

London Borough of Islington

**Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 11 July 2017**

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 5, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 11 July 2017 at 7.30 pm.

**Present:**           **Councillors:**           Champion (Chair), Hamitouche (Vice-Chair), Andrews, Russell, Heather and Jeapes

**Councillor Rowena Champion in the Chair**

**128       APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item A1)**

Apologies were received from Councillors Doolan, Gallagher and Perry.

**129       DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item A2)**

There were no declarations of substitute members.

**130       DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item A3)**

There were no declarations of interest.

**131       MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item A4)**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2017 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

**132       PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item A5)**

A member of the public enquired on whether the Display Energy Certificates for all council buildings including the town hall had been updated.

In response, the Chair advised that relevant officers would respond to him and Committee Members on this issue in due course.

**133       CHAIR'S REPORT (Item A6)**

In response to the Chair's suggestion on future meetings of the committee commencing at 7.30 instead of 7.00pm, Members welcomed the new start time.

The Chair informed the meeting that on Friday 30 June, some Members of the Committee visited the Ecological centre in Gillespie Park, met staff of the centre and 'Friends of the

Park' volunteers to understand the operations and the challenges. The Chair advised that it was an informative visit and would hope that similar visits could be undertaken to other open spaces within the borough by the Committee later in the year.

The Chair advised Members that a site visit to the Bunhill Heat and Power Centre, was being organised around the autumn period as it would provide Members the opportunity to witness the ongoing construction with regards to the second phase of the project.

**134 REGENERATION OF RETAIL AREAS SCRUTINY REVIEW - FINAL REPORT (Item B1)**

In the discussion the following points were made:

- The Chair informed the meeting that due to an administrative error a recommendation had been omitted from the final report and that this had been tabled for Members consideration. The Chair also highlighted a few typographical errors in one of the recommendations.
- A suggestion to include an additional recommendation to protect long standing local businesses from the impact of regeneration activities was noted. The exact wording of the additional recommendation to be delegated to the Chair and the Head of Economic Development Projects and Transport Planning.
- Members were advised that the Council was in the process of developing its Economic Development Strategy and that recommendations from the review would be incorporated into the process.

Councillor Russel moved a motion to include an additional recommendation to protect local businesses from the impact of regeneration plans in local areas.

This was seconded by Councillor Champion.

The Chair on behalf of the Committee expressed their appreciation to Councillor Court, Officers and the various contributors who had participated in the review.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the final report be agreed subject to including an additional recommendation which aims to protect local businesses from the impact of regeneration plans in local areas.
2. That the changes be agreed by the Chair in conjunction with the relevant Officer and submitted to the Executive.

**135 AIR QUALITY - OFFICER UPDATE (Item B2)**

Paul Clift, Environmental Health Manager and Jo Shaw, Environmental Project Officer updated the meeting on issues around Air Quality, its ongoing projects and its challenges.

## Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 11 July 2017

In the discussion the following points were made:

- A new Air Quality Action Plan within an overarching Air Quality Strategy will be agreed by 2018.
- The Council in conjunction with neighbouring authorities and businesses had participated in a number of projects aimed at reducing air pollution from businesses, such as the City Fringe Zero Emissions Network, Zero Emissions Network (ZEN), a Low Emission Neighbourhood and a freight consolidation initiative with the London boroughs of Camden and Enfield.
- The Council had also worked on anti-idling projects with schools, businesses and during events at the Emirates Stadium and elsewhere in the community on 'Action Days'. With regard to vehicle idling, Members were informed that although this was against the law in Islington and drivers can be issued with fixed penalty notices, the law requires officers to ask a driver to switch off and if they don't comply to that request, only then can a FPN be served. Although the legislation is weak regarding FPNs, the idling projects were a good opportunity to raise awareness and educate drivers on their part in causing air pollution hotspots, such as at school gates, rather than simply serving a fixed penalty notice. In response to a question, the meeting was advised that enforcement of idling is undertaken by two dedicated response teams and members of the Pollution Team (totalling approximately 30 officers) who will patrol hot spot areas such as outside school gates, bus stands and the Emirates Stadium on event days, as well as responding to complaints
- In response to a question on the level of public awareness/campaign about pollution caused by idling vehicles, Members were advised that the Council was part of a City of London initiative, funded by the Mayor of London which was a high profile London wide campaign involving 10 boroughs. Islington has received media attention as part of this campaign from local press and was featured on BBC Breakfast news.
- The Environmental Health Manager informed Members that all local authorities within Air Quality Management Areas are required by both DEFRA and for London, the Office of the Mayor of London, to undertake an audit known as an Annual Status Report where local actions and information on air pollution levels are reported on a yearly basis. The Annual Status Report is also published on the Council website.
- The meeting was informed that addressing air pollution requires working in partnership across different Council departments, with neighbouring authorities, in the community and with businesses More specifically with planning, Islington presently through its policy on home building programmes and its permitted development does not promote car ownership.
- strategy was launched, the Officer acknowledged that although there was still more work to be done, there had been an overall improvement in air quality over recent years. The Council now complies with the majority of the EU/UK air quality limit values with the exception of the annual mean level for Nitrogen dioxide which was breached on main roads in the borough. Islington in common with other London boroughs and urban areas across the country, continues to breach the Nitrogen dioxide annual limit value, and Members were notified that this was the reason for the legal action against the UK government by Client Earth and the issuing of an air quality action plan by Defra, which the Council, via Councillor Webbe had responded to during a recent consultation. This long standing legal action by Client Earth and the issuing of the action plan by Defra had been widely covered in the media as

