

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 6 September 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 6 September 2022 at 7.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Clarke (Chair), Heather (Vice-Chair), Jeapes, Craig, Gilgunn, Hayes and Jegorovas-Armstrong

Councillor Tricia Clarke in the Chair

24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Zammit

25 DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)

None.

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)

None.

27 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2022 be confirm as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

28 CHAIR'S REPORT (Item 5)

The Chair confirmed that an Officer will be attending a future meeting of the committee to present on how drought is affecting trees.

The Chair confirmed that the first meeting of the Informal working group will be held on 17 October 2022 and will feature officers discussing the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.

29 ORDER OF BUSINESS (Item 6)

The order of business would be B5, B3, B1, B2, B6

30 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 7)

To be taken with the relevant items.

31 EXTERNAL ATTENDEES (Item 8)

None.

32 SCRUTINY REVIEW- GREEN ECONOMY AND PLANNING (Item B1)

Karen Sullivan, Director of Planning, with Caroline Wilson Director of Inclusive Economy and Jobs, Cllr Santiago Bell-Bradford, Executive Member for Inclusive Economy and Jobs was present for discussion of this item and made a presentation to the Committee, copy interleaved. The following points were highlighted:

Circular Economy

- We will embed green/circular economy initiatives into our Local Economy Strategies across the borough, ensuring it is effectively promoted and local people and business can benefit at a local level.
We will develop the specification for a 'net zero' and circular economy focussed affordable workspace
- We will develop Green Social Value guidance including circular economy asks for integration into council commissioning and procurement processes
- We will encourage potential suppliers to work together with us on achieving best practice and innovation in the application of circular economy in achieving social value.
- We will identify where procurement of targeted high spends and high embedded carbon items can be focussed around circular economy principles, such as leasing rather than purchasing.
- We will promote green practices as part of the implementation of the Chapel Market regeneration programme e.g. food waste; circular economy products; sustainable deliveries.
- Convene a breakfast meeting with CITB to hear directly from construction industry on challenges faced, and what council/s can do to help.
- Work with Corporate HR and trades unions to promote the benefits of upskilling and keeping abreast of new green skills.
- We will develop business case to fund programme similar to ReLondon and circular economy to empower Islington residents and businesses to adopt circular economy practices, targeting under-represented entrepreneurs.
- Continue to work with Islington Sustainability Network (formerly ISEP) to raise awareness of the circular economy, to share best practice from around Islington and to increase membership amongst the Islington business community.
- Create a joint skills plan with local education and skills providers to outline the opportunities and gaps in green skills and jobs and identify the different needs of various sectors in the borough and recommend tailored approaches to strengthening green skills and jobs in these areas.

The Contribution of Land Use Planning

- All developments must adopt a circular economy approach to building design and construction in order to keep products and materials in use for as long as possible and to minimise construction waste.
- Buildings must be made from components and materials that can be re-used or recycled and building design must enable deconstruction to ensure the maximum value of building components can be recovered and re-used at the end of the building's life.
- Where demolition and remediation works are necessary materials must be reused and recycled.
- A minimum of 10% of the total value of materials used in the construction of both major and minor developments must derive from recycled and re-used products and materials.

- Circular Economy Statement submitted with the planning application and approved. Follows principles of GLA Guidance.
- Key commitments include:
 - Minimising the quantity of materials used e.g. by reusing building materials from the existing buildings.
 - Minimising the quantity of other resources uses e.g. water and energy.
 - Specifying and sourcing material sustainably.
 - Designing for reusability/recoverability/longevity/adaptability/flexibility.
 - Designing out construction, demolition, excavation and municipal waste.
- Pre-demolition Audit –95.5% of the building materials and 100% of materials for external areas will be recycled.

Members of the public asked about refurbishments, the council will be encouraging developers to refurbish rather than rebuild. But generally, developers are already minded to go down this route, as the economic and environmental concerns are getting stronger to use as much of the original site as possible. The historical element of sites is an area that is also considered.

The chair thanked Officers and Members for the presentations and welcomed members to raise issues and ask questions.

On the anchor institutions the council are currently working with, organisations like Arsenal Football Club, Whittington Hospital and local colleges play a large role in the circular economy and have the biggest potential to make the biggest difference. A task and finish group of these institutions has been set up to look at Net Zero Carbon.

On adult education, the council is offering many courses, via our partners in education, that are within the circular economy that can skill up adults looking to take on new vocations. Courses like bicycle repair and textiles are important, but also courses on English as a second language can be vital for community wealth building.

On working with larger employers based within Islington, the council is doing a lot of work to educate residents on how to pass on the plastic waste back to the business. This has worked well with the local markets in Islington, where residents are using more paper bags or reusable items and these initiatives should be levelled up to larger businesses.

On reusing building materials on brownfield sites, this will vary from site to site, based on what is agreed for the materials for sites. But often, applications need to state what materials they are using, and the impact on the environment. Currently lots of sites are not just reusing materials, but reuse parts of the old structure, and incorporate it into the new design.

On the Holloway Prison development, it is a council agreement to use residents and local supply chains for developments, but the Holloway Prison development has

specific arrangements to ensure that local businesses are also involved in the events space on the site.

