

MINUTES OF MEETING Corporate Committee HELD ON Wednesday, 17th March, 2021, 19:00

PRESENT:

Councillors: Isidoros Diakides (Chair), Zena Brabazon (Vice-Chair), Dawn Barnes, Patrick Berryman, Dana Carlin, Vincent Carroll, Mahir Demir, Erdal Dogan, Scott Emery, Alessandra Rossetti and Anne Stennett

ALSO ATTENDING: Cllr Hakata

12. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein.

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS (IF ANY)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Liz Morris.

14. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Urgent Business.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

16. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / PRESENTATIONS / QUESTIONS

None.

17. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4th February were agreed as a correct record.

18. STATEMENT OF FINAL ACCOUNTS 2019-20 & AUDIT COMPLETION REPORT

**Clerk's Note – The Chair agreed to vary the order of the agenda, in order to take the item on the renaming of Black Boy Lane as the last item of the open part of the*

*meeting. The minutes reflect the order of that items were considered rather than the order of items on the published agenda.**

The Committee received a copy of the draft statement of final accounts for 2019-20, along with the audit completion report from BDO and a covering report, as set out in the second dispatch agenda pack at pages 3-252. The item was introduced by Kaycee Ikegwu, Head of Finance and Chief Accountant and Leigh Lloyd Thomas, Partner at BDO LLP the Council's external auditor. At the behest of the Chair, Leigh Lloyd Thomas gave a short verbal overview of the Audit Completion report. The following key points were set out to the Committee:

- a. The Committee were advised that the outstanding issues were below the 1.5% threshold of materiality and so BDO were happy that the accounts were a fair and true reflection, even without concluding the outstanding issues.
- b. The Council was a significant landowner and one of the issues commented on was the under-valuation of a sample of properties by £4.3m. This was likely due to inaccurate information being supplied to the valuer. Schools had also been undervalued by around £26m but most of these had now been corrected. BDO advised that Pendarren needed significant refurbishment. A key area for the Committee to note was identified as inaccurate data being send to the valuer.
- c. Another area for the Committee to note was around bank reconciliations being out and the need to review processes behind this.
- d. The Committee noted that the Council's pension liability moved a lot in the Council's favour following the triennial valuation.
- e. The Committee was advised that there would be a significant hit to the HRA arising from the Thames Water court case brought by Kingston and the consequent requirement for local authorities to reimburse applicable excess water rents and charges to tenants. It was noted that at present the Council had only agreed 6 years' worth of reimbursements and that a further management decision on the amount of money to be set aside was pending.
- f. The MRP holiday was due to run out in 2023, which would result in a £5-6m cost to the Council per year.
- g. Haringey was in an advantageous position compared to some other authorities in relation to not having a lot of commercial property schemes.
- h. BDO advised that it appeared as though they would be able to give a true and fair determination overall. The next stage was for BDO to make adjustments following the responses to queries received from management and then the final statement of accounts would be issued and signed off by the Committee/Chair.

The following arose from the discussion of this agenda item:

- a. The Chair commented that he was satisfied with the position overall but highlighted that there seemed to be a number of long-standing concerns and re-occurring issues that had come up in recent years. The Chair set out that it was important that the authority got on top of these issues going forwards.
- b. In response to a question around the purchase of Alexandra House, BDO advised that it was not unusual for purchases to go through a controlling entity as there were tax advantages in doing so. However, in this instance the vendor applied for planning consent to alter the layout to residential properties, which had increased the value of the property and the Council had found itself in a

