

MINUTES OF MEETING Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel HELD ON Monday, 5th September, 2022, 18.30

PRESENT:

Councillors: Scott Emery, Culverwell, Hymas, Simmons-Safo (Chair), Wallace, Ibrahim Ali and Sheila Peacock

ALSO ATTENDING: Ian Sygrave (Co-Optee)

154. 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'.

155. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Worrell and Cllr Dunstall. Cllrs Ali and Peacock attended the meeting as substitutes.

156. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None

157. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

158. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

There were no deputations, petitions, presentations or questions received.

159. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30th June were agreed as a correct record.

160. LOW TRAFFIC NEIGHBOURHOODS UPDATE

The Chair acknowledged that there were a lot of people in attendance at the meeting and that a lot of the public that were present had very strong views on LTNs. The Chair advised that, as no written questions had been submitted to the Committee in

advance, she would not be taking questions from the public. The Chair requested that those present refrain from shouting out or disrupting the meeting as it was important that councillors were able to do their job by asking questions and scrutinising the LTN schemes.

Clerks note – The Chair agreed to take the presentations for items 7 & 8 together and then questions would be taken at the end.

The Committee considered a presentation which provided an update on Low Traffic Neighbourhoods. The presentation specifically focused on the implementation of the three LTNs that were approved by Cabinet in December 2021, namely Bounds Green, Bruce Grove/West Green and St Ann's. The presentation was introduced by Bryce Tudball, Interim Head of Planning Policy, Transport & Infrastructure and Naima Ishan, Transport Planner as set out in the agenda pack at pages 9 to 30 of the agenda pack. Mike Hakata, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment, and Transport and Deputy Leader of the Council was also present for this item. The following arose during the discussion of this item:

- a. The Committee raised concerns about exemptions to the LTNs, particularly for those who had carer responsibilities and sought assurances about how delays in administering those would be resolved. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that targeted consultation with specific cohorts and groups was undertaken. The Cabinet Member advised that one of the main drivers for the scheme was the results of the disability and carers survey, along with a range of other sources of internal and external analysis. This analysis looked at how exemptions worked across different schemes around the country. Following this analysis, Haringey introduced one of the most comprehensive list of exemptions to LTN schemes anywhere in the country.
- b. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that there may be some issues in relation to processing exemptions and how the Council communicates applying for an exemption, and that he was happy to look into these. It was added that the schemes were still bedding-in and that changes would be made following feedback received from residents. The Cabinet Member emphasised the fact that, as an authority, Haringey had taken the lead in relation to LTNs and that he was not aware of another authority that had as comprehensive a list of exemptions as Haringey. Officers advised that a significant amount of engagement work had been done, particularly around the exemptions policy, and that the Council had made a commitment not to introduce LTNs until an exemptions policy was in place.
- c. The Chair noted that she had personally found the process of applying for an exemption as a Blue Badge Holder to be difficult to navigate and sought assurances about how the Council could make this process as easy as possible. The Panel also added that the Council needed to give consideration to how to improve the process of applying for an exemption for carers, some of whom would likely care-share, and to learn lessons for future roll-outs of the scheme. In response, the Panel was advised that there would be a communication send out shortly to all Blue Badge Holders around applying for an exemption, and which would pick up on the concerns outlined by members. The Cabinet Member emphasised that this was very much a learning process.
- d. In relation to concerns raised by the Panel about road safety and the possible impact of LTNs on traffic on neighbouring roads and 'rat-running', the Cabinet

Member advised that a lot of time was spent analysing detailed designs for each scheme in a very high level of detail. The Cabinet Member advised that Road Safety was a top priority when it came to LTNs and that one of the key aims was to reduce overall traffic levels and improve road safety. The Panel was advised that some of the learning that had come from other schemes across London was that speeding rates had dropped where LTNs had been introduced. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that there could be a short term adjustment period but that ultimately the Council was looking to improve road safety and decrease collisions.

- e. In response to concerns about engagement with emergency services, the Cabinet Member advised that officers had met with colleagues in emergency services extensively and, using their data, went through journey times to every location in the borough. In light of these discussions, the Council had agreed to implement camera enforcement rather than a physical filter at any location where there would be an adverse effect on journey times for emergency services.

Clerk's note at 19:10 – After several warnings by the Chair that disruption by members of the public in attendance would lead to the meeting being adjourned, the meeting was adjourned.

19:41 – The meeting recommenced.

