

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 8 June 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held at Town Hall on 8 June 2021 at 7.00 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Clarke (Chair), Heather (Vice-Chair), Bell-Bradford, Jeapes, Khondoker, Ozdemir, Russell and Weekes

Councillor Tricia Clarke in the Chair

459 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

None

460 DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)

None

461 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)

None

462 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 April 2021 be confirmed and the Chair be authorised to sign them

463 CHAIR'S REPORT (Item 5)

The Chair stated that the Committee would be formulating an informal working group in order to look at waste and the renewal of the North London Waste Authority Incinerator. Councillors Clarke, Jeapes, Weekes, Ozdemir and Khondoker indicated a willingness to serve on the working group. The Chair stated that it was intended to report back later in the year to the Committee

The Chair also referred to the recent High Court decision regarding Ocado's proposal to have a delivery hub next to Yerbury school, that this was an example of the Council and community working in partnership, that the council took a huge financial risk but won as the high court upheld the council's decision to revoke the certificate of lawfulness and block Ocado's proposal.

464 ORDER OF BUSINESS (Item 6)

The Chair stated that the order of business would be as per the agenda.

465 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 7)

The Chair stated that the meeting was being webcast and due to Covid restrictions in the meeting room, public questions should be e mailed to the Chair or the Clerk following the meeting

466 **MEMBERSHIP, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND DATES OF MEETINGS (Item 8)**
RESOLVED:

That the membership and terms of reference be noted

467 **QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REPORTS 2020/21 -**
EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS (Item B1)

Councillors Asima Shaikh, Executive Member for Economic Development and Councillor O'Halloran, Executive Member Community Development were present for consideration of this item, and the following main points were made –

- An extremely challenging year due to Covid for the local economy, and there had been a need to support residents and businesses
- Meeting was advised of the impact of Covid on businesses with the result that a number of targets for Performance Indicators have had to be revised, however the Executive Member indicated that despite this performances have exceeded expectations, and that by next year, targets would return to pre-Covid levels
- The type of support provided to both businesses and residents have had to be changed from what was provided previously in light of Covid
- There is a recognition that going forward there is a need to emphasise social value in workspaces
- During Covid the Council has had to administer grants to businesses which has involved setting up new systems to enable this
- Meeting was advised that Adult Community Learning has adapted to also provide online classes and detailed information on those taking part would be available at the end of July
- Libraries service has also been functioning during the pandemic, especially, Home and Education Library Services. Libraries have also provided new online services alongside building based provision.
- In response to a question it was stated that tracking of residents obtaining jobs and continuing to retain them could be made available in future reports.
- In response to the issue of a significant increase in residents signing on at Job Centres in the borough and what action staff were taking to assist residents obtain work, meeting was advised that the Council's iWork Service and its Islington Working Partnership have been assisting residents Online and by telephone.
- There is an acknowledgement that the labour market is reconfiguring itself in light of COVID, that there will be job opportunities particularly in the health and care and technology sector, and support was being targeted to residents.
- 1:1 support was also being provided through a blended service, and retraining needs of residents is being considered.
- On the issue of better performance by external employers regarding apprenticeships in comparison to the Council itself, members were advised

that work is taking place, led by Human Resources to establish an Early Careers offer, which includes apprenticeships. However other measures such as Kickstart work placements was also being employed in the interim.

- It was acknowledged that in light of the ongoing situation, post Covid would be challenging for many businesses and it is anticipated that some will cease trading and a recognition that there is a need to rebalance the local economy and protect Central Activity zones

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and the Committee receive a report on the latest position on Council apprenticeships at a future date

The Chair thanked Councillors Shaikh and O'Halloran for attending.

