



**Haringey** Council

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## Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel

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THURSDAY, 20TH MARCH, 2014 at 18:30 HRS - CIVIC CENTRE, HIGH ROAD, WOOD GREEN, N22 8LE.

**MEMBERS:** Councillors Alexander, Bloch, Bull, Gibson, McNamara (Chair), Stanton and Weber

### AGENDA

#### 1. WEBCASTING

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If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the Scrutiny Support Officer at the meeting.

#### 2. APOLOGIES

#### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A member with a disclosable pecuniary interest or a prejudicial interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered:

(i) must disclose the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent, and

(ii) may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must withdraw from the meeting room.

A member who discloses at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary interest which is not registered in the Members' Register of Interests or the subject of a pending notification must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the disclosure.

Disclosable pecuniary interests, personal interests and prejudicial interest are defined at Paragraphs 5-7 and Appendix A of the Members' Code of Conduct.

**4. URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair will consider the admission of any late items of urgent business. Late items will be considered under the agenda item where they appear. New items will be dealt with at the end of the agenda.

**5. DEPUTATIONS**

To consider any requests received in accordance with Part 4, Section B, paragraph 29 of the Council's constitution.

**6. FRIENDS OF PARKS GROUPS (18.30) (PAGES 1 - 4)**

As part of its work with local Environmental Groups, Friends of Parks groups have been invited to attend to discuss the following:

- 1) What barriers do Friends of Parks groups face for engagement in local environmental projects and how can these be overcome?
- 2) What are the features of successful Friends of Parks groups and can these be developed further across Haringey?
- 3) What practical steps can the council take to support Friends of Parks groups in the future?

It is anticipated that there will be a small number of dedicated slots for individual groups to feedback to the panel as well as more generalised discussion.

Attached: List of Friends of Parks Groups in Haringey

**7. LEISURE CLIENT SERVICES - HARINGEY COUNCIL (20.00)**

Simon Farrow, Client Services Manager

**8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITHIN PLANNING SERVICES (20.30)**

To:

- 1) Discuss key evidence from the evidence gathering sessions
- 2) Outline conclusions and recommendations from the review

To follow

**9. STRATEGIC ENFORCEMENT (21.00)**

To:

- 3) Discuss key evidence from the evidence gathering sessions
- 4) Outline conclusions and recommendations from the review

To follow

## **10. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS (PAGES 5 - 24)**

- 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013
- 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013
- 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014-03-12 - to follow
- 24<sup>th</sup> February 2014 - to follow

## **11. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME SUGGESTIONS**

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Wednesday, 12 March 2014

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## Haringey Friends of Parks Groups

Parks & OS	Friends Group	Ward	Area Assembly	Area
Albert Road Recreation Ground	Friends of Albert Road Recreation Ground	Alexandra	Muswell Hill, Alexandra, Fortis Green and Highgate Area Forum and Committee	West
Avenue Gardens	Avenue Gardens Residents Association (AGRA)	Bounds Green	Wood Green Area Forum and Committee	West
Belmont Recreation Ground	Friends of Belmont Recreation Ground	West Green	West Green & Bruce Grove Area Forum and Committee	East
Bowes Park Community Garden	Friends of Bowes Park Community Garden	Bounds Green	Wood Green Area Forum and Committee	West
Bruce Castle Park	Friends of Bruce Castle Park & Museum	White Hart Lane	Northumberland Park & White Hart Lane Area Forum and Committee	East
Chapmans Green	Friends of Chapmans Green	Woodside	Wood Green Area Forum and Committee	West
Chestnuts Park	Friends of Chestnuts Park	St Ann's	St Ann's & Harringay Area Forum and Committee	East
Coldfall Wood & Muswell Hill Playing Fields	Friends of Coldfall Wood & Muswell Hill Playing Fields	Fortis Green	Muswell Hill, Alexandra, Fortis Green and Highgate Area Forum and Committee	West
Downhills Park	Friends of Downhills Park	West Green	West Green & Bruce Grove Area Forum and Committee	East
Ducketts Common	Friends of Ducketts Common	Harringay	St Ann's & Harringay Area Forum and Committee	West
Fairland Park	Friends of Fairland Park	Harringay	St Ann's & Harringay Area Forum and Committee	West
Finsbury Gardens	Friends of Finsbury Gardens	Bounds Green	Wood Green Area Forum and Committee	West
Finsbury Park	Friends of Finsbury Park	Harringay	St Ann's & Harringay Area Forum and Committee	West
Graham Road Triangle	Friends of Graham Green	West Green	West Green & Bruce Grove Area Forum and Committee	East
Granville Road	Friends of Granville Road	Stroud Green	Crouch End, Hornsey & Stroud Green Area	West