- f. The Panel sought assurances that key outputs of the scheme were being monitored and whether assurances could be given that the LTNs would be pulled if their objectives were not being met. In response, the Cabinet Member reiterated that the schemes were still bedding-in and that there would be several opportunities to tweak them if they were not working as intended. The Cabinet Member set out that, ultimately, if the schemes did not work and the key metrics were failing then they would be pulled.
- g. The Panel questioned how the current locations of the LTN's were determined and why, for example White Hart Lane or Northumberland Park were not used as initial locations. In response, the Panel was advised that these schemes were initially selected as part of a narrow bidding window for funding and that this contributed to why certain locations were chosen for the initial rollout. The key driving force behind the location of the schemes was data, particularly in relation to metrics such as health indices, collision data, car ownership levels and traffic metrics. In relation to deprivation indices, these would be prioritised as part of future schemes and as part of the development of the Walking and Cycling Action Plan.
- h. The Committee raised concerns that some of the signage for the schemes could be misleading and that, for example, zone signage that had X2 on it looked as though it referred to access was permitted for two vehicles. Members also questioned the clarity of communications that went out to residents and suggested that future communications should also be sent out to all councillors. In response the Cabinet Member advised that a lot of work had gone into providing comprehensive signage but that he would take the feedback on board and consider how to improve signage. Officers advised that information booklets on the LTNs were shared with all councillors, prior to being sent out to residents and businesses.

- i. In relation to a question about the inspiration for LTNs, the Panel was advised that these were being rolled out across London and that funding was being provided by the GLA. Haringey had taken on board feedback from schemes elsewhere in London and would continue to learn lessons from other boroughs going forwards.

RESOLVED

That the update in relation to Low Traffic Neighbourhoods was noted.

161. WALKING AND CYCLING ACTION PLAN

The Committee considered a presentation which provided an update on Walking and Cycling Action Plan (WCAP). The presentation was introduced by Bryce Tudball, Interim Head of Planning Policy, Transport & Infrastructure and Maurice Richards, Transport Planning Team Manager as set out in the agenda pack at pages 31 to 42 of the agenda pack. Mike Hakata, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment, and Transport and Deputy Leader of the Council was also present for this item. The following arose during the discussion of this item:

- a. The Committee noted its support for cycle hire schemes and sought clarification over the Council's recent announcement on Twitter that these were to be suspended in Haringey. In response, officers advised that the Council was committed to supporting a borough wide E-bike scheme but that at present there were a number of issue with bikes being left on the pavement and causing a nuisance. As a result, officers were engaging with providers to establish a Memorandum of Understanding to operate in the borough and it was hoped that a properly regulated scheme would be back and running in due course.
- b. The Committee sought clarification about bike hangers and what was meant by prioritising the rollout of bike hangers. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that provision of secure bike storage was key part of efforts to increase cycling in the borough, particularly as people who lived on estates or in flats may not have anywhere secure to store bicycles. Prior to last year, the Council was dependent upon TfL funding for installing bike hangers, however the Council had brought in a dedicated £200k a year budget for provision of these. The Cabinet Member advised that the administration was looking at how to increase the funding further.
- c. In relation to a follow-up question, the Cabinet Member advised that £200k roughly equated to 38 bike hangers, each of which was large enough for six bikes.
- d. The Chair sought clarification about the funding window for the £5.1m capital funding identified in the report for WCAP, officers advised that this covered three years from 2021-22, 2022-23 & 2023-24.
- e. In response to a question, officers advised that the final funding settlement from TfL would help determine the WCAP delivery plan and the timescales for this.
- f. The Committee sought assurances about what criteria was used to determine the location of bike hangers and when locations that had not received hangers might expect to do so. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that there were a number of metrics used to determine allocation but that it was essentially demand led and also took into account how long residents in a

- certain area had been waiting for storage facilities. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that there was a lot of demand and that they were looking at ways to increase provision.
- g. The Committee sought assurances about what equalities monitoring had been done and what support would be in place to support those on low incomes to access cycling. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that exclusion was a key consideration and that the administration was actively looking at how to improve cycling rates for particular groups and those that currently felt excluded from cycling. The administration was looking to make cycling safer and in doing so increase participation, particularly from minority groups and those that were disproportionately impacted by health inequalities. As part of this the Council would be looking at how to make bikes more accessible for those that may not be able to afford them.
 - h. The Committee raised concerns about pedestrian safety from cyclists when sharing pavements. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that there were a number of dedicated shared cycling and pedestrian lanes in the borough but acknowledged that separate lanes were usually preferable, location permitting.
 - i. In relation to a question about school streets and what could be done to overcome reluctance from some head teachers, the Committee was advised that the Active Travel team worked closely with schools. It was suggested that perhaps teachers didn't think there was much support for school streets and the answer might be to encourage parents to voice their support to head teachers.
 - j. In relation to encouraging walking, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that this was a fundamental element of the WCAP and that this entailed improving the street scene, planting more trees and encouraging people to get out and walk.
 - k. In response to a question about improving pavements, officers advised that works were prioritised according to their condition, number of complaints and also councillor requests for intervention. The Committee was advised that the Highways and Street Lighting plan that was agreed by Cabinet in March set out in detail which pavements had been identified for improvement. Officers advised that additional funding had been set aside for pavements over the next three years in recognition that 56% of the boroughs footways needed improvements.

