

**OPEN MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WESTERN RIVERSIDE WASTE AUTHORITY  
(WRWA)**

**HELD AT THE LAMBETH TOWN HALL, 1 BRIXTON HILL, SW2 1RW ON WEDNESDAY 22  
NOVEMBER 2023 AT 6.30 PM**

**NOTE: These minutes are to be read in conjunction with the agenda papers relating to the meeting on Wednesday 22 November 2023.**

**PRESENT**

<b>Hammersmith and Fulham Council</b>	<b>Councillor Wesley Harcourt</b>
	<b>Councillor Sharon Holder</b>
<b>Kensington and Chelsea Council</b>	<b>Councillor Will Pascall</b>
<b>Lambeth Council</b>	<b>Councillor Rezina Chowdhury</b>
	<b>Councillor Jackie Meldrum</b>
<b>Wandsworth Council</b>	<b>Councillor Judi Gasser</b>
	<b>Councillor Leonie Cooper</b>

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Bayo Dosunmu – Clerk  
Chris Buss – Treasurer  
Sukvinder Kalsi – Incoming Treasurer  
Mark Broxup – General Manager  
Rachel Espinosa – Deputy General Manager  
Katherine Burston – Deputy Treasurer  
Frances Devane – Assistant General Manager  
Richard Plummer – Lambeth Democratic Services

Borough Technical Officers  
Doug Perry – Lambeth  
Annie Baker – Hammersmith & Fulham  
Matthew Lawrence – Kensington and Chelsea\*  
Natasha Epstein - Wandsworth

\*joined online

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Johnny Thalassites

**1. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

Councillor Leonie Cooper declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Greater London Authority Assembly Member.

**2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting 26 October 2023 were discussed.

**RESOLVED:**

To approve the open and restricted minutes of the last meeting held on 26 October 2023 as a correct record of proceedings and that the open versions be approved as a public summary.

**3. BUDGET FORECAST (WRWA PAPER NO. 23-32)**

The Treasurer introduced the report and highlighted key details that were contained within the report for Members:

1. It was noted that energy cost in year 2024/25 would be more volatile and that, based on current high and low estimates, the likely contract rate for residual waste would be between £169 and £189 per tonne compared to the current charge of £160 per tonne in the current year.
2. The Treasurer noted that, in the event that an agreement on the charging mechanism was not renewed and there was no replacement agreement agreed between all four Councils, charging from 2025/26 would be on the statutory default basis. This was explained as being a position in which there was no incentive in cost between recycle and non-recycle. It was stressed that this would not be an optimum strategy.
3. The Treasurer explained that reserves started at £24 million, and that this would likely increase to £32 million in the year 2024/25.
4. It was explained that there was some risk to the authority from increases in energy prices in subsequent years. It was explained that this may cause difficulties by the financial year 2026/27.
5. It was explained, following Member questions, that the budget forecast presented to the authority would essentially have the same effect as a Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). It was explained that any successor to the Treasurer would be able to turn the Budget Forecast into an MTFS, but that there was no requirement to do so.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To note the report as information.

**4. FORWARD PLAN (WRWA PAPER NO. 23-33)**

The General Manager introduced the report and noted the date of the next meeting had been agreed as 8 February 2024. Members noted the information within the forward plan document.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To receive the report as information.

**5. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT (WRWA PAPER NO. 23-34)**

The General Manager introduced the report and highlighted the operational and other matters pertinent to the Authority.

1. It was explained that there had been some difficulties identified in recycling plastic film, and that there was a need to discuss this with Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to determine a practical solution to this issue. It was stressed that this was not an issue unique to this authority and that there was no identified solution to this problem as of the date of the meeting.
2. It was explained that DEFRA would name anaerobic digestion as the preferred method of treatment of food waste. The authority noted that they felt it was incorrect to do this, and would prefer that there not be a stipulated recommended process. It was explained that there was a chance that this would not be the optimal method in the future, noting that there was a possibility that carbon capture could potentially become more effective in future.
3. Members questioned what work was being done to ensure that lithium batteries were not placed in recycling, in order to reduce fires in waste facilities. Officers explained that the industry had introduced a campaign to raise awareness, and that the service was promoting this. However, officers stressed that there was a need to ensure that producers of batteries were more responsible for the disposal of batteries. It was explained that the risk of fire resultant from incorrect lithium battery disposal did have a negative impact to insurance costs.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To ratify the response to the consultations on Simpler Recycling as set out in Appendices B and C to this report; and
2. To receive the report as information.

