Council: 31 January 2017

Agenda item 14.2 – Opposition amendment in the name of Cllr Alan Schneiderman

Administration Motion in the name of Cllr Rohit Grover – A Public Realm Management Forum for Barnet

Add after the first paragraph:

"In addition to conservation areas being important, Council also believes that every area of the Borough is important and that proper planning and investment is necessary across Barnet."

Insert in second bullet point after 'certain areas":

"... - Cricklewood, for example, which is on the border of three Boroughs -...."

Substantive text to read:

Council believes that Barnet's 16 conservation areas contribute to the Borough's distinctive character, making it an attractive place to live and work. Any dilution of this character due to insufficient conservation input with respect to the design of streets could have profound consequences for perceptions of Barnet and therefore its future prosperity.

In addition to conservation areas being important, Council also believes that every area of the Borough is important and that proper planning and investment is necessary across Barnet.

Council notes that improving traffic flows and parking across Barnet is important, but that as well as getting people from A to B roads and streets also serve as arteries of communities which have the capacity to greatly affect the overall quality of life for local residents. While traffic signs control and guide traffic and promote road safety, when used to excess and with no clear function they can clutter streets, make them unattractive, and introduce hazards for users. This is also true for excessive street furniture and lighting equipment.

Council therefore believes that designers and stakeholders should be encouraged to work together at an early stage in order to promote a focus on the creation of locally distinct high quality places. A Public Realm Management Forum, with specialist input from conservation experts, would enable such a multi-disciplinary approach to be adopted with respect to the design of public realm works across the Borough, secure improved decision-making and instil best practice in line with other local authorities. Such an approach is recommended by the Department for Transport, Historic England and the Institute of Highway Engineers.

Council acknowledges that all parts of the public sector face challenges of reduced budgets. However, a Public Realm Management Forum would actually save Council money by avoiding abortive works and expensive mistakes being made which then have to be corrected at implementation stage - while ensuring compliance with best practice and statutory conservation requirements. Considerable sums could also be saved by minimising the need for street clutter and its subsequent maintenance, and through the recycling of materials.

Council therefore requests that officers are instructed to:

- Investigate how a Public Realm Management Forum may be able to ensure multi-disciplinary input into the design of future public realm works across the Borough; and

- Consider a trial period for certain areas, **- Cricklewood, for example, which is on the border of three Boroughs -** bearing in mind that informal collaboration of this nature already takes place within Garden Suburb ward where a number of residents and other stakeholders have specialist conservation expertise.

Council also requests that the results of this investigation are reported back to the Environment Committee for consideration.

Under Full Council Procedure Rule 23.5: if this item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting it will be referred to the relevant Committee