RESOLVED

That the update in relation to the Walking and Cycling Action Plan be noted.

162. Q&A SESSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE ACTION, ENVIRONMENT, AND TRANSPORT AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Committee held a question and answer session with the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment, and Transport and Deputy Leader of the Council. The Cabinet Member had already responded to a number of questions as part of the two previous agenda items. The following additional questions and answers were noted:

- a. The Committee sought assurances around floodwater management and in particular queried what was being done about Priory Road in Muswell Hill and the fact that this had been previously identified as the number one location for intervention. Concerns were raised that major works at this location had been

- put on hold in favour of the Queens Wood scheme. In response, the Cabinet Member agreed to come back to the Committee with a written response on this. The Cabinet Member advised that, in general, the aim was to accelerate the number of floodwater interventions across the borough. **(Action: Cllr Hakata).**
- b. The Committee sought assurances from the Cabinet Members that he would seek to engage with the government and encourage them to provide a cap or other forms of support to those with District Energy Networks or communal heating systems. The Cabinet Member acknowledged this and commented that Haringey was in the process of creating its own Council-owned District Energy Network.

163. UPDATE ON THE PARKING MANAGEMENT IT SYSTEM

The Panel received a verbal briefing in relation to the Parking Management IT System. This update was a follow-up to a previous update given to the Panel on 3rd March 2022 and the update was given by Mark Stevens, AD Direct Services. The following key points were noted:

- a. The IT system was quite complex, with 27 modules and it was also linked in with 16 other Council systems in order to provide the services required.
- b. Since the system went live, one year ago, the following number of permits had been issued:
 - 55k permit accounts had been created
 - 36k virtual parking permits had been issued
 - 10k other parking permits issued
 - 375k visitor permits, with additional paper visitor permits were issued
 - 1.2m pay-by-phone permits had been issued through Ring Go
- c. Officers acknowledged that there had also been problems reported with the system and that they had been working with colleagues in Customer Services to look at the issues and make improvements.
- d. Real improvements had been made in terms of the amount of time people were spending waiting on the phone to order parking permits. External mystery shopping had been undertaken and parking permits had come out on top in terms of the scores for services offered by customer services.
- e. Issuing of virtual permits had resulted in a decrease of Blue Badge theft by 65% in a year.
- f. Officers advised that they were undertaking a revision to the permit module in November, through Taranto, to tie it in with government design standards and significant improvements to the system were anticipated.

The following arose during the discussion of this item:

- a. The Chair passed on concerns from a resident about virtual permits and the fact that the person in question couldn't always get access to the virtual permits section of the IT system. The Chair noted that the resident was unaware that you could still receive paper copies of parking permits and concerns were put forward about the ability of some older residents to access online permits. The Chair sought clarification as to whether the Council's intention was to phase out physical permits altogether. In response, officers advised that they were seeking to channel shift residents to virtual permits as much as possible, but that they would retain paper permits for those that could not use the online

- permit system, for whatever reason. Officers commented that they were looking to make it easier to access virtual permits through upcoming revision in November.
- b. The Panel noted concerns about Blue Badge theft and queried why the photograph was located on the reverse of the permit, as if it was on the front other people couldn't use the stolen badge. In response, officers advised that the actual badges were designed and issued by the Department for Transport and that the local authority had no say in their design. Officers set out that the reason for introducing virtual permits was that the user no longer had to display their Blue Badge. In response to a follow-up, officers acknowledged that the virtual permits could only be used 'on-street' and that the physical badge was needed when parking in a supermarket.
 - c. The Panel raised concerns about the auto-validation process and questioned why when checking addresses, the system did not link up to other systems Council such as Council Tax. In response, officers advised that the auto-validation process should link up with data held on the electoral register and that this did happen in most cases. Nevertheless, officers recognised that there had been some glitches with this process and that it was hoped that these would be ironed out by the module update.
 - d. The Panel also relayed some other glitches with the system, including the fact that it was not compatible with some web browsers; past purchases were not visible; why couldn't people purchase more than 9 permits in one go; and why could the permits not be issued for two hour slots to accord with parking restrictions in certain locations. In response, officers acknowledged these issues and advise that they were working to rectify them through the update.

RESOLVED

The update was noted.