RESOLVED:

Members noted the presentations

33 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR INCLUSIVE ECONOMY AND JOBS (Item B2)

Cllr Santiago Bell-Bradford, Executive Member for Inclusive Economy and Jobs, with Caroline Wilson Director of Inclusive Economy and Jobs, was present for discussion of this item and made a presentation to the Committee, copy interleaved.

Cllr Bell-Bradford thanked Cllr Asima Shaikh, and officers for their work across the year.

The Chair thanked Cllr Bell-Bradford for the report and the Q1 Performance Report and welcomed members to raise issues and ask questions.

On the inclusive economy project, this a mixture of funding around the council and GLA to ensure that the local markets across the whole borough have stalls on the market that are still accessible and affordable for all residents.

On childcare bursaries, the budget has been increased this year and this can be used for several different schemes, like training, and the cost will not be capped. The uptake for these bursaries has not been as strong as it should be, so the promotion around the bursary needs to stronger.

On using council sites as warm rooms during the energy crisis, the council is currently developing its communications campaign around this, to work out how to roll out safe, warm spaces for residents to use.

On schemes that support residents' costs from job hunting, the council works with a number of organisations that provide clothes for interviews and also the council can provide funding for travel for interviews and other costs.

On apprenticeship targets, the council will be looking at the different barriers that are in place right now for those looking to get into training and apprenticeships, as well as a bold strategy to meet larger targets of those taking up the roles. Apprenticeships will all have green accreditation attached to them. The new targets will look at the different demographics of those who take up the apprenticeships.

RESOLVED:

Members noted the report.

34 Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT (2022/23) - ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT (Item B3)

Cllr Rowena Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport was present for discussion of this item and made a presentation to the Committee, copy interleaved.

Members of the public asked about reporting on the reduction of carbon emissions. Cllr Champion stated that this was a very hard area to report on but officers confirmed that the council is working with other authorities to establish protocols on reporting on this data.

The Chair thanked Cllr Champion for the report and welcomed members to raise issues and ask questions.

On the lack of progress on recycling rates, Islington has a very ambitious target on recycling, and this will take a lot of effort to see improvement. But the council is rolling out food waste recycling schemes to the estates across the borough and more funding has been secured for officers to do more engagement on food waste. Data collection needs to be improved, as it hard to report on if improvements are being made, but officers will hopefully be able to report on this soon.

On the commercial waste strategy, the council has recently completed the commercial waste strategy and it will outline how commercial waste collections will be improved with new technology and incentive schemes to businesses. A new key member of staff has been recruited to work on this new area of the strategy.

On the SHINE service, SHINE is an important service at the council and should present their work to the committee. Action: SHINE to attend a future committee meeting.

On cycle hangers, the council is seeking to roll out a greater IT system to support the cycle hanger placement and allocation to residents. This will take some time and will be a large amount of council work, but it could have a great impact on cycle parking within the borough.

On council buildings and energy certificates, with the energy crisis coming in the autumn, council officers will on the ground, across the borough to ensure energy efficiency.

On Bright Sparks and furniture, currently Bright Sparks works with council bulky waste collections to ensure any good furniture is collected and reused rather than going to waste.

On cycle danger on the roads, measures the council is taking to lower car use in the borough will help make roads safer for cyclists and those on foot. The local traffic neighbourhoods are ensuring minor roads are becoming safer and despite increase road use post the pandemic, work is being done to decrease overall car usage. This should help cyclists feel safer commuting across the borough.

RESOLVED:

Members noted the report.

35 **Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT (2022/23) - EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS (Item B4)**

This report was taken with B2.

RESOLVED:

Members noted the report.

36 **MENSTRUAL WASTE (Item B5)**

Matthew Homer, Waste Strategy Manager was present for discussion of this item and made a presentation to the Committee, copy interleaved. The following points were highlighted:

- Social media unflushable and anti single use plastic campaigns. 2020 and ongoing.
- Bid proposal for Cally future neighbourhoods fund. 2021.
- Promotion to schools of plastic free period products and training. Ongoing.
- Promotion of discounts on reusable period products. Ongoing.

Helen Lynn, Women's Environmental Network to present on the work of Women's Environmental Network on Environmenstrual Campaign. The following points were highlighted:

- People who menstruate use on average more than 11,000 disposable menstrual products in their lifetime.
- Generating 200,000 tonnes of waste/year
- Takes 100's of years to decompose
- Up to 90% of pad can be plastic
- Tampons shed 9.4 billion microplastic pieces/ tampon
- Plastic waste kills 1 million seabirds, 100,000 sea mammals, marine turtles and fish each year.

Cllr Finn Craig gave a presentation on menstrual waste and the actions the council could take to tackle this issue including greater work in schools within the borough.

The chair thanked the speakers for the presentations and welcomed members to raise issues and ask questions.

On measuring the successes of an engagement campaign, there has been an over 11% rise in the use of reusable menstrual products within the last year. The council is not currently tracking engagement of its own campaigns.

On the successes of working with parents' groups, getting the message out is very important about the Environmenstrual Campaign, and it has been a slow but increasing progress, year on year.

On the cost-of-living crisis and menstrual products, councils around the country should be using their budgets to provide more affordable menstrual products, or at the very least, hosting discounts on menstrual products that are environmentally minded

RESOLVED:

Members noted the presentations

37 WORKPLAN 2022/23 (Item B6)

RESOLVED:

Members noted the workplan

The meeting ended at 21:59

CHAIR