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QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REPORTS 2020/21 - PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT (Item B2)

Councillor Rowena Champion was present, and outlined the report following which the following main points were made –

- Welcomed the reduction in those residents killed or seriously injured in road traffic incidents
- A member enquired on the increase in fly tipping during lockdown, noting in particular the incidents in Finsbury Park Ward where bins had been removed and fly tipping had occurred. In response there was an acknowledgement that there is a need to target in notable areas where fly tipping occurs and ensure perpetrators are caught and prosecuted. Officer acknowledged that although it can be difficult to identify those involved in fly tipping, however officers in such instances have taken speedy action to have it removed.
- In response to a question about secure cycle parking roll out and the occupancy rate it was stated that the information would be circulated to committee members after the meeting
- In response to a question about specific performances or the progress of the various themes of the Net Zero Carbon programme it was stated that a strategy would be published later in the year, and that a new suite of performance indicators was being prepared and these would provided to the Committee at a future date when available
- Noted that reductions in emissions from the Council vehicle fleet, and non-essential housing repairs had taken place during lockdown, and that in future Council estates would move towards 100% Green Energy. There is a need to ensure education takes place amongst residents and businesses to achieve Net Zero Carbon
- Members were advised that work is taking place on a cross London basis to respond to the Government consultation document on reducing carbon emissions

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

The Chair thanked Councillor Champion for attending

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**NET ZERO CARBON PROGRAMME - ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION
- PRESENTATION (Item B3)**

Keith Townsend, Corporate Director Environment and Seth Brook, Strategic Communication Lead gave a presentation to the Committee, A copy of which is interleaved.

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

- Meeting was reminded that although 4% of the borough's carbon emissions are generated by the Council, 9% by Council boilers and housing stock, and 91% are generated by other activities, residents, businesses and borough partner organisations must all play their part in changing behaviours. It was noted that the Council must continue its efforts to reduce its own emissions and lead by example, hence the need for a long term engagement programme to change behaviours by all stakeholders.
- The Officer advised that the purpose of the workstream is to raise awareness, provide stakeholders with opportunities to shape interventions for behaviour change, co-design Council's approach to community owned/led action, work with partners to create best practice and lead by example, work regionally to influence Government policy and regulations
- In the next 12 months, the workstream will have in place engagement strategies to change behaviours, implement the communications plan to promote projects and policies that will contribute to net zero carbon. It will also deliver key note projects by developing and agreeing a collaborative plan with Fairer Together Partnership and Islington Sustainable Energy Partnership and influence development of London wide Net Zero Carbon (NZC) propositions by working regionally with partners
- Meeting was informed of some progress to date of its engagement and Behaviour change, by hosting an annual E&R scrutiny meeting with stakeholders, commissioned a specialist agency to develop the external engagement strategy and narrative and have started its engagement project with staff, unions and councillors
- The Net Zero Carbon communications forward plan sets out opportunities to communicate NZC policies and projects. Numerous opportunities have been identified which will allow the Council to align and harness regional and national communications opportunities e.g. Clean Air Day, London Climate Action week, COP26
- Members were advised that the communications team will help develop and launch keynote Council projects over the next 12 months to help audiences reduce their carbon emissions, and a new website will be in place to enable residents and stakeholders to make climate declarations and access NZC information and services provided by the Council and its partners. Develop and launch a resident and business audit scheme

