

Report for: Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel, September 3rd 2020

Title: Key Service Update from Environment & Neighbourhoods: Covid 19 Recovery

Report authorised by : Stephen McDonnell, Director for Environment & Neighbourhoods

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Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision: Non Key Decision**

1. Describe the issue under consideration

This report provides an update to the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel regarding actions taken by key services within Environment & Neighbourhoods in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Recommendations

That the Panel note the contents of this report for information

3. Parking Enforcement

- 3.1 To assist critical workers and all those in lockdown, we scaled back parking enforcement for over three months (between March and July). Our Civil Enforcement Officers focused only upon the most serious parking contraventions (for example dangerous or obstructive parking). Prior to the restart of enforcement, we put in place a variety of measures to help critical workers, businesses and residents. These include:
- Supporting critical NHS and care workers with free parking permits
 - Allowing all-day on-street paid parking and capping the maximum you will pay per day to just £15.
- 3.2 As traffic volumes returned to near-normal, we ran an extensive communications campaign about the restart of enforcement which fully began on 6 July.

4. Highways

- 4.1 The London Streetscape Programme (LSP) involved two footway widening programmes.

- 4.2 While several bids were submitted to Transport for London (TfL) for footway widening measures to support social distancing measures only two bids were successful.
- Hornsey High Street – measures have been designed with engagement with ward councillors, and frontage notifications have been sent out week commencing 17 August. The works will commence on 26th August.
 - Aylmer Parade – Measures are not required or supported by businesses at this location. We have designed a series of alternative priority measures where footway widening is required from the other unfunded footway bids. Discussions are underway with TfL to seek approval to reallocate this funding.
- 4.3 Projects are to be delivered by September leaving very little time for design, consultation and implementation.
- 4.4 LSP Emergency measures - The highways service has reviewed all existing 19 locations where temporary widening measures (the red and white barriers) have been installed. In consultation with colleagues in Enforcement & Community Safety it has been agreed that the majority are no longer required.

5. Waste and Street Scene

- 5.1 Frontline waste and street scene services such as kerbside collection and street cleansing have continued to operate throughout the pandemic. Our communications channels promoted measures that residents needed to make to ensure waste recycling and disposal can take place safely. Pressures put on the services due to Covid-related staff absence led to the suspension of bulky waste collections for only two weeks. The Reuse & Recycling Centres that are operated by the North London Waste Authority reopened on 13th May having been closed for approximately 6 weeks.

6. Parks

- 6.1 Park usage has significantly increased during lockdown and subsequent movement restrictions introduced. The public at large have had a unique opportunity to fully comprehend the role and benefit parks play in their life. The council committed very early on to keeping the parks open for exercise and casual use.
- 6.2 In March, all facilities within parks including playgrounds, ball courts, outdoor gyms, paddling pools, skate parks and cafés were closed and all events and organised activities cancelled.
- 6.3 Nearly 4 miles of temporary HERAS fencing was placed around all closed-off areas to ensure people adhered to the closures. Facilities were regularly broken into so contractors were on hand to re-establish any breaches of fencing on at least two occasions per week.
- 6.4 Despite the daily challenges of ensuring social distancing measures were followed, all parks have remained open for casual usage. Banners and floor stencils were put in place reminding people of social distancing measures, and dogs were required to be on leads.
- 6.5 Social distancing patrols in parks were introduced using a variety of staff including civil enforcement officers, parks staff and staff from the council's

enforcement team. After the first couple of weekends this moved to a seven day a week operation with a team of 30 staff involved. At weekends this was supported by dedicated police resource, including police horses, helicopter and dedicated joint command and control partnership between the police and the council. This lasted for a period of 10 weeks, including four bank holidays.

- 6.6 Tennis courts and ball courts were permitted to open first, but this was delayed due to extra concerns about social distancing and equality across the borough. All Playgrounds and outdoor gyms were opened over a two-week period in July. This was to ensure that all temporary structures were removed, sanitisation and cleaning was carried out, risk assessments done, grounds maintenance completed, and new permanent signage erected. Facilities were fully open by the end of July, as the school summer holidays started. Parks staff have been carrying out a twice weekly sanitisation of all play and gym equipment since the facilities were reopened.
- 6.7 Throughout this whole period the parks staff have continued to provide a good quality of service despite depleted resources due to a percentage of the staff shielding.

7. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

Finance

N/A

Procurement

N/A

Legal

N/A

Equality

N/A

8. Use of Appendices

None

9. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

N/A