register update.

The Committee agreed the following:

- resolution 1 was unanimously agreed;
- resolution 2 was unanimously agreed;
- resolution 3 was agreed following a vote with 8 votes for and 2 abstentions. Committee members who voted for resolution 3. asked for their vote to be recorded. Votes for: Councillors Amin, Barnes, Mark Blake, Demir, Ejiofor, Emery, Ibrahim, and Tabois;
- resolution 4a was agreed following a vote on the amendment: 8 for, 0 against, 2 abstentions; and voting on the resolution: 8 for, 0 against, 2 abstentions;
- resolution 4b was agreed following a vote with 9 votes for and 1 abstention;
- resolution 4c was agreed following a vote on the amendment: 8 for, 0 against, 2 abstentions; and voting on the resolution: unanimous; and
- resolution 5 was agreed following a vote on the amendment: unanimous; and a vote on the resolution: unanimous.

RESOLVED

1. To consider the feedback from the further consultation from 1 December 2021 to 19 January 2022 and the previous consultation from 15 January to 19 February 2021 on the renaming of Black Boy Lane to La Rose Lane, in particular, the objections from residents and organisations directly affected by the proposed renaming;
2. To consider and take into account the Equalities Impact Assessment (at Appendix 1) of the proposed change on protected groups and the actions proposed to mitigate the impact including a commitment to provide support, a dedicated staff resource and resident/organisation payments; and
3. To make an Order under the London Building Acts (Amendment) Act 1939 Section 6(1) to rename Black Boy Lane to La Rose Lane;
4. The Committee having decided to make an Order:
 - 4a. the Order to take effect from 1 February 2023. That the order should take effect from the 1 February 2023. However, officers are to use their best endeavours to achieve an earlier implementation date of 1 December 2022;
 - 4b. the Committee recommends to the Executive that a support package including a 'voluntary payment' of £300 and administrative assistance be made available

to all households and businesses of Black Boy Lane to minimise any inconvenience resulting from the processes required to reflect the renaming;

4c. that officers bring back a progress report to the Committee in September 2022 as towards the goal of achieving implementation by 1 December 2022; and

5. That the Committee acknowledge the range and strength of opinions expressed during the consultation and the continued need to address identity, history, heritage, and community through the development of the proposed Strategic Framework. This will provide a comprehensive approach to engaging with residents and key stakeholders on diversity in the public realm and will be led by the Council's Cabinet working alongside local residents.

10. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

To note the dates of future meetings:

Thursday, 10 March 2022

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of items 16-17 as they contained exempt information as defined in Section 100a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by Section 12A of the Local Government Act 1985); paragraphs 1, 2, 3, and 5; namely information relating to an individual, information which was likely to reveal the identity of an individual, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information), and information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

13. EXEMPT MINUTES

The exempt minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

14. NEW ITEMS OF EXEMPT URGENT BUSINESS

There were no new items of exempt urgent business.

CHAIR: Councillor Peter Mitchell

Signed by Chair

Date

