

MINUTES OF MEETING Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel HELD ON Monday, 28th June, 2021, 6.30 pm

PRESENT:

**Councillors: Scott Emery, Dana Carlin, Eldridge Culverwell and
Preston Tabois**

ALSO ATTENDING: Ian Sygrave

76. 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'.

77. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were noted from Cllr Ogiehor.

Cllrs Amin and Bull were present at the meeting virtually so their attendance cannot be formally recorded.

78. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

80. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

The Committee received a deputation on behalf of the Haringey Tree Protectors, around their concerns with the felling of trees on Parkland Walk and the need to maintain and enhance the existing tree coverage in the borough. The deputation was given by Giovanna Lozzi and Hannah Pescod. The key points of the deputation are summarised below:

- Parkland Walk was described as a 2.5 miles long former railway, which was home to rare species of flower and fauna, birds, owls, bats. A recent series of tree works was undertaken at this site, which had been deeply unpopular with some local residents, and had resulted in a petition and some local press coverage. It was commented that the works were the biggest intervention at this site since it became a wildlife corridor.

- The deputation party suggested that the planning, commissioning and site-management procedures of those works were beset by serious failings and were fundamentally flawed. It was contended that the Council appeared to take a ‘chop down first, ask questions later’, approach. A particular point of contention was the process of felling all trees within 5m of a bridge without ascertaining whether the trees were causing structural damage. Given that the world was facing a climate emergency, it was felt that trees needed to be maintained and protected.
- The Deputation party set out that they did not believe that the Parks service adhered adequately to the existing management plan for the site and should have adopted a more localised, nuanced and sensitive approach on a tree-by-tree basis.
- Concerns were raised as to why officers did not seem to be involved in the specification of works, or in carrying out a thorough survey and ecology report, which assessed both the ecological value and potential impact of the work on trees and other vegetation beforehand. Instead, the felling works were carried out by contractors without, it was suggested, any effective monitoring and site-management by the Council.
- A failure to manage the work effectively resulted in: The mistaken felling of a number of 100-year-old oak trees at St James’ Bridge; trees being cut down beyond the 5 metre remit; the loss of an array of other local flora, such as bluebells and daffodils; and path widening taking place which exceeded the 5m limit.
- The deputation party requested that OSC look into the works further in order to learn from mistakes. It was also suggested that:
 - There should be enhanced tree protections for trees, with TPOs that are properly enforced.
 - Trees should form a central part of the new Biodiversity Action Plan and Haringey urgently needed a properly implemented and scrutinised trees strategy.
 - There should be well-financed, robust and valued trees department.
 - Trees should be considered as local heritage assets and be treated with equal respect as buildings.
 - Haringey should consult meaningfully with communities on large ecological projects. It was suggested that some residents, whose houses back onto the walk, had not been consulted with or informed the work was being planned.

The following points arose as part of the discussion of the deputation:

- a. The Committee sought clarification around whether deputation party had received any response from the Council on their concerns so far. In response, the Committee was advised that as they understood it, the Council was conducting a retrospective environmental impact analysis and that this was still being completed. The deputation party advised that they had also submitted an FOI request.
- b. The Cabinet Member, Cllr Hakata, thanked the deputation party for their deputation and advised that he was new in post and was unable to respond in detail on some of the historical points. Cllr Hakata advised that he acknowledged the need to learn lessons from this process as well as the need to engage with residents better. The Cabinet Member advised that he would

be developing a community engagement plan going forwards. The Cabinet Member also acknowledged the importance of biodiversity and the role of trees and woodland within that.

- c. The Head of Parks and Leisure advised that he was happy to share the environmental study with the deputation group and would also commit to meeting them in the next few weeks to discuss the findings of the study with them and learning points going forwards.
- d. The Chair set out her concerns with the potential that a number of trees were cut down in error and requested whether a tree audit could be carried out so that there was a record of exactly what was there. In response, officers advised that they needed to go through the environmental study point by point. Officers advised that during the works they adopted a different specification that may have been done in the past whereby all trees within 5 metres of the bridge were felled. The Head of Parks and Leisure advised that he was happy to commit to an individual assessment in future, whereby every tree would be marked up.
- e. The Committee raised concerns with a perceived lack of consultation and engagement around these works and queried why all adjacent residents were not consulted with. In response, officers set out that letters did go out to local residents and that notices were also placed at the appropriate places. Officers also consulted with the Friends of Parkland Walk in advance of the works. In response to a follow-up point, officers agreed to supply the Committee with the communications plan that was used for these works including names and addresses of those engaged with. **(Action: Simon Farrow)**.
- f. The Chair thanked the deputation party for their contribution and advised that this issue would be incorporated into the Panel's work programme going forwards.

81. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting on 4th March were agreed as a correct record.

82. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS - CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT & CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Climate Emergency, and the Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllr Hakata, attended OSC to give a verbal update on his portfolio, followed by a question and answer session. Rob Krzyszowski, Assistant Director, Planning, Building Standards & Sustainability was also present for this item, along with Maurice Richards, Transport Planning Team Leader and Simon Farrow. Cllr Hakata's portfolio update is summarised as follows:

- A key element of the portfolio was around strategic transport, which included the TfL Street Space programme which had replaced the traditional LIP funding during Covid for the maintenance and upkeep of the borough's roads.

- One of the key drivers behind the Street Space programme was dealing with the issue of a car-led recovery from Covid. TfL modelling suggested that a 3% increase in traffic could lead to a grid lock on London's roads.
- Haringey was committed to being zero carbon by 2041
- Respiratory illnesses were increasing and the primary cause of this was pollution.
- In light of wider health concerns, the Cabinet Member set out that he was committed to pushing people to walk and cycle more and that Haringey would be looking to disincentivise car usage, whilst incentivising cycling and walking.
- The Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTN) programme was continuing, and the Cabinet Member advised that he was committed to engaging with local residents on LTNs and ensuring they were part of the process. The first consultation would begin on 8th July, with the others to follow shortly afterwards. This consultation exercise would feed into the decision making process for implementation in the autumn and there would also be a rolling process of consultation to ensure that LTNs achieved their stated purpose.
- LTN's were identified as being just one part of a wider toolkit of interventions, with the examples of School Streets and the Walking and Cycling Action Plan (WCAP) noted. The Council had originally committed to undertake 15 school streets programmes over the 5 period of the WCAP. The Committee was advised that this would in fact be 26.
- The Cabinet Member committed to ensuring a depth of engagement with residents across all the schemes and that he would also be looking to roll out other traffic interventions across the borough as-and-when possible.

The following arose during the discussion of this agenda item:

- a. The Panel welcomed the Cabinet Member's goal of trying to win the hearts and minds of local residents around LTNs. The Committee queried when the WCAP would be in place, in response it was noted that the original implementation of summer 2021 would now likely be delayed slightly to Autumn 2021.
- b. The Panel queried whether in addition to the three proposed LTNs, there was also scope for rolling out smaller self-contained schemes. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that a whole raft of traffic and transport interventions were needed and that a number of bids had been submitted. The Cabinet Member advised that the priority for bids submitted would be pedestrians first, cyclists second and public transport third. LTN micro-schemes would be a part of the overall work programme going forward, if it was feasible.
- c. In response to a question around how schemes were prioritised and what the criteria were, officers advised that the School Streets action plan was agreed by Cabinet last autumn and this set out the detailed criteria used. Officers also advised that the draft Walking and Cycling Action Plan set out the criteria used for determining LTN proposals going forwards. Officers advised that these criteria for prioritising LTNs were developed after the emergency TfL bidding window for new schemes last year and so the current schemes were based on existing proposals and feedback received from residents.

- d. The Panel queried the inherent assumption of increased traffic levels, given the impact of the pandemic and also raised concerns about the displacement effect on traffic to surrounding streets and neighbourhoods. It was also suggested that the impact of LTNs was disproportionately on working class communities who needed to commute work and, in some cases, may have two or three jobs. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that the pandemic had resulted many people working from home but that traffic levels had been increasing steadily since lockdown as more people returned to work and that this would continue as the recovery continued. Within this, pollution levels were continuing to rise and that this had a disproportionate effect on poorer and more vulnerable residents. It was suggested that only 40% of residents owned a car, and this was overwhelmingly more affluent residents. However, less well-off residents, most of whom did not own a car, suffered the most as a result of air pollution. The Cabinet Member also highlighted the prevalence of road traffic accidents in London and the links between this and traffic volumes.
- e. Following a suggestion from the Chair, the Cabinet Member agreed to provide a written answer to the Panel around the impact of LTN's, traffic displacement and the extent to which they disproportionately impacted working class communities.
- f. The Panel cautioned against the law of unintended consequences and residents feeling that this was something that was being foisted upon them. The example of a pastor in Islington was raised and it was commented that the Council needed to consider the detailed impacts of its schemes on adjacent areas. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that LTNs took time to bed-in and that examples in other boroughs had shown that initial negative impacts on traffic volume were not sustained and that these got better afterwards. Long term behaviour change was what was required, and it would take some time to bring this about.
- g. The Panel sought further clarification around attempting to disincentivise drivers and cautioned that a lot of car traffic in the borough was people travelling through the borough, rather than those that lived or worked here, and that this tended to be concentrated in the main thoroughfares. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that whilst disincentivising cars played a role, incentivising other modes of transport, was the most important factor in reducing traffic levels. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that making transport accessible to all was crucial. It was suggested that a lot of traffic in Haringey was being displaced from main roads to side roads, with the resultant impact of big increases in traffic on residential streets. LTN schemes in Walthamstow had seen a reduction in overall traffic and residents moving away from cars to public transport.

