

MINUTES OF MEETING ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON THURSDAY, 3RD SEPTEMBER, 2020, 7.00 - 9.15 PM

PRESENT:

Councillors: Adam Jogee (Chair), Peray Ahmet, Barbara Blake, Eldridge Culverwell, Scott Emery, Julia Ogiehor

ALSO ATTENDING: Ian Sygrave

16. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein'.

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

18. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Jogee declared that, in relation to Agenda Item 5, both he and Councillor Culverwell had been to Queens Wood to meet the people demonstrating against the proposed felling of trees.*

Councillor Emery declared that he had also been down to Queens Wood to meet the demonstrators.

Clerks' note – Cllr Culverwell was unavailable at this point in the meeting as he has been having a problem with his IT equipment.

20. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

The Panel received a deputation from Dr Glenys Law on behalf of an organisation she represented called SHIFT. The deputation was in relation to an ongoing case in Queen's Wood involving an adjacent property. The insurance company (AXA) acting for the owners of this property had submitted a compensation claim to the Council claiming that trees in the

wood had caused damage to the property in question. In response to the insurance claim, the Council was seeking to remove four oaks trees from Queens Wood.

The deputation party put forward the following points in support of the deputation:

- Engagement with the local community showed how important Queen's Wood was to local people. 9,000 people signed a petition to Haringey asking for the 4 trees to be saved and a further 5,000 signed a petition to Axa.
- Haringey felled more than twice as many trees as it planted over the last three years.
- The property in question was a relatively new property which, it was suggested, had been squeezed into a plot adjacent to Queen's Wood. It was built too close to the woodland and the fact that it was suffering subsidence was unsurprising. It was suggested that it was important to note the fact that the wood was there first.
- The deputation party felt a certain level of sympathy for the council and understood that it felt it had no choice but to cut down the trees due to the potential cost implications.
- Ancient woodlands were irreplaceable and no amount of new planting could make up for their loss. The four trees were vital components of the ancient woodland ecosystem; a home to protected species such as bats, hobbies and stag beetles, as well as an array of flora. The ecosystem had developed over centuries and would be seriously damaged if the trees were removed.
- In regards to the value of these four mature trees, it was suggested that they were an almost free asset in contrast to new tree planting. It was suggested that the 4 mature oaks in Queen's Wood captured about 240 pounds of carbon a year. In contrast, Haringey would need to plant 2,400 new saplings to mitigate the carbon cost of felling these 4 oaks.
- The deputation party also raised concerns that felling the four trees in question would not guarantee a solution to the subsidence problem. It was suggested that heave or landslip could easily occur without the retaining influence of the root network.

The Deputation party requested that:

1) The Council should negotiate with Axa to help protect this ancient woodland in line with their stated environmental goals. Axa were paying for a second independent engineer's report which, hopefully would come up with an engineering solution, such as underpinning or a root barrier that did not involve the felling of the trees.

2) Haringey urgently needed to implement a proper tree strategy. There had been no approved tree policy by Haringey Council for nearly a decade. It was suggested that the existing draft Tree Strategy should be updated, approved and implemented to provide a reference point for future planning and operational decisions. The borough had a new conservation officer who was currently working on producing a biodiversity plan for the borough. The Panel should lobby for this to include trees and ancient woodland.

3) Haringey, unlike many other London Boroughs, is not signed up to the London Tree Officer's Association Joint Mitigation Protocol which included a formula known as CAVAT (Capital Asset Valuation of Amenity Trees). CAVAT calculations applied to the four threatened Queen's Wood oaks suggested that their value would be assessed at around £200,000.

4) Having a tree protection officer in place would allow the Council to have in place someone to review all planning applications and insurance claims. It was suggested that hundreds of trees in the borough were lost every year due to the lack of scrutiny of planning applications.

The following was noted in discussion of the deputation:

