

Community Safety and Environment Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes

Wednesday 5 September 2018

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Bora Kwon (Chair), Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler, Ann Rosenberg and David Morton

Other Councillors: Councillor Wesley Harcourt (Cabinet Member for the Environment)

Officers: Ian Hawthorn (Head of Highway Maintenance and Projects), Lesley Gates (Waste Contract Manager), Chris Bainbridge (Head of Transport Policy and Network Management)

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Iain Cassidy

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

Ian Hawthorn, Head of Highway Maintenance, and Projects, presented the report and said that the existing winter policy was currently under review to

carry out precautionary footway gritting. The review would consider more protection for footways from lessons learnt from previous snow falls, the resources required and provision for a salt barn. He showed slides that highlighted the current work carried out by the service. The service was split between the Transport & Highways and Waste Management departments to manage the gritting of roads and footways. The winter maintenance period began on 1 November to 31 March and during this period the Council received three forecasts from the Councils weather forecast consultant Meteogroup within 24 hours.

Four officers were on duty during the winter months and were the responsible decision makers for sending out the gritter teams across the borough. Officers would also analyse the forecast and made decisions on what gritting needed to be undertaken to meet the likely hazards on the roads. Furthermore, going forward weather forecasts provided by Transport for London (TfL) would also be considered during the decision-making process. The road network was split into three priority routes with the remaining roads in a default route. P1 covered all the main and high-risk routes and P2 comprised of medium use roads and of some strategic importance.

Councillor David Morton said that feedback received from residents highlighted the condition of the footpaths during the winter months. He commented that this needed to be prioritised and asked what actions were taken. In response, Ian Hawthorn said that this would be factored in as part of the review. Furthermore, a hot spot map to track high priority locations would be designed to deliver services more effectively.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler asked how much salt provision was required since February 2018. Ian Hawthorn said that 800 tonnes of salt provision was used. Each borough determined their salt provision based on the weather conditions for the area, however additional supplies could be accessed from other boroughs if this was necessary in future. She also mirrored Councillor David Morton's concerns around the condition of the pavements during the wintery months, especially on Munster Road. She noted that snow turned into ice very quickly last year and greater emphasis needed to be placed on gritting pavements for all residents in the borough.

A resident said that the Brackenbury Residents Association were keen to understand if the Council would consider enforcing a local bylaw to ensure that residents swept outside their houses to make the pavements safer during snowfall. Ian Hawthorn said that the council does encourage street cleaning and self-help methods were available to residents.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler asked for an indication of any accidents that occurred last year. Ian Hawthorn said that this wasn't a large number as residents adhered to the Met Office weather warnings and took extra caution, however the exact numbers could be provided after the meeting. The Chair, referring to the report asked why there was greater empathise on vehicles rather than pedestrians. Ian Hawthorn said that this was because the Council was following the legislation and needed to ensure

that the code of practice was met. However, the focus would be brought back to footways and was currently under review.

The Chair asked if officers were satisfied with the performance of the contractor's and whether there was any room for improvement. Ian Hawthorn noted that FM Conveys and Serco Group were leading experts on this matter and had worked well in collaboration with the Council and the information centre. Overall the Council was satisfied with their performance. FM Conveys were reactive during snowfall and did three gritting runs a day, given that snow was forecasted at a later stage.

Councillor Ann Rosenberg suggested that rather just focusing on individual spots, gritting should be extended further and asked what proposals had been put forward. Ian Hawthorn explained that the Council was in the process of identifying high risk areas and this information would be available on the Council website once this was determined. In addition, Councillor Ann Rosenberg noted that further empathise needed to be placed on venerable locations where schools and elderly residents were situated. In addition, Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler asked for Churches and other places of worship to be included as a priority for gritting. Ian Hawthorn explained that safety advice would be accessible to residents on the Council's website once the review was completed. The Chair asked for the safety advice to be distributed to Care Homes, Schools, and Churches as well as published on the website.

A resident asked if the expansion of the gritting strategy had any financial implications to the budget. Ian Hawthorn explained that this was a cost neutral proposal and to accommodate precautionary footway gritting, the Council would look at reviewing the resources and applying them more effectively. A financial implication would only arise from the Serco Group contract if there was a need to catch up ahead of schedule for the roads not cleaned due to gritting.

Councillor Wesley Harcourt said that schools across the borough were closed last year due to the poor weather conditions and routes to schools had not been gritted which meant that schools could not be accessed. He noted that lengthening the gritting routes was important and would be considered part of the strategy.

RESOLVED

That the Committee reviewed and commented upon the report.

5. WEED REMOVAL STRATEGY

Lesley Gates, Waste Contract Manager introduced the report and explained that Hammersmith & Fulham was the first Council in London to halt the use of potentially harmful sprays in parks and open spaces. Spraying of glyphosate stopped in June 2016 and moved to a non-chemical weed removal service. This was introduced to create bio diversity as well as protecting London's habitat against any long term chemical effect containing glyphosate. She showed slides that outlined the chemical free weed removal strategy and the

use of two different methods adopted. One method was to use hot water which would stunt the growth of weeds and was applied three times a year by Serco Group. Learning was taken away from the use of this method and it was felt that more applications of hot water would be of benefit going forward. The other method was the use of foam on open spaces and estates.