RESOLVED

Noted.

83. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED

That the Panel:

- I. Noted the terms of reference as set out Appendix A of the report and the Scrutiny Protocol set out at Appendix B of the report for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Panels.
- II. Noted the policy areas/remits and membership for each Scrutiny Panel for 2020/21, as set out at Appendix C of the report.

84. APPOINTMENT OF NON-VOTING CO-OPTEE

The Panel received a report which sought approval of the re-appointment of a non-voting co-opted Member to the Panel.

RESOLVED

That a representative from Haringey Association of Neighbourhood Watches be appointed as a non-voting co-opted Member of the Panel for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

85. TRANSPORT PLANNING UPDATE

The Panel received report which provided an update on the Council's Transport Planning programmes, including the draft Walking and Cycling Action Plan (WCAP), the Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) Programme, Transport for London funding update (post-Covid) and actions being taken to reduce congestion and improve east to west transport links. The report was introduced by Rob Krzyszowski, Assistant Director, Planning, Building Standards & Sustainability and Maurice Richards, Transport Planning Team Leader, as set out in the agenda pack at page 69.

The following arose from the discussion of this item:

- a. The Panel welcomed the Peddle My Wheels scheme, which the Council contributed funding to, that allowed people to try out bikes before deciding to purchase them at a discounted rate. A Panel Member commented that cycleways in neighbouring boroughs seemed to be much better and sought assurances over how recent TfL infrastructure funding had been spent. In response, officers advised that the funding received for last year included £100k of funding from the DfT for bollards and segregation of cyclists on side roads. These works were originally due to be temporary and so some further work would be undertaken to improve these. The Panel was advised that the Street Space Plan was set out on the Haringey website, and this included details of all of the successful funding bids.
- b. As part of a follow up question, the Panel sought assurances around the latest round of TfL bids given the fact they were on a first come first served basis. In response, officers clarified that they had submitted a bid under the most recent bidding process and that this was not a new competitive bidding process. Instead, it was oriented towards schemes that had been submitted

previously where boroughs were already in discussions with TfL. Bids were either through the Street Space Plan or the LIP. Officers advised the Panel that they would provide updates on this round of funding bids, along with future rounds at a future meeting. **(Clerk – to note).**

