

**MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW - SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT
TUESDAY, 27 OCTOBER 2009**

Councillor Beacham, Mallett (Chair), Santry and Webers

Observer Councillor Guest Inattendance Short List

Apologies Councillor

LC10. APOLOGIES

None.

LC11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that Cllr Mallett was a member of the London Cycling Campaign and Cllr Beacham worked for Transport for London. Neither member felt that these declared interests would be prejudicial to the review.

LC12. LATE ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

LC13. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Corrections

In 5.8 it was noted that *Portsmouth City Council* had developed a 20mph speed limit on many city roads (excluding trunk roads) and in many instances, was enforced by signage rather physical barriers (bumps or humps).

In 5.11 it was noted that the Council is evaluating Stop and Shop scheme in both *Crouch End and Muswell Hill*.

Matters arising

The panel requested that actions or decisions agreed within the meeting should be clearly distinguished within the minutes.

The aims and objectives of the review were agreed.

It was noted that the panel would be visiting Sutton Council on 23rd November to learn more about Smarter Travel Sutton.

LC14. BRIEFING FROM SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SERVICE

At the request of the panel the service presented a briefing on transport congestion, school travel plans and pavement repairs. A summary of the main points from this discussion is provided below.

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Congestion

It was noted that projections for congestion on road, tube and rail networks would not significantly improve within the short to medium term. It was noted however, that these projections do not take in to account the recent publication of the Mayors Transport Strategy and the strategies identified in this document to tackle congestion.

School Travel Plans

Whilst it was noted that that inner London authorities appear to have greater success in school travel planning, the panel heard that this was in part due to the density of the public transport network in inner London and the wider range of travel choices available.

The panel heard that all schools have an approved travel plan which should be updated on an annual basis. It was noted that 83/99 schools had an updated travel plan. Small grants had facilitated uptake where schools had been able to build bike sheds and covered areas for those walking to school. There was some notable successes in developing school travel plans: Devonshire Hill Primary School achieved a 13% increase in walking.

Although the borough has good coverage of school travel plans, it was expected that the benefits of school travel plan would begin to tail off as individual circumstances / travel behaviour changed (children change school, school leads move on, parents change job etc). In this context, the most pressing challenge was keeping schools motivated and engaged to the travel planning process.

Agreed: That the School Travel Team is invited to a future panel meeting to outline the next steps in this programme.

Agreed: After consideration of the above, that the panel reflect on how School Travel plans can be refreshed to ensure that travel benefits are maintained and developed.

Footways

The panel noted that planned footpath renewal was determined by a number of criteria including condition of footway, proximity to a school or other public amenity, whether it was a popular shopping route and the desire to spread investment across the borough. It was acknowledged that there was some subjectivity in the selection of roads for repair or renewal.

The panel noted that as footway replacement programme was planned 18 months in advance, this raised questions about how urgent repairs were identified and dealt with in the borough. It was noted that the Executive Member has delegated authority to change the planned footway programme (to bring forward repairs or add new locations). It was also noted that there are two separate budgets (planned footway repair and reactive maintenance budget) to cover all short and medium term footway replacements.

The panel noted that the Council now has a robust system of inspection in place where roads and footpaths are inspected twice annually. This had reduced the Council's insurance premiums by one third.

The panel were keen to ensure that a process was developed which aimed to consult local residents on priorities for footway repair and replacement. This could be

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conducted through the local community groups or the network of local residents associations.

Agreed: That the panel consider recommendations for the report to identify ways in which local residents are consulted to identify priorities for footway repairs and replacement.

LC15. THE GREENEST BOROUGH STRATEGY

The Panel received a verbal presentation from the Programme Manager for the Greenest Borough Strategy. The presentation highlighted how the strategy was developed, the relevance of sustainable transport within the strategy, the implementation of the strategy and how objectives within the strategy were monitored and assessed. A summary of the key issues discussed is presented below.

