

Decisions of the Environment and Climate Change Committee

6 September 2022

Members Present:-

Councillor Alan Schneiderman (Chair)

Councillor Geof Cooke (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Giulia Innocenti
Councillor Simon Radford
Councillor Emma Whysall
Councillor Rohit Grover

Councillor David Longstaff
Councillor Ernest Ambe (Substitute for
Councillor Rishikesh Chakraborty)
Councillor Philip Cohen (Substitute for
Councillor Paul Lemon)

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Joshua Conway
Councillor Laithe Jajeh

Councillor Rishikesh Chakraborty
Councillor Paul Lemon

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Cllr Longstaff noted the minutes did not include a comment he had made about the Lead for Climate Change and whether he should have input into other Committees, such as Housing & Growth, as climate change cuts across many areas of the council's work.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2022 were approved, subject to the above amendment.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillor Joshua Conway who was substituted by Councillor Emma Wakely.

Apologies were received from Councillor Paul Lemon who was substituted by Councillor Phillip Cohen.

Apologies were received from Councillor Rishikesh Chakraborty who was substituted by Councillor Ernest Ambe.

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)

Public questions were received and published with the agenda. The Chair noted that Public Participation rules in the Constitution had changed, removing the limit to the number of questions residents can ask per agenda item. Under the new procedures responses are provided by the Chair at the meeting, rather than in advance.

The Chair invited Ben Samuel to the table. Mr Samuel asked a supplementary question: how many times a year glyphosate is sprayed on highways/verges. The Chair responded that the administration has made a commitment to stopping the use of glyphosate and minimising the use of all pesticides. Currently it is used three times a year on highways and the cost of treating weeds is £160k.

Mr Samuel noted that there is an alternative budget, but would the council ensure that alternatives used were not more expensive. The Chair responded that some of the alternatives were more resource intensive and could cost more. This would be assessed and cost would be one of the deciding factors given the financial position of all local authorities.

A question from Wendy Alcock was noted. As she was not at the meeting the Chair did not respond. Cllr Longstaff stated that it would be helpful to have the answer. The Chair noted that under the Constitution there was no requirement to respond but that Cllr Longstaff could raise this with the Constitution & General Purposes Committee. The Chair offered to send a written answer to the resident.

Action: Chair

The Chair invited Joan Roselie to the table. The Chair noted in response to her question on the stopping up order on Little Strand that because of objections received it has been referred to the Greater London Authority (GLA) to determine whether a public enquiry needs to be held.

Ms Roselie asked why freeholders were not taken into account. Mr Edser, Director of Highways and Transportation would respond outside the meeting with more details but noted that the Stopping Up Order was made under Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act.

Action: Mr Edser

The Chair invited Mr Samuel to the table in relation to his second question on the community skip service. Mr Samuel asked what items might be collected in the community skip. The Chair noted that a list is in the report but is not exhaustive. Craig Miller, Street Scene Director reported that small electrical equipment is not currently included but the level of demand would be ascertained by the pilot period. Electrical equipment can be collected directly from residents and taken to the Summers Lane Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Mr Samuel asked whether it would be possible to return to having the 'Passover Skip'. Mr Samuel reported that additional rubbish had been left after bank holiday weekends in parks. The Chair responded that subject to the report recommendations being approved,

officers would look into locations of skips in consultation with Ward Members. Mr Miller responded that bank holiday demand could also be considered.

Note: following the meeting Mr Miller confirmed that the council provides several chometz drop off locations in identified locations as part of the Passover service. This is primarily a caged tipper vehicle where residents can take up to three bags of chometz.

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS

None.

7. COMMUNITY SKIP SERVICE

Mr Miller, Street Scene Director presented the report. He reported that the Community Skip Service would begin in the autumn allowing residents to drop off bulky waste items at pre-advertised locations around the Borough. It would be operated on the basis that all residents would have access near to their homes four times a year. Mr Miller noted that the report also seeks delegated authority for him to implement the process, in consultation with the Chair.

Cllr Longstaff asked whether the service would be stopped during evaluation. Mr Miller responded that the service would continue with no break.