- position where it perhaps had to pay over the market value given the problems with River Park House and the Civic Centre. The Council effectively had to write down the £22m paid to the £16m underlying market value of the property.
- c. In response to a follow-up question, BDO advised that it was not within the Council's gift to extend the lease on Alex House, they could ask but the freeholder was under no obligation to agree to do so. If the Council did not purchase the property, there was a risk that when the renewal clause came up in 2021 that the Council could have been without accommodation, given the work being done to other buildings.
 - d. In relation to a question around the valuation of schools, BDO advised that it was difficult to quantify market value for schools as they would never be sold, so the government based the value on the Depreciated Replacement Cost. This was essentially what it would cost to replace the asset. It was noted that this was a notional value, not a real market valuation, that did not impact the revenue budget. It was an accounting measure and a way of applying some economic consideration of the cost to the Council in replacing it, largely based on depreciation costs.
 - e. The Committee queried the Council's involvement in relation to the Laurels and its under-valuation as the lease had been passed to the Bridge Renewal Trust. BDO agreed to pick this up with officers and the valuers outside of the meeting. **(Action: BDO/Kaycee).**
 - f. In response to a question, BDO advised that it was not the auditors' job to make a determination of whether the Council should have bought Alexandra House or not. The auditor considered that authority did everything correctly in terms of looking at the fair value, costing up local office space, looking at cost of temporary office accommodation and so forth. BDO commented that in this context the processes involved in making that decision were reasonable, even though the Council paid what it did.
 - g. The Committee was advised that the Annual Governance Statement was set by the Council and was not a function of the external auditors.
 - h. The Committee raised concerns around non-collection of receivables, given the large numbers involved and with £90m in uncollected debts, as set out in the statement of accounts. The Committee sought clarification around what this related to and whether other local authorities were in the same position. In response, BDO advised that Haringey was in the same position as any other local authority and the figures referred to related to the fact that some of the debts owed to the Council were issued under law rather than under contract and so had to be kept on the books and could not be written off for a period of six years. The Council held a lot of historical debt, some of which was very hard to collect. The example of £29m in outstanding parking debt was put forward. After 60 days and being unable to trace the owner of the vehicle, it was extremely unlikely the Council would receive any payment, but it had to leave the debt on its books for six years before being able to write it off. The same applied to housing benefit payments, where the recipient could no longer be contacted.
 - i. In relation to debts from central government and health authorities, BDO advised that the Council had not provided any expected loss on these, which meant that it expected to get repayment in full, albeit it may take time. It was

noted that central government did not allow local authorities to provide for non-collection of this and write the debt down.

The Chair invited the Head of Finance and Chief Accountant to address the Committee in response to the comments of the external auditor, noting the ongoing issues around valuations, conciliations and MRP etcetera. The Head of Finance and Chief Accountant acknowledged that there were a number of errors that had been highlighted through the audit process, which had now been corrected and would be reflected in the final statement of accounts. In relation to the issues highlighted in the external audit report, management set out their responses to many of these issues at page 60 of the report. Issues identified around cash conciliations, were a legacy issue that had existed for many years but there were improvements in being made in clearing these. Many of the concerns highlighted in the report had been taken on board, and management would be working with BDO and partners on how best to take these issues forward for the 2020-2021 audit process to ensure that they did not reoccur.

The following arose as part of the further discussion of this agenda item:

- j. The Committee sought clarification around Thames Water overcharging and whether the Council could be liable if a tenant was evicted for being in debt due to the additional charges that were deemed unlawful. In response, the Legal Advisor to the Committee assured members that officers were looking into how to deal with the issue and the best approach going forwards. However, it was suggested that it was probably inappropriate to say anything further at this stage given that this was a meeting held in public.
- k. The Committee sought further assurances from officers around the errors that were highlighted in the BDO report and what was being done to ensure that they did not happen again. In response, officers advised that at the end of every audit there was a list of issues that was compiled, and these were factored into the process going forward. In relation to the issue of PPE valuations, officers set out that the valuations were carried out by an external partner, WHE, and that there was always an element of subjectivity in determining something's value. Officers had met with the valuers and BDO earlier in the week on how to take the valuation issues that had been highlighted forward and to set clear expectations for the process of compiling next year's statement of accounts.
- l. The Chair advised that overall, he was pleased with the level of progress that was being made to deal with some of the underlying problems that had occurred over the last number of years. The Committee agreed to consider the establishment of an initial working group, with a view to setting up a subsequent formal sub-committee, to monitor the underlying issues that had been identified in relation to the process of compiling the statement of accounts and to ensure that these issues did not reoccur in future years.
- m. Cllrs Brabazon, Dogan, Carlin, Stennett and Berryman agreed to be part of the proposed working group. Cllr Barnes and Cllr Rossetti agreed to nominate a suitable representative from the Liberal Democrats. **(Action: Chair/Clerk to note).**