The Greenest Borough Strategy was developed in response to the aspirations of local residents and of the need to develop a coordinated response to the climate change agenda. The strategy was developed through a wide ranging public consultation exercise. It was noted that there were 7 key priorities within the strategy:

- Improving the urban environment
- Protecting the natural environment
- Managing environmental resources efficiently
- Raising awareness and involvement
- Leading by example
- Ensuring sustainable design and construction
- Promoting sustainable travel

Of particular relevance to the panel was priority 6: the promotion of sustainable travel. To help achieve this priority, the strategy identified four key objectives:

- Reduce car and lorry travel in the borough
- Improve public and community transport
- Encourage more people to walk and cycle
- Reduce the environmental impact of transport

An important aspect of the strategy was that the Council should be seen to lead by example and there were ways in which it was doing this. It had undertaken an extensive staff travel planning exercise, training had been given to fleet drivers to drive more efficiently and fleet vehicles were being assessed to improve efficiency and environmental impact.

Project leads are assigned to individual priorities within the strategy. The leads for sustainable transport are the Head of Sustainable Transport (JH) and the Team Leader for Transportation (MS). The council's partners are encouraged to develop an active role in meeting these priorities.

A programme board oversees the Greenest Borough Strategy. In addition, a quarterly progress report is submitted to the Better Places Partnership Board which maps activities and performance against agreed targets. An annual report will also be produced from 2010. The panel noted that there a number of tangible measures

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through which to assess the progress of the strategy i.e. CO2 emissions, uptake of car club etc.

The panel were keen to understand further about the performance monitoring process for the strategy; in particular 1) what interventions/ actions were delivering against the four sustainable transport objectives within the strategy and 2) how well these actions were delivering against the priorities. It was suggested that the panel should receive the latest quarterly monitoring from the Greenest Borough Strategy to update on strategy progression.

Agreed: Greenest Borough Strategy performance report to be circulated to the panel (papers for the next meeting).

The panel noted that considerable amount of effort had been undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the work within the Greenest Borough Strategy. A gap analysis had been undertaken to ensure that there were sufficient actions to deliver on key objectives and a prioritisation process had been undertaken to ensure that what actions were being undertaken were those which had most impact. These were identified as: School Travel Plans, Community and Local Transport & Car Clubs.

The panel were keen to hear further about how the council was leading by example. Here it was recorded that there was a successful staff travel plan in place (which had reduced people travelling to work by car by 5%) and that fleet vehicles were being assessed for the level of corporate emissions. Like other Local Authorities, the Council is assessing how emissions of its contractors are recorded and monitored. It was also noted that travel information is contained in recruitment packs.

The panel were keen to understand what local partners and local businesses were doing to promote sustainable transport and what support the Council provides in this process. It was noted that the Council shared a Workplace Travel Advisor with another five boroughs (an arrangement which could be improved) to support sustainable travel. For larger businesses (250+) these could contact Transport for London directly who would be able to provide support in developing sustainable travel plans.

Agreed: The panel conduct further work to assess what partners are doing to promote sustainable travel.

Members were also keen to know how well Street Car was performing locally (the local car hire scheme). It was reported that there had been a good uptake of scheme Membership and that the average usage of cars within the scheme was 15 hours per day. The panel heard that up to 6 people may give up their cars for every street car deployed.

23 bays were planned across the borough but 8 had not been taken up because of local objections. There is a target of developing 80 local bays which are evenly spread throughout the borough where residents are no more than 5 minutes distant. There is guaranteed funding to develop bays further through to and including 2010/2011.

The panel discussed where bays for Street Car should be located and how to avoid areas where there was already parking stress. The panel felt that bays should also go

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in areas where public transport was relatively poor given that cars are 'aspirational goods' and this may widen peoples travel choices.

LC16. CORE STRATEGY AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Representatives from Transport Policy and Planning Policy presented information on the Core Strategy and responded to questions from the panel. Highlights of these discussions are presented below.

The planning principles laid out within the Core Strategy (2011-2026) are aligned to the Sustainable Community Strategy and provide the overarching planning guide for development and land use within Haringey. The Core Strategy details 12 policy proposals which describe how the borough will manage issues of housing, climate change, transport, employment, leisure, retail, open space, and design up until 2026. Public consultation on this document was completed in June 2009.