Cllr Whysall enquired whether data would be collected on the type of items being left at the skip, and data used to map how far people travel to them to inform future skip locations. Mr Miller responded that this data would be collected for this use.

Cllr Wakeley enquired whether items would be sent to landfill or recycled. Mr Miller responded that general items would go into the waste but a separate section would be included for items that can be recycled. Work may be taken forward with the not-for-profit sector on the repurposing of items.

Cllr Ambe asked why the skip would focus on larger domestic items. Mr Miller responded that bulky waste items are currently collected through bulky waste collection services and the pilot period would show whether there is a demand for collection of other items.

Cllr Grover enquired whether the choice of area would be Ward based. Mr Miller responded that this is to be decided but the service would operate in two locations in a given day with a vehicle to move between them. Further details would be brought back to the Committee. It would be planned and communicated before going live.

Cllr Grover asked about the use of an additional vehicle which is not carbon neutral. The Chair responded that it is hoped that this would reduce the number of collections due to fly tipping.

Cllr Longstaff asked how the opening times of 7am to 1pm would suit busy people. Mr Miller responded that hours had been selected that could be delivered within the current staffing base. There are other free of charge facilities in the Borough such as Summers Lane. The Community Skip Service is only one part of the solution for residents.

Cllr Longstaff asked whether disposal costs are factored into the budget. Mr Miller responded that these were included.

Cllr Radford asked officers to ensure that the Community Skip Service is well communicated to residents.

Action: Mr Miller

Cllr Innocenti asked whether residents would be able to take items from the skip to repurpose. Mr Miller said that there could be liability issues for Barnet but this would be considered.

Cllr Cohen asked whether staff would receive any training, for example to deal with disagreements on what can be left in the skip. Mr Miller noted that provision is in place for supervisory staff to be on site but once the service starts this can be monitored.

Cllr Wakeley asked what the current income is from the bulky waste collections. Mr Miller responded that it generates around £125k but he could return to the Committee with more information as this would change with the Community Skip Service in place.

The Chair moved to a vote on the officer's recommendations, which were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that the recommendations were approved.

8. QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Chair introduced the report which was noted.

The Chair moved to a vote on the officer's recommendations, which were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that the recommendations were approved.

9. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S ADOPTED DOMESTIC VEHICLE CROSSOVER POLICY

The Chair introduced the report on the council's policy update.

Mr Ian Edser, Director Highways and Transportation reported that an update was needed given that the advances with electric vehicles and charging. Also clearer definitions have been included in relation to domestic and commercial crossovers, and the removal of the current residents right of appeal if a proposal is made to remove a healthy tree. There is recourse to the Councils Tree Policy which is due to be reviewed in the near future.

Cllr Grover asked whether there would be charges for repairs to damaged highways and pavements due to crossovers being installed. Mr Edser responded that where this can be identified, repairs can be put in place and charges made.

Cllr Cooke requested that a report be brought to the Committee on recovering the cost of damage to highways. Mr Edser agreed to bring a report in future on how the damaged highways service operates. This includes picking up some retrospective damage.

Action: Mr Edser

Cllr Longstaff enquired whether a resident could apply for a heavy-duty crossover. Mr Edser responded that the limit is clearly defined at 3.5tons. If a resident wants anything over this they would need to discuss this with officers.

The Chair moved to a vote on the officer's recommendations, which were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that the recommendations were approved.

10. SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY UPDATE

The Chair introduced the item, noting that the Strategy includes plans for a Citizens' Assembly.

Ms Yogita Popat, Assistant Director for Sustainability, reported that since the last meeting a contract was awarded to TPX Limited to take forward the Citizens' Assembly, which residents would be involved in designing. A Sustainability Officer has been appointed and an impact and cost-benefits impact exercise has been carried out to ensure the project is evidence based. A dashboard to monitor Barnet's trajectory to Net Zero is also being developed.

Ms Popat noted that the Citizens' Assembly would entail live meetings being held over two weekends, with around 40—50 residents attending to provide evidence. Residents will decide on outcomes and make recommendations for the local authority. They would be invited from across the Borough – notification would go out on *Engage Barnet* when recruitment to the Citizens' Assembly begins.

Cllr Longstaff enquired about the response to the proposal for the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) expansion. He asked that the submission be circulated to the Committee – the Chair agreed to arrange this.