- c. The Panel also sought clarification from the Cabinet Member about comments he had made previously on social media that other borough's LTN's were better than Haringey's. The Cabinet Member clarified that the point of his remarks was that Haringey did not have any LTNs at present and to emphasise the fact that Haringey could implement schemes that were as good as other boroughs
- d. The Panel sought clarification from the Cabinet Member about whether there was any data available about who was using the different cycling schemes and whether this was concentrated in particular areas. In response, the Cabinet Member highlighted the role of the Peddle my Wheels scheme in providing an opportunity for residents to try cycling and commented that he would like to see this scheme rolled-out further. The Panel was advised that only 3% of residents cycled and the point of building cycle lanes was to provide safe cycling routes for people who felt excluded from cycling because it was considered dangerous. The Cabinet Member advised that LTNs in other boroughs had seen increases in bike ownership because people felt safer and more able to cycle to work, school, doctors' surgeries etcetera.
- e. The Cabinet Member agreed to circulate a breakdown by area on take-up levels for the various different cycling schemes that were in place. **(Action: Cllr Hakata/Rob Krzyszowski).**
- f. The Chair noted that the delivery Plan for the Cycling & Walking Action Plan did not seem to be fully up to date and commented that a number of projects that did not have funding were RAG rated as amber. Furthermore, the Hornsey cycle way, which was part of Liveable Crouch End, was listed as green even though the funding had stopped. The Chair requested that officers updated the delivery plan and that rolling updates on the progress of projects contained within the delivery plan be brought to future panel meetings. The Chair also commented on the fact that cycle hangers for residential parking was also unfunded in the delivery plan. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that the plan was slightly out of date due to the nature of the projects and that the delivery plan would be updated following the latest funding update. The Cabinet Member advised that he would be seeking to produce a rolling delivery plan and that this would help feed into the Panel's request for regular updates. **(Action: Cllr Hakata/Rob Krzyszowski).**
- g. Officers advised that the Walking & Cycling Action Plan was approved by Cabinet as a draft, which would then go out to public consultation and engagement. Officers emphasised the importance of consulting with residents on this document and advised that an updated version would be produced following the engagement process. In regard to having projects on the plan that did not have funding, officers advised that listing those on the plan was beneficial as it supported the submission of future funding bids to TfL and allowed the authority to point to those bids having been engaged upon with residents. Officers noted that some TfL funding had been secured for the design work of the Hornsey cycle way but funding for the implementation had not been secured yet.

- h. The Chair followed up to reiterate the point that officers should look at the RAG rating again on the delivery plan, as it was felt that listing a project as being amber, even though it did not have funding secured, did not seem to accurately reflect the level of risk for that project. The Chair also requested further information at a future meeting about how talks with TfL bus planners were going as the borough had not had any new bus routes in a very long time. The Chair also commented that she would like to see officers engage with residents about where new bus routes should be implemented as well as the prioritisation of locations for development of step-free access at key stations and how far officers had got with these discussions. **(To note - Rob Krzyszowski)**.
- i. The Panel requested further information about cycle storage hangers. In response, officers advised that a bid had been submitted for this year under the LIP but due to TfL's funding situation this was currently suspended. A bid had been resubmitted through an alternative funding pot.
- j. The Panel queried whether the funding formula with the company that implemented cycling hangers could be re-examined as it was felt this was quite an expensive process. The Panel enquired whether this was something that could be brought in-house. Officers advised that this work stream was being looked at, including the potential for in-house delivery and that officers were keen to maximise cycle hanger delivery around the borough.
- k. The Panel emphasises the importance of buses and bus routes reflecting the needs of residents. It was commented that there were a whole range of people who were physically unable to use cycle lanes and that in that regard public transport should be seen as just as high a priority as cycling provision.
- l. In regard to cycle storage on housing estates, the Cabinet Member advised that conversations with HfH had taken place and that HfH were looking to re-provision some existing storage/garage facilities to support this.

RESOLVED

That the update was noted.

86. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Panel received a work programme update report for noting and further discussion around the Panel's work plan for 2021/22. The report was introduced by the clerk as set out in the agenda pack at page 137.

The Panel agreed to postpone indefinitely the proposed Scrutiny Review on Single Use Plastics and instead to undertake a review around the implementation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, the scope and boundaries of which would be agreed going forwards. The Chair also set out that in light of the deputation, she would like trees and the trees strategy to be included on the work plan. **(Action: Clerk)**.

In response, some members of the Panel emphasised the importance of the Council's single use plastics policy and the need to scrutinise it. It was agreed that a report would come to a future meeting on this subject.

The Chair requested that panel members email the clerk with suggestions and priorities for the work plan. **(Action: All)**.

The noted that she would like to see some rolling reports come to the Panel on particular topics.

In response to specific concerns around a piece of land near the Network Rail footbridge in Stroud Green, the Panel suggested that they would like to see a piece of work undertaken that looked at how well the Council worked with partners, such as Network Rail, on adopting a joined up approach to managing land and keeping it clear of litter. Cllr Bull agreed to email the Clerk with some further consideration of this topic, with a view to it being a future agenda item. **(Action: Cllr Bull).**

The Panel also noted that it would like an update from the new administration about a previous agreement to bring in vegetarian school meals once a week.

RESOLVED

- I. That the Panel noted its work programme, attached at Appendix A of the report, and considered whether any amendments are required.
- II. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to endorse any amendments at its next meeting.

87. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

88. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Noted as:

20th September 2021, 11th November 2021, 14th December 2021 and 3rd March 2022.

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair

Date