In relation to transport the proposed planning policy guidelines indicates that these should support economic regeneration, improve security, reduce car dependency, combat climate change and improve environmental quality. To do this the Council will:

- Promote public transport, cycling and walking
- Integrate transport planning and land use planning to reduce the need to travel
- Promote improvements to public transport interchanges
- Locate trip generating developments (i.e. supermarkets) in locations with good public transport
- Support measure to influence behavioral change.

The panel sought clarification of the council's position on car free developments. It was noted that the Council is supportive of car free developments and also specify maximum car parking spaces for other new developments.

The Panel also wished to clarify aims of the Core Strategy to minimize the need to travel. It was explained that this was not an attempt to restrict peoples aspirations to travel as it was recognised that people acquire many health and social benefits from mobility. It was hoped that new developments would minimize the need to travel through creating sustainable communities where a range of socio-economic opportunities were easily accessible (leisure, shopping, transport nodes etc).

Following on from this the panel were keen to understand how the council could promote sustainable town centers? The panel were concerned that some of the town centers were under pressure from the rising cost of rentals which was a deterrent to smaller businesses. High rentals may lead to a loss of diversity in the nature of shops and businesses in local town centers as only chains or high turnover businesses (pubs and restaurants) may be able to afford such rentals.

It was reported that the usage class of a property (retail A1) could not change without permission, so properties would essentially stay as retail outlets. What was proving more difficult however was to preserve the individual nature of local town centers, because an A1 designation would not prohibit some chain stores/ outlets from taking over leases.

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The panel noted that an audit was undertaken (prior to the recession) of all local metropolitan (Wood Green) and district shopping centers (Muswell Hill, Crouch End & Seven Sisters and Tottenham). This audit identified that district centers were doing quite well, though Wood Green was under threat and needed to operate more effectively. The biggest problem was identified to be the number of vacant shops and the need to diversify appeal to a broader range of leisure and entertainment opportunities.

The panel believed that creating diverse sustainable communities with a range of opportunities for local residents was important in promoting sustainable transport as this reduced the need to travel further a field (and the use of cars). It was noted that this was a very complex issue which involved many other factors apart from planning policy such as the use of the internet for shopping and the availability of parking (for cars and bikes).

The panel also sought to ascertain how walking and cycling routes were planned for new developments, such as Haringey Heartlands. It was reported a comprehensive planning exercise is involved which looks to assess a wide range of evidence to determine what may be needed in terms of transport infrastructure. The planning exercise looks at the population projections, the likely transport demands of residents and how routes can be connected to other transport hubs.

The panel also sought to clarify who was consulted in the planning and development of the boroughs cycle lanes. It was noted that Haringey Cycling Campaign are consulted in the development of the cycle network. It was also reported that there is a planned cycle network for the borough (London Cycle Network+) which the borough is gradually implementing (section by section). The aim being to fill in the gaps in the network over time for the eventual completion of the whole network. This can often give the appearance that the network is disjointed.

It was noted that Section 106 money¹ may be used to develop local infrastructure such as cycle routes and other environmental improvements. The panel was informed however that there was a lot of competition for S106 monies, where it was noted that environmental projects are not always accorded sufficient priority against other competing projects.

LC17. NHS HARINGEY

Representatives from NHS Haringey were not able to be present.

LC18. PLACE SURVEY

¹ The council can enter into a Section 106 agreement with a developer to provide contributions to offset any negative impacts caused by development (e.g. the provision of affordable homes, new open space, funding of school places or employment training schemes. The developer will either implement these or make payments to the council for them to be carried out. All Section 106 agreements must be relevant to the development they relate to.

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The panel noted the briefing on the methodology used for the Place Survey. In addition to charts of the comparative performance of all London boroughs in the survey (for pollution, traffic congestion, public transport) was presented to the panel.

LC19. MEMBER CYCLE CHAMPION

The Panel noted the briefing from Cycling England concerning the appointment of a Member Champion for Cycling. The panel thought that this was good initiative and should be included within the recommendations of the final report.

Agreed: That the appointment of a Member Champion for Cycling should be included within the recommendations for the review.

LC20. LATE ITEMS OF BUSINESS

None.

LC21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

17th November 2009.

Clr George Meehan

Chair