

**Minutes of the Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel  
24<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

**Present:** Cllr McNamara (Chair), Cllr Alexander, Cllr Bull and Cllr Weber

**In attendance:** Cllr Bevan, Graham, Beattie (LBH), Gary Weston (LBH).

**1. Apologies for absence**

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Bloch and Cllr Gibson.

**2. Declarations of interest**

2.1 None received.

**3. Deputations**

3.1 None received.

**4. Cabinet Members Q and Q**

4.1 The Cabinet Member for the Environment attended to answer questions from the panel relating to this portfolio. To begin, the Cabinet member outlined some key service areas which have been visited since being in post (September 2013). It was noted that the Cabinet member had:

- Met with street sweeping staff to assess how operations could be improved. The Cabinet member was impressed with the front line officers and the work that they were undertaking across the borough.
- Met with refuse collections teams and been out on refuse collection rounds to better understand some of the challenges that front line staff face;
- Met with all parks staff across the borough, visited Green Flag accredited parks and those that intended to apply for Green Flag status in the near future.

Waste Contract Performance

4.1 The panel noted that the performance for key waste and recycling indicators was improving. In respect of the recycling rate, it was noted that the council reached last year's target and was on course to reach this year's target (35.4%). It was also noted that street cleanliness assessments had also improved through 2013/14.

4.2 There were two issues however, which were proving more difficult to resolve, these were fly tipping and fly posting. The service was working with Veolia to help improve performance in these areas and had reinforced this as a priority with street cleansing staff.

Waste Contract Monitoring

4.3 The panel sought further clarification as to how the contract with Veolia was monitored now that the Waste Contract Monitoring Group was no longer in operation. It was noted that monitoring of the waste contract took place at numerous levels:

- Weekly on an operational basis with officers;
- Every three months for high level strategic assessments with lead member.

4.4 It was noted that with the demise of the Waste Contract Monitoring Group, there were no opportunities for local ward councillors to raise waste issues directly with the contractor and officers. As a result, the process of getting resolutions to local waste collection problems had become slower and more time consuming.

4.5 To support its scrutiny of waste and recycling services, it was suggested that it would be beneficial if the EHSP could receive regular quarterly reports of key issues within local waste contract monitoring (e.g. recycling performance, food waste from flats, enforcement, fly tipping).

**Agreed:** That a quarterly report of Waste Monitoring Data is provided to the EHSP, with the Chair to agree with Cabinet member the nature of such data to be provided. This is to be requested at the first OSC Cabinet meeting of the new administration.

Hard of hearing access to Veolia call centre

4.6 The panel noted that an elderly resident had tried to call the Veolia call centre but there was no provision for hard of hearing. The Cabinet member indicated that this would be followed up at a future monitoring meeting with Veolia.

**Action:** Single Front Line to follow up provision for hard of hearing at Veolia call centre.

Purple Bags

4.7 Members of the panel raised ongoing problems with kerbside collections of purple bags. Initial investigations would suggest that there are insufficient wire back collection vehicles to provide cover if any of the fleet break down. As a result, when break downs did occur, rubbish remained uncollected (which then raised further issues concerning foxes and other vermin).

**Action:** Single Front Line would raise this issue with Veolia at the next monitoring meeting.

Waste vehicles

4.8 The panel noted that waste collection vehicles had occasionally been noted to be travelling in the wrong direction up one way streets. Whilst it was noted that the size vehicle and narrow roads may limit manoeuvrability, it was suggested that this issue should be raised with Veolia as it did not set a good example.

**Action:** Single Front Line would raise vehicle transgressions with Veolia at the next monitoring meeting.

Rationalisation of bins

4.9 The panel noted that the number of bins on streets remained problematic in some areas and sought further clarification on what was being done to support rationalisation of bins. In its previous investigation of waste and recycling services, the panel made a recommendation that further support (e.g. a how to guide) should be developed and distributed to local residents to support those wishing to reduce the number of bins outside properties. It was noted that with the high rate at which households moved in and out of the borough, such information may need to be re-distributed to maintain local awareness.

**Action:** Single Front line to clarify the availability of the bin rationalisation leaflet and its availability and future distribution.

#### Bins without lids

- 4.10 The panel noted that there were ongoing issues with waste bins without lids. It was noted that whilst resident can be report this to Veolia, waste collection teams should be reporting this to Veolia as and when lidless bins are identified. The panel noted that this would be raised with Veolia.

