

Chris Hayward, Policy Chairman (CH): Well, good evening everybody. It's six o'clock now so I think we'll get underway if we may. Can I thank you very much for joining us tonight for our second City Question Time of this particular calendar year. And this is the first time that we've brought a City Question Time away from being held on Corporation property. And I'd like to thank everyone here at St. Katharine Cree for making your beautiful church available to us tonight.

It's very important to me and I think I may have said this before, that we continue to hold these City Question Time events in different parts of the Square Mile. And that has been my objective from the start. Those of you who don't know me, who are here maybe for the first time, I'm Chris Hayward and I'm the Policy Chairman of the City of London Corporation and in layman's terms that means I'm the de facto political leader of the Corporation. I made a commitment to hold these City Question Time events to try to engage better with residents to give you an opportunity to ask me and other committee chairs, deputy chairs from the Corporation, questions about what we're doing, what we're trying to do to improve your city. And this event gives us the chance to understand better the things that you like about and what we're doing as well as course as your concerns that you always do bring to us.

Now each of you will have received hopefully on your seats somewhere this which is our You Said We Did document. In these we expand on the responses to your questions from previous Question Time events and we do this in time for the next Question Time event. Hopefully you've got one of these. If you haven't got them they are available and we can make sure you have one before you leave tonight. And there are updates in there as I say on the topics that you've asked us about.

Since our last Question Time event, City Question Time event, I'm pleased to say that I've appointed Jacqui Webster who is a common councillor for the ward of Cripplegate as the Corporation's first ever lead member for resident engagement. And as lead member, Jacqui will play a key role in supporting my residential reset initiative, helping to develop hopefully essentially defined resident offer and improving how we at the Corporation consult and communicate with you. And Jacqui will, she's not available to be here tonight unfortunately she sends her apologies, but she will work very closely with Helen Fentimen and myself. Helen as our new chair of Children and Community Services, which department covers housing in the City and the three of us intend to work very closely together.

Now I'm very pleased that tonight's panel is to be chaired by the Governor of the Tower of London, Brigadier Andrew Jackson, CBE. As Governor, or I'm told Tower Director, there's another term which we can use, it's interchangeable. Andrew's responsible for the day-to-day running of the Tower of London. He's had 33 years of leadership and staff roles in the army, so I've no doubt that he will not only keep the room to order, but also ensure that every member of this panel properly answers your questions this evening.

Anyway, Andrew I'm now going to hand over to you so that you can set out the ground rules for the evening and the panel introduce themselves before we take our questions. So over to you Andrew.

Andrew Jackson CBE, Tower of London Director (AJ): Thank you Chris, hopefully everybody can hear me through the microphone. I've been asked to do one important hygiene thing, which is to tell you what happens in the event of a fire alarm. There are no tests planned this evening. If the fire alarm goes off, sorry I've got my script wrong already, this says there is no fire alarm,

which is a bit of a worry. So if you spot a fire you need to raise the alarm and raise the alarm by ringing the bell at the back of the church or shouting as loud as you can fire fire fire. If you hear anybody shout that, or if you see anybody gesticulating wildly in the international fire signal, head out of the door that you came in and the assembly point for anybody who's in this building is at the Gherkin. And I'm assuming you all know where that is, you might need to direct me as soon as I go out the door.

So Chris, thank you for your kind introduction. I do lead a sort of dual life as the Tower Director for historic royal palaces, but then with that lovely historical role of being the Governor of the Tower of London and also the Keeper of the Jewel House. And the Tower has a historic view of the City that we like to talk about quite a lot. It's quite an aggressive view, it's quite a keeping you at arm's length view of saying there must be a bowshot kept between the Tower of London and the City of London, and that reflects the liberties of the Tower. It was its own fiefdom up til about the mid 1800s run by the Constable of the Tower.

Now of course we're not part of the City, we are part of Tower Hamlets and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, but we are so closely connected to the City of London, particularly in terms of heritage, that that's why I've delighted to be offered the chance to come and chair the panel tonight. We are connected through the mutual benefit that the visitor foot flow into London has. We have nearly three million visitors a year at the Tower, and we're hoping that as many of those as possible flow towards the City to bring revenue there too.

We've got ambitious plans as a charity, historic royal palaces, we're looking to reach further, to reach more people, to mean more to those people by telling stories they don't necessarily anticipate, and also to act for the future, making sure that everything we do is geared to the next generation in terms of our education programme and geared to making sure that the buildings and fabric at the Tower stand for the next thousand years as well. Now to do that of course we have to raise all our own money. As a charity we don't receive any money from the government or any money from the Royal Household, so if you know of any rich benefactors around the City of London who are looking for some philanthropy then send it our way please.