RESOLVED

- I. That the Committee considered the contents of this report and any further oral updates given at the meeting by BDO LLP.
- II. That the Committee approved the Statement of Accounts 2019/20, subject to any final changes required by the conclusion of the audit, being delegated to the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Chair.
- III. That the Committee agreed giving the Chair of the Committee and Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) authority to sign the letter of representation to the Auditor.
- IV. That the committee noted the Audit Findings Report of the auditors, BDO LLP, and approved the management responses in the BDO LLP action plan contained within that report.
- V. That the Committee agreed to consider the establishment of a working group to monitor the underlying issues highlighted in the BDO audit completion report and ongoing issues which had been highlighted from compiling the Statement of Accounts, more generally.

19. QUARTER 3 TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Committee received a report for information which provided an update on the Council's treasury management activities and performance in the three months to 31st December 2020. The report was introduced by Tim Mpofu, Head of Pensions & Treasury as set out in the agenda pack at pages 89-102. The Committee was advised that all treasury management activities in the period were undertaken in line with the approved treasury management strategy and that there were no issues of concern to highlight to Members.

The Committee requested that future updates included information on the percentage of debts that were held in long term fixed rate investments. The Committee commented that they would like the Council to continue to be cautious and that some consideration should be given to linking investment terms to long term capital projects. **(To note - Tim Mpofu).**

RESOLVED

That Corporate Committee

- I. Noted the Treasury Management activity undertaken during the three months to 31st December 2020; and the performance achieved which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report;
- II. noted that all treasury activities were undertaken in line with the approved Treasury Management Strategy.

20. ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN, STRATEGY AND CHARTER 2021/22

The Committee received a cover report along with the Annual Internal Audit Plan and Strategy 2021/22 and the Internal Audit Charter, for the Committee's approval. The report and Internal Audit Plan, Strategy & Charter were introduced by Minesh Jani, Head of Audit and Risk Management as set out in the agenda pack at pages 103-124. The following arose during the discussion of this agenda item:

- a. The Chair commented that although the Audit plan was a management tool used to identify areas of weakness in the organisations' governance structures, there was a limited capacity for Members to influence the contents of this plans and that Members should feel able to suggest areas for inclusion.
- b. The Committee sought assurances around an audit of early years commissioning, that had been discussed at an earlier meeting, given the complexity of arrangements and the risks to provision in this area. In response, officers advised that the audit was already underway as part of the current year's audit plan and that an audit report would be brought to the July Corporate Committee. **(Action: Minesh).**
- c. In response to a question around areas of overlap in Scrutiny and the audit functions and how these could be support each other, officers advised that there was a clear distinction in the roles of scrutiny and audit. Audit looked at processes and whether those processes have adequately mitigated the risk involved but did not interfere with the decisions made by the executive. Whereas scrutiny examined areas of policy and the decisions that are made.
- d. The Committee sought assurances around how audits were prioritised and what the process was for determining which order they were carried out in. In response, officers advised that the audit plan in front of members was the prioritised list for audits and the next stage was to plan those audits in over the next four quarters of the year. In carrying out the audit work officers had to have some recognition for what was happening in those services on the ground and to prioritise with this consideration in mind.
- e. The Chair requested that in relation to the phasing of audit work, that the plan should also include the terms of reference for each of the audits being undertaken. In response, the Head of Audit and Risk Management advised that he would circulate details of when audits would be taken forward in the plan but cautioned that the auditors had to carry out their work with regard to the public sector duties on audit standards, which included objectivity and independence as a key component. The Committee was advised that it was important that Members should not be determining what the auditors should be looking at within individual auditable areas as this should be free from political influence. The Chair acknowledged these concerns but also highlighted the need for transparency.
- f. The Committee questioned how long services were afforded to implement changes in response to audits. In response, officers advised that this was based on the nature of the recommendations and the priority of the recommendations. Higher Priority recommendations should be actioned sooner due to the inherent risk. In practice, a reasonable timescale was agreed with management based on the above two factors.