- a. The Panel sought clarification about the outcome that was hoped for through negotiation with Axa. In response, Glenys set out that the Council needed to consider the importance of the trees and that the starting position should be that the trees needed to remain and that alternative options should be explored. It was noted that Axa had commissioned an independent engineers' report to look into possible alternative options and it was advocated that an alternative engineering solution should be pursued. It was also suggested that the Council should also request a breakdown of the costs for the claim.
- b. In response to a question around the extent to which the Cabinet Member had been engaged on the issue, the deputation party advised that she had been down to visit the site and was broadly supportive of the cause. The Panel sought further clarification from the Cabinet Member as to what conversations she had with officers on the issue. The Chair agreed to follow this up in writing with the Cabinet Member. **(Action: Chair).**
- c. The Panel questioned whether in not felling the trees now, the Council would simply be creating a bigger problem for itself at a later date. In response, it was suggested that the engineers report would set out the extent to which the trees would grow further and the depth of the foundations required at the property to prevent subsidence. It was suggested that there was a depth below which tree roots did not grow. One possible solution advocated was the use of root barriers, which released copper into the soil to divert root growth. In response to a follow up, it was acknowledged that part of the problem was that alternative solutions could cost more money.
- d. The Panel noted that street trees was a scheduled agenda item on its next meeting and it was agreed that an update on Queens Wood would be incorporated into the street trees item. **(Action: Clerk).**

21. MINUTES

Clerk's note – Cllr Culverwell re-joined the meeting at this point.

The Panel noted that in regards to the response to a previous action, that 371 HGVs had a PCN issued for illegally using Wightman Road from April to 15th August 2020, with 110 of those subsequently cancelled. This left 261 instances and the Panel suggested that this underlined how much unlawful activity by HGVs there was on Wightman Road.

The Panel requested further information around how much an the fine for an individual PCN for illegal HGV use of a Wightman Road was. The Panel also requested further information about what happened to that money- Where did it go? Was the revenue generated by the PCN ring-fenced? **(Action: Ann Cunningham/Clerk).**

The Panel also requested further information about who in the Council was responsible for chasing up the PCNs and ensuring that they were paid. **(Action: Ann Cunningham/Clerk).**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting on 5th March were agreed as a correct record.

22. COVID-19 RECOVERY UPDATE

Members received a report which provided an update to the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel on the actions taken by key services within Environment & Neighbourhoods, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The report was introduced by Tim Walker, Programme Manager - Highways & Parking; Ian Kershaw, Community Safety, Enforcement & Waste Manager & Simon Farrow, Highways, Parking, Parks & Open Space Manager, as set out in the agenda pack at pages 15-18. The following was noted in discussion of the report:

- a. In relation to a question around recovery of parking enforcement, the Panel was advised that numbers for July 2020, were very similar to those of July 2019.
- b. In response a query around the impact on recycling, it was acknowledged that this had been tracked during COVID-19 but that different boroughs had used different methodologies for doing so. The Panel was advised that the most obvious impact of COVID-19 in relation to this was the fall off in the commercial waste stream.
- c. In relation to concerns around damage to Finsbury Park, caused by illegal music events, officers advised that the summer period would usually see some damage due to barbeques taking place and additional use of the park. However, part of the issue had been that the parks had been so busy due to COVID-19. It was suggested that the main impact of music events and increased footfall in general was the additional amount of waste that was generated, rather than damage to the park.
- d. The Panel also requested comment from officers around the crowds on Green Lanes during August as a result of the 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme. Officers responded that engagement work had been undertaken with local businesses to ensure they were compliant with the regulations and social distancing in particular. Officers suggested that there was one particular incident involving very large queues that was widely reported and that the business owner in question was engaged with. It was suggested that this issue was not unique to Haringey.
- e. Concerns were raised around unlicensed music events in Markfield Park and it was commented that these had been taking place for years. Cllr Blake commented that officers had been fantastic in dealing with these during lockdown. Officers responded that they were continuing to monitor this situation closely and that security guards would be used to patrol the park at key times.
- f. The Panel sought clarification as to whether the current system of having to book a slot for use of the reuse and recycling centre would continue. Officers advised that this was due to government regulations around social distancing. The decision was ultimately down to the NLWA but that officers were keen to reopen the centre fully as soon as was practicable.
- g. The Panel acknowledged the work done by the Parks team in keeping the parks open and keeping them clean, especially Finsbury Park which was kept very clean and free of litter.
- h. The Panel also welcomed that Finsbury Park was largely vehicle free in recent months and questioned whether something could be done to ensure that it remained so. In response, officers set out that a consultation on the topic had been carried out last year. Whilst the results of the consultation did favour removing car parking, officers commented that a happy medium was required,

as some access would always be needed for disabled park users and for parks vehicles.

RESOLVED

That the Panel noted the contents of this report for information

23. UPDATE ON TFL CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE BIDS

Clerk's note – The Chair amended the order of the agenda and brought items 11 & 12 forward. The minutes reflect the order in which items were discussed, rather than the order published on the agenda.

