

# **MINUTES OF MEETING Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel Tuesday, 3rd November, 2020, 18:30**

## **PRESENT:**

**Councillors: Barbara Blake, Julie Davies, Scott Emery, Julia Ogiehor, Dana Carlin, Mike Hakata and Khaled Moyeed (Chair)**

## **ALSO ATTENDING:**

**Ian Sygrave, Haringey Association of Neighbourhood Watches**

### **32. 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'.

### **33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **34. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

### **35. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **36. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS**

None.

### **37. MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> September be agreed as a correct record.

### **38. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the Panel

- I. Noted the terms of reference at Appendix A of the report, and the Protocol for Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Appendix B;
- II. noted the terms of reference/policy areas and membership for each Scrutiny Panel for 2020/21 at Appendix C of the report.

### **39. APPOINTMENT OF NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER**

#### **RESOLVED**

That a representative from Haringey Association of Neighbourhood Watches be appointed as a non-voting coopted Member of the Panel for the 2020/21 Municipal Year;

### **40. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS: CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, EQUALITIES AND LEISURE**

The Panel undertook a verbal question and answer session with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Equalities and Leisure. The following arose from discussion of this item:

- a. The Panel sought assurances around the proposed charges for use of tennis courts and questioned the disproportionate impact that this would have on low-income families. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that she had paused the introduction of charges, pending a review of the policy and the pricing levels. It was noted that this applied to the remaining tennis courts that did not already have charges in place.
- b. The Panel also sought clarification around the extent to which parks funding would be protected going forwards. In response, the Cabinet Member set out that the Council had a significant budget deficit due to the coronavirus epidemic and that she was not in a position to guarantee that there would be no budget savings made in parks. However, the Cabinet Member advised the Panel that she would be looking to protect frontline services in parks. Officers clarified that proposals in the MTFs on parks were primarily focused on income generation. The three savings proposals put forward for parks were around; increasing property income, income from sports court charging and staffing reductions in the events team (non-front line roles).
- c. The Chair enquired about the four oak trees in Queens Wood and sought assurances around what conversations had taken place with the Cabinet Member and both officers and demonstrators on this. The Cabinet Member advised that she had met with the campaigners, who had also met with the homeowners. The current position was that a second report had been commissioned by Axa and the Council was awaiting the findings of this report. The Cabinet Member advised that she had asked officers to find alternatives to felling the trees, which would not cost the Council £300k. The Cabinet Member advised that she had been very clear on this issue and that she did not want to see those trees felled.
- d. In response to a follow-up question on whether the Council would pay for under-pinning the trees, the Cabinet Member commented that she would like to

- see Axa pay for the underpinning given their corporate stance on climate change and desire to be seen as a green/sustainable company.
- e. The Panel sought assurances around the impact of the new lockdown restrictions on parks and what contingencies were in place. In response, the Panel were advised that it was not anticipated that there would be the same impact as in the summer, because of the weather and parks being less busy during the winter months. However, it was acknowledged that there would likely be some increase in parks usage due to the imposition of a new lockdown.
  - f. In regards to the impact of the new restrictions, it was noted that sports facilities would be closed, along with outdoor gyms. Whilst, playgrounds would remain open, along with benches and picnic tables. Cafes would have to operate on a takeaway-only basis. Public toilets would also remain open.
  - g. In response to a follow-up question, officers advised that there were some exemptions in terms of support groups and volunteering being able to continue under the restrictions. This would include the continuation of school PE lessons.
  - h. The Panel suggested that the Council had been slow in reopening sports facilities and tennis courts in the wake of the first lockdown and sought clarification as to whether there was a plan in place this time to address it. In response, the Panel was advised that delayed reopening was done deliberately on the advice of public health colleagues, due to an increased risk of young people gathering and transmitting the virus. The high risk facilities were reopened in a supervised way in the run up to the summer holidays. It was felt that there were some equalities considerations from reopening tennis courts before other facilities were opened and a conscious decision was taken to delay this, in line with other sporting facilities.
  - i. In response, it was suggested that private tennis courts were opened in the west of the borough and that there was an argument that not reopening Council managed courts had the opposite effect intended in terms of equalities. The Cabinet Member commented that the tennis courts at Bruce Castle in the east of the borough were available.
  - j. Officers advised the Panel that reopening facilities should be done a lot quicker this time, as they did not have miles of temporary fencing to take down.

## **RESOLVED**

Noted.