- g. In relation to a question around what happened to items on the plan that were not completed by year end, officers acknowledge that there would be some items that were not completed by year end due to the auditors starting late. Officers would bring a report to the July committee that set out the annual statement of audits. **(Action: Minesh Jani).**
- h. The Committee queried whether the audit of performance management would be looking at performance across whole organisation, including senior officers. Officers responded that the audit was planned in recognition that Covid was likely to have a significant impact upon what was delivered and how it was delivered. The aim of the audit was to look at the new basket of performance indicators to make sure the organisation was set up to achieve what we it wanted to achieve and that these indicators were properly captured.
- i. In summary, the Chair noted that a detailed update of the audit plan with phasing would be circulated to the Committee in due course and that he would like a further discussion to take place around scope of audits.

RESOLVED

That the Corporate Committee reviewed and approved the updated Annual Internal Audit Strategy and Plan for 2021/22, attached at Appendix A of the report and the Internal Audit Charter, attached at Appendix B.

21. AUDIT & RISK SERVICE UPDATE

The Committee received a report which detailed the work reported by in-house audit resources, as well as Mazars since the end of quarter 3, which was reported to the Committee in February. The update also included information regarding the National Fraud Initiative. The report was introduced by Minesh Jani, Head of Audit and Risk Management as set out in the agenda pack at pages 125-139.

Officers summarised the background and findings of the fact finding reviewing of the opportunity to purchase Alexandra House. It was noted that the purpose of the review was to examine the governance arrangements behind the decision, rather than the decision itself or to provide any assessment of its value. The findings of the audit were that there was no evidence of irregularity, but that the governance arrangements were weak and that this resulted in decisions being taken in an ad-hoc manner. The Committee was also advised that the audit found that there was a lack evidence around a robust business case being in place and that the organisation was not collectively appraised of the decision making process.

The following arose during the discussion of this agenda item:

- a. The Committee queried whether, following this report, audit could also look into the period of time between May 2019 and March 2020 with a view to understanding why the Council changed its mind within a year and decided to purchase it after all, resulting in an additional £6m cost. A key area of investigation should be around what happened after this change of direction.
- b. The Committee also queried whether a small chronology of events could be supplied as well. In particular, the Committee was keen to understand whether

the developer received Planning Permission or just submitted a planning application and when this took place. In response, officers advised that they would go away and double check the planning status. The Chair also sought clarification around whether the developer had bought the building or just exercised an option to buy. The Head of Audit and Risk Management advised that these were outside the terms of the audit and that he would ask the service to come back to Committee with a response. **(Action: Minesh Jani).**

**Clerk's note - application HGY/2019/2826 for 219 residential units was refused; a subsequent application HGY/2020/0225 for 171 units was subsequently withdrawn*.*

- c. The Committee sought clarification around there being no political involvement in the decision-making process and whether the Cabinet Member was aware of the May 2019 decision, for instance. In response, officers clarified that one of the key findings was that, even before Members would have been asked to consider this, there should have been a robust business case drawn up. This was characterised as the root of the problem, even before any decision making was arrived at.
- d. The Committee commented that in light of this perhaps the follow-up audit should be around whether there was a robust business case in place for the subsequent decision to purchase the property.
- e. The Chair sought clarification as to whether it was a fact that there was no political knowledge of the decision being taken not to purchase Alex House, or whether it was just that the auditors couldn't find any evidence of it. The Chair speculated that the Strategic Property Board must have been informed of the decision. Officers responded that this was a significant decision with significant financial ramifications and that it should have been considered by a number of key decision-making boards. However, what the auditors found was that there was no record of the decision not to acquire the property in the minutes of any of these boards. Therefore, there was no record through the formal channels in which decisions are recorded.
- f. The Chair thanked officers for the report and commented that there were outstanding concerns and limitations to the audit, in that it stopped short of looking into why the decision was taken not to purchase and there was no definitive analysis of who authorised that decision. There were also concerns around how the Council ended up paying significantly more for it following the original decision not to purchase. The Committee agreed that they would like to see a follow-up audit around Alexandra House, looking at the decisions taken in relation to the subsequent decision to purchase the property at an additional cost. **(Action: Minesh Jani).**
- g. The Chair agreed to email the Head of Audit and Risk Management with specific areas of concern for the Head of Audit and Risk Management to consider as part of a follow-up audit. The Chair acknowledged that, ultimately, it would be up to the Head of Audit and Risk Management to determine the terms of reference for any subsequent follow-up audit. **(Chair).**

RESOLVED

That the Corporate Committee noted the activities of the team.

