

Community Safety, Environment and Residents Services Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes

Monday 29 January 2018

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Larry Culhane (Chair), Iain Cassidy, Sharon Holder Steve Hamilton and Charlie Dewhirst

Other Councillors: Wesley Harcourt, Max Schmid, Joe Carlebach, David Morton and Caroline Ffiske

Officers: Kim Dero (Chief Executive), Nick Austin (Director for Environmental Health), Peter Smith (Head of Policy and Strategy), Mark Jones (Director for Finance & Resources), Richard Duffill (Borough Cycling Officer), Hitesh Jolapara (Strategic Finance Director), Ian Hawthorn (Head of Highway Maintenance and Projects), Kevin Anderson (Planned Maintenance Manager), Andrew Lord (Head of Strategic Planning and Monitoring), Alistair Ayers (Head of Emergency Planning) and Amrita Gill (Committee Coordinator)

Members of The London Cycling Campaign: Ken McCosh, John Griffiths, Brian Smith

Representative from The Hammersmith Society: Richard Farthing.

1. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2017 be approved as an accurate record.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. 2018 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Hitesh Jolapara gave a presentation outlining the budget proposals for the services covered by the Committee. He highlighted the scale of the challenges facing local government in recent years. The Council's general government grant had reduced from £160m in 2010/11 to £90m by 2018/19. He noted that the 2018/19 budget assumed a continued freeze in council tax and no increase in fees and charges in Children's Services, Adult Social Care, and Housing Services.

A resident asked if the Council would be bringing the budget proposals in line with the current assumptions. Hitesh Jolapara said that the papers were reviewed regularly and the Council's fees and charges had been frozen on a range of areas. Additionally, statutory areas had increased by 3.9% which was historically based on the August retail price index (RPI), therefore the papers were consistent with the policy requirements.

A resident asked what the assumptions were around council tax growth, in comparison to the cost of servicing additional dwellings. Hitesh Jolapara noted that the Council was not building growth into base budgets and not receiving requests for additional expenditure, however at some point the costs would start to increase. The challenges of waste production had been declining very slightly which had also helped. Furthermore, the tax base had increased due to both an increase in the number of properties but also a reduction in the number of residents claiming a council tax discount through the local council tax support scheme (which replaced housing benefits).

Mark Jones gave a presentation outlining the proposed income and spend 2018/19 for Environmental Services. He highlighted that Environmental Services were an important income generator for the Council, recovering much of its costs from external sources and some from internal recharges. A considerable amount was recharged to Transport for London (TfL). The aim was to protect front line services through savings focussed on income, improved efficiency, and procurement. He noted that saving proposals (including income and outside investment) totalling 1.9 million were included in the proposed budget and a £640k budget growth proposed to strengthen corporate health and safety and budget planning.

Councillor Charlie Dewhirst asked how much savings would the Council make if pay and display machines accepted pound coins. Mark Jones said that the old coin machines were worn out and 80% of people pay by phone, therefore the new machines in place were card only. This expected to increase income by making parking easier while lowering operating costs. It was expected that

the introduction of new pay and display machines would lower the costs of maintenance and cash collection.

A resident asked how the budget for electric charging vehicles was determined and how this was progressing. Mark Jones said that the Council was receiving grants to install equipment and were at the experimental stages of what worked for electric cars in the borough, however a more detailed update would be available at a later stage.

A resident, referring to page 18 of the agenda noted that cycle street furniture and the introduction of advertising boards on the public highway were areas that had caused some concerns and could result in the increase of clutter on roads and footpaths. Mark Jones in relation to the advertising boards, explained the idea was to regulate the use of A boards on pavements which would reduce clutter in the streets. In addition, there were a number of cycle routes being developed across London and the Council was exploring opportunities to advertise on the street furniture subject to consultation.

RESOLVED

That the Committee reviewed and commented on the report.

5. CYCLE SUPER HIGHWAY 9

Richard Duffill gave a presentation outlining the process of the proposed scheme, where the Council was with the consultation, the Council's objectives and noted TfL's proposals. He emphasised that the decision to proceed or not with the TfL proposal, lies with the Council. The Chair welcomed members of the public to share their ideas on the proposed scheme and put forward the areas of concern or suggestions for how the proposed scheme could be improved.

A resident explained that moving bus stops was a concern and asked where the existing bus stops in Olympia would be placed. Richard Duffill noted that there was provision for bus stops and that the plan was to look at implementing floating bus stops that worked in conjunction with cycle lanes along the route, this information would be made available with the detailed design. Additionally, TfL were also working with the TfL bus team to identify appropriate and safe locations for bus stops. The Chair said that further clarification was required on how the location of bus stops would impact traffic in Olympia.