awareness of air pollution increases across the community. In this respect the Officer indicated that the Council continues to encourage its' residents to sign up to the free air TEXT service to receive alerts on days of high air pollution, which allows them to make plans to avoid pollution by changing travel plans, by taking back street walking or cycling routes or preparing themselves by carrying or taking medication. Members were informed that Islington had helped develop and coordinates the air TEXT service on behalf of all the London boroughs and beside air pollution alerts, can also alert people of high UV, pollen and temperature levels. The air TEXT alerts are sent to subscribers via a text, an email, to a home phone, via social media such as Twitter, an App, or by logging into the website [www.airtext.info](http://www.airtext.info) .

- Air pollution was of considerable importance and high on the agenda not only locally but nationally in the context of being a public health emergency. The Council recognises that the main source of air pollution locally in Islington is from road traffic, with a large contribution of this being the fumes from diesel fuelled vehicles. The Council does not consider there to be a clean diesel vehicle and acknowledges the failure of diesel vehicle EU emission standards to deliver the real world improvements in air quality promised from laboratory testing.
- With regards to concerns about dirty air being emitted from diesel vehicles, the meeting was advised that this was being addressed through the Mayor's Air Quality and Transport Strategies with plans, for example, to phase out diesel black cabs in London from 2018, where from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018, taxis presented for licensing for the first time will need to be Zero Emission Capable. The Officer also indicated that the Council was in consultation with Transport for London and the Greater London Authority on ensuring that the necessary infrastructure was in place for the smooth transition over to the use of electric and hybrid vehicles. Issues such as the siting and accessibility of charging points for private hire mini cabs using electric and hybrid cars were being discussed.
- The Officer advised that the impact of air pollution on public health was being considered as a topic by the Health & Care Scrutiny Committee. The Environmental Health Manager agreed to keep the Committee informed of any developments that may arise from the Committee's review which is due to commence on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2017, with a Scrutiny Initiation Document currently being jointly drafted by Officers from Public Health and Public Protection.

The Chair thanked the Officers and requested that due to the importance of this issue in the context of both road safety and public health concerns, the Committee would welcome it to be included as an item on the agenda for consideration.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee be kept informed of outcomes from the review to be undertaken by the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee on Air Quality and Public Health.

**136 SCRUTINY TOPICS - 2017/18 (Item B3)**

**RESOLVED:**

## **Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 11 July 2017**

1. That the main scrutiny topic for 2017/18 would be Recycling.
2. That the Scrutiny Initiation Documents be drawn up and agreed in principle by the Chair and Vice Chair and the scope of the scrutiny is to be formally agreed at the next meeting.
3. That as part of the review, site visits to the North London Waste Authority, Hornsey Street depot and Bywaters be organised.
4. That Officers facilitate a presentation regarding Recycling to Committee.
5. That Officers facilitate a meeting with residents in Council Estates
6. That the work programme reflecting the above be considered at the next meeting.

### **137 WORK PROGRAMME 2017/2018 (Item B4)**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the work programme be updated prior to the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 9.30pm

**CHAIR**