

**MINUTES (VERSION B) OF THE MEETING OF THE WESTERN
RIVERSIDE WASTE AUTHORITY**

**HELD AT THE TOWN HALL (COUNCIL CHAMBER), WANDSWORTH HIGH
STREET, SW18 ON WEDNESDAY, 10TH NOVEMBER, 2021 AT 7.00 P.M.**

NOTE: These minutes are to be read in conjunction with the agenda papers relating to the meeting on 10th November 2021.

PRESENT

- | | |
|---|---|
| Hammersmith & Fulham Council | - Councillor W. Harcourt |
| Kensington and Chelsea Council | - Councillor J. Husband (Chairman)
- Councillor M. Weale |
| Lambeth Council | - Councillor Dr. Hashi
- Councillor J. Meldrum |
| Wandsworth Council | - Councillor R. Morgan
- Councillor Mrs. Sutters |

In attendance:

- | | |
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| WRWA | Mark Broxup – General Manager
Chris Buss – Treasurer (attended virtually)
Bayo Dosunmu – Clerk
Thayyiba Shaah – Deputy Clerk |
| Hammersmith & Fulham Council | Annie Baker - Assistant Director – Street
Environmental Services |
| Kensington and Chelsea Council | Matthew Lawrence – Head of Waste and
Street Enforcement |
| Lambeth Council | Doug Perry – Assistant Director Environment
Public Protection & Regulatory Services |
| External Auditors | Benjamin Sheriff – Director, Audit &
Assurance, Deloitte LLP |

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Morton.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Dr. Hashi, a newly appointed Member, to his first meeting of the Authority.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Morgan disclosed a connection in any relevant matter insofar as he is a resident in a block in Kirtling street which overlooks Cringle Dock.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY HELD ON 29TH SEPTEMBER 2021

On item 2 it was –

RESOLVED - That Version A (the closed version) of the minutes of the Authority held on 29th September 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record, and that version B be confirmed as the open summary of these minutes.

AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR 2020/21 (PAPER NO. WRWA 21-24)

On item 3 (Paper No. WRWA 21-24) the Treasurer introduced the report.

Mr. Sheriff, Director (Deloitte) addressed the Authority and highlighted that the audit was substantially complete subject to the representation letter being signed and returned to him. He added that the focus on the financial statement this year had been on the valuation of the Authority's property assets and valuation of its pension liabilities; both of which have a significant impact on the balance sheet although they do not feed directly into the General Fund revenue position. Mr Sheriff stated that an unadjusted error on the pensions had been identified in the pensions scheme audit but that this did not require adjusting as the Authority's share was immaterial and only an estimate. In relation to the property assets a revaluation was strongly recommended for next year.

In response to a question from Councillor Meldrum, the Treasurer advised that the Authority is a member of the London Pension Fund Authority (which was set up post abolition of the GLC). Therefore, there is no input from the Wandsworth Pension Fund Investment arrangements. The LPFA is like a semi-public administrative body that reports to the Mayor of London.

The Treasurer apologised for his virtual attendance. He thanked the Deputy Treasurer for her substantial contribution and to Mr. Sheriff and his team. The Chairman echoed his thanks to all those mentioned by the Treasurer.

It was then

RESOLVED to:

- (a) note the draft report from Deloitte relating to the Accounts for 2020/21 (Appendix B);

- (b) authorise the Treasurer to sign the Letter of Representation (Appendix C), and if there are any matters arising after the meeting, to delegate to the Treasurer authority to agree the final version of this Letter;
- (c) approve the Authority's Statement of Accounts (Appendix A);
- (d) note the Annual Audit Letter for 2019/20 (Appendix D); and
- (e) otherwise receive this report for information

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT (PAPER NO. WRWA 21-25)

On item 4 (Paper No. WRWA 21-25) the General Manager introduced the report. Councillor Morgan questioned whether in relation to the Education Programme whether other opportunities could be explored. The General Manager advised that at present the schools were not engaging fully with the programme due to Covid and that the current level of engagement by schools matches the level of staffing. However, he was hopeful that the situation would improve by Spring 2022.

Councillor Meldrum raised the following questions:

- Whether paying wages in line with the London Living Wage (LLW) would alleviate the shortage in pickers? The General Manager advised that, in relation to the LLW, this was something the Authority was unable to do, but the Authority was advised that in view of staff shortages wages had increased thereby narrowing the gap between the LLW and actual wages.
- Is commercial waste included in the tonnages reported? Councillor Meldrum was of the view that a fairer comparison between the Boroughs would be if the statistics represented household or population per tonnage. The General Manager advised that the tonnages do include commercial waste; and that the boroughs will know the split between household and commercial waste. The General Manager added that the purpose of the statistics was to see if there were trends, and/or differences, amongst the Boroughs, for example as a result of Covid.
- Does the contribution by each constituent council towards the HWRC service could reflect the level of benefit they receive? The Treasurer reiterated the advice given at the last meeting, i.e., that the apportionment of costs was through the levy; and that all four Boroughs and the Authority had agreed to the conditions/clauses set out in the legal agreement on this matter and were bound by it until 2024. Any changes to the agreement can be made in 2024 but must be agreed by all four Boroughs and the Authority.

