

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 12 May 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 5, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 12 May 2015 at 7.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Court (Chair), Ward (Vice-Chair), Doolan, Heather, Jeapes, Russell and Turan

Councillor James Court in the Chair

72 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item A1)

None.

73 DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item A2)

None.

74 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item A3)

None.

75 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item A4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14 April 2015 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

76 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item A5)

Questions from members of the public were addressed during the relevant items.

77 CHAIR'S REPORT (Item A6)

None.

78 AIR QUALITY SCRUTINY REVIEW - REPORT BACK (Item B1)

Sukky Choongh-Campbell, Principal Technical Officer and Paul Clift, Principal Environmental Health Officer presented the report which outlined the progress made against the recommendations of the Air Quality scrutiny review.

In the presentation and the discussion which followed, the following points were made:

- Islington had met the Particulate Matter objective for the last six years but was still exceeding the Nitrogen Dioxide at the roadside objective.
- Work was taking place with neighbouring boroughs, businesses and schools and the council continued to lobby the Mayor of London to tackle bus emissions in the borough.
- The council had conducted research on the costs and benefits to being part of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) and had found that it would cost £174million and this would not be proportional to the health benefits. The study found that Euro 6 diesel fuelled passenger vehicles did not deliver the reduced emissions claimed by manufacturers. The council had asked the Mayor for London to ban all diesels in the

Ultra-Low Emission Zone and would continue to lobby the Mayor. The Chair expressed concern that Islington would not be part of the ULEZ and suggested that if the infrastructure was put in place, the vehicles entitled to use the zone could then be specified.

- A feasibility study for the potential for compressed natural gas (CNG) refuelling in Islington was taking place. If this was possible, some of the larger fleet vehicles could be replaced with those fuelled by CNG. CNG fuel produced significantly lower emissions than those from diesel.
- Bronze accreditation for the Freight Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) was achieved in 2014. The council would soon be applying for silver.
- Cleaner Air Borough status would be determined through the progress of actions detailed in the Air Quality Strategy.
- There was more work to be done but the council was continuing to work to improve air quality. It had introduced the diesel surcharge and tackled idling vehicles which both raised awareness and officers sat on relevant forums including the Mayor's Breathe Better Together campaign. Air quality was continually being monitored.
- The council was working with the car club.
- Hackney was conducting a study on a diesel scrappage scheme and would share the results with Islington.
- Work was taking place to ascertain whether the council could procure vehicles that would reduce the diesel take up. One completed, a draft report would be shared with the committee if suitable for distribution.
- Improving air quality would reduce hospital admissions.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the draft report on any options for procuring vehicles that would reduce the diesel take up be shared with the committee if suitable for distribution.

79

EXECUTIVE MEMBER'S UPDATE (Item B2)

Councillor Webbe, Executive Member for Environment and Transport Fuel Poverty gave a presentation on performance in Environment and Regeneration.

In the presentation and the discussion which followed, the following points were made:

Fuel Poverty

- Over 600 new efficient boilers had been installed in 2014/15 with 40% of these in vulnerable households.
- Over 4,000 new boilers had been installed since 2010/11.
- The council's insulation programme was now coming to a close after nearly 11,000 council homes had been insulated since 2010/11. Any boiler replacements currently due to take place would be completed in the next year.
- Each year 800 households received 'Energy Doctor in the Home' small measures and advice.
- Bulk-referrals to the annual Warm Home Discount brought in £160,000 to the borough.
- 400 households had signed up for a social tariff on water bills which brought in around £70,000 this year.
- The estimated annual cost savings to Islington households in receipt of various measures was as follows: new boilers - £125, loft insulation - £49, cavity wall insulation - £147, solid wall insulation - £211, Energy Doctor in the Home measures - £90, Warm Home Discount - £135

- Total estimated savings to residents from energy efficiency improvements, price support and debt relief was £700,000 every year at current prices.
- Joined up working was taking place between the Environment and Regeneration and Housing departments to address Fuel Poverty and Councillors Webb and Murray were the executive members leading on this. They both sat on the Affordable Energy Board.

Seasonal Health Interventions Network (SHINE)

- In 2014/15, 2,500 vulnerable residents were referred, each being offered an average of four to five interventions.
- The scheme was gradually moving onto harder to reach clients as well as receiving second referrals.
- Work was recognised by an award from the Energy Institute while the team was shortlisted for LGC 'Team of the Year' award.

Energy Services

- Bunhill Heat and Power (phase 2) would supply a further 500 new homes. There was likely to be Department of Energy and Climate Change funding for taking heat from Regents Canal.
- Work was taking place across the council and with partners to continually reduce energy costs and cut carbon emissions.
- Local Air Quality had a significant impact on health inequalities, particularly the large numbers of deaths at relatively young ages from cardiovascular disease, cancer and respiratory diseases. Exposure to high levels of air pollution, particularly diesel emissions, exacerbated these conditions.
- The most heavily polluted areas in Islington were also the most deprived wards.
- Lobbying and joint working with TfL, Mayor of London and other neighbouring boroughs was important.
- There was a task and finish group looking at options surrounding solar panels. It was suggested that consideration could be given to installing solar panels not just on council owned buildings but also on non council owned buildings.
- Resident exposure could be reduced through the use of Air Text notifications, the encouragement of lower risk travel routes and the use of public transport.
- Work was taking place to make the council's fleet more green and to consolidate deliveries. Currently all refuse collection vehicles made were fuelled by diesel. If the council used vehicles fuelled by an alternative fuel where they existed, there were difficulties relating to how the fuel would be sourced and how vehicles would be refuelled.