### **41. SINGLE USE PLASTICS**

The Panel received an update on the development of a Single Use Plastics (SUP) Policy and the accompanying action plan. The report was introduced by Zoe Robertson, Head of Place, as set out in the agenda pack at pages 47-61. The following arose from the discussion of this item:

- a. The Panel sought clarification about the proposal around milk deliveries. In response, officers advised that when the waste produced by the council was examined, a surprising amount of plastic was generated through milk cartons used by staff. As a result, one area of the action plan was to examine options to reduce this, including seeing whether an old fashioned milk delivery in glass

- bottles could be sought and then distributed to staff through some kind of shared system.
- b. The Panel enquired about the single use plastics procurement requirements and how these would be monitored and measured. Officers agreed to come back to the Panel with a response. **(Action: Zoe Robertson).**
  - c. In relation to a question around what percentage of council generated waste was made up of single use plastics, officers advised that the amount of recycling coming out of the building was monitored and that they would come back to the Panel with a response on this. **(Action: Zoe Robertson).**
  - d. In response to a question, officers advised that the go green guide for events was still in development, but that it was targeted at both large and small event organisers across parks and green spaces and included areas such as food and drink sourcing, paperless tickets, electricity generation, use of water standpipes and the transport used to get to events. The Council was working with Friends of the Earth to ensure all plastics bottles from large events were recycled.
  - e. In relation to a question about incentivising businesses to go plastic free, it was acknowledged that there were costs associated with provision of plastic cutlery and straws etcetera. The Panel was advised that that NLWA had been piloting a plastic free scheme in Crouch-End before the lockdown and part of this was around engaging with business owners on the economic as well as environmental case for reduction of plastic usage. Officers hoped that the NLWA would be able to replicate this across a number of business communities in the borough in future. The Cabinet Member suggested that incentivising businesses was something that could be picked up with Cllr Bull going forwards.
  - f. The Panel enquired whether there was fixed end date in mind for the use of single use plastics, given that other local authorities undertaking similar schemes had done this. In response, officers advised that the action plan would likely evolve over time but all of the individual actions contained within it had a specific end date.
  - g. The Chair requested further information around how many hits the dedicated web page had received. The Chair also queried what was being done to advertise this dedicated page and communications activity around single use plastics. Officers agreed to follow up on this. **(Action: Zoe Robertson).**

## **RESOLVED**

That the information contained in the report be noted.

## **42. PARKS PERFORMANCE**

The Panel received a report which provided an update on Parks performance during quarters 1 & 2 of 2020/21, including the national COVID-19 lockdown of March to June. The report was introduced by Simon Farrow, Interim Head of Parks & Leisure as set out in the agenda pack at pages 63-66. The following arose from the discussion of the report:

- a. In response to a question around performance targets, the Panel was advised that the targets were set according to what could be realistically achieved with the resources available.

- b. In response to a question around why performance was better in Q2 than in Q1, officers advised that April, May and June saw a sustained period of good weather and that parks were being heavily used, particularly as parks were the only place people could go and socialise during the period of national lockdown.
- c. The Panel enquired about the level of engagement undertaken with Friends groups during this period and whether arranging litter picks with them was considered. In response, officers advised that there was engagement with stakeholders, including friends groups but it was not felt appropriate to arrange litter picks due to the public health crisis. Members commented that that Alexandra Palace were able to utilise a regular group of litter pickers and that further exploration of working with mutual-aid groups should be considered in the event of further lockdown restrictions.
- d. Members emphasised the importance of hygiene standards in parks and raised concerns around a 55% hygiene score being quite low. Members suggested that hygiene standards should be prioritised over other areas such as grass cutting. In response, officers acknowledged that safety and hygiene standards were key considerations and agreed that there was a choice to be made around how resources were applied to parks. Members were advised that performance during this period was hampered by very high footfall in parks corresponding with 15% of staff being off work as they were shielding, meaning that there was a lack of flexibility in being able to respond to additional pressures.
- e. The Chair sought clarification as to whether hygiene performance reflected additional activities undertaken in response to COVID-19. In response, officers advised that the performance measure related to pre-Covid hygiene activities of picking up litter, graffiti and emptying bins and did not capture the additional activities carried out due to the pandemic.
- f. In response to a follow up question about the extra activities that had taken place, officers set out the following activities:
  - All parks operational buildings were risk assessed and made Covid secure.
  - Officers worked with café owners to undertake risk assessments and make them Covid secure.
  - Public toilets were made Covid secure.
  - Staff were working in a socially distanced manner, which also impacted the use of vehicles as a result.
  - Twice weekly sanitisation of outdoor play equipment and gym equipment.

## **RESOLVED**

That the report was noted.

### **43. PARKS AND GREENSPACE STRATEGY**

The Panel received a report which provided an update on the development of a new Parks & Greenspaces Strategy. The council made a commitment in the borough plan 2019-2023 to develop a new Strategy for the borough to guide the development, management and use of parks and greenspaces over the next 15 years. The report

was introduced by Simon Farrow, Interim Head of Parks & Leisure as set out in the agenda pack at pages 67-72. The following arose from the discussion of the report:

- a. In response to the report setting out that consultation would take place and that officers were looking to engage with a variety of groups, including those that the Council did not usually hear from, the Panel sought clarification on who those groups were. Officers advised that the groups included young people, BAME groups, dementia groups and working with public health colleagues around improving accessibility of parks for older adults. Officers agreed that they would be happy to share the list of stakeholder groups with the Panel when this was developed.
- b. In response to a question, officers advised that many of the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review on Parks would be picked up in the Parks & Greenspaces Strategy.
- c. Panel Members raised concerns around safety and street lighting in parks, with a rise in drug use and other anti-social behaviour. The Panel also set out that there had been concerns raised by local police colleagues about the fact that the Council had stopped locking parks at night. Priory Park and Chestnuts were noted as particular examples where crime and ASB were taking place. In response, officers advised that there had been a conscious decision taken during the pandemic not to lock park gates in order to focus resources elsewhere. Simon Farrow advised that he would pick up the concerns raised with colleagues in Community Safety and come back to the Panel. **(Action: Simon Farrow)**.
- d. The Panel commented that there was an opportunity to adopt a co-production model for this strategy. The Panel commented on the need to involve other services from across the Council in the development of the strategy, such as the Regeneration team, Children's Services and Public Health.

## RESOLVED

That the report was noted.

### 44. STREET TREE PLANTING AND QUEENS WOOD TREES UPDATE

The Panel received an update on the Council's street tree planting programme for 2020/21 as well as the four oak trees in Queens Wood which have been implicated in a subsidence claim. The report was introduced by Simon Farrow, Interim Head of Leisure and Parks, as set out at pages 73-78 of the agenda pack. The following arose from the discussion of the report:

- a. The Panel welcomed the street tree planting programme and noted that it would be the biggest for over ten years.
- b. The Panel commented that a number of trees had been removed on Harringay Green Lanes and around the Ladders over recent years without being replaced. It was commented that there seemed to be no trees in the plan designated for this area. In response, officers advised that there had been no direct funding for replacements for the last two years and that any replacement trees had been funded externally during this time, which often dictated where those trees were planted. Officers advised that the initial planting schedule was only part of the programme and that further replacement street trees would be factored into the programme going forwards.

- c. The Panel commented that they would like to see CIL money used to pay for additional planting of street trees.
- d. In response to a question, officers advised that around 400-500 trees were felled in the borough in a year. The Panel requested figures on the net number of trees in the borough going forwards. Simon agreed to provide an update to the Panel on the net figure for number of trees in the borough, either via email or an update to be brought to the next Panel meeting.

## **RESOLVED**

That the update was noted.

### **45. AIR QUALITY UPDATE**

The Panel received a report which set out the headline data regarding air quality across Haringey for 2019, which was the latest full years data available. The report was introduced by Joe Baker, Head of Carbon Management as set out in the agenda pack at pages 79-80. The following arose in discussion of this report:

- a. It was noted that overall, there was an improvement in air quality across the borough, but there were still five locations which exceeded the national objective for air quality.
- b. In response to a question, the Panel was advised that Holy Trinity School and the Welbourne School were identified as the worst performing schools in the Mayor's Air Quality Action Plan, this was due to their proximity to Tottenham High Road. In response to this, the Council was launching a trial programme to put in place an air quality fence at Holy Trinity School. In response to a follow up question about why that school was chosen, officers advised that it was the only school that responded positively to the Council's offer and that if the trial was successful they would look to try and roll this out to the other affected schools in the area.
- c. The Panel noted that Enfield had recently trialled their tenth LTN and had also set up local air quality monitoring posts to monitor the impact on local air quality levels in support of this. Officers advised that as part of the Air Quality Action Plan, Haringey was increasing the number of monitoring stations in the borough including two automatic sites, which would support the School Streets initiative. Joe Baker agreed to speak to Cllr Hearn about how passive air quality monitoring stations could be used to support LTNs. **(Action: Joe Baker)**.

## **RESOLVED**

That the update was noted.

### **46. RECYCLING RATE**

The Panel received a verbal update on the recycling rate from Nathan Vear, Interim Head of Waste. It was noted that the 2019/20 outturn figure was 30.14%, which was down from 30.17% the year before. The Quarter 1 outturn for the current year was

31.14%, which reflected a 1% increase so far. The main reason for the increase was because of an additional 900 tons of dry recycling collected. It was suggested that people were consuming more at home due to the lockdown. It was noted that the key challenges going forwards were identified as prevention of contamination of recycling bins and increasing the amount of food waste collected.

The Panel noted with concern the fact that the recycling rate had decreased for the fourth year running and sought further information around what challenges were faced by Haringey in relation to other London boroughs on this.

The Chair requested that a written report be drafted and circulated to the Panel, which included information in relation to the above point. The Panel would then submit written questions to officers in response. **(Action: Nathan Vear).**

**47. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Panel suggested the following areas for inclusion in the work programme:

- Impact of COVID-19 on BAME communities
- The development of the Cycling and Walking Action Plan

**RESOLVED**

The work programme was agreed.

**48. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

N/A

**49. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

10<sup>th</sup> December 2020

4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

CHAIR: Councillor Khaled Moyeed

Signed by Chair .....

Date .....