So on to the the rules of the event. When you ask a question please state your name because then we can politely engage in a conversation, but also please keep your question to a question. If you take too long setting up through a means of a statement that simply takes away the time that everybody else has to ask questions, so please keep it brief. I'll take one question at a time and due to time constraints we'll cut down on supplementary questions. Ideally don't ask a supplementary because we can take that again when we get to the towards the end if there's time. And this is all about giving everybody who wants to ask a question the chance to ask a question. So we'll take a question individually but what I'll attempt to do is keep the questions grouped on a particular theme. So for instance if we have one on crime I'll say any more questions on crime? After we've taken, asked, answered the first question and then do that. And we'll probably aim for about three questions on each theme but clearly if there's more appetite for that and again if there is more time at the end we'll move on to take more questions about themes we've already covered. Please only speak if you've been handed the microphone. The reason for that is two-fold. One is in buildings like this it's quite difficult for people at the back to hear if you're facing forward. Secondly I think we're capturing a recording this evening so that we can push out further information afterwards.

What will happen when you ask a question I'll feel I'll pass it off to a member of the panel by the relevant committee chairman in the first instance and and then the questions will be picked up

so that they can also be reflected in the next edition of the City Corporation's You Said We Did. Now remember that I run the Tower of London so people who break rules there's a handy place across there to send people to.

But without further ado I will ask the panel to introduce themselves. You probably all know Chris but I'll start with please Chris.

CH: As I said at the start Andrew, Chris Hayward, Policy Chairman of the City Corporation.

Helen Fentimen, Chair of Community and Children's Services (HF): I'm Helen Fentimen, Chair of Community and Children's Services.

Graham Packham, Deputy Chair of Planning and Transportation (GP): My name is Graham Packham. I'm a member for, I'm an elected member for Castle Baynard. I'm a City resident and I'm a Deputy Chair of Planning and Transportation and I chair Streets and Walkways.

Mary Durcan, Chair of Port Health and Environment (MD): Hello I'm Mary Durcan. I'm the Chair of the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee and like Graham I'm a Common Councillor for the ward of Castle Baynard. Thank you.

James Thomson, Deputy Chair of the City of London Police (JT): And I'm James Thomson, Deputy Chair of the City of London Police and in fact until very recently was the Chair so I'm standing in for the Chair tonight and member for Walbrook in the heart of the City around Bank junction.

AJ: Thank you. Brilliant. Thanks panel. So now over to you please and I'll spot the first person to ask a question and we'll be off. At the back there gentlemen with the glasses. Yes.

Question: Hello Ian Hartog from Middlesex Street Estates. We still have many many many unresolved issues which I won't go into in detail now for time constraints that have been going on for years and years and years and are still unresolved. What plans have the City to solve these problems within the next six to twelve months? Thank you.

AJ: Helen please.

HF: Yes thank you and thank you for your question Ian. Now I'm working on the assumption that when you talk about unresolved issues really what you're talking about or a large part of what you're talking about are some of the repairs and maintenance backlogs that we still haven't been able to tackle. I think that alongside Middlesex Street we have a similar problem in other housing estates. The positive thing is that we absolutely understand how much we have to do and I think that we have had a number of staff changes in the recent weeks not least the appointment and starting of Peta Caine who's the new Assistant Director for the social housing estate. She's been here six days now I think so we're just allowing a bit of time for her to be here become familiar with all of the issues and to start to work with residents to put that right.

I think you probably also know and it's worth reiterating that we are procuring a new service for repairs and maintenance. Many people have been dissatisfied with the service to date and we've heard that, understood that and so a new contractor will be in place unfortunately not until March of next year but nevertheless that doesn't mean that nothing will happen in the meantime. We are trying as hard as we can to work through those unresolved issues on Middlesex Street and on other estates but thank you for raising it here it's helpful.

AJ: And in the meantime what's the means of solving the problems if there's no contractor or do you bring in an individual contractor for an individual issue?

HF: No, there is a contractor in place but there have been some we'd have liked that contractor perhaps to have been a little more responsive of course they're free to put themselves forward for the for the next contract, but it's a properly managed procurement process and the best contractor will be selected and that would be on a quality versus price arrangement and those percentages have been agreed with residents' input.

AJ: Thanks Helen. Are there any other questions on state of the estate or the maintenance? Great let's move on to another group of questions if you wish. Yes please.