22. RENAMING OF BLACK BOY LANE TO LA ROSE LANE

The Committee received a report which sought approval for the change of street name from Black Boy Lane to La Rose Lane, following a second consultation exercise with residents and the issuance of a 'notice of intention' for the change of name. At its meeting on the 3rd December, the Committee agreed to move to a period of further consultation following the initial consultation exercise, carried out 28th September to 9th November 2020 which set out two alternative possible street names, and the selection of 'La Rose Lane' as the intended new name of the street. The report was introduced by Rob Krzyszowski, Interim Assistant Director for Planning, Building Standards and Sustainability as set out in the agenda pack at pages 9-88.

The following arose during the discussion of the report:

- a. The report set out examples of other relevant street & building renaming proposals, including those at Ealing and Brent. It was noted that there were no similar examples where the scheme involved consultation on such a large scale and where the authority had agreed to cover costs up to £300 per household.
- b. As part of the second round of consultation, letters were sent out and those letters were available in 12 languages, notices were displayed on the street and responses were accepted through a variety of digital and non-digital mediums. An online resident engagement event was also held on 23rd January 2021.
- c. Officers set out that most of the costs incurred from the name change were notional costs and would be met from existing budgets.
- d. The Chair noted the legal advice provided as part of the report and cautioned the Committee had already agreed the approach and timelines previously. The focus of the decision before the Committee was to consider responses to the statutory consultation and to agree the change of name and to comment on the financial package offered etcetera.
- e. The Committee queried whether the £300 offered per household was sufficient, particularly in relation to changes to leases and solicitor costs. In response, officers advised that the £300 should be viewed within the context of the wider support package and the fact that one-to-one legal support, to help with changing of documents, would also be made available to affected residents. Consultation responses on this issue was mixed, with some people saying that £300 was too low and others suggesting that it was more than sufficient to cover costs. Officers advised that they were satisfied that the package as a whole was sufficient to meet the needs of affected residents.
- f. The Committee enquired as to whether there would be any additional funding made available for those affected. Officers responded that after consideration of the Committee's previous comments, consideration had been given to means testing contributions but that the proposal was to stick with a flat rate and that proposals did not include provision of any additional costs above £300. Officers conceded that this could be reviewed going forwards, if it was not working and that the Council would always look to support its residents where it could.
- g. The Committee commented that the alternative examples of other name changing schemes set out in the report were not directly comparable as both had a majority of respondents in favour of the name change and involved a low number of households affected. The Committee noted that the proposed scheme involved a high number of residents and, of responses received from

- Black Boy Lane residents, around 71% were against the change. The Committee commented that the legal advice was that the responses of the residents of the affected street had to be prioritised. In response, officers advised that the full legal advice was set out in the report and that this set out that any objections to consultation needed to be taken in to account. Officers also highlighted that the Council also had to give due consideration to the equalities impacts including the need to foster community cohesion.
- h. Officers also directed the Committee to Paragraph 6.3 of the report, which showed that there was a 36% turnout from residents of the street, with 48 objections from Black Boy Lane (compared to approximately 183 properties on the street). Officers noted that the remaining households (64%) had all been included in the consultation but had not responded.
 - i. The Committee also expressed concerns about undertaking a consultation during a lockdown and the disproportionate impact this could have on those who didn't have access to IT. The Committee stressed the importance of the consultation being open and fair and suggested that with the easing of lockdown, there was an opportunity for officers to knock on doors and speak to people in person. The Committee sought clarification on exactly how many properties were counted and whether the residents on Lincoln Mews were consulted. The Committee also sought assurance whether HMOs had been properly considered and what constituted a 'household'.
 - j. In response, officers set out that two consultations had been undertaken as part of this scheme and the legal requirement was only for one. The first consultation was conducted in the autumn when there were fewer restrictions in place. Officers advised that multiple letters had been sent out to residents, starting in July, and that these letters included non-digital methods of responding to the consultation. Contact addresses were supplied with each of these letters for residents to get in touch with the Council on this issue and the Council had received feedback by post.
 - k. Officers advised that the number of addresses on the street was defined as per the street gazetteer, which was the national database maintained by the Council. This was 183. There were 13 HMO properties and 51 separate households, these figures were built into the financial modelling in the report. Officers confirmed that Lincoln Mews were not formally sent letters as part of the consultation but that there were street notices published on the adjoining Black Boy Lane. Any responses from the residents of Lincoln Mews were considered as part of the consultation process.
 - l. The Committee commented that they were concerned about how democratic the process was and that the residents who lived on Black Boy Lane would be most affected and so their views should be prioritised. Previously, the administration had looked into changing the name of Town Hall Approach to New Windrush Gardens and only the 52 residents and business on that street were consulted. Ultimately this was cancelled because of costs of around £21k it was suggested that there seemed to be a lack of consistency around those who were consulted and the what was deemed to be an acceptable cost.
 - m. Officers responded that the legal position was that the statutory consultation was either done through letters to addresses on the street with a notice or notices be published in and around the street for the attention of those walking down the street. Officers advised that the Council did both of these and more, as part of its consultation process. Responses taken from people who saw the

