

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE ACTION SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 16TH DECEMBER, 2020

MEMBERS: Councillors Mahmut Aksanoglu, Maria Alexandrou, Daniel Anderson, Tolga Aramaz, Charith Gunawardena, Lindsay Rawlings and Hass Yusuf

Officers: Doug Wilkinson, Director of Environment and Operational Services, Jon Sharkey, Head of Public Realm Services, Philip Wadsworth, Infrastructure Manager, Marcus Harvey, Senior Operations Manager Parks, Sue McDaid, Head of Regulatory Services, Jade Goodwin, Strategic Waste and Recycling Manager, Debbie Campbell, Environment and Operational Services

Also Attending:

9. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair, Cllr Yusuf welcomed everyone to the meeting.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Yusuf declared an interest as an Enfield representative at the North London Waste Authority and a member of the Waste Implementation Board. Following advice from the Monitoring Officer, Cllr Yusuf will not Chair or contribute to Item 5 on the agenda 'Waste Services and Fly-tipping.' The Vice Chair, Cllr Aksanoglu will take the Chair for this item.

11. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th September 2020 were agreed.

12. ENFIELD'S BLUE AND GREEN STRATEGY

Philip Wadsworth introduced the presentation and highlighted the following:

- 1) The purpose of the strategy is to value our parks, open spaces, trees and waterways and to improve access for community groups, especially those considered hard to reach.
- 2) The strategy is out for consultation over a 6-week period, ending on 11 January 2021. Feedback received to date includes comments from Friends of Parks Groups.
- 3) The Climate Action Plan requires an increase of 20% in green areas and this strategy will be a key tool in achieving that aim.
- 4) The range and number of open spaces in Enfield was highlighted, with only Barnet having more in London. There is more water in Enfield than

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any other borough including 5 reservoirs and 100km of rivers. There are also 20,000 street trees. Within 10 years, the strategy will ensure that Enfield is the greenest London Borough.

- 5) The links between the Blue and Green Strategy and the Climate Action Plan were noted.
- 6) A circuitous route is being planned to navigate the borough, to include many of the green spaces. One of the aims of the route is to improve access to Lea Valley Regional Park, especially for residents in the east of the borough.
- 7) Other blue and green projects to be undertaken include, expansion of the borough's cycle and pedestrian network to improve connectivity, the development of Enfield Sports Village within Enfield Playing Fields, the Enfield Chase woodland restoration programme and the wetland and river restoration programme.
- 8) The Blue and Green Strategy will be adopted by Full Council in early 2021, with an action plan being developed during the year.

The Chair thanked Philip Wadsworth for the presentation and asked Members of the Scrutiny Panel for comments and questions.

- 9) A comment was noted that with no measurable outcomes and the strategy still being out for consultation, there is little to scrutinise, for example areas of policy or delivery. It was confirmed that the purpose of the presentation was to obtain views of Members on the strategy and potentially any areas that have been omitted.
- 10) In response to a question, it was confirmed that the authors of the strategy would reflect on comments made in relation to farmland and front and rear gardens. It was confirmed that a Ramsar site is a wetland site designated to be of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. An explanation of this will be added to the glossary.
- 11) A comment was received that there is little, quality green space in the Edmonton area and this was acknowledged as one of the key challenges that the strategy will address.
- 12) It was confirmed that the development of the new Energy Recovery Facility will occupy the same footprint as the current incinerator plant, and therefore will not impinge on surrounding green spaces. Regarding emissions, there is greater concern about emissions from motor vehicles.
- 13) It was noted that the strategy sets out how the Climate Action Plan target of increasing blue-green infrastructure by 25% will be achieved.
- 14) In response to a question, it was confirmed that the strategy relates to developing existing green space and improving access, rather than building developments which will be included within the Local Plan.
- 15) The remediation of poor quality brown-field land will support the maximisation of food production.
- 16) It was confirmed that on-going consultation with Friends of Parks Groups is vital and a number of workshops will be held to obtain views and ideas from the groups, to inform the strategy document and action plan.

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- 17) Following a question relating to electric charging points for motor vehicles, it was noted that this area forms part of the Climate Action Plan which has a commitment to roll-out more charging points.
- 18) It was noted that Enfield Town FC and Enfield Ignatian Rugby Club have been consulted with regarding the development of Enfield Sports Village and discussions are on-going.
- 19) Because of the current situation with the pandemic, face-to-face consultation has proved difficult, however, social media has been used, including a video on You Tube in relation to the strategy.
- 20) It was recognised that funding gaps will be a challenge, but with the Community Infrastructure Levy on housing developments and opportunities to access sources of external funding, this will be addressed.
- 21) In response to a question, it was noted that farmland would be considered before the strategy document is finalised.
- 22) It was confirmed that Capel Manor College have been consulted and appraised of the strategy.
- 23) The figure of 30 million visits to parks and open spaces annually is an estimated figure and it is recognised that more work has to be done to encourage hard to reach groups to visit and feel safe within parks.
- 24) A scheme called Little Forests where forests the size of tennis courts are planned was noted and the value of them in the east of the borough was emphasised.
- 25) The Chair thanked Officers for their presentation and responses but confirmed that as members still had a number of questions, these would be sent by email, along with any comments from residents. The responses would be noted and would inform any recommendations the panel may have.

13. WASTE SERVICES AND FLY-TIPPING

Cllr Aksanoglu chaired this item, following Cllr Yusuf's declaration of interest.