Action: Chair/Governance

Cllr Longstaff expressed concern that residents could feel let down if global warming overall means that Barnet does not achieve its goals despite their efforts. Ms Popat responded that the council will look into what can be done to increase residents' resilience such as advice on warming their homes etc as part of the Strategy.

Cllr Wakeley asked how the council will act on the outcome of the Citizens' Assembly and what opportunities the members of the Citizens' Assembly will have to follow up on the council's actions. Ms Popat responded that the council will look at each recommendation and assess it in a scientific way, to ensure that actions have the maximum impact. A monitoring arrangement will be developed for the Assembly to follow up on actions.

Cllr Radford reported that he had met with Public in Whitehall which has start-ups around sustainability that would like to work with local authorities to prove their technology

works. He asked whether a meeting could be held with interested officers and himself with the company to explore what they might be able to do to support the Strategy. Ms Popat suggested that Cllr Radford email herself and the Chair to take this forward.

Action: Cllr Radford

Cllr Longstaff asked why planning officers had recently agreed to demolish a listed building as this is not in line with the Sustainability Strategy. He reiterated his comment that the Lead on Climate Change needs to have involvement with lots of different committees and needs to highlight this message to other Chairs.

The Chair responded that the Sustainability Strategy team is undertaking work across the council. Ms Popat stated that the team is working closely with planning colleagues, who are part of the action plan.

Cllr Innocenti referred to Page 143 of the report. Some electric vehicle charge points are placed on lamp columns and others are surface mounted – she added that care should be taken where they are placed, to allow for tree planting. Mr Miller responded that this would be taken back and noted by officers.

Cllr Grover enquired whether charging points could be created by running cables from properties under the pavement so that properties without driveways can charge their vehicles. Also the charging points on lampposts take away a parking space. Mr Miller agreed this was causing concern locally and other councils have gulleys in the streets. Cllr Radford suggested using purchasing power of cheaper rates through Motability Operations, to then subsidise the roll-out to public charge points.

Mr Miller reported that options for Barnet were being discussed.

Cllr Cooke congratulated officers, particularly Paul Bragg, for the successful submission for grant aid for charging points. Only nine local authorities in England have received funding. In addition a significant sum had been received following a submission for grant aid for flood control for Silkstream flooding.

Mr Miller would feed this back to officers.

Action: Mr Miller

The Chair moved to a vote on the officer's recommendations, which were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that the recommendations were approved.

11. HIGHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr Edser presented the report. He noted that the service had moved to a new asset management approach around alternative materials.

Cllr Longstaff noted that since the introduction of electric delivery vehicles and buses several roads had been badly damaged and Transport for London was slow to respond to complaints. Mr Ataie, Interim Strategic Lead Commissioner Highways noted that the

review of the network hierarchy would ensure that the maintenance regime is in line, and officers would monitor performance of the materials used.

Cllr Cooke asked whether evidence is available to show that the introduction of electric buses and other electric vehicles which are heavier, are causing quicker deterioration in roads. Mr Edser responded that some roads were not constructed for this type or level of traffic and the repairs required would not be covered under the Network Recovery Plan (NRP).

Cllr Radford noted that residents had told him that this had caused subsidence to their houses, and they cannot make insurance claims whilst the issue is not resolved. Churchill Road in particular is a problem with shaking foundations.

The Chair moved to a vote on the officer's recommendations, which were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that the recommendations were approved.

12. INVESTING IN BARNET'S ROADS AND PAVEMENTS 2023/24

Mr Edser presented the report.

He noted that the council has agreed on two pots of money. In addition to the NRP which was already in place, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding has been available for highways since 2021.

Mr Edser reported that £11.785million is available for the upcoming financial year. The report sets out work achieved to date around the condition assessment.

Mr Edser noted that the next stage of the three-year plan as part of the Asset Management approach is set out in the report, together with funding allocation on page 120. Work would be planned in relation to the priority need and further to briefings with Members.

Cllr Ambe asked about the rationale for repairing different roads. Surrounding roads were repaired in 2021 but Bertram Road and Forster Road were not, despite needing repair. Mr Edser suggested that Cllr Ambe email details to him.

