

Decisions of the Environment Committee

25 November 2020

Members Present:-

Councillor Dean Cohen (Chairman)
Councillor Peter Zinkin (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Alison Cornelius	Councillor Alan Schneiderman
Councillor Felix Byers	Councillor Geof Cooke
Councillor Elliot Simberg	Councillor Jo Cooper
Councillor Laithe Jajeh	Councillor Laurie Williams

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting that took place on 09 September 2020, be approved.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

None.

3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)

The Committee noted the receipt of a Public Comment and Public Question both in connection with item 7, 'Hosting a Tiny Forest' from Mr Daniel Mermelstein. The Chairman noted that Mr Mermelstein was not in attendance and therefore noted his submission and the Council's response in respect to the answer to his question.

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS

Councillor Alan Schneiderman was invited by the Chairman to introduce the item. Councillor Schneiderman gave a summary of the issue and requested that the Committee supported his item. He stated that a tiny forest was a really exciting and positive idea. The Chairman invited Councillor Anne Clarke and Councillor Roberto Weeden-Sanz to speak. Both Councillors spoke in support of the item.

During the consideration of the item the Chairman outlined his full support for the Council implementing a tiny forest, he suggested that Officer's find a suitable location(s) and consider the funding options. He added that locations should be considered with Councillor Anne Clarke and Councillor Roberto Weeden-Sanz

Before voting on the item Councillor Jajeh stated that it was important that the location was on Barnet land and therefore this point should be considered.

Resolved:

- That the Environment Committee supported and agreed the item
- That the Executive Director for Environment be requested to proceed with this matter and find a suitable location and consider funding options

Councillor Jo Cooper – Make our Parks Safer

Councillor Jo Cooper was invited by the Chairman to introduce the item. Councillor Cooper gave a summary of the issue and requested that the Committee supported her item. The Chairman gave his full support of this item as did Councillor Peter Zinkin. Councillor Alan Schneiderman spoke in support of the item and in particular in regards to making parks safer.

Resolved:

- That the Environment Committee supported and agreed the item
- That the Environment Committee noted that this matter would be reported to the relevant committee

Councillor Geoff Cooke – Full and Overflowing Little Bins on Streets and in Parks

Councillor Geoff Cooke was invited by the Chairman to introduce the item. Councillor Cooke gave a summary of the issue and requested that the Committee supported his item.

The Street Scene Director Mr Craig Miller spoke on this item and noted that Officers had been gathering information on the use of litter bins. He agreed that there had been an increase in the number of service requests for litter bin type issues and a decrease in the number received in regards to requests to the street cleansing team. He noted that this could be due to the switch in usage due to the pandemic. Mr Miller said that he would be happy to share the analysis with Councillor Cooke.

Resolved:

- That the Environment Committee supported and noted the item

Councillor Lurie Williams – Sustainable Park Benches

Councillor Lurie Williams was invited by the Chairman to introduce the item. Councillor Williams requested that the Committee agree that the costings of the benches be looked into.

Ms Cassie Bridger noted that the Council had adopted a standard specification for park benches. She noted that other products have been tested but these have gained unwanted attention from vandalism. Councillor Williams requested that Officers contact

the London Borough of Enfield in order to see what they do. The Chairman requested this also and noted that Councillor Williams be updated.

The Chairman requested that Mr Miller update Members on the combustion bin that was agreed at the last meeting. Mr Miller said Officers had introduced a trial bin that had installed on Montrose Playing Field and was moved to East Barnet in order to test it in two different settings. Mr Miller noted that he would conclude the trial process and report back to the Committee. This was noted by the Committee.

Resolved:

- That the Environment Committee noted the item
- That the Environment Committee requested that the London Borough of Enfield be consulted with in order to understand their approach to Sustainable Park Benches
- That the Environment Committee supported a trial to take place.