A resident said that according to TfL figures cycling accounted for 5% of the population and majority were males aged between 30-49, and 95% of residents didn't cycle in the borough and primarily walked. He added that Hammersmith and Fulham was the 6th most densely populated borough in London and population was increasing, therefore felt that taking away foot space from residents to accommodate cycling was very concerning. He felt that the TfL consultation was flawed and the direction of travel was against the pedestrian, and the scheme would have a negative impact on the quality of the lives of residents. Furthermore, the Council's police response teams were based in Chiswick as both Hammersmith and Fulham police stations

were closed and were not due to open until 2020. Therefore, TfL should not put in any sort of infrastructure that would be detrimental to police response times.

A resident said that he was broadly in favour of TfL's proposal to encourage people to cycle and make the streets healthier and safer. He suggested building the Cycle Super Highway 9 (CS9) down the A4. It would allow safer, quicker, and direct journeys from outer London into Central London.

The Chair thanked those in attendance for the useful points that had been raised, especially around the cycling demographics including more women and children cyclists. Councillor Wesley Harcourt noted that initially TfL were not keen on the A4 route, however the Council would like to revisit this including the Hammersmith flyunder proposal and take this plan forward with the Greater London Authority (GLA).

Richard Duffill said that TfL had carried out a pedestrian survey, along the route to establish where the crossing points would be situated. The findings were taken forward in the bigger model. A resident asked if this included dog walkers. The Chair suggested to clarify with TfL if dog walkers, partially sighted and less able people were accounted for.

A resident noted that whilst she agreed that the pedestrian should be a priority, the Council should take into consideration that according to new research 9,000 deaths in London were caused by air pollution produced largely by traffic. She felt that the heavy traffic and more lanes on the A4 road meant that there was significantly more air pollution on the A4 in comparison to King Street. Therefore, taking the CS9 down the A4 road would be harmful to the health of residents due to high levels of air pollution. She added that this was a flawed proposal as it didn't encourage more women and teenagers to cycle. She was keen to see more part time road closures like King Street for cyclists and more cycle routes in the borough.

Councillor Joe Carlebach expressed his concerns around significant traffic problems in Olympia and noted that the consultation was extremely limited and didn't include the current plans for the proposed expansion of Olympia. He felt that the proposal should address the issue of traffic jams particularly when exhibitions were held at the Olympia. He suggested to get all stakeholders involved, particularly residents to develop a better scheme which addressed these concerns. Additionally, he asked that the recommendations be strengthened to reflect the concerns raised.

Councillor Caroline Ffiske, noted that there had been some huge developments in the Avonmore and Brook Green ward yet nothing had the same impact as the CS9 proposal. She felt that the report lacked details around issues raised by residents such as traffic jams, bus stops, concerns of air pollution, bus travel times, ambulance and police response times and increased congestion. She asked that the consultation process be extended. Councillor David Morton noted that nobody would reject proposals to make cycling safer but with 1.7 million workers and 8 million visitors in the area per annum the issues raised by residents need to be addressed. TfL had agreed

to work with a resident working party after the results of the consultation had been made available to address some of these concerns.

A resident highlighted that there was no mention of air pollution and the impact on pedestrians in the proposal and asked if any impact assessments were carried out around the environment and pedestrians. He was pleased to hear that the Council would consider the CS9 to run down the A4 road which might ease some of the concerns raised by residents.

A resident said that she was a cyclist and felt that most people didn't cycle because they were too frightened. She felt that taking the CS9 down the A4 road colluded with the cycling demographic that most cyclists were male and would add to these concerns. Safety areas outside schools and cycling for younger residents needed to be considered. Additionally, air pollution was not caused by cyclists and if safe cycle lanes were added, some of the pollution would evaporate as more people would chose to cycle. A large number of disabled people used cycling as their only option and asked Councillors to look at a website called <http://wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/> for further information.

Councillor Iain Cassidy noted that data gathered from the Cycle Superhighway (East-West), which had been running for a year showed that there had been a reduction in pollution and other Cycle Super Highways across London had shown a decrease in pollution or no change at all. Furthermore, he felt that cycling in London was dangerous and studies showed that people didn't feel safe to cycle, therefore introducing segregated cycle routes would encourage residents to cycle.

John Griffiths supported the CS9 scheme. He noted that the time to get across from Fulham Palace road to Shepherd's Bush road would increase from 2 to 4 minutes and queues would be longer. Similar increases would be experienced on the Hammersmith Bridge road and Great Western Road. He felt that the possible environmental impacts should not be overlooked. To get a better idea of the impact on the gyratory, TfL must undertake a traffic modelling analysis and present it to residents.