Spinney	Spinney		Forum and Committee	
Greengate Common	Friends of Greengate Common	Harringay	St Ann's & Harringay Area Forum and Committee	West
Hartington Park	Friends of Hartington Park	Tottenham Hale	Tottenham & Seven Sisters Area Forum and Committee	West
Highgate Church Yard	The Highgate Society	Highgate	Muswell Hill, Alexandra, Fortis Green and Highgate Area Forum and Committee	
Hornsey Church Tower	Friends of Hornsey Church Tower	Hornsey	Crouch End, Hornsey & Stroud Green Area Forum and Committee	West
Lordship Recreation Ground	Friends of Lordship Recreation Ground	West Green	West Green & Bruce Grove Area Forum and Committee	East
Markfield Park	Friends of Markfield Park	Seven Sisters	Tottenham & Seven Sisters Area Forum and Committee	East
Nightingale Gardens	Avenue Gardens Residents Association (AGRA)	Bounds Green	Wood Green Area Forum and Committee	West
Paignton Park	Friends of Paignton Park	Seven Sisters	Tottenham & Seven Sisters Area Forum and Committee	East
Parkland Walk	Friends of Parkland Walk (North)	Muswell Hill	Muswell Hill, Alexandra, Fortis Green and Highgate Area Forum and Committee	West
Priory Common	Friends of Priory Common	Muswell Hill	Muswell Hill, Alexandra, Fortis Green and Highgate Area Forum and Committee	West
Priory Park	Friends of Priory Park	Muswell Hill/Hornsey	Muswell Hill, Alexandra, Fortis Green and Highgate Area Forum and Committee / Crouch End, Hornsey & Stroud Green Area Forum and Committee	West
Queens Wood	Friends of Queens Wood	Muswell Hill/Highgate	Muswell Hill, Alexandra, Fortis Green and Highgate Area Forum and Committee	West
Railway Fields	Friends of Railway Fields	Harringay	St Ann's & Harringay Area Forum and Committee	West
Rectory Gardens	interested person	Hornsey	Crouch End, Hornsey & Stroud Green Area Forum and Committee	West
Russell Park	Friends of Russell Park	Noel Park	Wood Green Area Forum and Committee	West

Shepherds Hill Gardens	Friends of Shepherds Hill Gardens	Hornsey	Crouch End, Hornsey & Stroud Green Area Forum and Committee	West
Springfield Park	Friends of Springfield Park	Bounds Green	Wood Green Area Forum and Committee	West
Stationers Park	Friends of Stationers Park	Stroud Green	Crouch End, Hornsey & Stroud Green Area Forum and Committee	West
The Paddock	Friends of The Paddock	Tottenham Hale	Tottenham & Seven Sisters Area Forum and Committee	East
Tottenham Green	Friends of Tottenham Green	Tottenham Green		East
Tottenham Cemetery	Friends of Tottenham Cemetery			
Tower Gardens	Tower Gardens Residents Group	White Hart Lane	Northumberland Park & White Hart Lane Area Forum and Committee	West
White Hart Lane Recreation Ground	Friends of Woodside Park	Woodside	Wood Green Area Forum and Committee	West
Wood Green Common/Barratt Gardens	Guardians of Wood Green Common	Noel Park	Wood Green Area Forum and Committee	West
Woodside Park	Friends of Woodside Park	Woodside	Wood Green Area Forum and Committee	West

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**Minutes of the Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

**Present:** Cllr Gibson, Cllr McNamara (Chair) and Cllr Weber

**In attendance:** Graham, Beattie (LBH), Sandra Hoiz (Groundwork), Emma Williamson (LBH), Clodah McGuirk, Sule Nisancioglu, Zoe Robertson (LBH) and Ransford Stewart (LBH).

**1. Apologies for absence**

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Alexander, Cllr Bloch and Cllr Bull.

**2. Declarations of interest**

2.1 None received.

**3. Deputations**

3.1 None received.

**4. Minutes and actions points of last meeting**

4.1 The minutes of the previous meeting (28<sup>th</sup> September 2013) were agreed by the panel.

**5. Environmental Community Groups - Groundwork**

5.1 The panel agreed to invite a number of community groups to attend to present some of the work that is being undertaken in Haringey. The focus of this work was to:

- Help raise the profile of local environmental community groups in the borough;
- Help to build links with members and council services;
- Identify current work challenges and make recommendations on how these may be overcome,
- Identify opportunities to extend work and improve outcomes in the borough.

5.2 Groundwork is a charity that has been delivering environmental regeneration projects for 30 years. The group has a long history of working in Haringey (8 years) and has worked with the Council, Homes for Haringey and voluntary sector groups. A key approach of Groundwork is to work with and empower local residents. The group offers:

- Consultation, design and implementation expertise;
- Professional input into local environmental projects (landscape architecture, project management);
- Community engagement and capacity building skills;
- Employment skills and training.

5.3 Groundwork London helps people and organisations make changes in order to create better neighbourhoods, to build skills and job prospects and to live and work in a greener way. A six year funding agreement is in place with the council which Groundwork use to attract further funding into the Borough. The panel noted that an additional £565k of external funding has been secured towards projects in Haringey over the past 2 years.

- 5.4 A key area of work of Groundwork is to produce Master Plans for Parks development and produces 3 per year. A typical landscape project on a park or open space will involve a prolonged period of consultation, working with a stakeholder group. Once a design has been agreed Groundwork will work to secure the required funding, typically through charitable trusts, the Big Lottery and landfill funding awards. Once secured, the project will be delivered in partnership with the council. Past development projects included:
- Fairland's Park (£270k); LBH, Big Lottery, LMT and Veolia
  - Stationers Park (£160k) – LBH, Biffa, Big Lottery LTWGS
  - Duckets Common (£250k);
- 5.5 Groundwork also supports the development of Community Action Plans which help to guide local people's efforts to look after green spaces. This simple plan is developed in partnership with LBH, residents and local groups and sets out tasks and responsibilities for implementation. Local groups are trained to help build capacity.
- 5.6 A timebank is also supported by Groundwork in which the skills and experience of local people (e.g. cooking, baking, woodcraft) are exchanged for other services. This service operates out of Winkfield Road, has 200 members and exchanged over 5,000 volunteer hours.
- 5.7 The panel noted that a community gardening scheme is in operation, which seeks to bring back in to use small areas of land which are neglected or abandoned. There is a good partnership with Homes for Haringey, which has helped to identify local green spaces on housing estates and facilitated community engagement and involvement. In Ferry Lane, there were 30 local residents involved in community gardening. Other outcomes from this work include:
- Skill building, improved confidence
  - Community cohesion
  - Access to cheap fruit and vegetables
- 5.8 The panel noted that employment, skills and training is provided through Green Teams. This scheme offers accredited training to dedicated groups (young people, vulnerable people) to learn new skills, gain qualifications and enhance employment prospects as well as helping to create better greener places. There are two schemes in operation in Haringey one within Homes for Haringey (vulnerable tenants scheme) and the other within LBH Parks (parks maintenance). The Green Team maintain 3 parks in Haringey including Downhills and Chestnuts,
- 5.9 The panel noted the key priorities for commissioned work in Haringey for 2013-2015 include:
- Master Planning for Parks
  - Community Action Plans
  - Capacity building for local groups
  - Local volunteer and recruitment
  - Developing effective marketing and publicity
  - Working with hard to reach groups
  - Employment, skills and training