**Action:** Reporting procedure for waste bins without lids to be confirmed with Veolia.

#### Fly tipping

- 4.11 The panel noted that fly-tipping was an ongoing problem in some areas of the borough. It was suggested that more should be done to publicise successful prosecutions of those caught fly tipping to act as deterrent to other potential offenders.

- 4.12 It was confirmed to the panel that the Neighbourhood Action Team could follow up enquiries relating to suspected illegal disposal of trade waste. The NAT team can investigate vehicles suspected of illegal dumping as it can be verified if the operator has a trade waste license.

- 4.13 It was confirmed that the service had recently met to identify improvements to how the service responded to fly tipping incidents, particularly in relation to how information is collected, analysed and acted upon. It was noted that further work was being undertaken to help improve local intelligence gathered from street sweepers to help identify illegal dumping and promote its speedier removal..

**Agreed:** An update is to provided to the panel on fly tipping, trade waste licenses and enforcement (possibly included in quarterly report).

- 4.14 The panel noted that with the new waste and recycling collection system, large household items could be collected for free via Veolia. It was suggested that this information may need to be re-communicated to local residents as part of an ongoing education and awareness programme.

#### Street Sweeping

- 4.15 The panel noted that header roads on the ladder did not appear to be being swept regularly, which was leaving the public realm looking very untidy. It was noted that NAT would enquire as to the frequency of sweeping in this area.

**Action:** NAT to assess frequency of street sweeping on header roads on the Harringay Ladder.

#### Disposable nappies

- 4.16 The panel sought clarification as to what support was available for families with young children wishing to dispose of nappies. It was confirmed to the panel that non reusable nappies are retained within residual waste and sent to landfill/ incineration. The panel noted that dedicated advice was available on the Haringey website about nappy disposal, including schemes to encourage use of real or reusable nappies.

#### Dog excrement

4.17 The panel noted that there were ongoing issues with dog excrement, in that this was not being removed within regular road sweeping rounds. It was reported to the panel that road sweepers should have appropriate tools to enable them to dispose of this safely.

**Action:** Follow up with Veolia to ensure that road sweepers systematically dispose of dog excrement where this is located.

#### Street Banners

4.18 The panel sought clarification on the use of street banners on road railings. It was noted that there had been no change to the local policy of not allowing any banners on road banners on the grounds of public safety as these may restrict the vision of motorists, pedestrians and other road users.

#### Finsbury Park Steering Group

4.19 The panel noted that in response to the recent call-in of the Councils Event Policy, a Finsbury Park Steering Group had been established and a first meeting held. It was noted that whilst there was member representation in this group, not all local members had been invited to keep the group to a manageable size. The group were already discussing plans for the first major event being held in May 2014.

#### Road resurfacing

4.20 It was noted that there were a number of roads that were in state of disrepair and which needed substantive resurfacing work (e.g. Wolves Lane, White Hart Lane). As a response the panel noted that:

- Increased spending was detailed within the new programme of road surfacing which had recently been agreed;
- It was confirmed to the panel that part of White Hart lane would be resurfaced in the next programme of road resurfacing works (2014/15) and that local councillors would be engaged ahead of this process.

#### Encroachment on local parks

4.21 It was noted that the Cabinet member had met local parks representatives and discussed local issues. An issue emerging from some local parks was encroachment (and poor maintenance) of properties adjacent to the park. It was suggested that the legal position of the Council should be ascertained in being able to reclaim any land taken or to require remedial work on adjacent properties.

**Action:** Scrutiny to ascertain the legal position of the Council in respect of park encroachment.

4.22 The panel thanked the Cabinet Member for attending and responding to questions within the environment portfolio.

### **5. Waste and recycling report - follow up**

5.1 The panel noted that substantial progress had been made in developing the food waste collection system from 25,000 local flatted properties. A pilot scheme involving 1,500 flats (Homes for Haringey, RSLs and private developments) was operated over September to October 2013. The pilot scheme had been successful with particular note to:

- The tonnage of collected food waste was higher than expected (26 tonnes);
- Improved performance in collection of dry recyclables recorded at test sites;
- Low contamination of food waste bins.

