

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE ACTION SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON TUESDAY, 24TH OCTOBER, 2023

**MEMBERS:** Councillors: Hivran Dalkaya (Chair), Nia Stevens (Vice Chair), Maria Alexandrou, Patricia Gregory, Ahmet Hasan, Mohammad Islam, Destiny Karakus, and Andy Milne.

**Officers:** Jon Sharkey (Head of Public Realm Services), Martin Rattigan (Interim Head of Regulatory Services), Doug Wilkinson (Director of Environment & Street Scene), and Harry Blake-Herbert (Governance Officer).

**Also Attending:** Cllr Rick Jewell (Cabinet Member for the Environment), Youth Parliament Representatives (Sila Karapinar (Deputy Young Mayor) and Estel Kayim), and press.

### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Joanne Laban, who was substituted by Cllr Andy Milne.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received regarding any item on the agenda.

### 3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED the minutes of the previous Environment & Climate Action Scrutiny Panel meeting held on Tuesday 14 March 2023.

Updates on the actions of the previous meeting were reviewed.

### 4. UPDATE ON WASTE

Jon Sharkey, Head of Public Realm Services, introduced the recycling and mandatory food waste segregation for businesses elements of the item, highlighting the key aspects of the report.

The officer's presentation to Members included information on: the services offered to residents, an update on the review of the ways in which the team communicate information with residents, recycling performance, government announcements/ regulation changes/updates, and the work being done on the delivery of a commercial food waste collection service.

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Officers responded to Member's questions and comments relating to engagement with Councillors. Officers advised that they had not yet consulted widely with Members on the changes that they were making, but that they would circulate an update on the work they had been doing in an all-councillor communication, in advance of the new/updated webpages going live. Officers agreed to send Members the information leaflet used to communicate to residents what they can/should be doing with the services they provide, and expressed that they had taken on board Members comments on communication from the previous meeting.

In response to Member's queries regarding what items could be recycled, officers advised that they try as best they can to clarify what items can be recycled; the example of loose plastic bags was mentioned, and officers agreed to take this away to see how this could be better communicated going forwards. Officers said the clarification/guidance from the government about future arrangements/requirements was a positive.

In response to Member's queries regarding hard-to-reach groups and areas, officers advised that they looked at average data on a round by round/geographical basis, and tried to target their engagement at those areas performing less effectively.

In response to Member's queries regarding Barrowell Green, officers advised that not wishing to turn people away and taking a relaxed line on bookings, had created some issues. It was expressed that they were now trying to reinforce the message about the slot-based system/appointments, as a means of: discouraging traders, getting useful data, and managing traffic. Cllr Jewell added that the service/facility was easy to book, that it was difficult to turn people around once in the queue, that staff were using common sense by allowing people without bookings in, but that the team wanted to reinforce the booking message in order to alleviate some of the issues being experienced.

In response to Member's queries regarding communication with residents, officers advised that updates to the webpages were coming which would make finding information about the services provided easier, that workshops would be taking in libraries to get feedback on the changes, and that suggestion boxes was something further that they could look at using. Officers advised that conversations with the communications team were taking place about the wider use and variety of social media platforms as a way of increasing accessibility to information.

In response to Member's queries regarding the generation of waste, officers advised that they were engaged with and feeding into conversations and consultations with various groups and government organisations relating to waste reforms. Cllr Jewell added that they had spoken to companies about their packaging, but that it was difficult to engage and enter into partnerships with these global brands.

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In response to Member's queries regarding business waste, officers advised that the obligation was for business to secure a contract to manage their waste. It was explained that enforcement action, such as community payback, could ensure businesses had appropriate arrangements in place, but that a focus needed to be placed on using public money for clearing up public spaces rather than private spaces. Officers said that following the recent government announcement, the team could now begin marketing themselves as a provider of this service, and were in a strong position to do so successfully. Officers expressed that it was difficult to encourage behaviour changes at present, but that the change in regulation/deadline and pricing would help to drive this.

In response to Member's queries regarding missed bins, officers advised that they did not have data regarding performance on this to hand, but that they could provide/circulate this, and the figures/performance were improving. Officers advised that a reconfiguration of resources through Covid had caused some disruption with the main focus being on getting all waste cleared, and subsequently, that lots of improvements had taken place in the intervening time, and that in the scale of the number of collections conducted, circa 250,000 per week, those bins missed made up a very small number.

In response to Member's queries regarding recycling in flats, officers advised that a recent trial had been encouragingly successful, with a big improvement in quality, but that they were waiting to see what finances/funding would be made available from Government from the waste reforms and additional burdens funding for the rollout of the model more widely.

In response to Enfield Youth Parliament Representatives queries regarding engagement with schools, officers advised that they supported and provided their services to schools and were happy to reach out to schools on an individual basis if there was an interest in further engagement.

Martin Rattigan, Interim Head of Regulatory Services, introduced the fly tipping elements of the item, highlighting the key aspects of the report.

The officer's presentation to Members included information on: statistics/performance relating to fly tipping incidents, work with other teams/departments, areas of focus, types and effectiveness of enforcement responses, CCTV usage, active communications with residents, initiatives, and the difficulty of investigating/identifying/ prosecuting individuals for fly tipping.

In response to Member's queries regarding fines and recovering costs, officers advised that fines received from fixed penalty notices went to the council, but that in the case of prosecution/court action, this money went to the courts. The council could only recover what was deemed as reasonable officer and legal expenses/costs, which the courts rarely fully compensated. Cllr Jewell reiterated these sentiments. Officers advised that following changes in the regulations relating to fixed penalty notices charge rates, they

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would likely move to increase fixed penalty fines to the top level, and offer a reduction for early payment moving forwards.

In response to Member's queries regarding communication with residents, officers advised that the use of different languages would be captured as part of the web page review/improvements, and that some of posters and leaflets already being distributed had been translated in a variety of different languages. Officers expressed that they try to investigate all incidents of fly tipping reported to them across their various platforms, that the reporting system was the primary method for this, but that there were also various email addresses, and telephone numbers advertised. Cllr Jewell added that a name and shame system for fly tippers was still in place.

In response to Member's queries regarding CCTV, officers advised that they were still collecting data on the effectiveness of those cameras already in use, as it would not be prudent to invest further, if they were not proving effective in achieving identification of perpetrators and resulting in prosecutions and a reduction in fly tipping.

In response to Member's queries regarding locking communal/flat-block bins, officers advised that the high turnover of residents in flatted accommodation and the management of keys made this difficult to rollout borough wide; but if particular blocks and management agents wanted to trial/explore this, they would be happy to promote/support this principle. Officers confirmed that in instances when communal bins were broken, they could replace these if alerted/emailed. Cllr Jewell added that such a trial would require blocks where all residents buy into the scheme, as it would only take a few residents to contaminate the waste for the whole building. He explored the idea of having competitions and league tables between various blocks, and discussed the impact of food waste segregation on bin divers.

The Chair reviewed the actions points/outcomes arising from the meeting as including that: information leaflets be circulated to members regarding recycling; the review of information on the webpages be discussed with councillors and language options be explored; clarification as to what can be recycled, for example loose bin bags, be looked at; suggestion boxes for residents be provided in libraries for residents to give their ideas; and data be provided to panel members on missed bin collections.

### **5. WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24**

Members noted and agreed the Environment & Climate Action Scrutiny Panel Work Programme for 2023/24.

### **6. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Members noted the dates of future meetings as set out in the report/agenda pack.

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Members asked that the Governance Officer find/provide a potential date for their additional meeting, for Panel to agree over/via email.

The Chair thanked everyone for their time/contributions, and the meeting ended at 20:37.