Question: Oh tiny microphone. Hello my name is Shirley Islam and my question is can the City set up a process whereby it makes it easy for community groups to apply for our community BID funds. Currently what happens is in order to apply for them you need to be an incorporated group or a charity or a CIC and across the City we have a number of informal groups who are not set up and other boroughs help the wonderful pockets of communities to set up to be a fund so can the City do that please?

AJ: Thank you.

CH: I'll try and answer that one for you but I think we'll I'm going to get Helen to talk about it afterwards. What you're asking as I'm understanding it you're telling us is that in order to get grants effectively you've got to be an incorporated body of some sort and that means that sort of voluntary groups etc aren't able to apply is that the case? You're nodding I'm taking your nod as the as the case. Look yeah I mean I think we can look at that and I think we can try and find ways to actually broaden out the displacement of grants that are available. It seems to me that you know what we want is them to benefit our residents and if you're saying that at the moment we can't do that because of the restrictions if you like corporate restrictions then we can certainly have a look at that and see whether we can do something about it and Helen and I'll talk about it and we'll come and have a chat with you about it at the end as well.

AJ: So you had a follow-up to that?

Question: Yeah Fred Rogers. A constitutional group can get funding the difficulty they have is getting bank accounts and it took Barbican Wildlife Garden nearly a year to get a bank account just to get a in order to get a grant, and so assistance on getting bank accounts will be preferable I think if you could aim at doing that.

CH: That might be a bigger challenge for us Fred than actually being able to ensure that the you know the groups can get the grants but because we don't actually have any appreciate the Corporation any control over bank banks and their ability to open accounts for community groups etc but you know that is a good point. So what I'm hearing is two things really. One we need to make it first of all more flexible and easier for community groups to actually apply they don't have to be incorporated they don't have to be and but secondly you know we've got to somehow try and help to support and we can write to the banks we can certainly you know there's no reason why we can't say that we're wanting to make this grant to this particular group but they need a bank account can you please help and maybe if we do that as the Corporation maybe that would be like a positive move so yeah we can have a go.

AJ: I think that would be helpful. Do we know of any banks that are more amenable to helping people than others?

CH: No not off the top of my head it's not my expert area but we can turn to our Chamberlain's Department who will know you know financially which best banks would be to go to.

AJ: Is this another question on residents and community engagement okay yeah.

Question: We finally got our bank account for Barbican Wildlife Garden from National Westminster no fees no nothing so there's nothing to pay up from they just want to know your details and a copy of your constitution.

CH: So that sounds really helpful so National Westminster bank you've got your account as a group and the no fees and you just had to supply them with a copy of your constitution effectively so there we are hopefully everybody heard that because that sounds to be a good starting point to approach so thank you very much thank you for that very helpful.

AJ: Any other questions on community engagement or residents engagement? On to sorry yes sir.

Question: Hi David Wilcox I think it's about resident engagement I'll slip it in here because it's actually about Destination City and how residents can engage with Destination City that and the programme if anybody doesn't know was originally launched to attract more visitors to the City and support its economy during the hard times that we've had initially focused on large events a review commission to look at that and the interim review by Paul Martin was really encouraging saying let's have more focus on a liveable connected lively place rooted in its heritage and culture and Paul gave a very good address to a citizens forum organised by Brendan Barns so I think we were all really buzzed about that.

Unfortunately all we've got now is a very short summary report which doesn't allow residents to really join in and help which I think is one of the other partnership aims so can you give us any idea of when we'll get a fuller report which is helpful to residents and engaging?

CH: So yes sure David I could take that so look Destination City thank you for what you've said about it and let me be absolutely clear at the start we're very keen to have a resident engagement in Destination City this isn't something that Corporation can or wants to do on its own.

I launched this a couple of years ago and initially as you rightly say it was in response really to the lack of footfall post-COVID pandemic and the impact that it had on our SMEs and the need to try and get more footfall and more new spend into the Square Mile and we did it initially in the first couple of years with a couple of big events that you will recall that.

The bottom line is that Destination City became a really exciting brand and everybody seems to know about it and talk about it but if you actually ask people what they understood by Destination City often and certainly if I asked the members I would get 10 or 20 different answers and it did seem to us that it was time to have an independent review onto what the next stage of Destination City should be so I asked the Town Clerk to appoint a consultant Paul Martin to help us with that you met him I think or mentioned you did he took a huge amount of consultation right across and indeed we sent him back a second time because we weren't satisfied there was enough resident consultation and input in there and he went back and did that so we know that we've covered the whole of the Square Mile in terms of actually getting getting feedback. And the renewed programme the new renewed Destination City goes beyond just being something to promote tourism but actually to a growth strategy for the Square Mile that's what we now want it to be so we've we've kind of it's grown up it's come of come of age a

little bit and I think that growth strategy for the Square Mile as a location will be incredibly important for us going forward. Residents' representatives will continue to play a key role as I said at the start in the external Destination Board.