Councillor David Morton asked whether the use of industrial vinegar had been considered as a treatment. Lesley Gates explained that the aim of the strategy was to move towards chemical free applications. This method had been trialled but was unsuccessful. Other alternative methods trialled included the use of an electrical lance and mechanical strimmer. The mechanical strimmer used alongside hot water had managed to remove some of the high weeds. Furthermore, Serco Group had created an App which mapped out the location of the quick growth hotspots and the data collected was shared with colleagues to ensure resources were being used effectively.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler questioned the effectiveness of the methods employed presently, adding that weeds on pavements and sprouting around trees had increased since the strategy had changed. Further to this, she stated that there were no reports to suggest that Glyphosate was deemed dangerous on pavements and felt that methods were adopted before it was known they would work.

Councillor Wesley Harcourt said that the use of Glyphosate was connected to cases of kidney damage and a direct response to residents' complaints was to look at alternative options. In addition, he said that it was important that pioneering work such as this took place in the effort of working towards cultivating a cleaner borough in line with the administration's manifesto. Other boroughs and TfL had shown interest in the methodologies employed by the Council and were keen to explore a similar strategy. Improvements had been made in the reduction of weeds on the pavements and residents were also being encouraged to look after the trees outside of their homes.

A resident asked if a timetable was available around street cleaning times across the borough. Lesley Gates said that Serco Group provided a rota and this would be published on the Council website in future to ensure residents were updated of when their streets were due to be cleaned.

The Chair said that the new methods that had been implemented needed to be given a chance to work and was pleased that this issue was being addressed. She said that it was essential that resident's feedback was reviewed and asked that response times and complaints be monitored as part of the strategy going forward.

RESOLVED

That the Committee reviewed and commented upon the report.

6. DRAFT TRANSPORT LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Chris Bainbridge, Head of Transport Policy and Network Management said that each borough was required to produce a Local Implementation Plan

(LIP3) which demonstrated how they intended to implement the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy (MTS3) in their borough. Budget cuts had been in response to TfL's financial situation and applied to all boroughs. The draft plan was sent to the Disability Commission for comments and would be submitted to TfL in November 2018. TfL would provide feedback on the draft plan by 7 December 2018 and the Council would be required to submit the amended plan as a result of the consultation by 16 February 2019.

He showed slides that outlined the short-term and long-term scheme aspirations. Healthy streets for healthy people, a good public transport experience and new homes and jobs were the three priority areas for MTS3. A key objective of the LIP was to improve access to transport opportunities for everyone.

In general, the Mayors objectives and the Councils objectives in transport were compatible and complementary. The areas the Council wishes to influence the Mayor and TfL were:

- The funding level for LIP projects to be restored to its 2018/19 level and funding for principal road maintenance should be restored
- TfL to give priority to working with the council to develop the case for the Hammersmith Fly-under
- TfL should adopt a route for Crossrail 2 which would include an interchange station with the West London Line at Imperial Wharf, to facilitate regeneration in the South Fulham riverside area.
- TfL route Cycle Superhighway 9 (CS9) via the A4 corridor to avoid conflicts with pedestrians in King Street.

Councillor David Morton asked why the removal of general traffic from north side of Shepherd's Bush Green was included in the short terms plans. Chris Bainbridge said that this was due to technical and funding issues and further discussions were required with TfL before this could be addressed.

Chris Banbridge, Head of Transport Policy and Network Management said that TfL were due to release results of the Cycle Super Highway 9 (CS9) consultation and the Council would have an agreed position of the route by the end of September 2018. A resident noted that whilst he agreed that the pedestrian should be a priority, cyclists would prefer taking the CS9 down King Street. He felt that this would enable cyclists to access shops and services and failed to understand why this access would be removed and be replaced with the A4 road.

Councillor Ann Rosenberg said that whilst she was in favour of TfL's proposal to encourage people to cycle the Council also needed to consider the safety needs of pedestrians. In addition, she said that cycling was a more common mode of transport in Holland and this sort of culture would need more encouragement to adopt in the UK.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler said that she was concerned about the state of Hammersmith Bridge and asked how the refurbishment would be funded. Chris Bainbridge said that TfL would fund this however there had been some delays around when the repair work would commence.

Furthermore, in the interim the bridge was monitored on a regular basis and there was no danger of it collapsing. He said that the Council were in regular dialogue with TfL and discussions were held to specify what the requirements were prior to work being carried out.

The Chair thanked officers for turning around the reports at short notice and was pleased to hear everyone's contributions.

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted the draft Local Implementation Plan (LIP)

7. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler asked why there had been a change in the Committee work programme. She said that Community Safety was an important issue and it was agreed at the last meeting that this needed to be addressed. The Chair explained that since the schedule was determined in July 2018, the Council had announced a Crime Commissions which would commence work in September 2018. She felt that the Committee would be in a better position to establish its scope and consider its recommendations at the next meeting once the report was complete.

In relation to the winter gritting strategy, reflecting on the schedule she felt that any recommendations that might had been discussed in December 2018 to improve the gritting plan would have been too late to implement this coming winter. Considering the plan in September 2018 gave the Committee a chance to have an impact upon the final preparations of the strategy prior to winter.

She apologised for the changes to the work programme. However, felt that this gave the PAC a better chance of having a real input into these areas by adjusting the agenda.

Meeting started: 7:00pm
Meeting ended: 9:30pm

Chair

Contact officer: Amrita Gill
Committee Co-ordinator
Governance and Scrutiny
☎: 0208 753 2094
E-mail: amrita.gill@lbhf.gov.uk