

NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY

At a meeting of the **NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY** held on **THURSDAY, 10TH FEBRUARY, 2022** at 2.30 pm in The Council Chamber, Crowndale Centre, 218 Eversholt Street, London, NW1 1BD

MEMBERS OF THE AUTHORITY PRESENT

Councillors Clyde Loakes (Chair), Peter Zinkin (Vice-Chair), Rowena Champion, Mete Coban, Dean Cohen, Isidoros Diakides, Paul Douglas, Satnam Gill, Mike Hakata and Hass Yusuf

MEMBERS OF THE AUTHORITY ABSENT

Councillors Kate Anolue, Robert Chapman, Adam Harrison and Richard Olszewski

The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the North London Waste Authority.

MINUTES

1. GUIDANCE ON HYBRID MEETINGS

RESOLVED –

THAT the hybrid meetings procedures set out on the agenda be agreed.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Richard Olszewski, Adam Harrison, Robert Chapman and Kate Anolue. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Mike Hakata.

3. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF PECUNIARY, NON-PECUNIARY AND ANY OTHER INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

Councillors Clyde Loakes and Peter Zinkin declared an interest in items on the agenda relating to LondonEnergy Ltd (LEL) as they had been appointed as Non-Executive Directors of LEL by the Authority. They noted that they had been given dispensations from their local authorities to participate and vote on the items.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

THAT the public minutes of the Authority meeting held on 16th December 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Broadcast of the meeting

The Chair announced that the meeting was being broadcast live by Camden Council to the Internet and could be viewed on its website for twelve months after the meeting. After that time, webcasts were archived and could be made available upon request.

Those who had asked to address the meeting, whether seated in the meeting room or participating via Teams, were deemed to be consenting to having their contributions recorded and broadcast and to the use of those sound recordings and images for webcasting and/or training purposes.

6. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT

There were no items of urgent business.

7. DEPUTATIONS (IF ANY)

There were no deputation requests.

8. 2021/22 FINANCE UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report of the Financial Adviser.

RESOLVED –

- (i) THAT the delayed audit of 2020/21 accounts was noted; and
- (ii) THAT the review of the 2021/22 revenue budget was noted.

9. BUDGET AND LEVY 2022/23

Consideration was given to the report of the Financial Adviser.

A Member noted that the forecast levy after balances was significantly higher for Islington and Camden than the other boroughs. This was being discussed with borough officers, including investigating the possibility of data error.

In response to a request for clarification over the budget pressure related to the Resource Recovery Facility as referenced in paragraph 2.9.1, it was confirmed that it would be the Minimum Revenue Provision payment from 2023/24 that would cause the budget increase.

It was commented that the use of Authority assets should be looked at, such as Pinkham Way which would not be used for a long time. It was suggested that Member Finance Working Group look at this in more detail.

ACTION BY: Head of Finance

RESOLVED –

- (i) THAT the Authority satisfied itself that the proposed budget would be sufficient to meet the net expenditure requirements for the year ahead and agreed the 2022/23 budget;
- (ii) THAT it was agreed to use revenue balance of £9.266m to support the 2022/23 budget;
- (iii) THAT the levy for 2022/23 was agreed as laid out in table 1 in paragraph 1.6 of the report;
- (iv) THAT the Financial Adviser was authorised to make the arrangements for collection of the levy and charges for non-household and household waste;
- (v) THAT the basis for calculating the Minimum Revenue Provision was approved as laid out in section 5 of the report;
- (vi) THAT the per tonne charge for non-household and chargeable household residual and recyclable waste was approved as laid out in table 3 in paragraph 2.15.2 of the report; and
- (vii) THAT the medium-term budget forecasts for 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 was noted.

10. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

Consideration was given to the report of the Financial Adviser.

Members commented on the challenges with the selection of auditors in the public sector, with very little interest from many firms because the income they received was low. There was also a strong case for continuity of auditors at the present time, given the scale and stage of the North London Heat and Power Project, with which the current auditors were familiar. It was proposed that the procurement exemption be considered to extend the auditor's existing contract. Alternatively, another Member said that it would enhance the Authority's reputation for openness if the selection of auditors was transparently undertaken with no input from the Authority.

The Financial Adviser recognised the challenges of the audit landscape across local government. He agreed that officers could explore the options to extend the auditor's existing contract and discuss the process with Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd. Officers would submit a further paper outlining options for appointing auditors with the benefits and risks of options set out.

In response to the issue of the independence of external auditors from the Authority, the Financial Adviser confirmed that the Authority could not set out the way the auditor would work and that they were independently regulated by the Financial Reporting Council.

RESOLVED –

THAT the decision on the officer recommendations be deferred to a future meeting, subject to further advice on options including exploration of the possibility to extend the contract with the current auditors for a limited time.