The Panel received a report which provided an update on the bids submitted to TfL for active travel schemes such as walking and cycling, in response to the Covid 19 crisis to enable social distancing. The report was introduced by Neil Goldberg, Transport Planning Consultant as set out in pages 97-100 of the agenda pack. Maurice Richards, Transport Planning Team Manager, Sam Neal Consultant Project Manager & Rob Krzyszowski - Interim Assistant Director, Planning, Building Standards & Sustainability were also present.

Haringey submitted 18 bids to the Streetspace Plan fund and a single bid comprising 5 cycleway improvements for £100,000 to the DfT. The Council was successfully awarded £1,139,285 in total. The funded cycleway projects included:

- Improvements to Cycle Superhighway 1 (CS1)
- The extension of CS1 to connect to the London Borough of Enfield
- Designing a new cycle route which will connect Haringey to Islington via Crouch End with the aim to secure further funding later this year to implement the scheme
- DfT funded improvements to existing advisory cycle lanes in the borough at five locations – Ferry Lane, Station Road N22, High Road N22, Bounds Green Road and the southern end of Green Lanes.

In July 2020, a further round of bids was submitted and the Panel were advised that an announcement on whether they were successful was expected imminently. These schemes included:

- The implementation of the Crouch End and Hornsey Cycleway which received funding for designing in the first funding round
- A Wood Green to Finsbury Park Cycleway
- Implementation of Cycle Future Route 2 between Tottenham Hale and Finsbury Park in Haringey
- Implementation of Quietway 10 between Bowes Park and Finsbury Park in Haringey.

The following was noted in discussion of this item:

- a. The Panel sought clarification as to whether the proposed Seven Sisters cycle route would go through Finsbury Park or whether it would include the surrounding roads. In response, officers advised that a final solution had not yet been agreed and that the proposal was on hold for the moment due to the revenue shortfall that TfL had experienced from COVID-19.
- b. In response to a question around Liveable Crouch End, officers advised that this scheme was currently on-hold due to TfL funding restrictions. The cycleway proposed as part of this scheme was temporary due to the parameters of the original bid but officers advised that the scheme could be a useful pilot in providing a similar permanent scheme going forwards.

RESOLVED

That the Scrutiny Panel noted the progress made to date in achieving funding from TfL and the DfT and the delivery progress of the funded cycling schemes.

24. UPDATE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SCRUTINY REVIEW ON PARKS (MARCH 2018).

The Panel received an update on the recommendations to the Scrutiny Review on Parks from March 2018. The report was introduced by Simon Farrow, Highways, Parking, Parks & Open Space Manager. The Panel were advised that the work done in response to the Scrutiny Review would continue as part of the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy.

In response to a question around the implications from a shortfall in revenue from cancelled Major Events in Finsbury Park, Officers advised that there was no threat to staffing levels in Finsbury Park. However, the Council was still working through the implications of a shortfall to its revenue from across the organisation due to COVID-19. The full implications would be known until the government announced funding levels for local government for 2021/22.

RESOLVED

The Panel noted the update on the recommendations to the Scrutiny Review on Parks.

25. YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK STRATEGY UPDATE

The Panel received a report which provided an update to the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel regarding the Young People at Risk Strategy 2019-29, which was approved by Cabinet in March 2019. It set out progress made in the delivery of commitments made in the strategy and the Young People at Risk Action Plan. The report was introduced by Hugh Smith, Policy & Equalities Officer as set out at pages 19-82. The following arose in discussion of the report:

- a. The Panel sought assurances around the extent to which the programme had been affected due to COVID-19. In response officers, advised that between March 2019 and March 2020, all of the services that were due to be in place were up and running, such as Community Gold and the CAMHS Trail blazer. COVID-19 had an impact, however services had shown a high degree of

- resilience to this and services were being delivered in different ways, with activities being delivered online and in other COVID-secure ways.
- b. The Panel requested a breakdown of the percentage change in serious youth violence in response to COVID-19. Officers advised that there had been a decrease of 25-30% in serious youth violence compared with the same period last year. This figure was broadly in line with the rest of London. Officers agreed to provide a breakdown of the figures for different types of youth violence. **(Action: Hugh Smith)**.
 - c. In response to a question, officers advised that there was a summer activity programme delivered this year in conjunction with public sector and voluntary partners, however the figures for this were still being compiled. Officers agreed to feedback to the Panel with further information on the level of engagement from the summer programme. **(Action: Hugh Smith)**.
 - d. The Panel questioned why the strategy had not been updated to incorporate the new Borough Commander. Officers advised that the strategy was agreed in March 2019 when the previous Borough Commander was in post. Officers agreed to feed this back to colleagues for further consideration.
 - e. The Panel sought further information around what the critical list was at Bruce Grove youth space and how many people were on it. Officers agreed to come back to the Panel with a response. **(Action: Hugh Smith)**.
 - f. The Cabinet Member for Communities, Safety and Engagement acknowledged the point around the Borough Commander and advised the Panel that he had agreed with officers to undertake a refresh of the strategy in light of COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter. This would be worked on over the coming months.