Strategic Transport

- There were plans to transform five dangerous junctions; Archway, Old Street, Highbury Corner, Kings Cross and Nag's Head. The council had campaigned to improve these junctions in terms of safety and air quality and wanted them transformed into public places which would benefit communities and aid regeneration. The expected delivery for Archway was from early 2016. Highbury Corner improvements were anticipated to begin in 2018 after the completion of the bridge replacement work.
- There was £2m TfL funding to improve local cycling routes by 2016, including three new Grid Routes and a pilot Quietway. Improvements could encourage those who were currently not cyclists.
- Safe cycle parking would be piloted and the options, including installing a cycle hanger would be considered. Bicycle theft figures would be provided to the committee.
- Work was taking place to try to get the North-South cycling Superhighway into Islington.

- There would be a new Crossrail 2 station at Angel but there would no longer be one at Essex Road.
- There would be significant improvements to Finsbury Park and Tufnell Park stations.
- A member raised concern about the speeds of vehicles on Seven Sisters Road and Isledon Road and was advised that work was being done to see whether improvements could be made around Finsbury Park Station. The Nags Head work was a longer project.

Parking

- There were new parking permit surcharge for residents with heavily polluting diesel vehicles with exemptions for carers, taxis and some trades people.
- In summer 2015, there would be CPZ consultation to simplify the scheme and better manage parking demand pressures. Plans included simplifying signs. Protecting residents from unwanted parking was the key priority.
- There was a progressive move towards more efficient virtual permits, cashless payments for 'Pay and Display' and use of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) for enforcement.
- 864 new parking bays had been introduced in the last three years. A member of the public suggested that some of these bays could be used for cycle hangars and was advised that a pilot would look at how cycle hangars could be used, the cost implications, where hangars could be located and how they could be managed.
- Complaints about parking had dropped 20% since last year.
- The number of Islington residents who drove was reducing.
- The Sustainable Transport Strategy promoted people walking, cycling and using public transport. Where people had to drive, low polluting vehicles were promoted. Work was taking place to try and encourage people to feel comfortable to walk and cycle and use public transport rather than drive.

Waste and Recycling

- In Islington in 2013/14, the recycling rate was 32.7%, up from 31.4% the previous year. The recycling rates were broadly stable.
- Islington's rate was now the third highest amongst the 12 inner London boroughs and fourth of the seven North London Waste Authority (NLWA) boroughs.
- Annual 'residual waste per household' (not recycled) was the lowest of all London boroughs and the only one below 400kg.
- The first priority in the waste hierarchy was to reduce waste, the second was to recycle and the third was to reuse. There was a target for how much waste was produced. The amount of waste produced used to increase by approximately 3% per year but now increased at about 1%. It was likely that the amount of waste generated by new developments in the borough could be accommodated.
- There was a challenging 2015/16 NLWA recycling target for Islington of 34.5% on a trajectory to 50% by 2020.
- There was a move towards communal food waste and garden waste collections with a pilot to be undertaken shortly in Tollington Ward. Further communal recycling would be introduced on estates.
- The NLWA was consulting on renewing the facility in Edmonton.

Missed Collections, Fly-Tipping, Cleansing

- Reported missed collections had been more than halved since taking the service in-house in 2013. They were now running at an average of 380 per calendar month.
- An average of 170 fly-tips were reported monthly with 88% removed within 24 hours.
- Free Bulky Waste collections for residents were running at their highest ever level with over 1,500 a month in 2014/15
- The 'Clean Islington' smartphone app which used GPS location technology had been launched. So far there had been approximately 400 reports through the app.
- 'Big Belly' street bins were being piloted at litter and hotspots. These compressed waste and emailed officers when they were full.

- Work was taking place to ensure frontline staff had the technology to see where collections were required.
- The winter gritting service had been expanded.

Greenspace and Cemeteries

- Recent improvements had been made to Tufnell Park playing fields, Dalmeny Park and the play area at Graham Street Park.
- User satisfaction of the in-house Grounds Maintenance service was now at 89% and up 18 points on last year.
- The Silver-gilt in London in Bloom had been achieved through the community working together.
- The new smoke free playground initiative was being rolled out across Islington
- Improvements to Biddestone Road Open Space, Seward Street Playground and Compton Park were being made.
- There were major current projects to increase burial capacity at Trent Park and the capacity of vaults & mausolea at East Finchley.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the presentation be noted.
- 2) That bicycle theft figures be provided to the committee.
- 3) That the committee receive a report back on cycle storage once the pilot had been undertaken.

80 FUEL POVERTY SCRUTINY REVIEW - FINAL REPORT (Item B3)

RESOLVED:

That the final report be agreed subject to the following amendments:

- 1) That recommendation 5 be amended to read, "That the council lobbies the government and the Mayor of London for more investment for fuel poverty reduction schemes, particularly in harder to treat housing."
- 2) That a recommendation be added to see if draught insulation in void properties was included in council void contracts and that if it was not, this should be included in contracts in the future. The wording of the recommendation was delegated to officers.

81 COMMUNITY ENERGY SCRUTINY REVIEW - DRAFT REPORT (Item B4)

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the findings of the solar panels on council buildings task and finish group be submitted to the next meeting of the committee.

The meeting ended at 10.05 pm

CHAIR