

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON MONDAY 26TH JUNE, 2017

PRESENT:

Councillors: Tim Gallagher (Chair), Clive Carter and Makbule Gunes

Co-opted Member: Ian Sygrave (Haringey Association of Neighbourhood Watches)

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 in respect of filming at the meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barbara Blake, Hare, Jogee and Stennett.

3. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

5. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

6. MINUTES

In respect of item 33 (Haringey's Sustainable Transport Programme), it was noted that the abandoned bicycle parts on cycle stands referred to had now been removed. Responsibility for removing them lay with Veolia, as part of dumped rubbish and issues should be reported to them in the first instance.

Panel Members felt that there was a need for greater clarity over responsibility for removing abandoned bicycle parts on stands. It was noted that it could sometimes be difficult to determine whether bicycles had been dumped and therefore notices had to be placed on them before action was taken.

AGREED:

1. That responsibility for the removal of bicycle parts from cycle stands be clarified with Veolia and that an update on progress be circulated to Panel Members; and
2. That the minutes of the meeting of 9 March be approved.

7. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

8. APPOINTMENT OF NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER

AGREED:

That a representative from Haringey Association of Neighbourhood Watches be appointed as a non voting co-opted Member of the Panel for the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

9. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

AGREED:

That the terms of reference, protocol for Overview and Scrutiny and policy areas/remits and membership for each Scrutiny Panel for 2017/18 be noted.

10. WORK PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT 2017-18

In respect of the review on street sweeping, the Panel felt that, amongst other issues, needs based standards should be considered. In respect of the forthcoming review on parks, it was noted that the report by the London Assembly on green and open spaces in the capital was shortly to be published.

AGREED:

That the areas proposed for prioritisation in the 2017/18 scrutiny work programme be approved and that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to endorse them above at its meeting on 17 July 2017.

11. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS - CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

The Panel received an update from Councillor Peray Ahmet, the Cabinet Member for Environment, on key issues within her portfolio as follows;

- She welcomed the proposed reviews by the Panel on street sweeping and parks. She reported that a workshop had been arranged with, amongst others, friends of parks and regeneration partners to consider the protection of green spaces and opportunities for enhancing them. Litter was a particular issue in some of the borough's parks and work would be undertaken to see what could be done to address this.

- There were shortly to be two large events, including Wireless, at Finsbury Park. Action was being taken to reassure residents and regular meetings were taking place with the Police. In addition, letters had also been sent to local MPs and ward Councillors. There had been improvement in how Wireless were working with the local community and, in particular, they had involved local schools.
- The Council's Transport Strategy was currently being developed and this would include a section on walking and cycling. She felt that there was a need for greater progress to be made in respect of these. In addition, strategies were also being developed on air quality and fly tipping, which was shortly to be circulated to Councillors. She reported that the service was aware of where fly tipping hotspots were. The two electoral wards with the highest levels were Northumberland Park and Woodside.
- The Sustainable Transport works plan had now been agreed and details of this would shortly be circulated. In respect of parking, six new Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) had been implemented. These had proven to be popular and residents had asked for extensions for some. Their introduction could be of benefit to neighbourhoods and often led to reductions in fly tipping.
- The changes that to charging policy that had been approved as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy were shortly to be implemented. The on-the-spot enforcement process that was undertaken by Kingdom was due to be reviewed. There was now a new operational structure for tactical and strategic enforcement. Finally, the new landlord licensing scheme was due to be launched shortly and details of it had been sent to the Department for Communities and Local Government, as required.

In response to questions about the work being undertaken by Kingdom, the Cabinet Member stated that the scheme was a pilot and was therefore subject to review. Most of the fines that had been levied so far had been for low level issues and it was hoped that there would be a greater focus on more serious issues in the future, such as fly tipping. It was nevertheless acknowledged that catching offenders for more serious offences was more difficult. A greater perception of risk could help deter people from offending. There needed to be a balance between enforcement and education though.

The Panel noted that the Council's enforcement officers were not paid any bonuses for levying fines. Some had been subject to assault and there were some streets that it was considered too dangerous for enforcement officers to operate in. They felt that this was unacceptable but noted that work was taking place with the Police to address this issue. It was noted that approximately 80% of fly tipping came from homes, with a significant percentage from houses in multiple occupation.

In answer to a question regarding cycling, the Cabinet Member stated that she felt that more needed to be done and that a bolder approach might be appropriate. She noted that measures to promote cycling in neighbouring boroughs had not met with universal support from residents but it was not always possible to please everyone.