- Fundraising.

5.10 The panel noted that key outcomes delivered by Groundwork included:

- Bringing together, social, economic and environmental regeneration and improving local green parks and spaces;
- On average, 650 days of active involvement of local adults and young people in local projects
- Fundraising ability: £565,000 of external funding secured to projects in 2 years;
- Supporting two Green Teams (Employment, skills and training to local people).

5.11 The panel indicated that there was significant potential to build and extend upon the principles embodied through the work of Groundwork, in particular using community engagement and involvement to identify, cultivate and maintain small pockets of neglected green spaces across the borough. This approach could help to bring community ownership / involvement in to green regeneration and bring neglected areas back in to use.

5.12 It was noted by the panel that a significant factor in the success of local projects was the degree to which local residents, community groups and friends of parks could be engaged and involved. The panel noted the success of Lorship Rec, of which a contributory factor was the presence of strong, effective and mobilised community groups. In other areas, engagement had proved more difficult.

5.13 The panel noted that current sites supported by Groundwork for community gardening were on the whole, those nominated by officers (in consultation with other bodies). The panel suggested that there should be a more organic or 'bottom up' approach to the identification of potential sites to be developed, and indicated that there should be a mechanism through which to consult local communities to help identify areas of neglected green space in each ward.

**Agreed:** that a mechanism is created through which to consult local residents to help identify 'pocket sites' to be potentially redeveloped as community green-space (e.g. community garden).

5.14 Similarly, the panel felt that the selection of sites for redevelopment could also contribute to 'designing out' those sites associated with fly tipping, particularly if these were cross referenced with Veolia and Neighbourhood Action Team data (NAT).

**Agreed:** that Veolia and NAT fly-tipping data further informs the selection of pocket sites for potential redevelopment.

5.15 It was noted in discussions, that whilst conversions of pocket sites would not necessarily be problematic, that maintenance and upkeep of such sites would represent much more of a challenge. There were however, examples presented to the panel of such pocket sites which could be very low maintenance e.g. green roofs, green walls and rain gardens.

5.16 In addition, the panel noted that there were too many instances within new development which were creating small pockets of land which were becoming

neglected. It was acknowledged that in respect of technical guidance on landscaping there was lack of in-house expertise, and that the planning service would welcome further input. It was suggested that the experience and skills of Groundwork could be put to greater effect in design consultation stage of local development to ensure that potential 'dead land' is not incorporated within plans and to maximise the greening of local development.

**Agreed:** that Groundwork would attend a future meeting of the Development Management team to provide further expertise and guidance as to how green spaces can be incorporated in to new development and minimise the occurrence of 'dead spaces' that could become neglected.

**Agreed:** That the sustainable Design Guidelines would be reassessed.

5.17 The Chair and the panel thanked Groundwork for attending and for giving a full and informative account of its work in the borough.

## **6. Performance report**

6.1 This report was deferred from the last agenda and was noted by the panel.

## **7. Environment Department Update**

7.1 At the previous meeting, an update was requested on a number of issues relating to services within Frontline.

### Out Haringey App

7.2 Officers gave a short presentation on the Our Haringey App, a reporting tool for smart phones for street based issues (e.g. potholes, fly tipping, rubbish and pavement repairs). The system uses GPS to pinpoint the location of reported item, allows details to be recorded (including a photo) and can be used with iPhone and Android operating systems (via free download). The APP can be used by local residents, groups as well as front line and all other council staff.

7.3 Reports generated through the APP go to the contact centre at Veolia and directed to the appropriate Haringey service (e.g. NATs or Highways). Residents (or other reporter) will receive an email update when report is received and confirmed when the job is closed.

7.4 The panel noted that whilst this APP did allow pictures to be sent to support the report, it was not encouraged to use this facility to report 'in-situ' contraventions such as fly tipping. Aside from the personal risk of reporting such instances, it was not clear if such material could be used as evidence to support any prosecutions.

7.5 It was confirmed to the panel however that if there were suspicions of illegal or unauthorised dumping, details could be checked within NAT to ensure that there was an appropriate license to support this (trade waste), and if necessary, appropriate enforcement action taken.

### Waste Contract Management Group

- 7.6 A briefing repapered for the panel was discussed. It was noted that this group was no longer functioning as it was perceived that this duplicated the contract management function of the Partnership Board.
- 7.7 The panel indicated that the current arrangement did not allow for sufficient member involvement for a service which was of particular importance within the community and is a significant contributor to local casework. The panel agreed that it would be useful if data could come to the EHSP as this may help bring further accountability and inform further scrutiny work.

