



Environment Committee

30 June 2020

Title	Notification of Covid 19 related Decisions
Report of	Chairman of the Environment Committee
Wards	All Wards
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix A – Decisions Taken by the Interim Director for Environment Appendix B – Delegated Powers Report: Changes to Parking Permits to support Covid 19 Recovery
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Summary	
<p>The Urgency Committee on 27 April 2020 considered a report which detailed emergency decisions taken since the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic. The report covered committee and officer level decisions across all of the Council's theme committees. The Urgency Committee resolved that any further emergency decisions should be reported to the relevant theme committee for noting and post-decision scrutiny. This report notes the emergency decisions taken by officers within the Environment Directorate since Urgency Committee. If any emergency committee level decisions were made by officers under delegated powers using the delegation from Urgency Committee, these will be reported as separate and standalone reports.</p>	

Officers Recommendations

- 1. That the Environment Committee notes the Covid 19 related decisions made by officers since the Urgency Committee on 27 April 2020 as set out in Appendix A and B.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 During the Coronavirus pandemic, the Council has taken several decisions to advance preparedness and response to the pandemic, to respond to announcements by the Government, directions from the London Strategic Coordination Group, London Local Authority Gold and legislative changes. It was not possible to convene a meeting of the Full Council or committees to deal with urgent decisions and therefore following consultation with the Leader an Urgency Committee took place on 27th April 2020. A link to the Urgency Committee agenda is linked the Background Information section of this report.
- 1.2 The Urgency Committee ratified the emergency decisions taken by officers since the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic and provided a delegation to Chief Officers (in consultation with the Committee Chairmen) to take decisions on business-critical matters related to the pandemic normally reserved to theme committees and Director of Public Health. Any committee level decisions taken using that delegation will be reported to committees as a separate and standalone report. This report deals with any updates to the officer operational level decisions taken since the Urgency Committee.
- 1.3 The Coronavirus Act 2020 includes the power to hold virtual meetings and the enabling regulations were brought into force on 4th April 2020. This Environment Committee meeting is the first virtual meeting for the Committee since the onset of the pandemic. This report notes the details of the decisions which have been made by Chief Officers since the Urgency Committee.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The council has had to comply on an on-going basis with announcements and guidance by the Government, directions from the London Strategic Coordination Group, London Local Authority Gold and legislative changes in this public health emergency. In addition, as noted in the 27th April Urgency Committee report any and all such decisions shall be reported back to Committee for post-decision scrutiny.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 None.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Officers making decisions using the delegations approved by Urgency Committee will continue to record all decisions via a Delegated Powers Report. Committee level decisions taken by the interim Director for Environment should record that consultation has taken place with the relevant Chairman with a copy of the report published to the Council's website and circulated to members of the relevant committee for information.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 During the emergency period where the Council have moved to delivering critical services only and undertake additional responsibilities required by Government, the Council will aim to continue to deliver as many elements of the Corporate Plan (Barnet 2024) as possible.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 The Covid-19 crisis will have a detrimental financial impact on many of the Council's services and this will be significant across a number of these. The scale of the financial challenge is unprecedented in complexity, scale of the crisis and the number of uncertainties in play. It is affecting all local authorities and is not bound by geographical boundaries. It is going to test physical, mental and financial resilience intensely in not only managing, responding to the crisis but also in moving on to the recovery phase.
- 5.2.2 Members should note that the financial impact of the crisis is being assessed by the Director of Finance and Senior Management Team as the council takes a range of decisions to stop and delay certain work and to increase expenditure in other areas in order to support local residents and businesses through the crisis. Details on the provisional and broad-brush estimates of the financial implications on Council services over the first 3 months of 2020/21 as a result of Covid-19 and an indicative overall impact can be found in the 27th April 2020 Urgency Committee report.

5.3 Social Value

- 5.3.1 N/A.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.4.1 Council constitution, Article 7 – details the terms of reference of the Environment Committee.
- 5.4.2 Detailed legal considerations relating to the Council's responsibilities to respond in emergency situations are referred to in the report to the Urgency Committee on 27 April.

5.5 Risk Management

- 5.5.1 Failure to comply with announcements and guidance by the Government, directions from

the London Strategic Coordination Group, London Local Authority Gold and legislative changes would result in an increased risk to public health in the borough and wider community and/or result in significant reputational damage to the authority.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.6.1 In making these decisions officers have had regard to the public-sector equality duty. Decision makers should have due regard to the public-sector equality duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome. The equalities impact will be revisited on each of the proposals as they are developed. Consideration of the duties should precede the decision. It is important that decision makers have regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material.
- 5.6.2 The statutory grounds of the public-sector equality duty are found at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and are as follows:
- 5.6.3 A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 5.6.4 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
 - c) Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 5.6.5 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 5.6.6 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- a) Tackle prejudice, and
 - b) Promote understanding.
- 5.6.7 Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

5.6.8 The relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil partnership

5.7 **Corporate Parenting**

5.7.1 N/A

5.8 **Consultation and Engagement**

5.8.1 The Environment Committee Chair and Vice Chair have been consulted on committee-level decisions taken during the emergency period and have confirmed their agreement where necessary. All Members have been briefed via a weekly conference call with Chief Officers.

5.9 **Insight**

5.9.1 N/A

6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 Urgency Committee, 27th April 2020
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=30751>