Having only recently made the decision or based on the review of Paul Martin we are now into implementation stage and that's where we as members hand it over to the Town Clerk and his team to actually ensure that we recruit the right people that we have the right resources in place and that we can actually take it forward so the answer to your question I think is that we will be in a position during the course of these summer months now to give you the next stage and to give you that plan to give you more flesh on the bones of okay this is what we've agreed now this is how we're going to implement it how you're going to be engaged in it so thank you for asking me about it because it remains a flagship policy for me and for the City Corporation and we're very very keen to have widest possible engagement we can from residents in its implementation so thank you.

AJ: Thank you and Destination City is a brilliant example of that synergy between the Tower of London and the City because as I said to Paul and other people involved with it Destination City without incorporating the Tower of London is ignoring all that potential that is resting on the boundary.

Thank you I think am I turned up too loud on my microphone? I'm getting quite a bit of feedback. Do I need to turn it down a bit? No? Thanks expert. So that sort of took us on to kind of travel tourism Destination City type themes and is there anybody else who wants to ask a question on that theme? Yes please ma'am.

Question: Thank you. Hi I think this is loosely attached to that so forgive me if I haven't gone quite on it but in terms of Destination City and the residents of the City of London my name's Miranda Quinnie so I realised I should have said that at the beginning.

A very high proportion of our residents are older people. I'm also very aware that Sadiq Khan as the Mayor of London has committed to making London overall an age-friendly city. I'd be interested to know what the City of London is doing about making itself an age-friendly Square Mile because that will be fantastically important for both Destination City, residents, visitors and of course the push towards making sure we all work for a very very long time before we retire or go back to work.

CH: Miranda thank you very much for that question I mean look we we try to be a fully inclusive city we do try and that means at the one end you've got to provide facilities for children whether it's play areas or whatever, you've got to provide sporting facilities, got to provide cultural facilities.

Some of the things of course go across the generations so culture is one of those areas where I would say it does actually cross the generations but you specifically I think made reference to our more elderly residents or the older residents in the City who are equally as important as anybody else in the City so we try we try and provide a breadth of cultural opportunities, leisure opportunities, the opportunities that living in a busy city, capital city can actually devolve and we we don't want to be ageist at either ends of the spectrum.

We want it to be everybody who comes here whether they come here as a resident, live here, whether they come here as a visitor, whether they come here to work it shouldn't matter what age they are it should be that the City is here for all of them and we will try to make our facilities

as age-friendly across the spectrum as we possibly can. You know I've tried to give you one of two thoughts and examples but I mean I'm sure we can work up something within the Destination City brand to actually address that actually because you know that inclusivity word is a big word and it's a really important word to us in the Corporation we want everybody to feel involved and engaged.

AJ: Thank you. Marianne.

Marianne Fredericks (MF): Thank you. On that point about inclusivity one easy win, bearing in mind this area and and to Tower ward, my ward, has a number of hotels. We have a number of families who come into the City especially at the weekends and we have families that actually live in the City but you'll find that there are very few restaurants that actually have children friendly facilities no paper changing units, no high chairs, no children's menus.

Now families spend a lot of money and they will spend a lot of money but if you don't have the facilities in the City they will go back to the west or go back to Canary Wharf and they will dine in there so that's one quick win but you said earlier on about over the summer period you will be looking at Destination City and how you can actually gel your policies together but in the meantime we have Wimbledon we have the olympics, we have the the euros so what are we doing to ensure that we can facilitate events that people want to put on bearing in mind Destination City is now looking to ensure that these events are carried out by third parties and the BIDs so what are we doing to ensure that we as a Corporation enable these events to take place in terms of our policy and maybe enabling it very quickly when people want to have something that will bring people into the area and then therefore footfall and spend.

CH: Thanks Marianne look a couple of couple of points you've raised there let's take the second point first of all I mean you and I know because we've been in discussions on it recently that we were we are hoping to have our effectively summer of sport programme happening in the Square Mile.

Now let's be clear there have been some technical hiccups about licenses etc around that and we're working as hard as we can officers are working as hard as they can to nail those but it's an example of a programme over the summer of which you know perhaps meets some of the you know quick wins that you're you're saying we could we could do we've got to be we've got to be fleet of foot to be able to work with these operators and people who want to do things and that means that means us as and this is a challenge in local government and I've been in it a long time I know it we've got to be able to be move faster our processes and our procedures have got to be flexible enough to respond when we get a proposition and an offer from a group or we want a group to put something on otherwise to be blunt they'll just go away.