#### Contamination Policy

- 7.8 The Panel noted that where contamination was present in recycling, this could potentially contaminate the whole truck, which may mean that the entire load being rejected and incorporated in to residual waste. A contamination policy was developed in April 2013 to minimise such occurrences. The panel heard that NAT deployed a three step approach to tackling contamination with offending residents; this was a balance between education and enforcement.
- 7.9 Prior to April 2013, contamination reports totalled (on average) 500-600 per week or 0.7% collections. Despite an initial increase after the introduction of the policy (where possibly more cases were being reported), contamination reports had reduced to back to original levels (500 reports per week).
- 7.10 Analysis undertaken by Veolia over the period late July to 13<sup>th</sup> October 2013 indicated that there were 9,200 contamination reports that involved 7,450 individual properties. The overwhelming majority (83%) of these reports related to the first contamination incident (12% of reports were for a 2<sup>nd</sup> incident, 3% for 3<sup>rd</sup> incident, 1% for a 4<sup>th</sup> incident and 1% for a 5<sup>th</sup> incident. This would seem to infer that most households comply after one incident and that there is not a significant core of repeat offenders.
- 7.11 In the 3 months to November, it was noted that there were just 100 households with 3 or more contamination notes. NAT was preparing FPNs under the Environmental Protection Act (section 46 Notice) which would incur a £65 fine to offending households. HMOs would be dealt with under provision within the Town & Country Planning Act (Section 215).

#### Community Environmental Champions

- 7.12 The panel understood that up to 30 local residents would be trained as environmental champions developed across Haringey. Environmental Champions would:
- Help to report environmental crime in their area;
  - Cascade environmental information across the community;
  - Act as a reference or focus group to discuss environmental issues within Haringey.
- 7.13 The panel noted that the initial training and recruitment day was being held on the 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014 and would initially seek at least one community environmental champion from each ward. The panel indicated that it would be useful if members

could be notified of local environmental champions, to be able to offer them support and links to other local groups.

**Agreed:** It was agreed that members would be notified of the environmental champion for each ward

#### Heavy Good Vehicles (Automatic Number Plate Recognition (HGV – ANPR))

- 7.14 Further to previous panel discussions and the successful business case presented, it was noted that HGV ANPR was being procured and would commence operation in January 2014. As this was a mobile unit (not fixed but not a car), there was a possibility that this could also be used for other traffic enforcement issues, for example, on zig zag lines near schools.

### **8. Community engagement with planning**

#### Scope

- 8.1 The panel agreed that community engagement with planning would be a project in the work programme for 2013-14. The panel discussed and agreed the proposed project scoping report. The overarching aim of this work was to:

*‘To assess whether residents and communities have appropriate opportunities to engage meaningfully in local planning processes through community engagement and involvement strategies within the planning service (with particular reference to the Statement of Community Involvement).’*

#### Evidence from Planning Officers

- 8.2 The panel noted that the Planning Service was committed to involving and consulting with local people in all planning processes and decisions and that the views of local people were important in shaping the future of the borough. Effective community involvement and consultation is fundamental to this process to ensure that decisions are reasoned, transparent and accountable to the community.
- 8.3 The panel heard that the planning service undertakes consultations for two types of planning processes:
- planning applications; and
  - planning policy documents.

#### Statement of Community Involvement

- 8.4 It was noted that consultations on both planning applications and planning policy documents are subject to statutory requirements. In addition, the principles and methods of local planning consultations are statutorily required to be set out in a local Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The panel noted that the SCI is generally a framework document as too much detail may stifle creativity and could be subject a Planning Service to legal challenge if not complied with.
- 8.5 The panel noted that Haringey’s SCI was first adopted in May 2007 and was reviewed in February 2011 in response to changes in planning law. The planning service aims to exceed any minimum requirements detailed in the SCI, though this

will depend on the type of consultation, the targeted consultees and resources available.

8.6 The panel noted that the SCI needs to be updated to reflect the introduction of Localism Act, National Planning Policy Framework and Neighbourhood Planning. The review will also incorporate a review of new engagement tools available to the Council. The panel noted that its work, which would involve consulting local groups on the SCI, would also contribute to the review process.

Planning Consultations

8.7 The Planning Service consults in the formulation of local planning policies; these would include major planning documents at the Core Strategy, as well as more specific policies for particular planning issues. Minimum requirements for consultations are set out by government, and the SCI provides additional methods and approaches to help ensure community involvement is effective and reaches local stakeholders.

8.8 Different methods and requirements for consultation are required depending on the status of the planning document, for example, whether it is a Development Plan Document (DPD) or a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD):

- A DPD brings forward statutory local policy which requires at least two stages of community consultation and an independent examination.
- An SPD provides further guidance for policies in DPDs and as such requires only one stage of community consultation and is not subject to an examination.

8.9 The panel noted that a variety of local stakeholders were involved at various stages of the plan making process and include:

- Statutory consultees (e.g. Mayor of London, neighbouring boroughs, fire, police, utilities, health, transport);
- Representative bodies
- Community groups
- Business groups, planning agents and consultants
- Local residents and individuals.

8.10 The planning service maintains a database of local stakeholders and currently this has almost 1,500 entries. The database is updated every three years and this last occurred in 2012. In some cases the Planning Policy team will access other consultation databases to target groups or individuals for particular issues, for example the London Landlord Association database was used for consultation on the for the introduction of the Article 4 Direction.

