



AGENDA FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee are summoned to a meeting, which will be held in Committee Room 4, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on **9 March 2017 at 7.00 pm.**

Stephen Gerrard
Director – Law and Governance

Enquiries to : Peter Moore
Tel : 020 7527 3252
E-mail : democracy@islington.gov.uk
Despatched : 1 March 2017

Membership

Councillor James Court (Chair)
Councillor Dave Poyser (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Raphael Andrews
Councillor Mouna Hamitouche MBE
Councillor Gary Heather
Councillor Clare Jeapes
Councillor Caroline Russell

Substitute Members

Councillor Theresa Debono
Councillor Satnam Gill OBE
Councillor Alice Perry
Councillor Angela Picknell

Quorum is 4 members of the Sub-Committee



A.	Formal Matters	Pages
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Substitute Members	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
4.	Minutes of Previous Meeting	1 - 8
5.	Public Questions	
6.	Chair's Report	
B.	Items for Decision/Discussion	Pages
7.	Regeneration of Retail Areas Scrutiny Review - Witness evidence - Verbal	
8.	Bridge Works on Holloway Road –to follow	
9.	Work Programme 2016/17	9 - 10
C.	Urgent non-exempt items (if any)	
	Any non-exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgent by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.	
D.	Exclusion of press and public	
	To consider whether, in view of the nature of the remaining items on the agenda, it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt or confidential information within the terms of the Access to Information Procedure Rules in the Constitution and, if so, whether to exclude the press and public during discussion thereof.	
E.	Confidential/exempt items	Pages
F.	Urgent exempt items (if any)	
	Any exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.	

The next meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee will be on 25 April 2017

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 23 January 2017

Councillor Aisma Shaikh, Executive Member for Economic Development was present for discussion of this item and made a presentation to Members. (Copy interleaved).

Councillor Shaikh added that she was also dealing with the witness evidence required from Councillor Hull, who could not be present that evening.

During consideration of the report the following main points were made –

- The Council approach to Economic Development and Growth built on the Fairness and Employment Commission recommendations. Following the Employment Commission recommendations the Council has now assisted over 2,700 residents into work and a case was being made to JCP to implement a similar approach of support
- The aim is to tackle inequality and poverty and develop an approach that is driven by inclusion, a model of economic growth that benefits everyone
- There are 2 Islington's with affluence in some parts, however Islington has the third highest rate of child poverty in the UK
- The draft economic development strategy vision is to make Islington a place a place for sustainable, inclusive economic growth, where local people and communities share in this growth
- In addition there should be a diverse, resilient, local economy for the most densely populated local authority in the country, where economic activity can successfully co-exist with residential and other land uses and displacement of successful established activities in sectors is limited, provided demand exists. Economic growth should be a means of reducing inequality of opportunity within the local community
- The Council should take a proactive role in shaping the local economy and successfully engaging with and supporting key economic factors
- The Council's objectives are to ensure Islington residents share in economic growth, particularly through employment opportunities such as iWork employment support – to improve the learning and skills of Islington residents to enable them to take full advantage of available employment opportunities such as the Employment and Skills strategy, ACL and Skills devolution, challenges of BREXIT – encouraging business uses and other appropriate commercial development in the borough through the local plan and the opportunities of Economic clusters
- In addition the Council will support resilient Town Centres and encourage diversity as an enabler, through small business support and the night time economy and refreshing the markets strategy. The Council will also seek to maximise opportunities for the growth of SME's and for local entrepreneurs through planning policy and S106 and affordable workspace, and making a difference through the Council as an economic agent. Councillor Shaikh added that a large amount of workspace has been lost to residential use over a number of years
- With regard to Business Rates the 2017 revaluations were announced on 28 September and will see increase in Islington by around 45% and will see bills increase by around 30%-45%. This could force businesses to close or leave the borough
- L.B.Islington does not get increased funding and are calling on the Government to freeze the re-evaluation implementation until after Britain leaves the EU, extend transitional relief to small businesses, and increase the threshold for Small Business Relief for inner London to £20,000
- Councillor Shaikh outlined the timeframe for consultation but stated that this was flexible if it needed to be and consultation was already taking place with the Chamber of Commerce and Town Centre Managers
- Discussion took place as to business rate retention and it was stated that this is still unclear, and the Government had not indicated any firm decision in relation to how

this is to work. Councillor Shaikh added that her understanding was that 100% business rate retention was unlikely to result in additional income to the Council, however she would report back when further details were known

