

MINUTES OF MEETING Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel HELD ON Thursday, 4th March, 2021, 6.30 pm

PRESENT:

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

ALSO ATTENDING:

63. 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'.

64. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Davies.

65. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

66. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

67. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

68. MINUTES

In regard to a previous action, the Chair advised that he had spoken to the Leader of the Council regarding the Parks Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator post and he had been advised that the Council fully funding the post will be looked at as part of next year's budget setting process.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting on 10th December were agreed as a correct record.

69. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS: CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND PUBLIC REALM INVESTMENT

The Committee undertook a verbal question and answer session with the Cabinet Member for Transformation and Public Realm Investment. The Cabinet Member gave a short verbal update on her portfolio:

- a. The Committee was advised that following the Scrutiny Review on Disabled Parking Services, most of the recommendations were accepted by Cabinet and a further Disabled Parking Action Plan was due to be agreed by Cabinet next week. Part of this involved £200k capital funding to expand the size of disabled bays and the introduction of a grace period for Blue Badge users who live in an area with a CPZ and had their badge stolen.
- b. Cabinet had agreed a £9m investment in Highways for the following financial year. Also, as part of the new contract, a Direct Labour Organisation was being developed to bring specific elements of the contract back in-house.
- c. A £6m drainage bid had been submitted to DEFRA in partnership with some local groups.
- d. There continued to be significant investment in street lighting.
- e. The walking element of the Cycling & Walking Action Plan was continuing to be developed and a number of new pedestrian crossings were being put in place.
- f. The waste service had been realigned to bring the waste management and waste enforcement functions together, and managed by one Assistant Director. A new waste enforcement team had been established and had issued nearly 1500 fixed penalty notices in the last 12 months.
- g. Further rollout of the black box scheme would continue this year, following a successful trial orientated to better management of waste from flats above shops.
- h. The Council was undertaking a piece of research in conjunction with Birbeck University on HMO's and how levels of recycling from these premises could be improved.
- i. The Cleaner Haringey Strategy was going to Cabinet the following week.
- j. The Council had agreed with Veolia for them to undertake additional waste collection services for Passover.
- k. The Cabinet Member outlined the Access First project which was aimed at improving the relevant sections of the website in order to make it easier for people to access information, report a problem and so that they received feedback on problems reported. This project was halfway through the improvement process and work was ongoing.

The following matters arose from the discussion of this item:

- a. The Committee noted that the recycling rate had decreased slightly for the fourth year in a row and queried whether large-scale changes were needed or smaller more incremental reforms, in order to meet the Mayor's target of 38%. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged the scale of the challenge to meet that target and cautioned that none of the seven boroughs in North London had met the target. Haringey ranked 4th out of seven. The Cabinet Member advised that part of the problem with falling recycling rates were much more exacting rules around what could and couldn't be recycled and very strict tolerances around contamination of waste. Another issue identified was that companies were increasingly investing in lighter and lighter packaging, which affected recycling rates as they were based on tonnages. The Cabinet Member also set out that there was a challenge around needing to adapt to emerging trends including the impact of lockdown and increased home deliveries. It was

- hoped that the work with Birbeck would provide a basis for making improvements.
- b. In response to a query around different possible strategies for dealing with waste, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that there was a lot of investment into looking at how to tackle waste and recycling nationally and that the best way forward was to perhaps set up a meeting with Cllr Bull to look at funding options for different groups in the borough.
 - c. The Panel raised concerns about plans to invest in a new incinerator for waste and commented that this seemed to be contrary to the Council's carbon reduction strategy. In response the Cabinet Member advised that the current incinerator was very old and inefficient and that a new one would be far more efficient and would also be able to generate power to heat people's homes. The plans also included the setting up of an eco-park which was welcomed by the Cabinet Member. The Panel were advised that a financial analysis of whether this was still the right decision was undertaken in 2018.
 - d. The Panel raised concerns about the Council's website and it not being user friendly. The Panel questioned whether electronic visitor permits could be introduced like in Islington, which were instantaneous.
 - e. In regards to a question as to the Cabinet Member's assessment of Veolia's performance and whether the Council were getting value for money, the Cabinet Member contended that Veolia provided a huge array of services for the Council and that on the whole she thought they did a good job. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that the authority had got street sweeping wrong and that a more targeted approach was the right outcome. The Panel were advised that Veolia collected waste from 90k households and the vast majority of the time they got this right but that there would always be areas in which performance could be improved.
 - f. A member of the Panel raised concerns about a local business that had been issued with an FPN due to waste caused by people rifling through their bin. The Cabinet Member declined to comment on a particular case where the Council had taken enforcement action, but advised that there was an appeal process available for people to use. It was suggested that security measures would need to be arranged with the private waste contractor involved.
 - g. In response to a question about the wall of shame campaign and whether this was continuing, the Cabinet Member advised that it was felt that this scheme had been hugely successful and had even resulted in one case where an individual turned themselves in for flytipping. From the following week, the campaign would be being rolled out with added impetus.
 - h. In response to a question around the Direct Labour Organisation, the Cabinet Member advised that Marlborough Highways had been awarded a contract in 2019 for street lighting and highways but that part of that contract included provision for the Council to bring some of those services back in-house as and when it was feasible. After carrying out an assessment it had been determined that it would not be cost effective to bring street lighting back in-house, however reactive footway maintenance would be brought back in-house. It was hoped that having a dedicated in-house resource would help the Council improve the very poor condition of footways in the borough and that a £9 million investment had been made to support this.

RESOLVED

That the update and responses to questions were noted.