- Meeting was advised of the importance of working with partners such as Health via the Fairness Together partnership, and Transport
- Members were also informed of emerging areas for collaboration with Islington Sustainable Partnership in areas of Governance, Engagement and Communications and skills and resources
- In addition meeting was informed that there is room for Sub – regional and regional collaboration, noting the London Climate Change programme, UK Cities Climate Investment Commission Investment Portfolio etc
- In terms of challenges, meeting was advised about the risk of a lack of internal engagement, apathy and unwillingness to change, failure to successfully to consult residents on decisions that affect their lives.
- Meeting was informed that there will be opportunities to use NZC case studies to show how the Council are making Islington a fairer place for everyone, that the Council will deploy exciting engagement activities and will pioneer behaviour change insights, build trust and goodwill, build a coalition of supportive local advocates, champion the progress of the Council and its partners, use innovative projects and work in the London wide programme to position Islington as an exemplar amongst professional networks
- A Member suggested that in order for Council to achieve its Net Zero Carbon 2030 target, there is need for a huge drive in order to engage businesses, especially with those based in the south of the borough to reduce emissions. It was stated that a Business Net Carbon Zero summit would be beneficial and that such a summit should attract businesses and residents who did not normally get engaged in Net Zero Carbon discussions, as well as those that do, the recognition of the need to broaden the audience
- There is an acknowledgement that regional working is paramount especially as it would have more impact, that there is a need for both systemic and behavioural change in order to meet Net Zero Carbon 2030 targets, and to communicate the scale of change that is needed
- Achieving the aims of Net Zero Carbon huge investment is required across London in conjunction with an effective communications strategy. It was also suggested that at local level a municipal investment bond strategy will be formulated to encourage and enable residents to invest in carbon reduction measures
- In terms of communication, it is important to recognise that an effective strategy should take cognisance of multi-lingual language so as to ensure that any communication is targeted to reach all sections of the community
- Reference was made to Bunhill 2, that there were more sites in the borough where similar developments could take place. It was stated that consideration was being given to localised heat pumps, electric vehicle charging points and other energy streams, and work was taking place with the private sector on such initiatives

The Chair thanked Keith Townsend and Seth Brook for attending

Keith Townsend, Corporate Director, Environment and Regeneration and Timi Ashaye, Net Zero Carbon Programme Lead gave a presentation to the Committee thereon, copy interleaved

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

- It was noted that progress would be reported on a quarterly basis
- A budget of £700k pa has been secured to support the delivery of the Net Zero Carbon strategy over the next 3 years. Council is in the process of securing £3m of additional programme funding through Carbon Offset Fund
- Meeting was advised that by securing the budget for engagement and communications, it has been able to recruit a dedicated communications officer. Also council has completed first phase of work with University College of London to develop a road map for how council will achieve net zero carbon emissions on Council's housing stock
- Council is in process of securing approval for key strategy document on decarbonising its New Build Homes. It is delivering on major transport priority areas, increasing the number of electric vehicles within the Council's fleet, trials have been completed on its seven low traffic neighbourhoods and now has 35 school streets covering 36 schools.
- Meeting was advised that it is identifying and developing new opportunities for green jobs and skills, and that the new local SPD will strengthen existing policies to reduce carbon emissions for development proposals
- Generally in terms of performances of the various themes of the strategy, 85% of commitments have either been completed or are on track to be delivered within the original timescale
- Committee noted progress on strategy commitments that are due before and up to March 2021 on buildings, homes and infrastructure, Transport, Sustainable and affordable energy, Green economy, natural environment, waste reduction and recycling, Planning and Engagement and Communications
- Members were informed that opportunities with regards to achieving Net Zero Carbon emission with new housing developments is taking place on the Holloway prison site.
- Reference was made to the details of incentives for use of cargo bikes to businesses and residents and it was stated that this information could be provided to Members
- In response to a question it was stated that resources available for the engagement strategy would be available in July and these could be circulated
- A Member referred to the greenspaces/trees on Council estates and that more work is needed to look at this with housing staff. It was stated that Environment and Regeneration officers were working with their counterparts in Housing in this regard
- Reference was made to work taking place on the walkways at Andover Estate, that excellent work had taken place to ensure appropriate greening by the use of tree canopies and greening

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and details be circulated to Members in relation to the issues raised above on cargo bikes and resources that would be available for the engagement strategy

The Chair thanked Keith Townsend and Timi Ashaye for attending

471 WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22 (Item B5)

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted and an additional item be added on GLL Leisure at the September meeting of the Committee, and an item on Waste and North London Heat and Power Plant at the November meeting

The meeting ended at 9.30 p.m.

CHAIR