- Members expressed concern that the large increase in business rates would force many businesses, especially small businesses, to close and although there may be some flexibility on rate relief this is unlikely to be enough
- Discussion took place as to providing residents with the appropriate skills to fill jobs and that many residents did not have the social networks to obtain jobs in the City and there needed to be pressure put on businesses to apply corporate responsibility policies
- A Member expressed the view that there needed to be better broadband speeds to assist businesses and that the lack of affordable and social housing impacted on children's ability to learn which could affect their future job prospects
- There also needed to be engagement with employers to encourage them to pay the LLW
- A Member expressed the view that the Council should encourage pop up shops and cultural events to revitalise Town Centres at night to give new businesses an opportunity and it was stated that consideration could be given to this
- Reference was also made to the fact that more should be done to assist Islington businesses in the tendering process and procurement and that this should be considered
- Councillor Shaikh also added that the Council were looking to strengthen the night time economy if it did not affect residents
- Reference was made to the need to look at barriers to employment and Councillor Shaikh stated that she would provide figures on unemployment and the breakdown in age terms to Members
- Discussion took place as to the lack of work opportunities for the over 50's and that this area had seen an increase in unemployment rates. Councillor Shaikh stated that she would look at the employment data in this area and provide support if there is a problem
- In terms of careers advice, which had been one of the recommendations of the Employment Commission, it was stated that this is being addressed and direct work is taking place with schools to ensure that proper careers advice is being given both at schools with employers and at job fairs, however the challenge is to make this sustainable in the light of reductions in funding for the Council

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Councillor Shaikh be requested to report back to the Committee following the results of consultation and with a breakdown on the unemployment figures and age breakdown
- (b) That further details of the Government's proposals on business rate retention be reported back to the Committee, once these are available

The Chair thanked Councillor Shaikh for attending

95 PERFORMANCE STATISTICS (Item 8)

Kevin O'Leary, Director of Environment and Regeneration was present for discussion of this item.

During consideration of the report the following main points were made –

- It was noted that performance indicators were on target with the exception of waste collections and this was currently being investigated
- Reference was made to the Xmas tree collection and it was stated that the arrangements for collection had not worked as well as in previous years. It was noted that there had been an increase in trees collected which had risen from 65000kg this year from 35/45000kg 5 years previously
- Members expressed concern at dumping of rubbish/fly tipping in the borough, particularly on Council estates and it was felt that an additional PI should be added and possibly the Leisure/Library indicator should be removed as this is well meeting its target. In addition Members were of the view that there needed to be clear responsibility set out for who is responsible for what in clearing rubbish on Council estates
- Discussion took place as to the changes that had been circulated to residents in collection arrangements and that this should be circulated to them in pictorial format to assist them in understanding the new arrangements
- Discussion took place as to recycling and that the figures had gone down and that this is a big challenge and the recycling centres were requiring more high quality recycling to process this. Islington recycling rates Most neighbouring boroughs recycling rates had also plateaued. A Member referred to the Highbury Quadrant estate and there is a trial taking place on recycling and it would be useful for the Committee to get the results on this once it is available
- It was stated that a new communications plan needed to be developed to inform residents on recycling arrangements

RESOLVED:

- (a) That a further report be submitted to the Committee on the problems with the Xmas tree collections
- (b) That Councillor Hull be asked to consider adding an additional PI on fly tipping/dumping of rubbish and deleting the Leisure/Library indicator
- (c) That pictorial details be circulated to Members on recycling arrangements, in addition to the written details already circulated
- (d) That details of the recycling trial on Highbury Quadrant be reported to Members of the Committee once these are available

96 PROGRESS OF INSTALLATION OF PV SOLAR PANELS - PRESENTATION (Item 9)

Martin Holland, Environment and Regeneration Department, was present and made a presentation to the Committee. (Copy interleaved).