Action: Cllr Ambe/Mr Edser

Cllr Longstaff asked where the additional £299k in funding for 2023/24 is from and what would happen if there is a steep rise in inflation. The Chair responded that this is CIL and NRP. Inflation would put pressure on the highways service.

Cllr Cohen stated that Members needed to think more into the future than 12 months. He enquired how the scheme would work in practice within the 3-year programme, allowing Members' input. Mr Edser explained that as schemes are brought forward officers would provide details on where the money would be spent. There is some flexibility and possibility for input from Members which is welcomed.

Cllr Radford asked whether the council can inform apps such as Waze that roads will be closed as the re-routing, as such apps can cause problems with traffic flow. Mr Edser

responded that the council has invested in One Network which has collaborative tools to provide advanced notification of road works in detail. Officers are also looking at options to deal with road closures and sharing information on the Barnet website.

The Chair moved to a vote on the officer's recommendations, which were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that the recommendations were approved.

13. WASTE MANAGEMENT REDUCTION AND RECYCLING PLAN

The Chair reported that the Barnet Reduction and Recycling Plan is due to be submitted to the GLA at the end of September. It demonstrates the council's commitment to the sustainability agenda and references a commitment to reintroducing food waste collections, encouraging increased composting, promoting waste prevention and reduction, maximising recycling and other measures.

Mr Miller noted that the report covers April 2023 to March 2025. The council is required to submit the plan to the London Mayor as part of the Environment Strategy. The report requests that authority be delegated to Mr Miller in consultation with the Chair to make changes following feedback received from the GLA.

Cllr Radford asked whether more businesses could be helped to sign up to the food waste programme to avoid food being thrown away unnecessarily. Mr Miller responded that officers are in discussion with the North London Waste Authority (NLWA) on this.

Cllr Whysall suggested changing the size of wheelie bins so that they are relevant to household size. This may encourage recycling as bins would allow less waste. Mr Miller responded that the plan refers to a future review of the container policy. The Environment Act will be key to what is decided as some measures will be mandated.

The Chair moved to a vote on the officer's recommendations, which were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that the recommendations were approved.

14. WELSH HARP DRAFT VISION REPORT

Ms Cassie Bridger, Assistant Director, Greenspaces and Leisure presented the report.

Ms Bridger reported that officers have worked with a consortium of partners including the Canal and River Trust (CRT) and GLA to develop a vision for the Welsh Harp. The report includes details of engagement undertaken and the next steps in developing an action plan which will be presented to the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee. Work would continue with stakeholders to develop a full vision.

Ms Bridger noted that the Committee is asked to note the approach and to approve delegated authority to the Executive Director Community, Adults and Health in

consultation with the Chair, to agree the Welsh Harp Vision which will be ready by the end of September. This will be circulated to the Committee once complete.

Cllr Ambe asked whether the draft vision was presented to the last Joint Consultative Committee meeting. Ms Bridger responded that the draft was not available at that time, but the JCC had been updated on the progress of the project. The Welsh Harp Oversight Group had provided feedback on the draft vision. There would be opportunities for the Committee to provide feedback on the vision and action plan.

Cllr Longstaff expressed concern that the Committee could not see the final vision and action plan before deciding on the officer's recommendations. The Chair responded that the various partners had been involved over a long period of time.

The Chair moved to a vote on the officer's recommendations, which were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that the recommendations were approved.

15. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE RELATED FEES AND CHARGES 2023/24

The Chair reported that Fees and Charges would be submitted to Policy & Resources Committee for approval.

The Chair moved to a vote on the officer's recommendations, which were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that the recommendations were approved.

16. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE FORECAST FINANCIAL OUTFURN AT MONTH 4 (JULY 2022)

Mr Asong presented the report.

The Chair moved to a vote on the officer's recommendations, which were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that the recommendations were approved.

17. COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair introduced the Forward Work Programme.

He noted that updates on the Citizens' Assembly would be added.

An update on damage to highways would be added as agreed under Item 9.

The Chair moved to a vote on the officer's recommendations, which were unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that the recommendations were approved.

18. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

None.

The meeting finished at 9.20 pm