

# MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT FORUM HELD ON TUESDAY, 5TH DECEMBER, 2023

**MEMBERS:** Councillors Nicki Adeleke, Chris James (Associate Cabinet Member (Enfield West)), Maria Alexandrou, Nia Stevens and Peter Fallart

**Officers:** Brett Leahy (Director of Planning & Growth), May Hope (Plan Making Manager) Chris Cole (Head of Strategic Transport Planning & Policy), David Taylor (Head of Highways, Traffic & Parking), Ian Russell (Principal Engineer) and Petra Stephenson (Governance Officer)

**Also Attending:** Robert Varney (TFL), Denise Gandhi (Southgate Green Association), Paul Hutchinson (Grange Park Conservation Area Study Group), Mark Hawkins-Dady (Better Streets for Enfield), Dennis Stacey (Bush Hill Park Conservation Area Study Group), Juliet Barnett (Trent Park Conservation Committee), Dave Cockle (Enfield Transport Users Group) and Jane Maggs (Southgate District Civic Voice), Hannah Newton

## 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Hannah Dyson who was substituted by Cllr Peter Fallart, and Cllr Anyanwu (Cabinet Member for Public Spaces, Culture and Local Economy).

Apologies were also received from:

Andrew Chillingsworth – GTR

Patrick Ladbury – GTR

Andrew Newman – Clay Hill Study Group

Mustafa Ibrahim - Enfield Town CAG

Richard Beaumont – Forty Hill and Bulls Cross Study Group

Robert Wilson - Hadley Wood Association and HW Conservation Area Study Group

Apologies for lateness were received from Cllr. Nia Stevens.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none declared.

## 3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18th September 2023 were **Agreed.**

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### 4. CHANGES TO AGENDA ORDER

The Committee agreed to alter the order in which the items on the agenda were considered at the meeting. The minutes reflect the order of items as listed on the agenda.

### 5. PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN ENFIELD

Chris Cole introduced himself as the new Head of Strategic Transport Policy and Planning for Enfield.

GTR, the train operators for Great Northern Trains were unable to attend the meeting but provided a brief statement as an update as follows:

In regard to Palmers Green step – free access, work is currently in progress and due to be completed mid 2024.

In terms of the Great Northern off-peak frequencies, increasing trains from two trains per hour to four trains per hour off-peak would require additional funding which is currently unavailable.

GTR support making the transport interchange at stations attractive and sustainable to all potential users, however the works need significant financial support from external parties and service providers to make it viable.

Robert Varney from TFL provided an update on TFL's funding position since the impact of the pandemic and was pleased to announce that for the next financial year TFL has returned to financial stability and will no longer require funding support from the government.

Support will still be required for the investment to the Piccadilly line.

In relation to the 456 bus route the request to consider extending the service to Crews Hill is not currently viable.

The Superloop (SL1) bus from North Finchley to Walthamstow will be launched 9<sup>th</sup> December. The route will cover New Southgate, Arnos Grove, Meridian Water, Palmers Green and Friern Barnet.

The Cockfosters depot is being upgraded with new facilities and features. Residents in Cockfosters and Oakwood will be kept informed of the depot works which will impact the neighbourhood. This will be supported with newsletters, forums and a designated email address which residents and members are encouraged to join by emailing:

[cockfostersdepotupgrade@TFL.gov.uk](mailto:cockfostersdepotupgrade@TFL.gov.uk)

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TFL will undertake discussions on improvements to the public realm and formalisation of crossing arrangements at Sterling Way, Enfield early next year.

Following the update Members made suggestions and asked questions as follows:

1. Members requested that more attention was considered to the placement of bus-stops to prevent the invasion of privacy into people's homes. Robert confirmed that TFL work with the council to identify spots but it can be a challenge in built up areas. There is consultation and engagement with the local community for new routes and changes which the community are encouraged to respond to.

2. Members agreed that Finsbury Park and Highbury & Islington interchange require cleaning by TFL and GTR.

**Action:** Robert will report the issues to TFL.

3: Members enquired whether Grange Park Station will be taken out of service when work is done on the platform?

**Action:** GTR/Govia will provide an update on the work planned for Grange Park station.

4. Members suggested the reinstatement of the Great Northern Metro to allow for a more frequent service.

5. Regarding signage, bus destinations, audio visual and displays, Members requested a review to ensure consistency and better integration, for Brimsdown, the SL1 and 191 bus, and outside Enfield rail stations and Overground to ensure better interchanges.

**Action:** David Taylor will check/ hold conversations with TFL and GTR regarding signage, audio and visual displays.

**Action:** Enfield Transport Group will liaise with Chris Cole directly to provide a list of further locations that require better signage and interchanges.

