

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 1 February 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 4, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 1 February 2016 at 7.00 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** James Court (Chair), Diarmaid Ward (Vice-Chair),
Mouna Hamitouche, Gary Heather, Clare Jeapes,
Caroline Russell and David Poyser (Substitute) (In
place of Marian Spall)

Councillor James Court in the Chair

13 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item A1)**
Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Theresa Debono and Marian Spall.

14 **DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item A2)**
Councillor David Poyser substituted for Councillor Marian Spall.

15 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item A3)**
There were no declarations of interest.

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

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee meeting on 11 January 2016 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them subject to the following amendments:

- In relation to Minute 11 - Solar Panel Report, Councillor Heather had asked if the council would be willing to offer advice to groups interested in putting solar panels on private roofs and the Director, Public Realm, had responded that the council would be willing to provide advice.
- In relation to Minute 10 – Recycling, Councillor Poyser had reported a bin that had been overflowing in Hillrise ward (just outside the pilot area).

17 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item A5)**
There were no public questions.

18 **CHAIR'S REPORT (Item A6)**
There was no chair's report.

19 **CCTV SCRUTINY REVIEW - WITNESS EVIDENCE (Item B1)**

RESOLVED:

This item was deferred as the officer was unable to attend the meeting.

20 **SMART CITIES SCRUTINY REVIEW - WITNESS EVIDENCE (Item B2)**
Sally Millett, Head of ICT Strategy and Transformation gave witness evidence. In the presentation and discussion the following points were made:

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- Smart Cities meant many things to many people. Smart cities was about having Smart and Connected Communities.
- The growth in local populations, the increase in visitor numbers and commuters meant that all urban areas faced a broad range of problems ranging from traffic management to pollution to rising energy costs.
- Pressure on council resources and increasing demand for public services meant that there was a need to redesign services and technology was a significant enabler in service transformation and improvement.
- Homes, buildings and spaces would become significantly more intelligent. 1.6 billion connected things would be used by Smart Cities in 2016. This was a 39% increase on 2015.
- Conceptually the possibilities associated with “Smart Cities” were endless and it provided one of the answers to enable the council to do more with less especially as urban data and technology could be used to make places healthier, safer and more efficient for citizens, businesses and visitors.
- To be successful a Smart City required a focus on the citizens living in it and the challenges they faced.
- Connecting interlocking smart technologies was complex and exploiting the opportunities associated with making open non-personal, non-commercial data sets available for innovative purposes required careful and realistic consideration of issues such as information management, protection and security.
- Islington’s digital strategy included four strands: 1) Digital Collaboration which involved data sharing; 2) Digital Place which was how citizens were involved in a digital way; 3) Digital Customers and 4) Digital Workforce.
- There were many technological advances that would happen in the short, medium and long term future. These technological advances would drive Smart Cities.
- Considering a global perspective, India and China had infrastructure based plans, Singapore had the ‘World’s First Smart Nation Programme and Beijing’s new 2025-2050 master plan based crowd funding community projects focussed on the everyday needs and challenges residents faced.
- Considering a national perspective, Milton Keynes was using smart technology in infrastructure and parking/traffic management, Glasgow was building a new university and had a Smart Campus, Bristol and Birmingham were working on infrastructure and open data, Manchester had done Smart Cities work in sustainability, EU partnering and funding and Leeds had a Data City Partnership.
- In London, the Greater London Authority had the Smart London Plan and was looking to share data with communities.
- London had a £100m annual fund for Smart Cities.
- Future Cities Catapult was a not for profit organisation working with digital communities across the UK to drive innovation and accelerate growth for the UK’s digital economy. This represented £1bn funding over next 5 years.
- There were opportunities to collaborate with the private sector.
- IT Vendors such as Cisco, BT and Arquiva were involved in Smart Cities work.
- The latest thinking on Smart Cities was that it addressed urban challenges by using digital technologies to engage and enable citizens, however it could be too concerned with hardware and technology and citizens should be put first and technology put second. “Collaborative technologies” offered cities another way to make smarter use of resources, smarter ways of collecting data and smarter ways to make decisions. Collaborative technologies could also help citizens themselves shape the future of the cities.
- NESTA had produced a report entitled “Rethinking Smart Cities from the Ground Up”. The policy recommendations included realigning the Smart Cities approach. This could involve:
 1. Setting up a civic innovation lab to drive innovation.

