

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 15 DECEMBER 2022**

COUNCILLORS

PRESENT Margaret Greer (Chair), Bektas Ozer (Vice Chair), Maria Alexandrou, Nawshad Ali, Mohammad Islam, Michael Rye OBE and Jim Steven

ABSENT Elif Erbil and James Hockney

STATUTORY CO-OPTES: *1 vacancy (Church of England diocese representative), vacancy (other faiths/denominations representative), vacancy (Catholic diocese representative), Alicia Meniru & 1 vacancy (Parent Governor representative) - Italics Denotes absence*

OFFICERS: Doug Wilkinson (Director of Environment & Operational Services), Peter George (Director of Development), Simon Gardner (Regeneration Director – Meridian Water), Claire Johnson (Head of Governance, Scrutiny and Registration Services), David Morris (Head of Parking), David Taylor (Head of Traffic and Transportation) and Marie Lowe (Secretary)

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WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received by Councillor James Hockney, who was substituted by Councillor Jim Steven.

Apologies for absence had also been received from Councillor Elif Erbil, who had been unable to attend due to ill health and Councillor Lee Chamberlain who was unable to attend the meeting to present the reasons for call-in in relation to Item 5 the Meridian Water Security Budget Extension.

The Chair explained the purpose of the meeting was for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the reasons the decision had been called-in in relation to the following two items.

Item 4 - KD 5546 Changes to Controlled Parking Zone Permit Charges, Councillor Rick Jewell, Cabinet Member for Environment was present in relation to this item. Officers were also present.

Item 5 – KD 5357 Meridian Water Security Budget Extension Officers were present to put their responses to the reasons for call-in and to answer questions put by the Committee.

The Committee noted that Councillor Alessandro Georgiou would present the reasons for the call-in of both items as Lead Member for item 4 - KD 5546

Changes to Controlled Parking Zone Permit Charges and, on behalf of Councillor Lee Chamberlain item 5 Meridian Water Security Budget Extension present the reasons for call-in for this decision.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

It was **AGREED** that the minutes for the meetings held on 10 November 2022 and 24 November 2022 would be taken at the next business meeting scheduled on 16 January 2023.

4 DECISION CALLED-IN - KD 5546 CHANGES TO CONTROLLED PARKING ZONE PERMIT CHARGES

Details of the decision taken and issued on 25 November 2022, had been included on Publication of Decision List No. 26/22-23. The report also set out officer responses to the reasons for call-in.

The decision had been called-in for review by 13 Members of the Council; Councillors Alessandro Georgiou (Lead), Lee Chamberlain, Andrew Thorp, Paul Pratt, Adrian Grumi, Stephanos Ioannou, Reece Fox, Ruby Sampson, Julian Sampson, David Skelton, Peter Fallart, Edward Smith and Emma Supple.

4.1 REASONS FOR CALL-IN - KD 5546 Changes to Controlled Parking Zone Permit Charges

The reasons for the call-in were presented by Councillor Alessandro Georgiou as Lead Member.

4.2 RESPONSE TO REASONS FOR CALL-IN - KD Changes to Controlled Parking Zone Permit Charges

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Rick Jewell, responded to the reasons for the call-in and explained that there were clear reasons for the proposed changes to the controlled parking zone permits charges. These were to ensure that all operating costs were fully recovered with no costs to the Council to administer the scheme and that other residents, who did not require a parking permit, did not subsidise the scheme. The scheme continued to contribute to the Council's wider transport objectives. There had not been a review of the scheme in recent years. However, whilst the Administration fully understood the current cost of living crisis there was the necessity, due to the both the Council's and the wider current economic situation, a careful and thorough review of all budget areas had been undertaken.

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Costs had been stripped down to the bare essentials to enable the Council to deliver on budget. Cost recovery on all items was necessary. Revenue from the car parking was not ring fenced from other areas of the budget, which was extremely complex with overlapping in some areas.

Officers advised that the proposals were designed to support the Council's objectives to encourage active and sustainable transport in the light of a developing policy framework locally and Pan London. The Council remained a highways and transport authority to manage the road network. The charges would also better manage existing kerbside space.

Officers reiterated that a consultation had been carried out between December 2020 and February 2021 which had generated 890 responses. As a direct result of the consultation, where Officers had paused, reflected, and carried out further research, a number of the proposals were subsequently amended. These included the link between permit price and engine size was retained (rather than being linked to emissions).

As a larger engine size would generally equate to a larger vehicle, the connection between the price of the permit and the amount of kerb-side space occupied was also retained. The proposal to limit the number of permits per household had not been implemented. The 25% uplift in price applies to individuals rather than households that want more than one permit.

The consultation results had been fully considered and had helped to shape the proposals set out in the report and one recommendation, and as a result of the consultation exercise, had been to retain the current between permit price and engine size.

Officers reassured Members that a great deal of thought had been given to the impact the proposed changes would have on people who share one of the different nine protected characteristics. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) had been completed fairly with knowledgeable colleagues across the Council. Where it had been recognised that where there would be some impact on particular groups, such as large, multi-generational households of certain ethnic groups, the original proposal to limit the number of permits per household was not being taken forward at this stage to enable further investigation to determine whether this would disadvantage large, multi-generational households. Members noted that many minority ethnic groups had greater proportions of multigenerational households.

Members expressed dissatisfaction that the basis of the proposal and decision had been based on the estimated financial implications and not actual number of permits sold and income generated.