**6. GENERAL MANAGER'S RECRUITMENT AND INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS (WRWA PAPER NO. 23-35)**

The Clerk introduced the report.

1. It was explained that the General Manager was retiring and that the Clerk would be asking the Authority to authorise seeking a reappointment to this post. It was additionally noted that the authority would be implementing interim arrangements to fulfil the role. This would be undertaken by current Deputy Manager as Interim General Manager.
2. The Clerk asked the Authority to create a Member recruitment panel with one Member per Constituent Council to undertake recruitment to the post. Members suggested that they should be more involved in the recruitment of the new General Manager, and whether there were opportunities to involve the whole Authority or Borough Technical Officers in the recruitment process. The Clerk noted that they would develop a means of involving Members within the process.
3. Members raised concerns regarding that a quorum of two, rather than ensuring representatives from all authorities, would be inadequate to ensure representation. The Clerk stressed that officers would endeavour to ensure that all four authorities would be involved, but stressed that there were some logistical difficulties in prescribing a quorum of four, in the case of Members dropping out at the last minutes. Members suggested an amendment to recommendations to be at least three Members, to allow for some contingency, but also ensure representation. It was also suggested that the other four Members be appointed as substitutes.
4. Members noted that there were concerns regarding holding a management review of staffing and resources during the recruitment of a new General Manager. It was stressed that this would be undertaken by the incoming General Manager and the Clerk. It was additionally explained that there would be a review taken separately of the governance arrangements, which would be part of the development of the advertisement of the post.
5. It was explained that the longlisting process would be undertaken by officers, but that they would include the Chair of the Authority in this process.
6. Members asked about handover for both the General Manager and Treasurer post, and whether they would be adequately supported. The Clerk stressed that there was significant knowledge in the organisation that would be able to provide support in order to manage the organisation. Members were assured that there was sufficient knowledge and expertise in the organisation to be able to continue its work.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the vacancy in the post which will arise as a result of the General Manager's retirement be filled;
2. To authorise the Clerk to appoint a four member appointments committee consisting of four Members involved in the governance review, that the Chair of the Authority will Chair the Committee, and that the other four members will be appointed as substitutes.

3. To the arrangements for recruitment and the provisional timetable.
4. To approve the proposed terms of reference and procedural rules of the Appointment Committee with the proviso that the Terms of Reference and Procedural Rules 2c) be amended to: "The quorum for the Committee shall be three Members"

**7. PROCUREMENT AND JMWMS STRATEGY UPDATE (WRWA PAPER NO. 23-36)**

**RESOLVED:**

1. That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, members of the public and the press be excluded from the meeting whilst remaining items are being considered because it is likely that exempt information as described in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act would be disclosed to them if they were present; and it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, given the fact that these papers and the presentation deal with ongoing negotiations and procurement terms.

**8. SAVINGS REPORT (WRWA PAPER NO. 23-37)**

**RESOLVED:**

2. That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, members of the public and the press be excluded from the meeting whilst remaining items are being considered because it is likely that exempt information as described in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act would be disclosed to them if they were present; and it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, given the fact that these papers and the presentation deal with ongoing negotiations and procurement terms.

**9. WMSA (WRWA PAPER NO. 23-38)**

**RESOLVED:**

3. That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, members of the public and the press be excluded from the meeting whilst remaining items are being considered because it is likely that exempt information as described in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act would be disclosed to them if they were present; and it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, given the fact that these papers and the presentation deal with ongoing negotiations and procurement terms.

CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 9.12pm

CHAIR

**Date of Despatch:** Date Not Specified

**Contact for Enquiries:** Wayne Chandai

**Telephone:** 0207 926 0029

**E-mail:** [wchandai@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:wchandai@lambeth.gov.uk)