

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 10 September 2018

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 4, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD - Islington Town Hall on 10 September 2018 at 7.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Champion (Chair), Bell-Bradford, Clarke, Hamitouche, Jeapes and Russell

Councillor Rowena Champion in the Chair

219 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Khondoker, Clarke-Perry and Nathan.

220 DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)

Councillor Gill substituted for Councillor Khondoker.

221 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

222 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)

Matters Arising -

Outstanding matters from last meeting:

The policy and/or guidelines regarding the demand, siting and distribution of electric vehicle charging points

A report on GLL's employment practices in particular employment of local people.

RESOLVED:

That the Chair be authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2018 as an accurate record of proceedings. The Clerk will follow up on the outstanding matters referred to above.

223 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 5)

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

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport reported that the option to purchase paper visitors parking voucher will remain. The cost benefit of e-vouchers is considerable and residents should be encouraged to switch but there are no plans to compel them to do so.

224 CHAIR'S REPORT (Item 6)

The Chair, Councillor Champion informed the meeting that there will be a meeting to coordinate witnesses and the visits for members. Suggestions should be emailed to the clerk.

Future scrutiny topics, suggested by members, namely electric charging points, plans for

the transport team and syringes in local parks, would be recorded for future reference.

If members wish the clerk to follow up on questions raised during the meeting they should provide him with a brief note.

225 **SCRUTINY REVIEW - DRAFT SCRUTINY INITIATION DOCUMENT - RESIDENT AND VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT IN PARKS AND OPEN SPACES (Item B1)**

A planning meeting will be held next week to decide on witnesses and site visits. Members should email any suggestions to the Chair or the clerk.

The review could incorporate issues around bio diversity and ecology

The Parks and Open Spaces Manager offered to report on the use of pesticides in greenspaces.

RESOLVED:

That the Scrutiny Initiation Document be agreed subject to the inclusion of witnesses and site visits.

226 **PRESENTATION - PROCUREMENT OF COUNCIL VEHICLES (Item B2)**

The Corporate Fleet and Transport Manager gave a presentation to the Committee regarding the procurement of the Council vehicles. The following issues were highlighted during the discussion:

- The Council has a fleet of 500 vehicles ranging from cars to large vehicles, 90% of which are currently council owned assets and the rest are leased. 156 vehicles are ULEZ compliant. The officers look to procure the cleanest vehicles practical, where possible zero emission vehicles.
- The Council is taking steps to ensure that new cleaner technology can be adopted as it becomes available. Officers are looking into a range of fuelling options such as compressed natural gas, gas to liquid and electric.
- The market provides zero emissions small cars and small vans but the challenge is to provide an alternative to the larger vehicles and refuse vehicles which require enormous horsepower.
- Once replaced, vehicles are sold off via auction, many of which end up overseas. There was a concern that vehicles that were not clean enough for Islington were being sold rather than scrapped, however these go to replace even older dirtier vehicles which are then scrapped.
- Consideration is given to whether some cars or vans can be replaced with electric assisted and/or cargo bikes.
- The heavier vehicles in the fleet are likely to be replaced by ULEZ compliant diesel vehicles but the specifications provided to the suppliers for this round of procurement was that with the advent of new technology, the suppliers will take them and refit the vehicles with new eco-friendly engines and gears.
- There are no discussions with NLWA with regards to their heavy refuse vehicles, which travel on Islington roads. The Council is presently in discussion with Camden and Hackney on fleet procurement and the sharing of vehicles.

- In response to public safety concerns about the positioning of electric charging points on pavements and the effect of noise and light on residents, the Executive Member for Environment and Transport informed Members that the siting of these units is based on demand or requests. This is new technology and the Council continues to work on improving their design. Where complaints are made sites will be reviewed and changed if they are deemed to be detrimental to the well-being of residents.

The Chair thanked the Corporate Fleet and Transport Manager for his presentation.

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AIR QUALITY -UPDATE AND PRESENTATION FROM ENVIRONMENT MANAGER (Item B3)

Jo Shaw, Pollution Officer gave a presentation to the Committee, a copy of which is interleaved and responded to questions. The main points were as follows:

- The pollution team covers areas such as noise, light, water, contaminated land, smells, construction as well as air quality.
- Air Pollution harms health of people and animals, kill plants and can damage the environment.
- Islington is designated an air quality management area. Its NO₂ levels exceed the EU limits across over 60% of the borough. Air quality is monitored around the main roads especially south of the borough and in and around schools.
- Islington nitrogen oxide emissions by source type are – major roads 43%, minor roads 6%, domestic gas 13%, commercial gas 17%, NRMM 2%, Industry 1%, and other 18%.
- Further measures have been introduced in order to reduce air pollution and the Council continues to work with other boroughs, TfL, and the GLA to improve air quality. The Council can still improve how different departments and teams work together to improve air quality.
- Programmes to improve air quality include policies:
 - at a national level, such as vehicle and fuel taxes to promote uptake of cleaner technologies
 - city wide such as congestion charging, low emission zone and investment in public transport and borough level.
 - at borough level, such as infrastructure changes including installation of electric charging points, introducing further parking charges for high polluting vehicles, school streets school audits and ULEV streets.
- The Transport Manager highlighted examples of local programmes such as the Archway ZEN and LEN, and the City Fringe ZEN and LEN.
- Measures to improve air quality include promoting active travel and public transport, higher parking charges for the most polluting vehicles, energy efficiency schemes to help reduce NO₂ from boilers, electric charging points along Regents Canal, idling action, and low and zero emission networks.

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- The Mayor of London's Healthy Streets programme is a framework of 10 indicators of healthy streets. Its aim is to encourage more walking, cycling and the use of public transport, to reduce road danger, to tackle air quality and noise, to reduce car dependency, to improve the environment and deliver an accessible and inclusive transport system.
- Local programmes to mitigate poor air quality include the introduction of Air Text which forecasts high pollution to enable subscribers to take action to avoid exposure, walking and cycling promotion, anti-idling events and car free days
- Further improvement requires a multi-agency approach as much of the source of the pollution in Islington is outside the Council's control. National legislation, including a new Clean Air Act is needed. In recent years the emphasis has been to divert the public from personal car use and to move them to cleaner vehicles which involves investment in infrastructure such as electric points and CNG filling points. Efforts are in place to improve public awareness and to change attitudes. Additional funding and resources are being provided to develop new initiatives.

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Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT (2018/19) - ENVIRONMENT (Item B4)

The Committee considered the Performance Report.

- In response to the concerns about the fall in the recycling rate, the Executive Member for Environment and Transport advised that the NLWA had introduced a stricter tolerance regarding contamination which was leading to more recycling being rejected. This was driven by the recycling market which is now very competitive. It is not due to a reduction in public participation
- Islington produces the second lowest amount of residual waste out of all 32 London boroughs
- More needs to be done with regards to nappies and the Council is continuing to look at ways of highlighting this issue among its residents.
- In response to a question of how to raise the recycling rate, Members were advised that recommendations as a result of the Committee's recent scrutiny was in the process of being considered by the Executive.
- Concerns about drug dealing and syringes around Landseer Park were raised and Officers advised that they would look into this issue.

The meeting ended at 9.50 pm

CHAIR