8.11 Consultations need to be flexible, accessible and proactive and above all, tailored to meet the needs of consultees and the scope of the planning document. In this context a wide range of consultative methods can be deployed to inform and engage local residents. These could include:

• On line surveys	• workshops
• Dedicated focus groups	• Area Forums

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drop in sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Street leafleting</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance at residents and community group meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public roadshows, exhibitions, stalls</li> </ul>

8.12 Informal methods of consulting such as drop-in sessions, public exhibitions and on street leafleting proved to be successful in engaging with individuals who have not been involved with Planning before and who would otherwise not have the time, interest or inclination to submit a formal response to a consultation. Their views and issues are captured and in some cases the participants will ask to be included in the consultation database to receive information on future consultations.

8.13 Notifications setting out when and how the Council will consult on a particular document is published through a variety of mediums including: local press; the Council's website; emails and letters to statutory consultees, all organisations, voluntary and community groups, and individuals on the Planning Policy consultation database; the Council's consultation calendar; Haringey People (when appropriate); and information leaflets and posters (when appropriate). Printed documents are made available in public libraries and in the planning service office.

8.14 The panel noted that wherever possible, the Planning Service seeks to work with established structures such as the Developers Forum, Conservation Area Advisory Committees, Tenants Forums and residents' associations which allow engagement with a wider audience.

Statutory Consultees

8.15 In the presentation given to the panel it was noted that there were a number of agencies which need to be systematically consulted within certain planning processes these included Thames Water, Fire Service, Police Service, Environment Agency and English Heritage. Contact is predominantly via email and is made in accordance with guidance from individual bodies.

8.16 In discussion on statutory planning consultees it was noted that:

- statutory consultees do not have to respond to consultations
- In respect of development consultations, there is a threshold for statutory consultation.
- The provision of responses from statutory consultees varies, and that a planning view or judgement has to be taken where there has been no response.
- In respect of Development Management, statutory consultees would be re-evaluated.

Internal consultees

8.17 The panel discussed those services from within the Council that are routinely consulted within planning applications. The panel indicated that it would be useful to understand further what services were included, what was asked and how frequently these responded to consultations.



### Website

8.18 The panel discussed the use of the website as a tool through which to provide planning information. A wide range of planning information is contained on the site, including local planning policies, planning proposals and planning advice. Whilst it was acknowledged that there was a lot of information on the website and that improvements have been made, it was acknowledged that further work to improve the content and accessibility would be undertaken (it would be assessed as part of the Development Management improvement programme). The panel also noted that:

- It would be useful, if (panel) members could receive a demonstration of the planning service website, how and information is stored and can be accessed;
- Planning consultation responses would be labelled in the future.

### Pre-application discussions

8.19 The panel noted that constructive pre-application discussions between potential applicants and planning officers can help to ensure all relevant considerations are addressed when an application is submitted. The opportunity for local stakeholders to engage and discuss proposals offers a number of potential benefits to the planning process:

- It can help to identify improvements needed to a scheme before it is formally considered;
- Improve the quality of the submitted application (for example, ensure that it is supported within development plan, conforms with local planning policies);
- Facilitate the speedier delivery of decisions, time and cost savings and higher quality development;
- Bring greater certainty into the process;
- Less pressurised timescales also allow for greater community engagement and involvement.

8.20 Due to issues of probity, the panel noted that there was no formal member involvement in the pre-application process. Planning Authorities were naturally wary that members could be accused of predetermination when applications subsequently came in for consideration that may result in legal challenge. The panel noted however that the Localism Act (2011) has recognised the benefits of involving members in pre-application consultation and seeking of advice at a pre-application stage so long as members:

- Avoid expressing an overall view and indication of how they intend to vote
- Limit their questions to an understanding of the proposal
- Asking questions which could not be viewed as having a closed mind.

8.21 In written evidence submitted at the meeting the panel noted that a number of other London Authorities had established pre-application consultation processes in which members were involved:

- **Camden** – operates Development Management Forum for large scale development proposals at a pre-application stage to help understand the aims and any constraints as early as possible and see how proposals can be adapted to better reflect community aspirations. The forum enables local residents, business and organisations to comment on proposals at an early stage and

supplements any developer consultation. Members and officers attend but do not express any opinions on the merits of the proposal.

- **Croydon** – operate a Strategic Planning Committee that both determines major planning applications and receives presentations on them at the pre-application stage. At key points in the pre-application process the developer has the opportunity to present their schemes to the committee and for members ask questions and give their opinion on aspects of the scheme (though must avoid giving their opinion on the scheme as a whole).
- **Lambeth** – operate a strategic panel where members and senior officers are briefed on major development proposals at pre-application stage. The protocol sets out that the panel will have no decision-making powers, nor will views expressed be binding or influence the way in which applications may be reported to and determined by the Planning Applications Committee.
- **Wycombe** – have a facility for developer presentations to members and stakeholders immediately before Planning Committee. Invitees include all members of the Council, relevant officers, representative of the Highway Authority, Chairman of the Parish/Town Council and a deputy, members of local associations and residents groups.

8.22 It was noted however, that member involvement at the pre-application stage should not be undertaken without an agreed protocol as this may unnecessarily open any member on the planning committee to avoidable risks of challenge on apparent pre-determination. The panel noted that a review of the current member protocol for involvement in planning is scheduled for 2014 which will draw on experience and best practice in other authorities.