ACTION BY: Head of Finance

11. ESTABLISHING RESPONSIBLE ASSET MANAGEMENT

Consideration was given to the report of the Managing Director

In response to questions, it was confirmed that the Strategy was intended to secure information on assets and develop plans to allow them to be used optimally. In governance terms, the Strategy would strengthen future decisions on the use of assets, including Member decisions, by enabling them to be taken on a well-informed basis.

RESOLVED –

THAT the contents of the report was noted.

12. ROADMAP TO RESIDUAL WASTE REDUCTION PLAN 2022-24

Consideration was given to the report of the Managing Director.

Members made the following comments:

- The comprehensive actions and initiatives over the years to reduce residual waste were acknowledged
- There was an increased level of interest in waste management generally in connection with climate change and the environment.
- In developing the plan, there should be further engagement with communities.
- There should be an emphasis on not just raising awareness but on shaping policy.
- It was suggested that the Member Recycling Working Group could operate alongside a Community Recycling Working Group.
- It should be considered how funding for the waste prevention programme could be augmented.
- It was requested that engagement work with schools be aligned with Hackney's Eco-Schools programme.
- There needed to be understanding over how the Authority would engage with communities that were typically not represented and that intersectionalities be recognised.
- The plan had to complement the work on the front-line in boroughs.
- Focus groups of local residents had taken place in autumn 2021 and those opportunities should be utilised again.

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- Officers should arrange for workshop discussions to think through all the options for increasing recycling rates.
- The Authority should be as ambitious as possible.
- Members should show initiative and contribute ideas to the process.

In response to questions and comments, the Head of Strategic Communications made the following comments:

- Authority officers had met with colleagues in the borough councils to ensure that priorities aligned.
- A borough officer had noted that, while councils could tell residents how they should recycle, the Authority could explain why and make the connection with wider environmental issues.
- He did not like to use the term 'hard to reach' in respect of any groups of residents as that just meant that the right tactics were not being employed.
- Any insight into reaching communities would be welcomed.
- The Education Research Project would help shape messages so that they worked for teachers.

The Chair noted that the Authority had been in the forefront in action to increase recycling, citing the recycling of mattresses and polystyrene, as well as lobbying to make recycling compulsory. In roundtable discussions on increasing recycling, the initiatives that had already taken place within boroughs should be presented.

RESOLVED –

THAT the Authority commented as summarised above and noted the report.

13. NORTH LONDON HEAT AND POWER PROJECT UPDATE AND REPORTS

Consideration was given to the report of the Programme Director.

In response to questions, the Apprenticeship Forum had gone well but it was an ongoing process. There would soon be four more trade apprenticeships.

Taylor Woodrow were commended for the fundraising activities they had undertaken for charity.

It was requested that training and apprenticeship opportunities be shared across the seven boroughs.

The Programme Director assured Members that it was expected that the apprenticeship programme would exceed its targets.

Members commented that it would be good if more young people who had undergone training were subsequently employed on site after their training finished.

In response to a question about the eight-week delay, the Programme Director commented that on any construction project, the client bore some risk. Those risks were assessed and included in the overall project budget. Much of the eight-week delay was due to COVID-19 issues. It had not changed the overall forecast for the project.

RESOLVED –

THAT the Authority noted the contents of the report.

14. FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to the report of the Managing Director, who noted the deferment to a subsequent meeting of the decision for Item 10: Arrangements for the Appointment of External Auditor.

RESOLVED –

THAT the contents of the report were noted.

15. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT

There were no items of urgent business.

16. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - ACCESS TO INFORMATION

RESOLVED –

THAT the press and public be excluded from the proceedings of the North London Waste Authority on 10th February 2022 during consideration of the following items on Part II of the agenda, on the basis that, were Members of the public to be present, there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

Specifically:

Exempt Information Category 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information, and not required to be registered under various statutes: the reasons why the public interest favours withholding the information are that the release of such information would prejudice the Authority's conduct of a commercial operation OR because the disclosure of the information is likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the Authority and organisations engaged in commercial activities as the information related to commercial activities that are conducted in a competitive environment.

17. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

THAT the private minutes of the Authority meeting held on 16th December 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

18. GOVERNANCE OF LONDONENERGY LTD

Consideration was given to a report of the Managing Director.

RESOLVED –

THAT the recommendations set out in the report be approved.

19. NORTH LONDON HEAT AND POWER PROJECT PROGRAMME UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report of the Programme Director.

RESOLVED –

THAT the cost and commercial status summary was noted.

20. ANY OTHER EXEMPT ITEMS THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT

The meeting ended at 3.45 pm.

CHAIR

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MINUTES END