Councillor Charlie Dewhirst explained that Hammersmith Bridge would be closed for a period and this would have implications to traffic flow in the borough which would also need to be considered. Richard Duffill said that the Council was liaising with TfL to establish the timeframe of the closure of Hammersmith Bridge.

Richard Farthing noted that 97.5% of their members were against the scheme and that an alternative scheme was required. There was significant mileage in support of an A4 proposal. He noted that there was a huge campaign against floating bus stops. London needed a superhighway with integrated links. He also felt in 10 – 15 years, electric cars and hybrids would change the air pollution levels.

Bryan Smith stated that cycling in London was a horrible and unsafe experience. Segregation of cyclists from cars was required.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions and recapped the discussion, noting the following key points be brought forward to TfL for consideration:

- Potential traffic implications as a result of CS9 and potential developments in the Olympia area
- The impact on air pollution
- Impact on foot space and pedestrians, including less able bodied and partially sighted
- Re-visit taking the CS9 down the A4 road
- Impact on journey times and bus stops
- Access to schools
- Impact on response times for police and ambulance services
- Provision to be made for younger residents

RESOLVED;

1) That the Committee acknowledged the Council's response to the TfL consultation on CS9, which considered the concerns of residents and business along the route.

2) That the committee note the proposed scheme, the technical comments raised so far That the committee requested that TfL and officers continued to analyse and consider all the issues raised by residents, business, and stakeholders at our meeting tonight and other forums.

6. A DRAFT CONSULTATIVE REPORT ON H&F COUNCIL'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO MAJOR INCIDENTS IN JUNE AND SEPTEMBER 2017

Peter Smith introduced the draft report and noted that in 2017 there were two major incidents in and around Hammersmith & Fulham that required the authority to implement its emergency planning procedures. These were the fire at Grenfell Tower in June and an explosion on a tube train in Parsons Green in September. The report reviewed the Council's response to those incidents at both strategic and operational levels and considered the views of local businesses and community organisations that participated in a 'hackathon' event convened by the Council to examine the views of partners.

The report identified action taken to improve the Council's readiness and response to major incidents and made recommendations for additional action for further improvements. The Committee was invited to discuss the report's findings and consider the draft recommendations.

The Committee thanked officers who were at the frontline and supported both incidents. Councillor Wesley Harcourt added that the support received from local resident groups to all the people that were affected on both incidents was also appreciated by the Council.

The Chair asked what the additional emergency planning training entailed for staff. Nick Austin said that training was being expanded to increase the capacity of the authority to cope with an incident of the scale of the Grenfell Fire in H&F. Basic induction would be provided to staff at departmental meetings to discuss the general structure of emergency response and training would be identified for staff depending on their roles. Furthermore, at any given time a group of responders would be on call.

Councillor Iain Cassidy asked if the recommendations were being revised after each PAC meeting. Peter Smith said that the report had updated prior to it being presented at the next PAC meeting.

The Chair said that he was grateful for the wealth of volunteering and donations offered by the community. He asked if the Council continued to encourage the community to support in what they could do and if there was scope to guide them on how they could contribute.

Kim Dero said that it was important for the Council to establish what it could influence communities to do together. The Council had organised a hackathon event in recognition of the important role that community organisations play. The Council was also planning exercises involving the community, building on the ideas that came out of the Hackathon. She added that it was important for the Council to understand what it could influence communities to do together with the Council. Furthermore, the Council offered training to bring the community together and encourage community response.

RESOLVED

That the Committee reviewed and commented on the report.

7. HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

Kevin Anderson introduced the report and noted the statutory duties and requirements that the Council was required to perform to ensure that its highway network was in a safe and reliable condition and the process of compiling a program of planned footway and carriageway maintenance works. He showed slides that outlined the main purpose of highway maintenance and noted that each year council engineers carried out a visual inspection of the highway network assessing whether a road or footway needed maintenance. Each year Council engineers carry out a visual inspection of the highway network assessing whether a road or footway needs maintenance. A visual score is assigned to the road according to its condition.

Ian Hawthorn explained that London had a backlog of repair work because of funding restraints and the Council faced challenges to get on to the road network due to existing works being carried out. The Council worked with the utilities team to coordinate and ensure that high priority works were carried out with limited disruption to residents.

Councillor Iain Cassidy noted that historically Kensington & Chelsea had invested a lot of funding into the resurfacing and planned maintenance of roads and had fewer trips and accidents in comparison to H&F. He asked if there was an opportunity for the Council to shift towards Kensington and Chelsea's model. Ian Hawthorn said that this was still the plan and there would be an increase in footway schemes on the Council's programme going forward.

RESOLVED;

That the Committee reviewed and commented on the report.

8. WORK PROGRAMME AND DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The PAC's work programme was noted.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 10.00 pm

Chair

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