#### Member involvement (general)

- 8.23 The role of members in local planning processes was discussed by the panel. The panel noted that there were three issues:
- that greater use could be made of the existing knowledge and skills of local councillors in planning consultations and processes;
  - the need to further publicise to members the planning resources available to them (e.g. website, publications, public advice services) to support their role in community planning processes (e.g. liaison with local residents and groups);
  - the need for further ongoing tiered training on the role of members in local planning processes should be made available to support members role (as above).

#### Benchmarking consultation costs with other Local Authorities

- 8.24 The panel noted from the officer presentation that the average cost for consulting on applications for residential development in Haringey was £708, this was significantly higher than the comparator average of £266. In fact, the nearest borough average was £300. It was suggested that this figure would indicate that there is a wide level

of consultation and engagement in Haringey. It was suggested this additional cost of consultation could in part be attributed to larger / or wider consultation areas for each development in Haringey.

8.25 From written evidence submitted to the panel it was noted that a summary of consultation is produced for each planning application and this accompanies application document on the website. A sample from these provides an illustration of the levels of consultation:

- Hornsey Depot application for Sainsbury's and 438 residential units, 3,931 residents were consulted;
- Mowlem Trading Estate – the replacement of warehouses, 102 residents were consulted;
- Somerset Gardens Health Centre an application for change of use of part of Doctors surgery to include a pharmacy, 92 letters were sent
- for recent householder application - 64 Elmer Road 5 letters were sent.

#### Defined community consultation post

8.25 It was noted that whilst community consultation figured within a number of individual roles, there was no defined designated community consultation post in the planning service. It was suggested that it may be of some value for the planning service to conduct an option appraisal of the community engagement function which sought to assess value and contribution of different methods (e.g. cost of scaling back quantitative consultation and being retackled by more specialist community development input).

#### New technology

8.26 The panel noted that the planned review of the SCI would include an assessment of new methods of engagement, particularly the use of more interactive online tools, such as SNAP surveys and online discussion forums. The panel noted that the service is trialling SNAP survey tool which not only allows for on-line consultation, but can also record and note responses and non-responses.

8.27 It is anticipated that on-line methods of consultation will develop further in this sector as people use more mobile and remote communications. The panel noted that the planning service would continue to work with corporate consultation to ensure that the best use of new technologies were utilised within consultation processes.

#### Capacity Building – local community

8.28 In written documentation presented, the panel noted that notifications of a planning policy consultations sets out the scope and role of the draft document, the stage of preparation, how to access the relevant documents, and how to respond to and participate in the consultation. The planning policy team also offer advice on the document and how to engage via dedicated web pages, email and telephone. In addition, information and advice is provided through meetings attended by officers during the consultation period.

8.29 The panel noted that the policy team held a number of training events in the past for community groups and are currently considering an open-day event in June/ July 2014. This will coincide with the preparation of our next three key planning policy documents. In addition, the panel also noted that an open day session for community groups early was being planned for early 2014 as part of the development management improvement plan.

DRAFT

**Minutes of the Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013**

**Present:** Cllr Alexander, Cllr Bull, Cllr McNamara (Chair) and Cllr Weber

**In attendance:** Cllr Bevan, Matthew Gaynor (Corporate Finance), Phil Harris (AD Housing), Katherine Heffernan (Corporate Finance), Mustafa Ibrahim (Stephen McDonnell (AD Environmental Services and Community Safety), Ransford Stewart (AD Planning)

**1. Apologies for absence**

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Gibson and Cllr Bloch.

**2. Declarations of interest**

2.1 None received.

**3. Deputations**

3.1 None received.

**5. Budget Scrutiny 2013/14**

5.1 The panel noted that Budget proposals for 2013/14 were contained in two papers:

- Financial Outturn 2012/13 and Budget 2014/15 (as presented to Cabinet in June 2013)
- Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2014/15 to 2016/17 (December 2013)

5.2 Items were considered line-by-line for the three service areas covered by the panel which were:

- Planning
- Housing
- Environment

Planning

5.3 The following discussion relate to planning items in the Financial Outturn 2012/13 and Budget 2014/15 (as presented to Cabinet in June 2013):

Savings proposals Dir. Place and Sustainability

#5: Planning Regeneration and Economy – staff budget reduction £135k: The panel noted that the proposed savings related to 1 in 33 posts (3% of staff budget). In this context they were felt to be achievable. There were some concerns voiced by the panel that staff reductions were being made to the service when the economy was improving and where an increase in planning applications may be expected.

#9: Removal of recruitment and retention allowances Planning Regeneration and Economy £12k: This brings terms and conditions into line with other staff. The panel noted that affected staff had been notified, were aware and none had left their post. The job market has also changed and there is no need to have a retention bonus.

#15: Supplies and service reduction in Planning Regeneration and Economy £25k: the panel noted that this predominantly related to printing and stationery and was

achievable on previous years spend (based on a £25k under spend in previous years).

#20: Increase in scaffolding hoarding income £100k: the panel noted that the number of planning applications received by the Council (projected to be 2,500 in 2013/14 rising from average of 1,800 per annum) and subsequent income from planning fees was rising again (peak of £1.6m in 2007, fell to £700k, currently at about £1m). In this context, increased fee income from this source was achievable and generally healthy.

The panel noted that planning enforcement income generally goes back in to the planning enforcement budget. It is difficult to reclaim or secure that income from whom the penalty has been imposed, even when this is through the courts.

At present, planning enforcement income is about £20k, but if this was to radically exceed that (to say £100k), then there would probably be some Cabinet consultation as to whether this income should be retained in planning, or used to support other services across the Council.

