

Decisions of the Environment Committee

2 June 2021

Members Present:-

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

Councillor Felix Byers
Councillor Geof Cooke
Councillor Alison Cornelius
Councillor Laithe Jajeh

Councillor Alan Schneiderman
Councillor Elliot Simberg
Councillor Laurie Williams
Councillor Claire Farrier

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting and noted that Councillor Claire Farrier had returned to the committee as a new Member and therefore he welcomed her return. The Chairman outlined the Covid face to face meetings restrictions rules that all present needed to follow.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting that took place on 18 January 2021, be approved.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

None.

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

Councillor Peter Zinkin and Councillor Dean Cohen both declared a non-pecuniary interest in regard to the food waste Members Item. Both Councillors noted that they are elected representatives on the North London Waste authority. Both members considered the item.

Councillor Peter Zinkin noted he had received a dispensation from the Council's Monitoring Officer for the matter that involved London Energy.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)

None.

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS

Councillor Alan Schneiderman – Protecting the Welsh Harp

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 give support to this item.

The Chairman noted that at the last meeting there had been a request for an update and therefore the Executive Director for Environment provided a verbal update.

During the debate the Governance Officer in attendance noted that recruitment decisions to Officer posts was not in the remit of the Environment Committee. It was further noted that the recruitment decision of a biodiversity Officer was within the realm of the Executive Director for Environment and that power was contained within the Chief Officer's Scheme of Delegation.

The Chairman noted his support for the item and said that the efforts of volunteers in clearing up the Welsh Harp should be recognised and therefore the Committee's thanks were noted.

During the consideration of the item Councillor Alan Schneiderman made a request that his item be voted on, he therefore moved the following which the then Chairman then put this to the vote.

Resolved:

1. That the Committee requested the recruitment of an in-house council biodiversity officer and asks the Executive Director for Environment to come back to the committee with options and arrangements for doing this.

Vote

For – 4

Against – 6

2. That the Committee requested that Policy and Resources Committee considers the use of strategic CIL funding for the Welsh Harp.

Vote

All

3. There is a commitment to using the remaining s106 'SSSI mitigation fund' on protecting and enhancing the Welsh Harp and implementing the new 'vision document' when it is adopted.

Vote

All

4. The Council will continue consulting with local conservation and community groups.

Vote

All

Councillor Laithe Jajeh requested to add the following resolution, this was put to the vote:

5. That the Committee requested that the Environment Committee bring back a progress report to a future including an executive summary of the work of roles and responsibility of the various groups associated with the Welsh harp and what they do.

Vote
All

Geof Cooke – Barnet Citizen's Climate emergency Panel

Councillor Geof 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. He stated that there was a climate emergency.

The Committee had the opportunity to consider this item. The Chairman put this to the vote.

Resolved:

1. To declare a climate emergency.

Vote:

For – 4

Against – 5

Abstained – 1

2. Ensure that all Council' decision-making reporting processes includes an assessment on environmental impact, and therefore this be added to Council's reporting framework. That the Committee requested this be reported to the Constitutional and General Functions Committee, if required.

Vote

All – as amended above.

3. To set up a Barnet citizen's climate emergency panel to support the development of climate change and sustainability action plans and to monitor the council's progress in implementing the plans and mitigating climate change.

Vote

For 4

Against – 6

4. To start a recruitment process for the panel, inviting Barnet residents and representatives from businesses, community groups and local climate change and environmental groups to join.

Vote

For – 4

Against 6

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

The Committee considered the item, in doing so the Chairman stated he fully supported the item. He therefore requested the matter be voted on.

The Environment Committee unanimously agreed that:

- The Environment Committee requested a report or future item on how through Council maintenance, the below be can be enhanced
 - o That Hedges allow wildlife to move about between gardens and other spaces and provide feeding and breeding opportunities.

Councillor Claire Farrier was invited by the Chairman to introduce the item. She gave a summary of the issue and requested that the Committee supported her item.

Councillor Peter Zinkin said that the decision to suspend food waste collection was done with the Mayors Officers. He spoke in detail on the subject and concluded that he was unable to support the item.

Councillor Farrier requested that the below be voted on.

1. That the council makes a firm commitment to restart separate food waste collections.
2. That the Environment Committee should receive a report at the next meeting on 6 October 2021 setting out details of how food waste collections will be restarted, including the timescale, cost and communications plan.

Vote

For 4

Against 6

Resolved

That the item be noted

7. REVIEW OF RE HIGHWAYS KPI SUITE

The report was presented by the Executive Director for Environment. He stated that the report set out an update for Members on the need to review the Highways Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) under the Development and Regulatory Services (DRS) contract with Regional Enterprise (Re) following the award of the Highways term maintenance contract (TMC) to TarmacKier Joint Venture (TarmacKier) which went live on 1 April 2021.

Councillor Geof Cooke noted that the next meeting was 06 October 2021 not in September 2021 as referenced in recommendation 4. The committee requested that this be minuted.

Having considered the report the Committee unanimously:

Resolved

1. That the Environment Committee noted the suspension of 6 KPIs under the DRS contract with Re for Quarter 1 2021/22.
2. That the Environment Committee noted the review being carried out by officers of the Re KPI suite to ensure that it better aligns with KPIs in the new Highways TMC, and reflects Re's Managing Agent role under the DRS contract.
3. That the Executive Director, Environment be authorised to agree a revised KPI suite in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, to be reported from Quarter 2 2021/22.

4. That the Environment Committee agreed a further report at the 06 October 2021 meeting on the revised KPI suite.

8. UTILITIES AND HIGHWAYS CHARTER

The report was presented by the Executive Director for Environment. He provided a full overview of the report and requested that Members give consideration. He introduced Rob Marchand from the Roads Permitting team who spoke at length on the item.

Having considered the report the Committee the:

Resolved

(a) Approved the draft Utilities and Highways Charter as set out in this report for informal consultation

Vote
All

(b) delegated authority to the Executive Director for Environment to finalise the Utilities and Highways Charter, in consultation with the Chairman of the Environment Committee, following the outcome of the informal consultation

Vote
For - 6
Against - 4

9. COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the work programme and noted that the following:

- Welsh Harp - a progress report at a future meeting to include an executive summary of the work of roles and responsibility of the various groups and what they do.
- That the Environment Committee receives a further report at the 06 October 2021 meeting on the revised KPI suite.
- Councillor Geof Cooke noted a report on the details of the changes to the impact to cycle lanes and buses. The Chairman noted that this business would be included in the social distancing report that was due to be reported to the 6 October 2021 meeting

10. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

The meeting finished at 21:04