- 1) Doug Wilkinson, Debbie Campbell, Jon Sharkey, Sue McDaid and Jade Goodwin went through the presentation covering waste service changes, fly-tipping and the reuse and recycling centre and highlighted the following.
- 2) The changes to service provision affected approximately 90,000 properties. In November 2019, provision changed from mixed food and garden waste collected fortnightly to a new separate weekly food recycling service and a paid for garden waste collection, also on a fortnightly basis, at a cost to residents of £65 per year.
- 3) In March 2020, the collection of refuse and dry recycling changed to alternate weeks.
- 4) To implement the changes, a number of workstreams were established relating to procurement, ICT, communications, operations and project governance.

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- 5) Communications worked well in relation to service changes and the promotion of the paid for garden service.
- 6) Challenges included issues around ICT, caddy delivery and missed bins as a result of 190 new rounds being introduced. The number of missed bins has reduced considerably after the initial 6 months.
- 7) Waste levels reduced over the initial phase of the service change as expected. However, when the first lockdown period was introduced and more people stayed at home, these levels increased again and in responding to the need, the service began collecting side waste in addition.
- 8) During this difficult period, all collection services were maintained, even with staff shortages. In addition, extra fly-tipping crews were deployed across the borough.
- 9) Resident engagement work, planned for 2020 has not been undertaken due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. This work will be undertaken in 2021/22.
- 10) An impact of the covid crisis included higher numbers of reported fly-tipping. To mitigate this, a growth investment of £500k has been implemented, allowing additional resources to be deployed and operating a clear all approach. Improvements have been noted in Upper Edmonton and surrounding wards.
- 11) It is planned to reduce fly-tipping through education and enforcement.
- 12) The recycling centre at Barrowell Green closed in March, following government advice that this type of facility was not essential.
- 13) Upon re-opening in May, a site new layout and change to service provision was in place. A new appointment system is in place, allowing 480 appointments every day, 7 days per week.
- 14) Details of resident's usage, traffic improvements in the area and social distancing measures are all benefits of the new system.
- 15) The revised service at Barrowell Green will continue to be reviewed.
- 16) In summary, it has been a challenging 8 months, however, the teams have performed well in difficult circumstances.

Cllr Aksanoglu asked Members for any questions or comments.

- 17) It was noted that electric vehicles for refuse collection are being considered but currently it is an immature market. Approximately. £170,000 for a diesel refuse vehicle and £400,000 for an electric version. We have a fairly new fleet but affordability will be further considered as appropriate.

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- 18) Following a question relating to there still being only 24 hours to report a fortnightly missed collection, it was agreed that this would be monitored.
- 19) It was confirmed that if a fly-tipping incident was reported via the MEQ system, this would be identified and responded to.
- 20) It was noted that fly-tipping debris is searched in an attempt to identify those responsible and fixed penalty notices are issued. In addition, CCTV is deployed, there are proactive patrols in hotspot areas and the Council responds to resident reports.
- 21) Following a comment that fly-tipping is increasing, it was asked whether there is a strategy to address this and to possibly reduce the rate to zero. In response, it was noted that improvements were being made but with the pandemic over the last 8 months, this has had a detrimental effect. It was planned to engage face to face with the community but this hasn't been possible, but will take place when we are permitted.
- 22) The recycling rate was 33% last year and the rate for this year is currently being calculated.
- 23) A comment was made that fly-tipping has increased dramatically in Winchmore Hill Ward, so it is important to focus on all areas of the borough. In response it was confirmed that attention is given to all parts of the borough and as an example, a trial has been undertaken in Grovelands Road, N21, with the refuse bins belonging to the flats above the shops being removed from public view, with the engagement of local residents. Following this successful trial, this model will be replicated elsewhere.
- 24) In relation to household waste, a figure of 600kgs per household was estimated for 2019/20 was noted. It was agreed that the actual figure for the period would be provided.
- 25) The targeted figure for recycling last year was 37% but it was confirmed that the actual figure of 33% was confirmed.
- 26) A question was asked in relation to the recycling rate at Barrowell Green – is there any comparable data or any trends? In response, it was confirmed that the rate is around the contract target of 65%, however, this figure was not achieved during periods of enforced closure.
- 27) The mobilisation costs for the waste changes in 19/20 were going to be £1.8m. and it was confirmed that most of this sum has been spent but approximately £190K will be rolled over as a result of not being able to undertake engagement work as a result of the pandemic.
- 28) It was confirmed that although the 5-year business plan for 2019/20 indicated a saving of £25K following service changes, this savings target has been exceeded significantly.
- 29) It was noted that the anticipated target of the number of residents subscribing to green waste bins was 25%, however

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the take-up rate is approximately 32% with income of £2m currently.

- 30) Confirmation will be provided as to whether a Cabinet Member report was produced to approve the £500k investment for street cleansing and fly-tipping or whether this was determined via an operational report
- 31) In response to a question it was confirmed that approximately 65% of Fixed Penalty Notices issued are paid and the Council are looking at other boroughs to see how we can improve the compliance rate.

The Vice Chair thanked Offices for their presentation and responses to questions. Cllr Aksanoglu also praised the Waste Services Team for the work undertaken during the difficult, ongoing period of the pandemic.

14. WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

The work programme was noted and an additional meeting date of Wednesday 10th March was agreed. The items on the agenda will be Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and School Streets.

It was suggested that the Scrutiny Panel may consider the final Blue and Green Strategy and the development of the new Energy Recovery Facility as items for the next municipal year.

A general point to note is that Members should have adequate time to ask questions, with presentations providing highlights of the subject to be scrutinised.

15. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings were noted, with the date for an additional meeting agreed as Wednesday 10th March 2021.