RESOLVED

That the Panel noted the report.

26. HARINGEY CRIME PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW AND UPDATE ON THE TURNPIKE LANE JOINT STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

The Panel received a presentation and covering report, which outlined current performance levels in relation to the MOPAC indicators for crime in Haringey. The Panel noted that Haringey had experienced large reductions in most crime types since March 2020. Overall crime in Haringey had decreased by 7.6% in the past year, which was larger than the London-wide decrease of 5.8%. The report and presentation were introduced by Joe Benmore, IOM Strategic Lead as set out in the agenda pack at pages 83-92.

RESOLVED

That the Panel noted the report.

27. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS; CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, SAFETY AND ENGAGEMENT

The Panel received a verbal update from Cllr Mark Blake, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Safety & Engagement on his portfolio and this was followed by a Q&A session. The following arose in discussion of this item:

- a. The Panel sought further information around a proposed Black Lives Matter motion at an upcoming Council meeting. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that this was being progressed. The Panel also noted that the Mayor London had implemented an action plan to improve trust and confidence in policing and that the Council was supporting this where it could.
- b. The Panel noted some concerns with a lack of joint working around unlicensed music events in and around Seven Sisters and Cllr Blake invited the Cabinet Member to attend a local community meeting on this. The Cabinet Member advised that a lot of work had been done across the borough on early interventions to unlicensed music events over recent months. In relation to Markfield Park, the Cabinet Member advised that robust proposals were being drawn up with the Friends group and police colleagues and that he was in the process of arranging a meeting to progress this. As part of a follow-up, Cllr Barbara Blake welcome progress on this issue but advised that, to date, she had found it a struggle to make any progress on the issue and to get to the point where something was being done about it.
- c. The Panel also expressed concerns with delays in getting a statement out around antisemitism, in the wake of the high profile story around the Grime artist Wiley and advocated that there needed to be better communication between the administration and the community on this issue. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged these concerns and commented that he was keen to get a statement out as soon as possible, to the extent that he did so through the local Labour party website, as it was felt that this would be a quicker way of doing so. In response to a follow-up on this, the Panel suggested that the issue was one of political leadership rather than an issue with the communications team.
- d. The Panel noted some concerns around the Council's engagement with community groups in response to COVID-19 and urged the Cabinet Member to undertake early intervention and engagement with community groups and faith forums etcetera. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged these concerns and set out that he had sought to pilot a number of community conversations with community groups prior to lockdown. The Cabinet Member also advised that grant programme bid had also been made for £500k to support local voluntary and community sector organisations. The Chair requested that the Cabinet Member provide follow-up to the Panel in writing about what activities had taken place with around engaging with mosques, faith forums and other community groups. **(Action: Cllr Mark Blake)**.
- e. In response to a question around the Cabinet Member's key local priorities, the Panel noted concerns around disproportionate policing methods for and an overreliance on Stop and Search powers. The Cabinet Member advocated a greater onus on community policing and the need for engagement with communities, as well as the need for educational opportunities and safe places to go for young people in the borough.
- f. The Cabinet Member advised that he was looking to arrange a briefing session with Members and the Borough Commander.

RESOLVED

Noted

28. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Panel received a report which presented an outline work plan for 2020-21 and requested the views of the Panel on priorities and issues to be added.

RESOLVED

- I. That the Panel approved the draft current work programme for 2020-21, attached at Appendix A of the report.
- II. That consideration was given to which one-off items to prioritise and any additional issues to be added to the work plan.
- III. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were requested to endorse the work plan for the Panel at its upcoming meeting on 6 October.

29. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

30. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

3rd November 2020
10th December 2020
4th March 2021

31. A.O.B.

The Panel requested an agenda item around recycling rates be added to the next agenda, in response to a concerns about a drop-off in recycling performance. **(Action: Clerk).**

CHAIR: Councillor Adam Jogee

Signed by Chair

Date