During consideration of the report the following main points were made –

- The third party PV installations for 2011/12 were completed in December 2011 and the licence concessions provide 7.5% of FIT income to Islington
- LBI also receives £18.52 for each kWp installed annually and there were 20 new systems installed on the Elthorne Estate providing approx. £3,200 income per month and there had been no investment necessary from L.B.Islington
- Housing Own investment – six systems were completed during 2011 by Housing as a pilot at a cost of £88k investment. All systems are 4kw and receive the top FIT rate of 43.1/kWh, Housing typically receive between £10-£12k per annum and a licensed FIT supplier has been appointed (Good Energy)
- Future investment has been curtailed due to a 50% cut in tariffs rates
- The 2015/16 PV installation at Sobell Leisure Centre, 222 Upper Street and 1 Cottage Road was completed in February/March 2016 and the investment was

£790k and has resulted in electricity and energy cost savings of £67,394 in the year to date. The FIT income is linked to RPI and the total installed capacity is 510kW

- Other systems included the Climate Change Fund 2008 pre feed in tariff and 11 PV systems were installed as part of the Climate Change Fund project around 2008 which included Central Library, Newington Barrow Way office and 7 Primary schools
- It was noted that FIT rates were only 6% of original rates and had reduced proportionally by 59% in March 2012 and 70% in 2016
- Cost of installation dropped by approx. 33% since 2011 and investment is continuing to be reviewed to make an investment case if unit rates increase
- With the reducing FIT rates the Energy Team were looking at other measures of reducing fuel poverty
- Capital investment is needed for PV solar panels and it had proved a cheaper option to reduce energy use by installing LED lighting
- Members expressed the view that the Council and other boroughs should be campaigning to increase the FIT rate to encourage the use of energy reduction measures, however it was noted that this did not seem to be a Government priority at the present time. Members were also informed that the Council had signed a letter to the Government protesting about the reduction in FIT rates
- A Member expressed the view that the solar panels at Gillespie Park should be upgraded and that Arsenal could be asked for a contribution towards this. It was that the viability of this could be looked at

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted
- (b) That the viability of upgrading the solar panels at Gillespie Park be considered

97

USE OF BARBEQUES (Item 10)

Councillor Richard Watts, Leader of the Council was present for discussion of this item and made a presentation to Members.

During consideration of the presentation the following main points were made –

- It was noted that the report e-mailed to Members of the Committee prior to the Committee from Air Quality Consultants on BBQ smoke at Highbury Fields could not be considered that evening due to legal advice, however a response would be sent in due course
- Councillor Watts stated that the Council had introduced the BBQ policy as a result of 80% of Islington residents living in flats and added only 1 in every 6/7 residents have access to a garden or open space. He BBQ policy had proved a popular policy to date but is under constant monitoring
- Councillor Watts stated that whilst he accepted that some residents around Highbury Fields were unhappy certain measures had been introduced to assist with their concerns
- In relation to health implications from the smoke from the BBQ's, this has been looked at on the basis of the Kings College report in 2015 and World Health guidelines and it was not felt that the smoke was within these guidelines and British legal requirements
- In response to a question about the cost to the Council of the use of BBQ's on Highbury Fields it was stated that this was met from the Council's maintenance budget
- Reference was also made to the numbers of people allowed to attend a BBQ and it was stated that the number of people allowed by Islington to attend a BBQ is more

than Camden, however this could always be kept under review if there were problems

- A Member thanked the Council for being responsive to complaints from her and putting measures in place to alleviate the problems of the BBQ's on Highbury Fields, however she felt that the Council needed to look at their policy again, given the huge amounts of smoke emanating from Highbury Fields when BBQ's took place and the health implications and impact on residents. The Member added that the Council should consider picnics instead of BBQ's. It was stated that there would still be costs involved for the Council in clearing rubbish and in supervision. Councillor Watts added that there is nothing to stop residents having picnics at present if they wished to do so
- A Member also stated that she felt that residents who had asthma could not use Highbury Fields on BBQ days and the Council had a duty of care towards all its residents. There were also people using Highbury Fields engaging in physical activity and the health implications on these residents also needed to be considered and the Council needed to consider the health risks for local residents and introduce communal gas BBQ's or stalls that sell hot food instead of allowing individual BBQ's
- Councillor Watts responded that the cost and complexities involved, including the dangers of calor gas, in arranging the use of communal gas BBQ's and food stalls had been looked at, but was not considered appropriate. Communal gas BBQ's had been trialled in L.B. Southwark, however it had not been successful
- A Member referred to the fact that he had lived in the area for over 20 years and expressed his appreciation of the work done by Council staff at the BBQ's and there were risks involved in many activities that took place and that in his view the benefits outweighed the disadvantages
- Councillor Watts stated that BBQ's were taking place at other venues in the borough, however the only complaints that had been received were in relation to Highbury Fields
- A resident expressed concern that people from outside the borough were coming to Highbury Fields and having BBQ's and his enjoyment was being affected. Councillor Watts responded that many local residents were also attending and that if people were coming in from outside the borough this was bringing in investment and money into local shops
- A Member stated that she was concerned at BBQ's in Gillespie Park and that this could be dangerous, given the long grass there, and that it was also not appropriate, given the siting of the Ecology Centre there. Councillor Watts stated that there had been no BBQ related fires at Gillespie Park to date and the fire that had taken place there had been as a result of criminal arson. He added that if the Committee wished to recommend Gillespie Park not being suitable to hold BBQ's they could do so
- A Member enquired whether BBQ's could be held at one end of Highbury Fields, thus eliminating BBQ smoke being spread all over the fields. Councillor Watts stated that if the Committee wished to recommend this it could be considered, but there would be additional costs in supervising this
- A Member stated that she did not feel that moving the BBQ's to one end of the fields would solve the problem, as not many BBQ's took place at the northern end of Highbury Fields, so this would not address the health issues
- In response to a question it was stated that consultation had taken place on the BBQ policy, however a local resident stated that a petition had been submitted to ban BBQ's on Highbury Fields last September
- Reference was made as to whether BBQ's could be held on Council estates and it was stated that these would be broadly allowed if there was no danger to health and safety. A Member expressed the view that she did not think that the residents of Highbury Quadrant Estate would welcome this and that there would be an enormous number of complaints if BBQ's took place on the estate

