

London Borough of Islington

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 7 May 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD - Islington Town Hall on 7 May 2019 at 7.30 pm.

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

Councillor Rowena Champion in the Chair

277 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Khondoker.

278 DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)

There were no declarations of substitute members.

279 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

280 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)

With regard to the high demand for tables and chairs in libraries, a member wanted to know if the furniture would be rolled out to all libraries irrespective of it being refurbished.

A member enquired if the adult and community learning being provided for hard to reach group includes white working class men.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2019 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

281 CHAIR'S REPORT (Item 5)

Councillor Champion informed the meeting that this was her last meeting as the Chair, however noting that she would still remain a member of the Committee during the 2019/20 Municipal year. She took the opportunity to thank all members, officers and witnesses involved during the review exercise for their input and contributions.

In addition, the Chair informed the meeting that item B1- Transport Strategy had been withdrawn from consideration as public consultation had not be carried out due to the ongoing period following the forthcoming European elections.

In response to a question on the possible date on public consultation regarding the transport strategy, the Chair requested that the committee clerk liaise with relevant officer on this issue and report back to the members.

The Chair also informed the meeting that following Committee's review into household

recycling, a briefing note addressing one of the recommendations, recognising recycling champions is to be circulated by the Committee clerk.

282 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 6)

The Chair advised that questions from members of the public would be taken in relation to each agenda item.

283 PRESENTATION - ISLINGTON TRANSPORT STRATEGY (Item B1)

The meeting was advised that as this was purdah period, public consultation regarding the Transport Strategy could not be carried out. Item has been deferred till the June meeting for possible consideration. The Chair reiterated the Committee's apologies to the members of the public who had attended on this issue.

284 UPDATE ON THE ACCELERATOR FUND BID - OFFICER UPDATE (Item B2)

The Parks and Open Spaces Manager advised members that there is no update for this meeting as the Council is still awaiting formal notification from the Heritage Lottery Fund on the "Accelerator Fund" bid.

In response to a question, the manager informed members that everything looks positive and he hopes by the next meeting of the Committee in June 2019, more information should be made available for the Committee.

285 SCRUTINY REVIEW - DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS (Item B3)

The Chair informed Committee that additional papers in relation to item B3- Draft Recommendations had been circulated and allowed Members sufficient time to consider the papers before the meeting commenced.

- The Chair informed the meeting that the purpose of the meeting will be to consider the draft recommendations which are in bold and welcomed contributions and suggestions which would eventually be incorporated into the final report.
- A request to amend section 1 of the report for clarity was noted, that it should read – Section 1 - Maximising the contribution of parks-prevention, early intervention and the promotion of health and wellbeing.
- In response to concerns that the heading 'Strengthening Friends and Garden Groups' could be misconstrued especially as it raises an expectation that the Council would only support specific Friends and Garden groups instead of a network of friends of group, the meeting was advised that the essence of the recommendation was simply to ensure that all groups receive consistent support. A suggestion that this recommendation be reworded was noted.
- In response to a question about recommendation 14 about communication strategy, the meeting was advised that Parks officers will work in conjunction with Council's communication team to ensure that the service is promoted. Members agreed that the wording should be amended to read, that the Council will promote the communications strategy
- In response to a possible recommendation that the Council consider allocating some further funds to support volunteers, the Open and Spaces Manager advised that one of the positive benefits of a successful Accelerator Fund project is that it would explore ways of unlocking funds from other commissioning bodies which could be

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used to support volunteers.

- On concerns about lack of reference of the need to monitor air quality in open spaces and parks, the meeting was advised that the review was primarily about volunteer engagement and not air quality, however Council will continue to support local initiatives to improve air quality where possible.
- In response to questions about clean air in the parks, the Open and Spaces Manager informed the meeting that at present staff who carry out maintenance work use electric powered tools and subsequently with the advent of new technology, the service would be looking to move their fleet of vehicles away from diesel to electric.
- The Chair informed the meeting that with regards to recommendation 2, will need to be reworded after a further discussion with developers and planning officers especially as there are some related issues being raised in the draft local plan.

RESOLVED

1. That subject to the amendments noted above, the draft recommendations be noted.
2. That the recommendations will be incorporated into the final report which will be agreed at the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.15 pm

CHAIR