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Officers advised that the figures contained in the forward-looking report had been taken as a base without the costs and income from actual permit sales as there were a number of variables. In the year 2021/22, 8,200 resident permits had been issued which had generated a revenue income of £390k, which was used to cover the costs of the scheme, such as contractor costs, visitor scratch cards and Officer time. Revenue from Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued in relation to the quieter neighbourhood schemes was used to for concessionary travel passes and any residual revenue funded other highway expenditure. Any funding shortfall in revenue in previous years had been funded from the operation. It was not the Council's intention to make a surplus on the revenue.

Responding to a question from a Member, Officers explained that it was difficult to compare Enfield's CPZ scheme with other London Boroughs on a like for like basis as each one differed in, characteristics, circumstances and services offered, which was reflected in the prices charged. Enfield had 15% CPZ, others had significantly more, such as Islington, where all areas were covered with the CPZ schemes, all permits incurred a charge.

Members requested that:

- i. Members be advised of the outcome of the carers permits review, once undertaken.
- ii. Once completed, the list of comparator figures for permits issued in other London Boroughs be shared with the Committee Members.
- iii. Information on the differentials of the figures contained in the Officer's report was requested.
- iv. The Committee be updated on the outcome of Section 4 – Monitoring and Review (page 45 of the Equality Impact Assessment) and Section 5 – Action Plan for Mitigating Actions (page 46).

ACTION

In summary, the Cabinet Member and Officers acknowledged that there was never a good time to increase fees and charges however it was necessary to ensure the cost of the scheme was fully recovered. The result of consultation with residents had shaped the proposed recommendations and the EQiA had recognised that, although there would be an impact in some areas these would not be huge and had been taken into account in the final recommendations. The prices of permits had not changed frequently however, due to the current unprecedented times. It was now necessary and essential to do so to enable the Council to focus on the most vulnerable residents in the Borough and children's services.

The Call-In Lead, Councillor Alessandro Georgiou summarised the points made during the discussion.

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The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the reasons provided for the call-in and responses set out in the Officer's report. Having considered the verbal responses and information presented by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Officers, the Committee **AGREED** to confirm the original decision made by the Cabinet Member for Environment.

The Director of Environment and Operational Services thanked the Committee for the constructive feedback regarding the quality of the information provided by Officers, which would be taken on board and be used to reflect and improve information in future reports to provide back to the Committee.

With the agreement of the Committee, at 20:07 the meeting was adjourned for seven minutes.

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DECISION CALLED-IN - KD 5357 MERIDIAN WATER SECURITY BUDGET EXTENSION

The Committee **AGREED** that the Part 1 and Part 2 reports be taken together as there were no press or public present at the meeting.

Details of the decision taken and issued on 18 November 2022, had been included on Publication of Decision List No. 27/22-23. The report also set out officer responses to the reasons for call-in.

5.1 REASONS FOR CALL-IN - KD 5357 Meridian Water Security Budget Extension

The reasons for the call-in were presented by Councillor Alessandro Georgiou, which were **NOTED**.

5.2 RESPONSE TO REASONS FOR CALL-IN - KD 5357 Meridian Water Security Budget Extension

The decision had been called-in for review by 7 Members of the Council; Councillors Lee Chamberlain (Lead), Adrian Grumi, Paul Pratt, Andrew Thorp, Edward Smith, Peter Fallart, Alessandro Georgiou.

Officers, responding to the reasons for call-in, stated that this was an important decision regarding security and, critically, human health and safety. There was a significant security requirement for the East Bank due to the criminal activity taking place there. There were areas which were susceptible to fly tipping, incursions and violent incidents involving people working there, the consultants and security staff. Measures had been put in place to mitigate and reduce the cost of security in this area and a number of security measures had been put in place to reduce the need for human security guards on site.

Officers stated that they were conscious that the cost of extending the contract was significantly over budget, which was due to inflationary

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pressures, together with the level of uncertainty regarding Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF) from the Government. Officers would have preferred for the Council's infrastructure partners, who would take over responsibility for the security arrangements, to have been on site months ago. The original security contract was procured in 2019 with a contract value of £2million and for 3 years with the ability to extend for one. The proposal sought to extend the contract by a year as outlined in the report by Officers and approved in the original Cabinet report and an additional £800k funding from contingency to cover the rest of this year and the next calendar year. Subject to the programme progressing as planned, it was anticipated that there would be a significant reduction to this among over the course of next year. The contract would end regardless in November 2023.

The proposal had been through the proper procurement process and complied with all requirements of the Council's Constitution and Contract Procedure Rules.

The Council had been and continued to be working very closely with the Police to reduce security costs. Security costs had increased due rise in the cost of living and inflation. Consideration was being given to the weight attached to pricing and quality. Whilst the procurement for the contract extension had not been market tested, it had been in 2019 and it was these costs which had been used to provide the figures for the budget extension. It would not be possible to extend the contract further as a full procurement exercise would be required.

Members requested further, detailed clarification be provided regarding the cost of security based on the current market rates and conditions and details of the contingency planning around procurement.

The Call-In Lead, Councillor Alessandro Georgiou summarised the points made during the discussion.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the reasons provided for the call-in and responses set out in the Officer's report. Having considered the verbal responses and information presented by Officers, the Committee **AGREED** to refer the matter back to the original decision taker, the Acting Executive Director, Place to consider:

- Update of the confidential appendix with benchmarking data
- Provide an explanation on contingency funding.

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DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

NOTED that the next business meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place at 7pm on 16 January 2023 at the Civic Centre, Enfield.