So I take your point and you and I know because we've spoken about the challenges of the summer of sport summer sport programme just what that challenge is. I think your first point's a really interesting one about child friendly facilities in restaurants in the City and it's and it's a good one actually I'm going to have to go back and talk to officers about that because I'm not sure how commercially we're able to if you like enforce maybe maybe via the licensing process I don't know you're former chairman of licensing you'll know whether that's possible through that or not I don't know but there has to be ways in which we can encourage restaurants to provide more facilities for children rather than just for adults and and you're right if they're not here it simply means that people will either cross the river and go the other side or they'll go into the west end and we will lose all that business we'll lose all those people those families coming in at

weekends who might go and visit the Tower of London amongst other things and we don't want to do that we want to make sure they're here and they're spending their money in our City. Well to get them to spend the money in our City we've got to be as best we can at providing the facilities for them to do so so I will take that specific point away and we'll we'll look at the child-friendly stuff.

AJ: There was a question further back.

Question: Hello my name is Yvonne Courtney and I live in this Aldgate ward other side of that wall and never mind about watching sport it's this side of the City has next to no facilities for sports and during the pandemic we all got to know that the quickest route to sanity was being able to go outside to even just take a walk and have mind running or doing anything that would help your mental health and we're pretty horrified about one of the developments, One Undershaft where it was promised a sunken garden which sounded magical and would have almost been a bit like the Rockefeller Center in New York in our heads and now the whole of the open plaza is going to be hoovered up by the building and there's a little terrace on the 13th floor and if you have to take a lift and go through security you just don't do it for a walk it's not spontaneous. But we've had the one swimming pool and one health centre on the other side of the City we desperately need more areas here that will encourage our health as we all get older and older.

CH: Yvonne One Undershaft you know was a was a planning application which when I was Chairman of Planning many years ago we gave the initial planning application you know it's coming back at the moment which means I can sidestep it over to the current Deputy Chairman of Planning uh to answer the question about One Undershaft.

GP: Yes um I think I've got to be careful because um it's it's a it's a application in the pipeline um it's not actually true to say all the ground ground space is being lost there's a there's a small loss but clearly there's concerns about the the podium which overhangs and as you say um ground level uh space is actually more valuable than space at a higher level because people you know if you if you've got a sandwich at lunchtime and you when you've only got half an hour to eat it you know you're looking for somewhere nice to sit at ground level so I take the point that it's not as valuable um I mean that's an application which will come in shortly and I mean I think this will be a key one of the key uh decisions you know about this offer and how it stacks up with the um the application that was given permission when Chris was was the Chair that's all I can say I think.

AJ: Because this links into Marianne's point about restaurants and if we're trying to bring new audiences into the City your family as was your example you need to have facilities that will be attractive and they are not all wanting to come and see the Tower of London or come and see the amenities in the City so what's the approach to finding open spaces and building open spaces into some of the new planning that's been put forward?

GP: Well there's a there's a great example now in near St Paul's of another new public square which is it's going to be called Greyfire Square and we're closing a road, and that will be a really large public square it will actually have um some facilities for children to play in and it will have a lot of greening and it will have the ability to host events.

It's very hard to do things like that I mean we had one, we had a really good one with Aldgate Square a few years back so this is on a similar scale. I mean they they tend to be pocket parks and smaller spaces but they're they're really precious and we've got lots of them and people

really enjoy them but yeah it's not it's, I mean it's a Square Mile so yeah space is expensive and precious.

AJ: Thank you, that was all about sports facilities, came from accessibility inclusivity, any more questions about that sort of theme? Access, inclusion, sports facilities, etc? Fred

Question: Yes sorry gosh um yes as far as um I think this week's national volunteers week one of the things about volunteering in the City is the availability of Tempo Time Credits um I appreciate the Tower of London do have a one for two or two for one offer, but they don't accept Tempo Time Credits and for a family going there um you know with time credits it saves about 40, 50 pounds there are a lot of carers in the City who are suffering financially and can benefit from time credits and I would like to see more offers and particularly from, to enable Destination City to work better would enable um by giving Time Credits out to people will get more people in and they'll spend more money on other things anyway so.

AJ: Thank you so I'll reply on behalf of the Tower but should I go ahead?

CH: The question was to you.