2. Using open data and open data platforms to mobilise collective knowledge.
 3. Taking human behaviour as serious as technology.
 4. Investing in smart people not just smart technology.
 5. Spreading the potential of collaborative technologies to all parts of society.
- Local Communities engaging, mobilising and collaborating was the key to success.
 - There was much Smart Cities work taking place in Islington. Infrastructure work included street based WIFI. The council received £500,000 initially from the operator who would put boxes on lampposts free of charge and it was anticipated that when the revenue streams were in place, the council would receive £2million per year. Initially the WIFI would be on Holloway Road and Upper Street and would then be rolled out. A roof top tender was underway. Existing initiatives included smart bins and links with Future Cities Catapult. The registrars system was fully online, repairs was due online shortly, some non-office based officers had been given mobile devices to help them report issues and conduct more work whilst out of the office and smart technology was used to record carers' visits and timings.
 - In 2015 a joint workshop with Islington and Camden had been hosted by Catapult. A BT innovation event was held in November 2015. Spacehive was used for crowd sourcing for funding opportunities.
 - The next step for Islington was to develop the Smart City Framework for Islington. This would include assigning leadership for the Digital Collaboration Strategy, engagement with communities, partners, private sector experts and technology providers, to review the strategic objectives and delivery principles as well as the opportunities and to create an action/delivery plan.
 - Bristol and Loughborough had appointed Smart Cities leaders. Leadership at a political and director level helped in building momentum for Smart Cities but as well as a top down approach, a bottom up approach was also required. Those who delivered the services knew where the challenges were.
 - Islington was doing lots of Smart Cities work without thinking of it as Smart Cities work. Publicising it more would help the Smart Cities agenda, help with gaining feedback and technology providers who worked where there were opportunities, could see Islington as a good place to work.
 - A member asked if social media or web platforms would be used to give residents the opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way. The officer advised this was a possibility.
 - It was important to: 1) enable participation and involve communities e.g. young people, schools, residents, volunteers and local businesses; 2) collaborate with the private sector, funding bodies, industry experts and communities; 3) identify data sets and; 4) create a culture of open data to enable external partners/communities to create apps which delivered value for citizens.
 - The council should consider internal challenge and think about what else could be done, how it could link up with other external initiatives and funding opportunities and how it could encourage local communities to participate towards making Islington digital.
 - In response to a question, Sally advised that there was not a Smart Cities Week. However there was a Smart Cities Forum.
 - A member asked about the safety of telephone masts and raised concern about whether those without access to technology would suffer if services became more digital.
 - Sally Millett advised that lots of research had been done into the safety of mobile telephone masts and health and safety was a serious consideration in procurement with there being a health and safety criterion. There were 154 computers in libraries that could be used by those without access to technology and there was mediated access where staff helped customers access services digitally. Some people would

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not want to use computers in libraries and consideration should be given to the needs of the elderly and ethnic minorities.

- The chair suggested that digital inclusion could be included in a recommendation.
- The Director, Public Realm stated that technology was necessary to deliver services in a more efficient way. It was hoped that in time 80-90% of people would self serve and then a dedicated service could be provided to the remaining 10-20%.

RESOLVED:

That the witness evidence be noted.

21

COMMUNITY ENERGY SCRUTINY REVIEW - FINAL REPORT (Item B3)

A member suggested that there could be a recommendation about a co-operative being set up. The chair advised that the council would be unable to set this up and it would have to be led by a community group. Officers confirmed that to date no groups had approached the council but if they did, the council was willing to provide advice. It was considered that Recommendation 7 covered this.

RESOLVED:

That the final report be agreed and submitted to the Executive.

22

WORK PROGRAMME (Item B4)

RESOLVED:

- 1) That a visit to the CCTV control room at 222 Upper Street be arranged.
- 2) That an additional session on Smart Cities witness evidence be held.
- 3) That tenants and Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) be invited to the next meeting to contribute to the CCTV scrutiny.
- 4) That the work programme be noted subject to the above amendments.

The meeting ended at 7.55 pm

CHAIR