There is potential for developing POCA derived income, though the practicalities of receiving this income. Looking to use this income more strategically and to focus enforcement work.

#### Housing

5.4 The following discussion relate to planning items in the Financial Outturn 2012/13 and Budget 2014/15 (as presented to Cabinet in June 2013):

#### Savings proposals Dir. Adults & Housing

#9: Supplies and service savings on Housing and Adults £106k: this related to anticipated savings across the directorate and relates to printing and stationery.

#10: Housing Management rationalisation £186k: then panel noted that this related to restructure of housing management and predominantly related to savings with the deletion of three posts. The panel noted that these were not front line services. These changes will be approved by Corporate Committee in January when the management review with Homes for Haringey will be completed. This will reduce number of heads of services from 4 to 3 and reduce other capacity below this. There are risks, particularly in relation to the delivery of services transformation, but it is hoped that this joint organisational review will also create opportunities for new ways of working.

#11: Community Housing Staffing Efficiencies: to delete two posts in this service by £77k  
The Panel noted that this related to the deletion of two front-line posts one of which was in the Private Sector Housing Management Team and the other in the Vulnerable Adults team. The Panel noted that the deletion of posts would have impact.

The panel discussed whether fee income could be used to offset or mitigate the impact of this savings proposal. It was noted that fee income from HMO licensing

comes in to the Housing Improvement Team budget, however, income derived from fines and prosecutions are received in to the general fund.

**Agreed: The panel indicated that it could not support this savings proposal because:**

- It conflicted with other financial proposals in the Medium Term Financial Plan (i.e. growth proposal relating to 'increased resources allocated to HMO licensing due to dramatic rise in private sector renting in the borough');
- There was an evident need to develop and expand enforcement within private rented sector in Haringey;
- The retention of the post in the Private Sector Housing Management Team may potentially increase enforcement income;
- The post in the Vulnerable Adults team relates to advice provided to vulnerable adults who are homeless and the deletion of this post may significantly impact on the work of the remaining team;
- Officers indicated that there may be likely an over-achievement of procurement savings in relation to Item 12 (Housing Related Support – contract efficiencies) which could be off-set against this and negate the need for the deletion of both these posts.

It was noted that Cabinet would be considering the development of the Private Rented Management Strategy to assess what can be done to support higher standards of housing management housing conditions for tenants in this growing sector of the housing market (30%).

Similarly, it was noted that the Council would be considering the introduction of a borough wide licensing scheme similar to that introduced in Newham which could also improve regulation and standards in this sector.

Action: That the department notify the panel on its current position in terms of considering the evidence and models for possible implementation in Haringey.

#12: Housing Related Support Programme: a procurement saving achieved through renegotiation and contract efficiencies with providers of £250k. There is no staff impact within the Council, though there may be some reductions among contractors and suppliers. The panel noted that significant savings (£7m) have already been achieved in this budget and the service is confident that a further £250k can be found. It is hoped to over achieve in this item so not as to implement recommendation 11.

Savings proposals Place and Sustainability

#19: Increased income from Service Level Agreement with Homes for Haringey for Grounds Maintenance £25k. This relates to including inflation in SLA.

#25: Recharge to the HRA of £45k. A fuel poverty post has been redefined which means that the scope of this work can now be chargeable to the HRA account (i.e. they are working solely in Homes for Haringey stock).

Draft Medium Term Financial Plan – Adults and Housing

- #1: Enforcement in Industrial Units (HMO licensing in industrial units) additional investment of £400k. The panel noted that there was unauthorised use of industrial areas for residential purposes and this extra income would be to support HMO and enforcement work being undertaken across these sites.
- #2: Growth item of £994. As a result of the impact of welfare reform there has been a significant increase in cost of securing temporary accommodation and reduced income from rents (bad debts). Item is made up of 1) incentive for landlords in private sector 2) bad debt provision.

Action: Figures on TA different unit costs for types of accommodation to be supplied to the panel.

Since August 2012, joint council agreements securing the cost of securing private rental accommodation to support local housing needs (TA) have been lost. Since April 2013, London Councils are paying much more to secure housing, over and above what can be reclaimed centrally and has had to be met through local sources. There is a shortage of housing supply which has driven up housing costs.

Through the Corporate Delivery Unit, the leader has committed to reduce TA total to 2,800 and continue this trend onward into 14/15 and 15/16 – through joint procurement (LA consortium) and securing rents in cheaper parts of London. Other schemes being considered include inward investment (to secure housing for TA) and the use of containers.

Also in relation to the DHP, the panel noted that £1.35m had been granted to support the tenants affected by benefits cap, though grants given this year to date is £2.2m. DHP grant from central government for the benefits cap will be reduced £700k , creating a £1.5m shortfall.

The Panel noted the increasing cost of temporary accommodation in supporting local residents to respond to welfare reforms. The panel wished to highlight the possible use of Cumberland Road (or other soon to be vacant office buildings) for temporary accommodation. The Panel suggested that should similar accommodation become available, this should be considered for use as temporary accommodation within the planned Property Review currently being undertaken.

Medium Term Financial Plan Capital Programme

- #17: Compulsory Purchase of empty properties £500k. Although this is a growth proposal, the panel noted that this item is self funding as this generally brings in funding through the resale of properties to responsible owners. There is an enforced sale programme where monies are owed to the Council, though this has to be authorised by the Secretary of State.

Housing Revenue Account



Fire Safety: the panel noted that there is a £1m to £3m jump in provision within the HRA. All the improvements coming out of the Coroner's report from the Southwark Council flat fire have been implemented bar 1 (sprinkler systems in sheltered housing).