AJ: So I haven't heard of Time Credits um so I'll take that back to our team to have a think about. We do, we're just offering the two for one for residents we are offering now a one pound ticket for those who are in receipt of universal credit along with their families and that's had great success um so that's something we'll certainly look into. Would you like to say the approach across the whole city to that particular thing?

CH: Well again it's the first time I've heard of Time Credits so, we'll come to you and get a bit more information on. Well okay well I'm not I'm not personally aware of them but I will research, the City does ? Right okay well we'll research them. I'm not I'm not I'm not aware specifically. But the more, what you're saying is the more that we can offer that type of thing across the City not just the Tower of London the more it will attract people into the City to spend their money there so it's a it's a no-brainer isn't it we all want to do that so fine, good idea.

AJ: Thank you, is this on the same theme or? Yes, please go after you've got the microphone.

Question: Yeah um Alison Parry it's actually to you because you're talking about two for one. There are a lot of people who live on their own in the City and who aren't about to go and find someone because this is all sort of too complicated so couldn't we have half price for residents?

AJ: Good question.

Question: Unless you set us up with someone.

AJ: So I could start a dating service that would be a different sort of thing but I can also start go back and bring that question back to the team again, thank you it's a good one. Hang on this is all about the City Corporation this is not about the Tower of London.

Moving on to a different theme then any new starters? At the back there sir.

Question: Hi I'm James from uh from Queenhithe I have a question about the um the the four megawatt heat pump under Smithfield and the boreholes and the district heating network. I don't know if that's in scope for this meeting but I wondered if you could talk about that and whether there's times to expand it to cover more of the City?

CH: I'm not sure who this is one that can answer on the panel, I'm looking along the panel. I think we may have to take, oh Paul Wilkinson can he's he knows all about um heat pumps and um so perhaps we could just let Paul who's our City Surveyor for anybody doesn't know him he's very good at this subject.

Paul Wilkinson, City Surveyor (PW): Okay um thank you for the question. So in terms of this is the Citigen network which is part of the E.ON Group of companies and we are actually working with E.ON to actually look at expanding the heat pump network in the City so they're doing a piece of work that will they'll be bringing to us later this year which is good news I think. And they're looking about a) decarbonising the uh the current um facility and then looking to have more sort of local heat pumps um networks around the City so that's something they're really looking at. I guess one of the issues is the cost of of doing it. The civils costs are pretty significant but they're looking at government grants and things such as that but more than happy to catch up with you later to maybe give you more detail. Thank you.

AJ: Thank you. So it's on a similar theme to heat pumps. Well let's let's move on to your theme then. Oh sorry was that was that a following on? Yes let's do follow up first then we'll come back to you.

Question: Thank you my name is Ian Burley and I live in Tudor Rose Court in Fann Street. Talking about heat pumps, there is a new block of flats next to us which I believe views Citigen for their heating and electricity. Our landlords are about to embark on a boiler replacement for our communal areas in the block of 35 flats and they're talking about a gas boiler with a expected life of 25 years which takes us to 39 I think. But I would like them to engage with Citigen to find out whether that's a possibility for us to use the similar system which is already being used next door to us so hopefully the cost of installation wouldn't be too high but I don't know how to begin. I've contacted Citigen and got no response so any any help with that would be great. Thank you very much.

CH: We'll ask Paul to get together with Ian afterwards yeah. Would you do that?

AJ: Thank you is this lady in the dark dress.

Question: Yeah that's funny looks like a makeup brush. Hi my name is Henrika I'm a councillor of Castle Baynard ward I'm also a resident in the City of London and I have a question from one of my constituents who couldn't be here today as a resident. And that person would like me to ask the following. Regarding license applications where the license is for a closing time say after 1 a.m how is the Corporation ensuring that nearby residents can have a reasonable expectation of not being unduly disturbed between 11 p.m and 7 a.m as stated in the Corporation's own statement of licensing? Thank you.

CH: So we might need some help from somebody who does licensing here I mean Marianne used to chair licensing I don't know whether she can help us with it or whether there's an officer who can help us with it because I can't. Oh can you help John with it yeah?

John Fletcher, Deputy Chair of Licensing (JF): John Fletcher I'm Deputy Chair of Licensing.

CH: Oh you are Deputy Chair sorry I do apologise John.