164. TREE PLANTING UPDATE

The Panel received a report which provided an update on the tree planting programme completed in 2021/22 and also set out the 2022/23 tree planting programme, as well proposals to develop an Urban Forest Plan for Haringey. The report was introduced by Simon Farrow, Head of Parks and Leisure as set out in the agenda pack at pages 43-46 of the agenda pack. The following arose during the discussion of this report:

- a. During the last planting season, the council planted 571 new trees. Of those trees 475 were new street trees or in an adjacent verge. Of the 571 trees planted 134 were trees sponsored by residents through the Trees for Streets sponsorship platform.
- b. The 2022-2026 Labour Manifesto committed the Council to planting 10,000 new trees by 2030 and to continue planting trees until all wards can achieve 30% canopy cover.
- c. A mini-forest of 1200 trees would be planted this tree planting season Woodside ward. A further mini-forest of 200 trees would be planted in Finsbury Park to compensate for the removal of the 200 whips removed earlier this year that were planted in the wrong place.

- d. In response to a request from the Panel, officers confirmed that the new tree planting plan for this year would be based on the new ward boundary changes and officers agreed to circulate this updated plan, including the number for South Tottenham, to the Panel when it was available. **(Action: Simon Farrow).**
- e. In response to a question, officers advised that a number of trees had been removed from Finsbury Park as they had been planted by the Friends Group in the wrong location, that did not accord with the nature conservation plan for the park. The Council would be planting 200 trees in the park at a more suitable location.
- f. In response to a question, officers agreed to circulate information about the number of trees will be planted in the reconstituted Bruce Grove wards. **(Action: Simon Farrow).**
- g. The Panel commented that a lot of tree planting tended to take place in parks and that there was a need to ensure street trees were planted and that there was adequate canopy cover on the streets. The Panel sought assurances about how residents could feed into the location of street trees. In response, officers advised that they were also looking at improving street canopy cover and that they would be using technology to assess where the available space for trees was, and doing so in recognition of the climate emergency and their role in providing on-street shade. Once this mapping exercise had been done, the Council would be seeking the views of residents on where they would like to see trees planted. The Cabinet Member advised that he was committed to resident engagement on tree planting and that this was set out in tree and woodland plan part of the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy.
- h. In response to a questions about community orchards and the planting of fruit trees, officers confirmed that they would be looking to plant MORE fruit trees in suitable areas as part of the developing strategy around food growing.
- i. In relation to types of trees being planted and concerns about historical instances of planting trees that were unsuitable to an urban environment, officers set out that the Council no longer planted larger forest style trees, such as London Plane trees, and instead sought to plant trees with a much smaller habit. The Council also planted trees using a root barrier in order to encourage downward root growth and minimise tree roots interfering with pavements.
- j. In response to concerns about pavements going right up the base of trees, officers advised the root network of trees was usually far larger than its canopy and that trees got very little of their water from around the trunk of the tree.

RESOLVED

Noted

RESOLVED

Noted

165. POCKET PARKS

The Panel received a report which provided an update on plans to enhance and create new pocket parks across the borough. New funding of £50,000 per annum was included in the council's budget from April 2022 to establish a community led programme to identify suitable small green spaces that can be enhanced through environmental improvements. The report was introduced by Simon Farrow, Head of Parks and Leisure as set out in the agenda pack at pages 47-50 of the agenda pack. The following arose during the discussion of this report:

- a. New funding of £50,000 per annum was included in the Council's budget from April 2022 to establish a community led programme to identify suitable small green spaces that can be enhanced through environmental improvements.. Over the course of a 12-month period it is anticipated that 10-12 community groups will be supported to realise the improvements in their local small greenspace.
- b. A pilot project has been identified in West Green Ward to make improvements to the small green space at the end of Caversham Road and the verges in the road. The location currently attracts instances of littering and anti-social behaviour. The proposal includes enhance the planting at this ,location to increase bio-diversity.
- c. The Panel raised concerns about previous pocket park locations attracting street drinking and litter. In response, officers acknowledged the need to learn lessons from previous schemes and to try to isolate problems and limit unintended consequences.
- d. The Panel noted concerns with the fact that in order to receive funding for a pocket park, a group had to be properly constituted, with a constitution and a bank account and it was suggested that this would likely lead to better organised groups getting better outcomes. In response, officers advised that this may have been the case in the past but that the criteria for funding had been significantly relaxed and that the scheme was aimed at small groups of residents who wanted to become involved in developing small green spaces in their local area. Officers also acknowledged the need to do more to target the east of the borough.
- e. The Chair suggested that she would like to see more done to provide young people with more access to allotments and green spaces for growing food. The Cabinet Member advised that the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy would focus on inclusion as a core principle.

RESOLVED

Noted.

166. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee noted a verbal update in relation to the work programme and the upcoming Scrutiny Café event that was being held on 16th September.

167. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

168. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

14 November 2022
15 December 2022
16 March 2023

CHAIR: Councillor Michelle Simmons-Safo

Signed by Chair

Date