

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 26 June 2018

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 5, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD - Islington Town Hall on 26 June 2018 at 7.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Champion (Chair), Khondoker (Vice-Chair), Clarke, Hamitouche, Jeapes, Nathan and Russell

Councillor Rowena Champion in the Chair

208 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Bell-Bradford and Clarke-Perry.

209 DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)

There were no declarations of substitute members.

210 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

211 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2018 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

212 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 5)

The Chair informed the meeting that public questions will be taken during consideration of each item on the agenda.

213 CHAIR'S REPORT (Item 6)

The Chair welcomed everyone and in particular the newly elected councillors to the first meeting of the Environment & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair proposed that while the Committee continues to receive Quarterly Performance reports, officers will be ordinarily be required to attend only two meetings out of four. This is to enable sufficient time for members to question the officers when they do attend. Anomalies or performance issues should be highlighted by the officers when providing the quarterly performance reports. They may be asked to attend an additional meeting to address particular concerns of members. This arrangement will be reviewed later in the year.

214 ARRANGEMENTS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE (Item B1)

RESOLVED:

That the membership, terms of reference and dates of meetings of the Environment & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2018/19 be noted.

215

OVERVIEW - ENVIRONMENT & REGENERATION SERVICES (Item B2)

Brahm Kainth, Director of Public Realm provided an overview of the Environment and Regeneration Department, highlighting the various services and challenges.

The following main points were noted in the discussion:

- Kevin O’Leary, is Corporate Director, Environment and Regeneration. There are three Service Directors, Brahm Kainth (Public Realm), Jan Hart (Public Protection) and Karen Sullivan (Planning and Development). The department supports five Executive members, Councillors Burgess, Hull, Shaikh, Ward and Webbe.
- Public Protection covers emergency planning, licensing, noise and anti-social behaviour, environmental health, cemetery service, cctv, and crime and disorder.
- Public Realm covers open green space and leisure, highways, street maintenance, rubbish and recycling, energy services, such as the Bunhill Power Station, and parking enforcement.
- Planning and Development covers the determination of planning applications, planning enforcement, building control, inclusive economic development and transport planning.
- The department has more than 1,000 staff, half of whom are involved in front-line services, such as street maintenance. The current year’s budget is £80 million for operating expenditure and £20m for capital expenditure. It generates around £25 million a year.
- In response to concerns about parking around House on the Rock, the Director of Public Realm requested further details so that officers could investigate whether the concerns relate to the terms of the planning consent, the parking bay design, or parking enforcement.
- In response to a question on whether planning permission is required for installation of electric charging points, the Director of Public Realm advised that this depends on the type of contract and who installs the points. The Council has permitted rights, but any installation by the Mayor of London’s office would require permission.
- An officer from the department works with the transport policy team on the distribution of charging points across the borough. The Council endeavours to meet residents’ requests as well as placing them in strategic places, such as shopping areas, taxi ranks and the ultra-low emission zone.

In response to a question about street cleansing the Director of Public Realm advised that from 4 June all residential streets would be swept daily (Monday to Friday). Each sweeper has been allocated a regular, manageable area. Caretakers are still responsible for housing estates.

The Chair thanked the Director of Public Realm for his presentation.

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2017/18 QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE REPORT- ENVIRONMENT (Item B3)

The Director of Public Realm presented the Quarter 4 Performance Report. The following points were noted in the discussion.

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- The increased number of missed collections was due to changes introduced by the Service. The difficulties this caused have now been rectified and the number of missed collections has reduced.
- Although the tonnage of recycling remains the same as previously, more of it is being rejected as being contaminated. This is because buyers demand higher-quality products rather than because of an increase in contamination by residents.
- Director of Public Realm advised that meeting the London recycling target is challenging for all authorities, not only Islington. Key measures taken to increase the rate include educating residents, placing cameras in hot spots, and putting up new signage around communal recycling bins.
- With regard to Council's plan to ensure that Islington fulfils its goal of being a carbon neutral borough, the meeting was informed that for a number of years Islington had been pioneering ground breaking measures to address climate change and although the present focus of Council is on reducing fuel poverty, this has a beneficial effect as carbon consumption is reduced. Members were informed that Council's strategy and policy in this area was being reviewed and that no timescales could be provided as this was subject to government legislation, campaigning and infrastructure being in place.
- Councils have no power to introduce local congestion charges. The extension of the Ultra Low Emission Zone into Islington will have an impact on pollution. Islington continues to be the first local authority to introduce CO² based charging for permits and has introduced a diesel surcharge for pay and display parking.
- Officers and the Executive Member for Environment and Transport were considering closing streets around schools to traffic at the beginning and end of the school day in order to reduce the emissions to which the children are exposed.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

217

2017/18 QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE REPORT - EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS (Item B4)

Councillor Shaikh, Executive Member, Economic Development presented the Q4 Performance Report.

The following points were made.

- Overall the Council is achieving its targets on reducing unemployment and supporting people into work. It is focusing on the long-term unemployed, particularly young people and those facing multiple barriers to employment.
- The number of parents supported into employment was good compared with the same period last year. This was as a result of improved processes for capturing data on outcomes from partners, and Team Islington being able to provide more employment opportunities for residents with physical disabilities.
- The increase in the number of apprentices taken on by the Council has been made possible by aligning the apprenticeship scheme with the school term, and by ensuring that schools are aware that their school leavers have the option of a good-

quality apprenticeship.

- Islington has the highest proportion of London school leavers going into apprenticeships, which is attributable to the Council's aligning the scheme with the school year.
- Officers are considering setting targets to measure performance on Adult Community Learning. An update will be provided at a future meeting.
- Officers indicated that a large number of apprentices are placed in the construction sector, others within NHS, and some in engineering firms. A breakdown of sector-by-sector apprenticeship placements will be provided.
- In response to concerns that Greenwich Leisure Limited were not taking on enough apprentices, considering the high level of investment in the borough, the Head of Greenspace and Leisure Services advised that GLL has been achieving their target of 20 apprentices per year. Concern was also raised about the loss of self-employed instructors. The Head of Greenspace and Leisure Services responded that GLL operates a mixture of self-employed and full time employees to ensure continuity of classes.
- The Council focuses on providing employment support to groups that are not well served by other providers.
- The Council continues to look at ways of increasing the skills of young people interested in the technology sector to enable them to find careers in coding and programming. An update will be provided at a future meeting.
- With regards to the support provided to school pupils, support for all pupils continues for up to two years after they leave school after which they are the responsibility of the local authority in which they reside. In the case of Islington College, however, the Council only support pupils that reside in Islington.
- On the question of how Council promotes apprentice schemes on housing estates, the meeting was advised that the Council's iWork service set up Employment Clusters (located in Finsbury Park, Archway and South Cluster) with the aim of reaching out to local residents and community groups to publicise employment opportunities including apprenticeships.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

218

SCRUTINY TOPICS AND WORK PROGRAMME 2018/2019 (Item B5)

1. That officers presenting quarterly reports on Employment and Environment performance attend two out of four meetings in the municipal year. This arrangement will be reviewed later in the year.
2. That the main scrutiny topic for 2018/19 would be Resident and Volunteering Engagement in Parks and Open Spaces.
3. That a mini-review of the procurement of the Council's fleet be considered in September 2018.

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4. That the Scrutiny Initiation Document be drawn up and agreed in principle by the Chair and Vice Chair and the scope of the scrutiny be formally agreed at the next meeting.
5. That, as part of the scrutiny, site visits to parks and open spaces will be organised.
6. That Friends Groups and Community Garden Groups will be invited to a meeting.
7. That the work programme reflecting the above be considered at the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm

CHAIR