Councillor Meldrum also noted that:

- the Spring would be an opportunity for greater engagement by schools with the Education Programme offered.
- the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report should include targets and Authority Members should be involved in the assessment of those targets. The General Manager agreed to take on board the comments made and will consider them during the review for next year.

Councillor Dr. Hashi referred to paragraph 17 of the report and asked whether smaller contractors, as is the case with large contractors and suppliers that supply significant levels of service or goods to the Authority, should provide evidence of equality, diversity, and inclusion via annual reports to the Authority. The Clerk agreed to explore this outside of the meeting.

It was then

RESOLVED to receive this report as information.

FORWARD PLAN (PAPER NO. WRWA 21-26)

On item 5 (Paper No. WRWA 21-26) the General Manager introduced the report.

It was then

RESOLVED to agree that:

- a) the Authority's meeting in 2022 will be held on the following dates:
 - Tuesday 25th January 2022
 - Thursday 23rd June 2022 (Annual General Meeting)
 - Wednesday 21st September 2022
 - Wednesday 23rd November 2022
- b) meetings will start at 7.00 p.m. and take place at Wandsworth Town Hall; and
- c) should meetings need to be held virtually, they will start at 5.30 p.m.

THE BUDGET FORECAST FOR 2021/22 AND THE PROSPECTS FOR APPORTIONMENT OF WASTE DISPOSAL COSTS (AWDC) RATES AND THE LEVY ARE PROVIDED THROUGH TO 2022/23 (PAPER NO. WRWA 21-27)

On item 6 (Paper No. WRWA 21-27) the Treasurer introduced the report.

During discussion, the Treasurer advised that in relation to Appendix B that two figures should be amended in relation to the total levy income – column should read - 4686 and column 4 should read - 4218.

Councillor Morgan referred to paragraph 17 of the report and asked what Constituent councils should be mindful of before introducing any new recycling initiatives. The General Manager advised that it was difficult to forecast accurately the future value of recyclables as the markets are so volatile.

Councillor Harcourt stated that it was very difficult for the Constituent councils to set their council tax given the price variation in commodities and asked whether a cap could be imposed on any increases to assist in the council tax setting process. The Treasurer advised that the Authority sets its budget in January and therefore, each

constituent Council had at least two months before it set its council tax. The Treasurer considered this to be ample notice. In relation to setting a cap, the Treasurer advised that a cap could not be agreed in case circumstances changed between now and January 2022.

The Deputy Chairman, Councillor Mrs. Sutters, echoed Councillor Harcourt's concerns.

The Treasurer advised that an optimistic and pessimistic figure had been introduced over the last few years at the request of Members, although overall the format of the report remained unchanged. The Treasurer added that the real issue was the high degree of inflation and the level of uncertainty with energy prices. However, the Treasurer advised that another two months of energy price data should afford a greater level of certainty. The Treasurer advised Members to look towards the optimistic figures quoted in the paper.

The Chairman, Councillor Husband, referred to paragraph 10 of the report and advised that the paper provided a forward look at the possible budget. Councillor Husband added that there was a good chance that the optimistic budget of £160 per tonne was achievable but subject to how things developed it could be as high as £162 per tonne. Councillor Husband also reminded Members that the levy was lower than it was a few years ago. The Treasurer confirmed that levy costs had indeed reduced significantly over a number of years.

In response to questions raised by Councillor Meldrum, the Treasurer advised that Cory sell the recyclates and that the Authority receive a percentage from the sale in accordance with the arrangements between the Authority and Cory. As the Authority is receiving income from the sale of recyclates, it does not need to use its reserves. Instead the Authority could use its reserves to pay for the borrowing costs to acquire land for future operational services.

It was then

RESOLVED to receive this report as information.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED -

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, members of the public and the press be excluded from the meeting whilst item 8 (The detailed 2021/22 and 2022/23 General Waste Rate and update on Savings proposals for the Authority (Paper No. WRWA 21-28)) and item 9 (Waste Management Services Agreement and potential redevelopment of the Cringle Dock Transfer Station (Paper No. WRWA 21-29)) are being considered because exempt information, as described in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, is likely to be disclosed.

THE DETAILED 2021/22 AND 2022/23 GENERAL WASTE RATE AND UPDATE ON SAVINGS PROPOSALS FOR THE AUTHORITY (PAPER NO. WRWA 21-28)

On item 8, (Paper No. WRWA 21-28) the Treasurer introduced the report. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED to receive this report as information.

WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES AGREEMENT AND POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT OF THE CRINGLE DOCK TRANSFER STATION (PAPER NO. WRWA 21-29)

On item 9, (Paper No. WRWA 21-29) the General Manager introduced the report. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED to approve the recommendations in paragraph 44 of the report.

The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.