- notices whilst walking down the street were a legitimate part of the consultation responses. A lot of consultation responses had been received by residents of the borough who said that they were negatively impacted by the racist/offensive undertones of the existing street name.
- n. Officers advised that in the example of renaming Town Hall Approach, this was not directly comparable as the existing name did not have a negative impact on some people within the community. In relation to the cost, officers emphasised that the costs would be met from existing budgets and that there was no cost threshold to consider, as such, when determining whether to undertake a change of street name.
 - o. The Committee also commented that Cabinet had previously agreed to provide a policy on renaming streets and places. It was suggested that this policy should be in place before any renaming exercises took place. Officers responded that there was existing guidance around street naming and that this proposal had been considered in light of that guidance as well having consulted with the London Fire Brigade and their renaming procedures.
 - p. Committee members acknowledged the need to change the street name and commented that they agreed that people found the current name offensive. However, the Committee raised concerns about the use of a flat rate of £300 to reimburse affected households and highlighted the fact that the Committee raised this issue previously at its meeting on 3rd December. It was suggested that rather than means testing, all that was needed was to provide additional assurances that any additional costs would be met by the Council. It was suggested that the Council seemed to have gone about the process in the wrong manner and that residents needed to be properly engaged with in order to bring them along with the decision.
 - q. In response, officers assured the Committee that they had looked into this issue following the Committee meeting on 3rd December. The report included a much more detailed analysis of the costs that people may incur, as set out in paragraph 6.8. The vast majority of the changes that may occur either involved little or no cost, or the Council would be able to make the required changes themselves, as the public body that maintained the property gazetteer. The areas where residents may incur costs, as set out in the report, included issues highlighted by residents, as part of this consultation process and this demonstrated that the Council had listened to their concerns.
 - r. The Committee questioned why the Council didn't just agree to cover any legal costs incurred by residents. In response, officers advised that part of the wider support package included legal support and that the Council would review the costs going forward if it turned out that the £300 was insufficient.
 - s. The Committee set out that there needed to be a policy in place, which was being followed rather than going forward on a discretionary basis. It was suggested that the Council needed to ensure that no residents would be out of pocket as result of this name change and that a better job should have been done of communicating this to residents. In response, it was noted that the report set out that many of the expected changes would not incur costs, including changes to wills and leases. The Committee reiterated that the Council should have just made a firm commitment that it would pay any additional costs that were incurred by residents and businesses.
 - t. In light of concerns around the potential for there to be a Judicial Review, the Committee questioned whether the existing guidelines should be changed to

omit the current stipulation that changes would only usually be permitted when they gave concern to the occupants of that location. In response, the Committee was assured that officers felt that the risks of a Judicial Review were very low, that the guidance had been fully considered and that the Council had met all of the relevant legal requirements in bringing this decision to the Committee.

- u. A Councillor, who was not a Member of the Committee, addressed Corporate Committee and raised concerns about the timing of the whole process. In particular, it was queried why the consultation was done during the pandemic, given that residents would have other things to worry about. It was also commented that the threshold of how many people were in favour of the decision was important to residents, as was a perception that the consultation process was fair, and that the Council needed to take the objections of residents into account. The Committee also heard that it was important that the views of the George Padmore Institute were taken into account.