Laithe Jajeh – Policy Regarding Cross Overs

Councillor Laithe Jajeh was invited by the Chairman to introduce the item. Councillor Jajeh gave a summary of the issue and requested that the Committee supported his item

The Chairman proposed that the Executive Director for Environment be requested to review this matter and consider the locations and what the impact could be. He stated that in the event that a decision is required to change policy then this matter be reported to the Committee to determine, this was seconded by Councillor Peter Zinkin. Councillor Simberg supported this and said that the impact to trees should be taken into account. Councillor Schneiderman suggested that it was important to look at locations where this takes place to avoid damaging and losing grass verges. Councillor Jajeh agreed with the comment that had been made.

Resolved

- That the Environment Committee noted the item and requested that the Executive Director for Environment look into this matter and consider such locations and in the event that a policy decision is required the item be reported back to the Committee.

7. BUSINESS PLANNING 2020-25 AND FEES & CHARGES FOR 202122

The report was introduced by the Executive Director for Environment. He provided a full outline of the report and noted the contents in appendix A and B. The Executive Director for Environment requested that the Committee give consideration to the report and the recommendations.

Members of the Committee had the opportunity to consider the report and raise questions to the Executive Director for Environment. Members considered the report and it's appendices in detail.

Councillor Schneiderman outlined some concerns in regards to the waste collection review and the savings proposals in relation to this. Mr Mee said that saving proposals would be reported back to the Committee once Officers had time to work on this. Councillor Peter Zinkin outlined that the priority was to balance this years budget that was contained in the report.

Councillor Felix Byers noted the delivery of LIP funding schemes. Mr Mee responded to this point as did the Chairman respond to this point.

Members raised issues in respect to Street Lighting as highlighted in appendix A. Mr Mee outlined that options in respect to street lighting would be reported to the Environment Committee. Mr Mee said that he would look into this topic and update Members accordingly.

Councillor Alan Schneiderman requested to know what would happen to the review of low quality parks and open spaces and how funding could be raised. Ms Cassie Bridger outlined that the Parks and Open Spaces strategy contained this information.

Councillor Schneiderman requested that Policy and Resources Committee be more informed in regards to saving proposals in relation to smarter cities and therefore he stated that there should be more detail available in order for a more informed decision to be made. Mr Mee outlined that the Council will make improvements as technology improves and he said that figures will change as the technology changes and Government policy is amended. The Chairman said that the Environment Committee would have it's opportunity to provide scrutiny in the future. He added that the Environment Committee had delivered it's saving targets as set out over the years.

The Chairman invited Councillor Laithe Jajeh to speak on the Fees and Charges element of the report. He raised questions on the costs that are connected to cricket and the charges for training nets and matches. Ms Cassie Bridger responded to this point and noted that rates were correct, she said that she would provide further information to Members on this point. Councillor Jajeh also noted points on street light banners and the power required for street lighting. This was responded to by Mr Mee.

Members also made comments on graffiti and additional time costs.

Councillor Alan Schneiderman requested that the item be voted on. The Chairman therefore moved this item to the vote:

Resolved:

That the Environment Committee considered the MTFs proposals that relate to the committee as set out in Appendix A after having considered the initial equalities impacts and refer these recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee for decision

That the Environment Committee noted the changes to the fees and charges 2021/22 as set out in Appendix B, which will be included in the budget proposals submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee.

The vote recorded was:

For – 6

Against – 4

**8. REFERRAL FROM CHIPPING BARNET AREA COMMITTEE TO ENVIRONMENT
OCT 2020**

The Chairman introduced the report and noted that Ward Member Councillor David Longstaff was not able to attend the meeting to give a representation on this item. The Chairman invited Members to consider the report and make comment where appropriate.

Mr Mee said that the Area Committee's budget would not be charged for carrying out a feasibility study for a second time in order to understand if a zebra crossing is required.

Councillor Williams noted the Officer's recommendations stated that they did not believe the cost justified the numbers that crossed the road.

Resolved:

The Chairman proposed that the Executive Director for Environment be instructed to conduct a survey that be funded from the Area Committee budget. This was unanimously agreed.

9. COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Alan Schneiderman noted that sustainability report was not listed. Mr Mee said there progress had been made and therefore it can ne it can be listed to be reported the March.

The Chairman noted that a Fly Tipping item be report to the January meeting.

Resolved:

That the Environmetn Committee noted the Work Programme

10. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

None.

The meeting finished at 19:57