6. In relation to the viability of the 456 bus route, Robert stated that there were several elements involved. There would need to be work done at Crews Hill Station to improve the turnaround point for the buses, to make it safe and viable, also cost efficiencies. The route will be revisited periodically as the development continues.

7. In answer to a question on disability access, it was confirmed that 90% of all bus stops and buses are fully accessible in London. There are trials taking place now on improving the count down at bus stops and audio updates for those who are visually impaired. Drivers are also expected to give updates. Officers added that there is an ongoing programme for converting some of the

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hail and ride sections to fixed stops which would make those routes more accessible.

8. Residents in Cockfosters and Oakwood will be kept informed of the depot works which will impact the neighbourhood. This will be supported with newsletters, forums and a designated email address which residents and members are encouraged to join by emailing:  
[cockfostersdepotupgrade@TFL.gov.uk](mailto:cockfostersdepotupgrade@TFL.gov.uk)

**Action:** Members are invited to email Robert with suggestions and contributions to the Hail & Ride consultations.

### 6. REWILDING AND TREE PLANTING

Ian Russell (Principal Engineer) provided an update on rewilding and tree planting being carried out as part of the Enfield Chase Landscape Restoration project.

Key points highlighted were as follows:

**Beavers:** LBE are seeking additional funding to enhance the site. The council are working with Capel Manor to introduce tours and educate visitors on the new inhabitants.

**Cows:** LBE are looking to expand where the cattle graze in Forty Hall and introduce them at Trent Park. Trent Park has seen a lot of natural regeneration of woodland.

**Landscape recovery project:** secured funding from DEFRA to carry out an 18-month development phase to improve land management, create new woodlands and restore natural habitats.

1. In response to a question from Members on tree losses the impracticalities of watering new trees planted in extreme weather was explained. Advice has been taken from the Forestry Commission on good practices and extra payments received to plant more.

2. Grazing cattle are planned to be introduced at Trent Park in the new year. An email will be sent to Members and residents to provide an update on the project. 40 people signed up to be volunteer lookers, people who are trained to keep an eye on the cattle.

3. Assurance was provided on Oakwood Park; by next year when planting is better established the new wetlands should look more mature. The pathways will be maintained by the council. There will be lot of extra planting in the spring which will be a community effort, and the plastic pipes that connect the wetland features will be finished off properly.

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4. In regard to Lavender Hill cemetery, it is envisaged that it will remain locked at night whilst the rural side will remain unlocked. Signage was suggested to avoid people trying to cut through to Gordon Hill station after dark.

### 7. ENFIELD'S LOCAL PLAN PROGRESS

Brett Leahy (Director of Planning and Growth) and May Hope (Plan Making Manager) provided members with a comprehensive update on the ongoing development and progress of the New Enfield Local Plan (ELP) as it advances through the various stages of planning.

Key points, milestones and the consultation procedure were made clear during the presentation as follows:

1. The Local Plan will be pre-published on 6 December before the Local Plan debate at the Full Council meeting on 6 March 2024.

2. There will be a 12-week engagement period for elected members to provide an opportunity to digest the document and engage with businesses, communities and residents.

3. Assuming Full Council's approval of the draft Regulation 19, in March, the draft Local Plan will be published for statutory consultation on 7 March or shortly thereafter, for a period of six weeks. All responses will be submitted to the Secretary of State alongside the draft local plan.

In response to committee members questions which focused on procedures, timelines and Meridian Water the following answers were given:

1. The best way to comment on the Local Plan is via local Councillors who will raise the questions prior to March 7<sup>th</sup>.

2. If Meridian Water does not deliver the number of new homes proposed the Plan can be reviewed as the Local Plans are required to be updated every 5 years.

3. In regard to the Mayor of London and the GLA, they have been actively involved and engaged with the Local Plan, the principle of development on Green Belt land is the only area that remains unresolved. The GLA will be able to formally respond on their position when the plan is being consulted under the Regulation 19 stage.

4. The Planning Inspector sets out the timeframes but it is anticipated that the completed and adopted Local Plan is expected to be in 2025, the examination is the end of the process.

5. In relation to the Green Belt sites put forward, officers highlighted that Landowners put the sites forward they want to see delivered, not the council. There are viability tests and technical layers to check that proposed sites will work. Officers confirmed that there had been sites put forward in the east side

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of the borough but there were a lot of planning policy constraints such as being in Site of Special Scientific Interests (SSSI), flood risks and Sites of Importance Nature Conservation (SINC).

6. Officers confirmed that a General Election will not affect the Local Plan and does not change the position in terms of the process, procedure and framework.

7. Regarding the Meridian Water master plan it is independent to the Local Plan but views and parameters on how it should be developed have been put forward.

**Action:** May Hope will find out when the Meridian Water master plan will be available to communities.

**Action:** Brett Leahy will distribute the presentation to Members.

### 8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10<sup>th</sup> January 2024