Clerk's note: 21:50 hours – As per Committee Standing Order 63, the Chair agreed to suspend CSO 18, and that the Committee would continue past the 10pm cut-off point.

- v. The Committee specifically queried whether the Council could provide a solicitor to residents to make any required legal changes. In response, officers commented that they were open minded about how this support would be done. It was suggested that the initial thought was to provide one-to-one support in a manner redolent of the Citizens Advice Bureau. Officers agreed that they would bottom out this proposal and take it forward if the Committee was minded to agree to the change.
- w. In response to concerns around the number of responses to the consultation, officers advised that 742 responses from across the borough was quite a good return rate for a consultation of this nature. By way of context, it was noted that the latest borough wide Local Plan consultation received around 1000 responses.
- x. Some members of the Committee commented that that they were deeply uncomfortable with the existing name and that they were assured that the Council had done everything it practicably could to mitigate the impact of a name change. In response, the Chair set out that the whole committee felt that changing the name was an appropriate thing to do but that there were concerns over the timing of it and the nature of the consultation.
- y. The Legal Advisor on the proposal assured Members that the consultation had been fair and reasonable and that the statutory process for the consultation had been adhered to, and in fact the Council had exceeded the statutory requirements.

Clerk's note: 22:10-22:14 - The meeting was briefly adjourned as the Chair's internet connection cut out.

- z. Committee members commented that if it wasn't for the fact that the majority of responses from residents on the street had responded against the change in the consultation then the Committee would have approved the proposal. A number of Committee members felt that additional consultation should be undertaken and that, as part of the communications materials involved, the Council should make it expressly clear that it would offer a solicitor to assist residents and would meet all reasonable legal costs.

- aa. Other members of the Committee commented that it was important that a decision was made that evening and that any delays would be tantamount to 'kicking into the long grass', especially as there were no guarantees that the pandemic would not necessitate further periods of lockdown.
- bb. The Legal Advisor reiterated that that statute clearly set out what the consultation requirements were and the expectation was that the Committee would adhere to these requirements, rather than creating their own requirements.
- cc. Cllr Brabazon proposed an amendment to the recommendation to the making of an Order under the London Building Acts (Amendment) Act 1939 Section 6(1) to rename Black Boy Lane to La Rose Lane to take effect on 1 October 2021. The amendment was that this should be delayed and that a further period of consultation be carried out with residents on a face-to-face basis with the aim of seeking the support of the residents of Black Boy Lane and providing those residents with additional assurances to their concerns, including improving the support package on offer where necessary. The amendment was seconded by Cllr Carroll.
- dd. A recorded vote was taken. Cllrs Brabazon, Berryman, Carroll and Rossetti voted in favour of the amendment. Cllrs Stennett, Emery, Demir and Barnes voted against the amendment. Cllrs Diakides, Dogan and Carlin abstained. The Chair used his casting vote in favour of the amendment. The amendment was therefore passed by five votes to four.

RESOLVED

The Committee:

- I. Considered the feedback from the Consultation #2 (Statutory) 'Notice of Intention' 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;
- II. Considered and took into account the Equalities Impact Assessment (EqiA, Appendix 6 of the report) 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
- III. Rejected the making of an Order under the London Building Acts (Amendment) Act 1939 Section 6(1) to rename Black Boy Lane to La Rose Lane to take effect on 1 October 2021 and requested that a further period of consultation should be carried out in order to provide further assurances to residents of Black Boy Lane and elicit their support for the change of street name. The Committee also requested that the support package offered to the residents be reviewed as part of the further consultation work.

23. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE

None.

25. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting due to item 26 containing exempt information as defined in paragraph 3, Section 100a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by Section 12A of the Local Government Act 1985).

26. AUDIT OF CYBER SECURITY UPDATE

The Committee noted that a follow-up audit would be conducted over the summer and that the report would come to the Committee in September 2021. **(Action: Minesh).**

RESOLVED

The Committee noted the update.

27. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

TBA

CHAIR: Councillor Isidoros Diakides

Signed by Chair

Date