70. UPDATE ON PLANNED AND REACTIVE HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE

The Panel received a report which provided an update on the planned and reactive highways maintenance programmes, as set out in the agenda pack. The report was introduced by Peter Boddy, Highways & Traffic Manager. The following arose from the discussion of the report:

- a. Significant investment was required to counteract the historical underspend on the planned maintenance of highways and footways in the borough. The administration had invested significant additional funding in this area. The investment was around £19m over the last five years. It was noted that 59% of the borough's footways required structural maintenance and that this was towards the bottom of scores across London boroughs. Highways were in a better shape but still required significant maintenance.
- b. Highways maintenance was outsourced to Ringway Jacobs through the TfL LOHAC contract from 2013-2019 but from 2019 a new contractor had been appointed, Marlborough Highways. As part of the contract Marlborough agreed to the creation of a Direct Service Offer (DSO). Officers were developing a full business case for the creation of the Direct Service Offer and a decision would come to Cabinet in due course. The depot at Sedge Road would also be upgraded to support the development of the in-house footways maintenance team.
- c. In response to a question, officers advised that due to the scale and range of works undertaken as part of the contract there was no intention to bring the whole contract back in-house as it would not be cost effective. The focus of the DSO was reactive footways works due to the need to improve their condition.
- d. In relation to a follow-up, it was estimated that the average score for footway defects in London was around 30-40%. With continued investment over a 10 year period, it was hoped that Haringey would achieve a similar figure. This would represent a 1-2% improvement year on year and was considered achievable.
- e. In relation to a question around coordination with Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes, officers advised that there would always be some coordination and joining up of investment but it was cautioned that the funding available for LTN's was minimal in comparison to the scale and cost of planned maintenance works required across all of the boroughs roads.
- f. The Panel welcomed the investment in highways and footways but also made a plea for additional resources to be targeted towards drains and gullies as blocked drains had a significant effect in terms of undermining highways, and it was suggested that this could save the Council money long-term. In response, officers advised that there had been a significant capital investment in this area over the past 12-18 months, but it was acknowledged that this had also been an area of historical underinvestment.

RESOLVED

That the update was noted.

71. WASTE, RECYCLING & STREET CLEANING PERFORMANCE

The Panel received a report for information, which provided an update on the borough's waste, recycling and street cleansing performance. The report was introduced by Beth Waltzer, Interim Head of Waste as set out in the agenda pack at pages 17-32. The following arose from the discussion of the report:

- a. In response to a question, officers advised that the review into missed collections was being undertaken as part of the Veolia plan which was wrapped up in the contract improvement plan and looked into what type of information was received by the crews compared to managers, compared to staff at the depot. An audit of complaints was being undertaken and was due to be completed in the following week. It was estimated that the contract improvement plan should be in place in the next one to two months' time.
- b. The Panel questioned why the recycling target remained the same over a ten year period and queried whether the authority should be seeking an improved rate over time. In response, officers advised that the target of 62% was the contractual target with Veolia but that Veolia were aware that the Council would like to see an over achievement in performance.
- c. In response to a question, The Cabinet Member confirmed that consultation with community groups around the proactive graffiti response would take place from March 29th and would be done on a rolling ward-by-ward basis. Panel Members welcomed the work being undertaken to tackle graffiti and expressed a desire to see the roll-out take place in their respective wards.
- d. The Panel raised concerns about the impact of HMOs on waste and fly tipping, which was a particular problem in the borough due to the demographics. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that benchmarking work was being undertaken with similar boroughs.
- e. In relation to the recycling target, the Panel was advised that future targets in that regard would be looked at in the context of the Reduction & Recycling Plan, the Veolia Recycling Action Plan and the Borough Plan Refresh and that increasing recycling participation was a priority.

RESOLVED

- I. That Members were asked to note the content of the report and provide officers with any comments regarding their experience, or reports they have received relating to the waste, recycling and street cleaning services.
- II. The Members note that a review of the borough's Reduction and Recycling Plan is still in progress

72. UPDATE ON THE FLY TIPPING STRATEGY

The Panel received a report which provided an update to Scrutiny Members on progress against Borough Plan commitments for waste and street cleansing, and specifically on the work to reduce fly-tipping in the borough. The report was introduced by Beth Waltzer, Interim Waste Manager as set out in the agenda pack at pages 33-46. The following arose during the discussion of the report:

- a. In response to a question, the Panel was advised that the introduction of the litter and waste enforcement team had resulted in significant improvements to fly-tipping and general cleanliness levels. Officers agreed to provide a written response on the improvements since the introduction of the litter & waste enforcement team. **(Action: Beth Waltzer).**
- b. The Panel queried some of the figures around Fixed Penalty notices and sought clarification on volumes. In response, officers advise that 540 FPNs were issued to residents in the period from April 2020 to the report being compiled and 330 FPNs issued to businesses in the same timeframe.
- c. Officers agreed to feedback to the Committee a breakdown of all waste related FPNs (not just litter) as well as a breakdown of how many of these had been paid. **(Action: Beth Waltzer).**
- d. The Panel also sought assurances around the hotspot locations referred to in the report, officers advised that these were spread across the borough with 10 in east, 10 in the west and 10 in the centre of the borough. Officers would come back with the specific locations of these hotspots. **(Action: Beth Waltzer).**
- e. The Panel questioned whether officers had found that the current use of black boxes had attracted dumping. In response, the Panel were advised that they had not found them to be a magnet for dumping and that the waste was contained more effectively than having it just sat on the street. Officers set out that there had been a general improvement in street cleanliness as a result and their rollout was considered to be a success in that regard.

RESOLVED

That the Panel noted performance to date and comments on progress against Borough plan objectives.

73. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

RESOLVED

That the Panel agreed the Work Plan and any changes contained therein.

74. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

75. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that this was the last meeting of the municipal year.

CHAIR: Councillor Khaled Moyeed

Signed by Chair

Date