JF: Yes all right I can answer. I can try to answer this yes, there are there are conflicting policies when an application is submitted and there are I think it's eight objections might be less than that it has to be before a tribunal of members of the Licensing Committee. The applicant puts

their case for whatever they have applied for whatever opening hours they have applied for. Objectors get a chance to put their case and of course their case may well include an expectation of um an undisturbed night after 11 p.m. And quite rightly they should do that um and then the panel will take the evidence and based on that evidence, and I I am going to be clear here we are required by government regulation to base our decision on evidence not supposition or guesswork, the tribunal will go the members of the tribunal will go away, consider the evidence and make a decision. Now I'm sure you appreciate it will be wonderful for all residents, and I'm a resident here just down the road, if all activity stopped at 11 o'clock and there was no noise in the City and we all sleep all the way through till seven o'clock in the morning bliss. But we can't do that and have Destination City can we? So there's got to be some nighttime activity and then it comes down to personal judgment of those people who have taken the evidence as to whether the opening hours of any particular establishment will impact too much, will create too much impact on the ability of residents to have an undisturbed nights sleep beyond 11 o'clock. That is the judgment, you've got to judge the distance between where the events are being held and the nearest residents' accommodation, what sort of accommodation it is etc etc. But that's how it's come about and it's all um covered not by City regulation but by government regulation. And I'll just add one thing government regulation is permissive and what that means is that when an application is made and when we sit in judgment we have to assume that we will give the license as requested unless there is evidence against it. Not the other way around. Does that create an explanation satisfactory Chris?

CH: Well thank you I mean that's helpful I don't know the rules around licensing so but thank you hopefully that Henrika you can transfer back to your questioner from your ward I think Marianne's got a point on it though.

AJ: Is that an another one or licensing Marianne?

MF: Thank you um today is actually my election day 16 years ago. And I got elected simply on the back of the licensing laws changing in 2005 and coming into fruition in 2008. And in 2008 for those residents who lived in the City you might recall we went from being a quiet oasis to absolute bedlam. And my ward in particular is Tower ward, all of a sudden we had restaurants becoming nightclubs at the weekends and we had cars broken into, we had vomits, pizza pavements, we had everything going on. And that's when I rocked up to my Wardmote and said to the ward members what are you doing? What's going on with the City? Why are you allowing all these late night licenses? Why have we got all these problems and for most members who aren't residents, who are business members they've got no idea what goes on in the City of London during the weekends. And so I then called for a City-wide meeting and of course that's how we actually started all these meetings off. I then became a member, I then became a member of the Licensing Committee and I became Chairman of the Licensing Committee and I introduced the code of best practice and a lot of things. We had a lot of promoted events in those days and we actually changed it and we got rid of a lot of them. And since then, with proactive policies allowing residents to engage, the noise policy, the officers reacting at weekends dealing with noise issues we've actually had it we struck a balance where residents and the licensing trade could work in harmony. My concern at the moment is we're going to be tipping the other way, because some people misunderstand Destination City.

I think for residents we see Destination City as allowing visitors into the city enjoying what we see on a daily basis. Adding to the City in enhancing the City, not being detrimental.

The concern for the residents at the moment is more late night venues and the problems that we have to deal with when all these business members are at home in Surrey or elsewhere and don't have to deal with the problems we do. And the concern that we have is we are seeing more late night licenses where actually there are grounds not to grant them. Our policy our licensing policy says that we have an expectation as residents to have a good night's sleep from 11 o'clock at night until seven in the morning and so does the World Health Organisation. So it's about actually underpinning the licensing policies and planning policies that we have. But our concern is with Destination City people have misused that term and they're seeing things that they can actually suggest that we have nightclubs everywhere. That might be your view for residents. I don't think it is and I think for the businesses that we have and as Chairman of Licensing I see businesses complaining about the aftermath of the night time economy but also the number of hotels that we have now. So we have a huge number of residents be it permanent residents or day residents and night residents. And therefore where does the City actually stand on late night licenses? Are we going to go back to bedlam? Or are we actually going to keep the balance that we've struck and we have maintained where we can all live in harmony together without actually impinging on one side or the other. So where do you stand on this?

CH: No I think that's a good question I can tell you precisely where I stand on it which is, the level of balance. We've got to protect our residents our residents who live in the City. It's not reasonable to expect them to be disturbed at one o'clock etc, in the morning and licensing in my view the policy should reflect that. Similarly I agree with you, there has been by a minority I would say a tendency to completely misuse and abuse the term Destination City. We see that particularly on a Friday night at Liverpool Street Station when the people pile in some weekends for stag weekends and hen nights and and the like and it causes us and our residents a huge amount of upset. You know it's a problem for environmental services it's a problem for the police and we do not want to become in my view that sort of City. We do not want to attract those people coming in from another county to to to to run those sorts of late night activities in the City of London. That's not what we're set up for, we do need to strike that balance and I think I certainly do not want to see us go back to those days that you mentioned Marianne when you first ran for the Corporation and it was mayhem and chaos and etc. So there's got to be a balance. We want of course we want a vibrant night time economy but a vibrant night time economy does not mean all hell let loose at one o'clock in the morning.