5.2 The panel noted that the learning from this pilot would inform the roll-out to all flats in June 2014. In other follow up points from this report, the panel noted that:

- An outreach team from Veolia had been very active in the pilot scheme areas and had received positive feedback from residents;
- £200k had been secured by the Council to purchase reusable bags for tenants in flats to support dry recycling;
- Leaves collected from the roadside can no longer be included within green recycling due to possible contaminants;
- Our Haringey enforcement reporting App was now in full operation and use was growing.

5.3 The panel noted that due to resource pressures, the conversion of twin waste chute flats (one to recycling and one retained for residual waste) had not been progressed. This would be looked at once the food waste programme had commenced.

5.4 The panel noted that a fuller response to the recommendation to further develop education work to improve recycling in schools had been expected. It was suggested that this should be included within the quarterly report to EHSP as agreed earlier.

**Agreed:** Recycling education for recycling given in schools to be included within quarterly update to EHSP.

5.5 The panel noted that a near 6% increase in recycling rate was attained for 2012/13 to 32% and that the 2013/14 target of 35.4% was likely to be achieved. Future recycling targets would be challenging however, and that the Council was working with Veolia to develop strategies to further improve local recycling performance.

#### Environmental Champions

5.6 The panel noted that the Council had now recruited 20 local Environmental Champions across Haringey. The group had met a number of times and were being provided with training from Veolia and other sources.

5.7 It is hoped that this group would help to improve notification of local environmental problems (waste dumping), help develop local capacity of local groups to respond to environmental issues and provide a contact group for the Council in the development of local environmental initiatives.

5.8 The panel noted that it would be useful to be made aware of local Environmental Champions so that these could be supported further in the community.

**Action:** That local Councillors are informed of Environmental Champions in their ward.

5.9 The panel thanked officers for the preparation of this report and for responding to their questions about it.

## 6. Strategic parking in Tottenham - follow up

6.1 The panel noted that substantive progress had been made against the recommendations agreed in its scrutiny report from 2012/13. There had been a minor delay in the implementation of the Phillip lane scheme to allow works to coincide with road resurfacing. The issue of pop-up parking had been investigated and a number of possible options were being discussed and strategies for action would be developed in 2014/15. It was noted that:

- Match Day Parking Scheme Approved
- Stoneleigh Car Park C was now open to the public;
- New corporate signage was being rolled out - including new signage for car parks;
- Streetscape had been softened in car parks.

6.2 In relation to Phillip Lane development, the panel noted that most of the planned improvements had been made and that a site visit had been undertaken to inspect completed work. There were a few outstanding issues:

- Loading bays were still present on Jansen Road as TFL were not in agreement for removal. This was still being pursued.
- A review of CPZ spaces is being undertaken;
- As all works are undertaken under an Experimental Traffic Order, this allowed for further review and amendments within the scheme.

6.3 Security in Council operated car parks was discussed by the panel. It was noted that mobile CCTV would be used to help identify fly tipping and ASB to make car parks look and feel more welcoming to users. It was noted that improved signage to car parks would help to increase turnover which may help users feel safer whilst using it. It was suggested that Homes for Haringey, RSLs and local businesses could be approached to resource efforts to soften / reclaim landscape of car parks, and that local environmental (Groundwork / TCV) groups could be contacted to maintain these with the local community.

6.4 The panel noted that this holistic approach to resolving local traffic pinch points (as exemplified through the Phillip Lane Scheme) had been very successful and provided good value for money and that the Highways Service was looking to identify other areas where the model could be re-applied. It was suggested that the service may provide a short update once the Phillip Lane scheme was fully completed. The panel suggested that it would be useful to include a pictorial update to enable members to full assess the impact that changes have made.

**Agreed:** A further update is provided to the panel once the scheme has been completed (to include pictorial evidence where possible).

6.5 The panel noted that the North Tottenham Parking Scheme would move in to Phase 2 later in the 2014 and a second tranche of funding would be released. This phase would also include a review of the existing CPZs. The panel noted that it would be beneficial if the Council were replace the current processes where CPZs were implemented 'piecemeal' across the borough with a more holistic approach as this may help to:

- Remove anomalies;
- Provide further clarity and consistency;

- Limit displacement that occurs in new schemes;
- Improve scheme costs.

**Agreed:** the panel indicated that it may be helpful to revisit CPZ policy in the new municipal year.

**7. Minutes of the previous meetings.**

These were deferred to the next meeting.

**8. Date of next meeting.**

20<sup>th</sup> March 2014

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