In response to a question about ward walkabouts, it was noted that one of its main aims was to ensure that ward Councillors knew who their Village Managers were. Ward Councillors normally had a good knowledge of issues within areas and were therefore a very useful source of information.

In respect of the introduction of the new charging regime for services, it was noted that short notice had deliberately been given. Other authorities that had introduced new charges had found themselves flooded with enquiries prior to the implementation date. Charging for green waste would start in October as less waste was likely to be collected from the autumn onwards. There would be an introductory offer that would allow people to get the remainder of this year and next year for the price of one year. There would be a range of options available for people to use including refuse sacks. Payment would be through the Veolia call centre and waste collected would be composted. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that there were likely to be teething problems but a lot of other authorities were now charging for collecting green waste. Collections would continue as normal until October.

12. WASTE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANSING DATA

Zoe Robertson, from the Commercial and Operations Service, reported on current performance in respect of waste, recycling and street cleansing. The Panel noted the following;

- Street sweeping had met performance targets for the last two quarters following a deterioration in performance that had occurred when the frequency of sweeps had been reduced from twice to once weekly;
- After a short period shortly after changes being implemented when performance had dipped, targets for detritus had consistently met relevant targets;
- The changes had also not led to a significant increase in complaints. It was possible that ward walkabouts had assisted with this by helping to identify issues at an early stage;
- There had been a sustained increase in satisfaction levels amongst residents over a number of years. This had peaked last year but was still high despite a recent drop. It was possible that the drop was due to the changes to services that had been introduced last year;
- Graffiti levels remained low;
- Figures for fly posting had improved substantially since business cards had been removed from monitoring;
- There had been a reduction in reported fly tipping since October. The reduction had come about from fewer reports being received from Veolia. There had been no specific change in how the Council was addressing the issue. The figures were being monitored very closely and the intention was to reduce fly tipping by half.

The Panel noted that a wide range of streets were inspected by staff for monitoring performance and these were chosen at random. The Keep Britain Tidy campaign had been brought in to assist with monitoring and help train staff. Veolia also undertook their own monitoring. Inspections were done on the day of the sweep.

In respect of fly tipping, the Cabinet Member reported that a lot of effort had been put into reducing levels. It was acknowledged that there was a problem within the borough but part of this was due to the fact that Haringey was conscientious in

recording fly tips. It was noted that there was no standardised way of recording fly tips. Panel Members felt that there was a need to ensure that a strong message was provided to all residents that fly tipping was unacceptable. The Cabinet Member felt that engagement with local residents was important. Following the Team Noel Park pilot, residents in Noel Park were now taking a greater level of responsibility and this had led to higher levels of reporting.

Panel Members felt that there was a hard core of offenders who were responsible for a large amount of fly tipping. These were often houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). The Panel noted that a new licensing scheme for landlords was due to be introduced shortly. There was a list of the top 10 fly tipping hotspots in the borough. Consideration was being undertaken on suitable further action to be taken in respect of such problematic sites. Hotspots were not just identified through data and Councillors were also able to feed in their concerns. Eubert Malcolm, Head of Community Safety and Enforcement, reported that each cluster of wards now had its own enforcement manager. In addition, Veolia also had Village Managers for each area of the borough.

The Panel noted that levels of missed refuse collections were meeting targets. In respect of recycling, the Panel noted that performance had been affected by a higher percentage of loads being rejected due to contamination following a change in government regulations. This had impacted on all local authorities. The presence of a small amount of contamination could now result in entire loads being rejected. A 36.5% rate of recycling had been achieved last year compared with 37% for the year before. There was a target of 41% for this year but only 36.3% had so far been achieved. A recycling action plan was being developed.

AGREED:

That the Director of Commercial and Operations be requested to circulate details of Veolia's Village Managers to all ward Councillors

13. SCRUTINY REVIEW ON FEAR OF CRIME

The Panel noted that fear of crime was a quality of life issue and Haringey had some of the highest levels in London. Successful action to address the types of crime that caused residents the highest levels of concern should help to address the issue. However, people did not respond to crime in a uniform way and levels of anxiety in some areas were comparatively low despite there being high crime rates whilst in other areas the reverse was true. This could lead to resources not being utilised in a way that was proportionate to the severity of issues. The issue was very complex and there were no obvious solutions, although there were some interventions that had been used elsewhere that appeared to have the potential to make a difference.

AGREED:

That the report and its recommendations be agreed and submitted to Overview and Scrutiny for final approval.

CHAIR: Councillor Tim Gallagher

Signed by Chair

Date