AJ: I think that's a fascinating subject isn't it because it really does cut to the heart of what you're trying to promote with Destination City getting that right but acknowledging the reality that there will be businesses who come in who they can only afford to trade if they're able to trade at night time as well as in the daytime.

We are I'm afraid we're getting very close to that last question. You've had one I'm afraid and so at the back there yep. Sorry, right at the back behind the pillar. Tim will come to you.

Question: [inaudible] I just wondered if you could just elaborate on that because we do share borders particularly Liverpool Street station area with Hackney and Tower and stuff like that I mean is there a some sort of relationship to sort of in place?

CH: Yes I mean look, we as local authorities Corporation and the boroughs London boroughs talk to each other all the time about these sort of cross-border issues. But you know we're not a fortress city, we can't sort of stop people at the border with Tower Hamlets and say, you know you can't come in or you know you've got to go out by such a time. But yes we can of course work proactively and constructively with our neighbouring authorities around the Square Mile

frankly to try to ensure that there is an understanding around these matters but we what we're not is a fortress so we. And I think the best controls are frankly what Marianne is talking about which is the licensing policy and the licensing control because if you have reasonable closing hours and reasonable, you know people can party but not excessively and not late at night then our residents are also protected.

AJ: We have the advantage that we are of course a fortress so.

CH: You are a fortress but you can close your gates.

AJ: Last question sorry just last question.

Question: Hi my name is Katie I live in Cripplegate ward. It's not just noise that is that residents have to put up with I've see, the City seems to be becoming a sewer. Like walking from the Barbican to here along um London Wall I have to dodge so many let's say creeks of urine. It's very unpleasant.

CH: It's for Mary.

AJ: Definitely a Mary question.

MD: Thank you, thank you for the question. Yes I agree that there are spots in the City where this is a problem particularly about late night urination in the streets and vomit and and that sort of thing and that's not what people want and it's not pleasant.

I would say that we have uh I'm well aware that uh cleaning of the streets has not been up to our usual standard in recent years but we have been awarded a extra 1.4 million for, to employ more street sweepers we've now got 70 people who sweep and clean the streets 364 days I think it is a year that's that I think they're allowed Christmas day off but the the rest of the time they're out 24/7 cleaning the streets. In terms of providing toilets we have got a report coming back to our next committee meeting and we are in the process of increasing the number of, I don't know if you know the UriLifts lifts the toilets that come out of the pavement in the evening and pop back down in the first thing in the morning if you're about. There are some of those they are very useful and we're looking to increase the number of those and to advertise that are um the the existing toilets far better than present. Because at the moment many people don't know where they are, and I was certainly surprised that we had, in fact had so many that I didn't even know about. So we're looking to try and get that sit that situation so that people do know where the toilets are and know where the premises. A small thing when we have planning applications now office blocks we are asking them where if they can provide public toilets in their foyer whatever that are accessible to all members of the public not just the people who work in that building. So we are we are making progress it's not it's not easy and a lot of it costs a lot of money which although we have money for street cleaning we haven't got the the money for toilets and that but I'm well aware of the problem. And please if there's anybody, a lot of people have sent me photographs of litter and rubbish on the streets and it's really helpful to use that as an argument for why we need better facilities. And if anybody's got problems with lack of toilets, rubbish, rubbish on the streets, please just let me know. It's very useful. Thank you very much.

AJ: Thank you Mary, that's been a fascinating run through all sorts of different issues and ending with some really basic human needs uh and we have exactly the same issue at our place too.

Chris is there anything you'd like to say in conclusion?

CH: Well only really just first of all Andrew to thank you first for chairing the meeting so effectively. You didn't have to send anyone to the Tower, so that that was that was good news. I'd also like to thank the audience on behalf of the whole panel and the Corporation for your your questions. I think these the City Question Times are really important. The next one will be on the 22nd of October so do put that date in your diary and we'll get more details out to you. We'll we'll do a a follow-up yet again a You Said We Did from tonight, and I hope we'll see you all there on the 22nd and please spread the word to residents. Please tell them about these meetings and encourage as many of them to come as possible. My final thanks are to the Corporation's offices and particularly my own team in my private office who organise these particular events and for the work they've put in in sorting this out and I'm incredibly grateful to them. Do stay and chat over refreshments there's no need to rush away there's refreshments on the right hand side here. And i just like to say thank you again for tonight. Thank you everybody.