Decent Homes: The panel noted that funding for 2014/15 (£37m) is last year of the DH programme administered by GLA. Therefore funding for 2015/16 (£33m) is to come from the Councils own resources. There is no DH funding for 16/17 but there will be the Planned Preventative Maintenance (£4m) to contribute to similar type work and a 'DH successor programme' which will provide £25m from the Councils own resources from 2016/17 to improvement of council owned housing stock.

At end of 2013/14 non-decent homes projected to be 26%, though not sure what would be the position at the end of 2016/17 (as this fluctuates). It was unclear what percentage of the housing stock would not be uneconomical for investment through DH.

Action: Further information on the flow of homes in and out of non-decent status each year (trend data).

#### Environment

5.5 The following discussion relate to planning items in the Financial Outturn 2012/13 and Budget 2014/15 (as presented to Cabinet in June 2013):

#### Savings proposals Place and Sustainability

#2 & 4 & 6: Staff reductions and vacancy factor in the Parks Service and Single Front Line to achieve £94k, £219k and 3220k of savings respectively. This was marked as amber as this report was compiled in June. Parking savings relates in part to channel shift as more parking services are moving on line and reduced need for back office staff. There is also de-layering within the parking service.

#10: Single Front Line Restructure; saving of £100k. This related to loss of one post (Head of Neighbourhoods).

#17: Contract savings of £20k for car parks: the panel noted that this saving would be achieved through improved contract arrangements. The panel noted that the IT system, CCTV and the car pound (e.g. with Civica and Time) are not run by the Council and these represent small savings on this overall budget.

#18: Efficiencies in the renegotiation of the Veolia Contract t of £250k. The panel noted that this represented 1% of the total contract value with Veolia and the Council would seek to minimise the front line impact of any contract changes. The contract has yet to be renegotiated.

The panel were concerned as to whether there was a contingency to cope with additional demand (e.g. harsh winter). It was noted that in this context, the department would put in a bid to the general contingency fund. The panel noted that the £250k may lead to a reduce performance, but it would be hoped that any reduced service would be mitigated.

Action: The panel is provided with further information on the changes in services provided by Veolia as a result of renegotiation.

Action: Waste Management Group and data that comes to EHSP in the New Year report back on the Veolia contract.

Thee panel discussed dog excrement and if road sweepers had sufficient resources to deal with this. It was suggested that instead of investing in capital resources to deal with the issue, that increased used of enforcement could be a cheaper option and deliver improved response and greater accountability to regulate poor behaviour.

#21: Increase in Street Works Income of £175k. This relates to the permits income charged to utility companies for works on highways. As penalties have increased, it is assumed that income will increase (25% increase in budget). There is a risk however, as there is a risk of greater compliance by utility companies.

#22: Increase in scaffolding hoarding income £150k. This budget line has been overachieving to this figure for the last couple of years, so this is reflected as additional income.

#23: Increase parking income of £200k. This is to reflect new CPZ in Tottenham and other areas. Incomes relate more to PCN rather than issuing of permits.

#26: Increased enforcement income £75k. This is a 50% increase. The panel indicted that this would support more preventative work.

#27: Fund General Fund salaries in Transport from increased fee income (£330k).

#28: Pre-agreed savings staffing savings of £400k. This relates to the earlier than planned departure of senior staff in the Place and Sustainability Directorate.

#### Medium Term Financial Plan – Savings proposals

#3: Increased income derived from planned traffic management infrastructure of £100k. The panel noted that this relates to fines from PCNs.

#4: Increased income from extended CCTV monitoring hours in town centres of £50k. This was implemented in Muswell Hill at the request of SNT.

#6: Increased income from HGV weight restriction enforcement of £280k. The panel noted that this in part would relate to HGV enforcement through mobile cameras (not mobile cars, but 6 moveable fixed cameras). Income projection based on other LA usage and Haringey modelling.

#7: HRA funding of disposal costs of waste removed from void properties £100k.

#### Capital Programme

#2: Investment programme for street lighting of £400k. The panel noted that this is an ongoing programme of replacement columns. The panel noted that there was

guidance in the placing of lampposts near trees (block out light) and should be adhered to more to prevent more costly arboreal work at a later date.

- #3: Investment in carriageway and footway works of £2m. The panel had two ongoing issues 1) The panel noted that there could be improved quality assurance on footways and pavements (There is a loss of white lines after refurbishment) 2) coordination: highway renewal and pavement repair, installation of lampposts.

The panel noted that highways are coordinated where possible and that works are undertaken are based on assessed need.

The panel also noted that temporary white lining is available and used in other boroughs and further enquiries would be undertaken to see if this could be developed here in Haringey.

The panel noted that further information is about to be placed on the web site about pavement repairs to provide more information about how replacement lists are decided and how these are undertaken.

Action: The panel indicated that they would like to invite the new contractor (Ringway Jacobs) to attend a future panel meeting for discussion.

- #4: Investment in Road safety infrastructure of £150k. This was noted by the panel.
- #5: Parking infrastructure of £300k. This was noted by the panel
- #6: Tree planting programme of £65k. This was noted by the panel. The Cabinet member noted that a capital bid to improve some of the infrastructure in Council parks would be put before Cabinet early in 2014.

6. Date of future meetings:

6.1 Dates of the next meetings would be:

- January 28<sup>th</sup> 2014
- February 24<sup>th</sup> 2014.

6.2 It was agreed that additional meeting could be held after February to ensure that reports and projects were cleared by the panel for presentation at the final Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

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