



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

GENERAL PURPOSES URGENCY SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee** held at 6.00pm on Thursday 19 January 2012 at Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP

Present: Councillors Melvyn Caplan (Chairman), David Boothroyd and Tony Devenish

1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1 There were no changes to the Membership.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

3.1 The Chairman, with the consent of the Members present, signed the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2011 as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

4. **AUTHORITY TO MAKE BYELAWS TO CONTROL THE USE OF TENTS AND SLEEPING EQUIPMENT IN DESIGNATED AREAS SURROUNDING PARLIAMENT SQUARE AND TO AMEND EXISTING BYELAWS TO ENABLE SEIZURE OF NOISE EQUIPMENT (see report of Strategic Director City Management and Head of Legal and Democratic Services)**

4.1 Leith Penny, Strategic Director of City Management, introduced the report. He explained that this report and in particular the Addendum Report, set out the results of the consultation exercise which the Urgency Sub-Committee had agreed at its meeting on 7 December 2011. With reference to the action taken earlier in the week when the police had removed most of the protestors who had been camping on the footways attached to Parliament Square Gardens, it was noted that there hadn't been any immediate displacement of those protestors. Mr Penny explained that one reason for that was the fact that some provisions of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 still remained in force which effectively prohibited demonstrations taking place in the areas to be designated by the Byelaws without the consent of the Metropolitan

Police. The Byelaws would be needed when that legislation was finally repealed so as to enable immediate action to be taken against any new encampments that might then appear. He gave a summary of the consultation responses, which had been fully reflected in the Addendum Report. He explained that the bulk of the responses had been against the proposal, as a matter of principle. Those responses in favour had, in the main, come from local residents. The Strategic Director drew particular attention to the representations made by Liberty, Crisis and the Home Office. He also made a revision to paragraph 7.14 of the addendum to reflect the fact that the Council's Rough Sleeping Unit was aware of some isolated incidents of rough sleeping within the proposed area during January 2011 which were dealt with appropriately by the Rough Sleeping Unit at the time.

4.2 Peter Large, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, advised that the DCLG had emailed shortly before the meeting requesting, in order to be clear about the area to be covered, that the schedule provide a more detailed description of the streets so that the designated area could be identified without reference to the plan. It was also requested that the plan should be to scale, precise and easy to understand.

4.3 All members of the Urgency Sub-Committee spoke in favour of the need for the byelaws. In recommending these to the full Council the Sub-Committee authorised Officers, in consultation with the Chairman to table at the Council meeting, any updated schedule and map that might be necessary in order to satisfy the request from the DCLG.

4.4 **RESOLVED:**

That having had regard to the responses to the consultation exercise, the Council be recommended to:

- i. make the new byelaws as set out in Appendix 1 to this Addendum (with any modification that may be deemed appropriate to meet the concerns of the DCLG, subject to any revised schedule and map being tabled at the Council Meeting); and
- ii. authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to seal the byelaws and make the application to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for confirmation of the byelaws.

5. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 6.21pm.

CHAIRMAN _____

DATE _____