- In response to a question Councillor Watts stated that whilst detailed discussion could not take place because of the legal advice on health issues that evening, he would ask Councillor Webbe to update the Committee on this issue when she presented her Annual Executive Member report to the Committee later in the year
- A member of the public stated that he lived near Highbury Fields and his enjoyment of using the fields was spoilt by BBQ smoke and his enjoyment was as important as other residents having BBQ'S. Councillor Watts responded that the Council felt it important to balance all views, however green space was limited in Islington and the Council were trying to provide facilities for the enjoyment of BBQ's for a wide number of people
- Councillor Russell referred to the implications on limit values and air cooling and that these should be looked at

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Councillor Webbe be requested, if legal advice allows, to report back when presenting her Annual Executive Member report on the health implications of BBQ's in relation to Highbury Fields
- (b) That consideration be given to whether Gillespie Park should be included in the open spaces where BBQ's are allowed and any health implications in this regard
- (c) That the implications of limit values and the air cooling ruling be taken into consideration in relation to the above

98 WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17 (Item 11)

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

99 OTHER BUSINESS (Item)

Flood Plain consultation

In response to a question it was stated that the Flood Plain consultation proposals would be circulated shortly and details could be sent to Members.

RESOLVED:

Accordingly

The meeting ended at 9.40p.m.

CHAIR

This page is intentionally left blank

DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2016/17

23 January 2017

- 1) Regeneration of Retail Areas – Witness Evidence -Executive Member for Finance, Performance and Community Safety and the Executive Member for Economic Development
- 2) Performance Indicator Report – Quarter 2
- 3) The progress of the installation of PV solar panels on council buildings presentation
- 4) Presentation on the use of barbecues in public open spaces
- 5) Work Programme

9 March 2017

- 1) Regeneration of Retail Areas – Witness Evidence – Town Centre Manager chairs, Market Stall Holders and the Chamber of Commerce
- 2) Work Programme
- 3) TfL – Holloway Road – Bridge Works

25 April 2017

- 1) Executive Member Annual Report
- 2) Performance Indicator Report – Quarter 3
- 3) Regeneration of Retail Areas – Draft Recommendations
- 4) Community Energy report back
- 5) Work Programme

25 May 2017

- 1) Regeneration of Retail Areas – Final Report
- 2) CCTV scrutiny review – 12 month report back
- 3) *Smart Cities scrutiny review – 12 month report back?*
- 4) Work Programme

Visits To Be Undertaken During The Year

- 1) Gillespie Park – In Spring 2017
- 2) Bunhill Heat and Power Energy Centre – undertaken on 3pm on 25 November 2016

Topics To Be Considered For The Allocation of Committee Time During The Year Subject To The Progress Of The Work Programme

- 1) The Mayor of London's 'Energy for Londoner' proposals
- 2) The Ultra-Low Emission Zone consultation
- 3) The funding the Mayor of London had made available for Local Implementation Plans and the projects the council could bid for money for

This page is intentionally left blank