

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

Wednesday 28 June 2017

PRESENT

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

Other Councillors: Wesley Harcourt and Guy Vincent

Officers: Ullash Karia – Head of Leisure and Parks, Ian Ross – Parks Manager, Graham Burrell – Projects and Developments Manager, Transport and Highways, Slobodan Vuckovic – Project Engineer, Transport and Highways, Gavin McIntosh – Environmental Quality Officer (Air Quality) and Nick Austin – Director for Environmental Health.

1. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

4. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Steve Hamilton was elected as Vice-Chair of the Community Safety, Environment and Residents Services Policy and Accountability Committee for the 2017-18 Municipal Year.

5. PARKS COMMISSION REPORT

Councillor Guy Vincent, Chair of the Parks Commission, explained that the administration had been concerned about the long lease granted to PlayFootball at Hammersmith Park. They wanted to find a way to ensure that community access to parks was secured permanently, and so had set up the Parks Commission to look at ways of doing this.

The Parks Commission had considered a range of options, including creating a trust for all of the parks in the borough, setting up individual trusts for each park, and legally dedicating the parks to public use through Fields in Trust. The Commission had decided that dedicating parks through Fields in Trust was the best option as it would allow the Council to continue to own and support the parks but would protect them from inappropriate use.

Councillor Hamilton highlighted that PlayFootball's lease at Hammersmith Park was not the only example of park land being used for sport, noting that Fulham Pools had been granted a Lease at Normand Park, whilst parks continued to be used for a range of events which made the Council money. Councillor Vincent said that he did not know how long the lease at Fulham Pools was; he explained that the Council was starting to consult friends groups and local residents regarding events in parks. He also said that specific deeds of dedication could be adapted to suit what residents felt was appropriate in each park.

Councillor Hamilton said that he was concerned that a veto would be handed to an organisation which, however well meaning, was not accountable to local residents. Councillor Vincent said that control would be maintained by the Council except where the terms of the deed would be broken; then Fields in Trust would have to agree any proposal. He said that Fields in Trust would consider proposals and would not unreasonably refuse permission for any proposal; he felt that the only time that a refusal was likely was if the Council was acting against residents interests, for example, by selling off a park without any benefits for leisure in the borough.

Councillor Dewhirst asked whether access for schools would be affected. Councillor Vincent said that it would not be, the Council would continue to run the parks as they did now.

Councillor Hamilton asked what would happen to those parks where other protections were in place, such as being designated as Metropolitan Open Land. Councillor Vincent explained that Lawyers would be looking at what agreements were necessary for each park. He explained that a similar arrangement to Fields in Trust already operated in Bishop's Park as the Church of England retained some control over the use of the park.

Councillor Dewhirst asked whether the Council could end the Deeds of Dedication. Councillor Vincent said that any deed could be ended with the agreement of the parties. Councillor Dewhirst asked whether a review of the arrangements could be undertaken after a few years of operation. Councillor Vincent agreed that this would be a useful exercise.

Councillor Dewhirst asked whether the arrangement would cost the Council money. Councillor Vincent said that the only cost would be the time spent by officers in drafting the agreements. Fields in Trust did not charge for their work or their legal expenses.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Parks Commission recommendation that the Council protect the borough's parks and open spaces via a Deed of Dedication with Fields in Trust be endorsed.
- 2) That the Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Residents Services and the relevant director be recommended to work with the Parks Commission and individual park groups to progress their specific deed of dedication with Fields in Trust.
- 3) The positive input from all those involved in the Parks Commission in reaching a common consensus be acknowledged.

6. 20MPH SPEED LIMIT - SPEED SURVEYS RESULTS

Graham Burrell introduced the report saying that the Council had extended its 20mph zones to all residential roads and town centres, whilst deciding to leave some of the borough's principal roads with 30mph limits. So far, only signs and road markings had been used to reduce the speeds on these roads to the new limit, however, as the Cabinet report agreeing the extension of the 20mph zones had anticipated, further measures were likely to be necessary in some areas. The speed surveys in the report had been carried out to see what impact the signage and markings had had on speed and to identify where further measures were necessary.

Councillor Culhane asked how speeds were measured during the survey. Slobodan Vuckovic explained that 100 roads, randomly selected, had been measured for a week before the new 20mph limit had been introduced; these same roads had been surveyed again a few months after the introduction of the limit. The surveys were carried out using automatic traffic counters which, he explained, were the rubber tubes which residents might have seen placed across the road.

A resident felt that more enforcement of the 20mph limit was necessary, including police enforcement. He complained that despite the speed limit cars regularly drove much too quickly down Kelvedon Road. Graham Burrell explained that the police would now enforce 20mph speed limits but that schemes did need to be largely self-enforcing as there were a great many roads with a 20mph limit and relatively few police officers. Physical measures to slow drivers would help to ensure that the speed limits were always obeyed. Jeremy Leach, Campaign Co-ordinator for Twenty's Plenty for Us,

explained that Community Roadwatch was a scheme whereby residents, with the support of Transport for London and the Metropolitan Police, could measure vehicle speeds providing not only a deterrent, but also allowing offenders to be written to. Councillor Harcourt said that there were already a few Community Roadwatch schemes in the borough and that he hoped more would develop. He said that the Council had installed a number of sinusoidal speed humps which provided a smoother ride whilst being very effective at preventing speeding as Councillor Harcourt had found recently when driving close to the speed limit over the hump. The Council also intended to use Vehicle Activated Signs to encourage residents not to speed.

Councillor Dewhirst said that he didn't feel that the 0.31mph reduction in the average 85th percentile speed justified the introduction of the 20mph zones; he felt that a more targeted approach, tackling individual streets where speeding was a particular problem, would have been a better use of resources. Graham Burrell explained that the 20mph extension had been implemented as a result of an extensive consultation which showed that residents wanted the lower speed limit. He explained that it had never been anticipated that simply installing signs would reduce speeds on all roads and that one of the purposes of the traffic survey was to identify which streets needed further measures to reduce speed. A resident said that she felt it was too early to tell if the change in speed limits would reduce speed as had been hoped as drivers' habits took time to change.

A resident asked whether there had been any reduction in the number of accidents in the borough. Graham Burrell explained that there was a time lag in the Police verifying and releasing casualty data. No casualty data for the period since the 20mph extension had been launched was available. He also explained that in order to ensure that there is sufficient data to carry out a statistically meaningful analysis of casualties it was usual to compare data for the 36 months before and 36 months after implementation of a scheme and so the impact would not be known until late 2019 at the earliest.

Councillor Hamilton felt that the main impact of the scheme had been to make motorists lawbreakers. He felt that the Council's focus ought to be on areas where accidents had taken place and that speed limits ought only to be reduced where speeding had been shown to be a reason for an accident. Councillor Harcourt said that the Council reviewed accident sites with the police to identify if any improvements could be made to the area to reduce the likelihood of further accidents taking place.

A resident said that more measures were needed to calm traffic; it was noted that the ideal situation would be for cars to move more slowly but not get stuck in traffic so often.

The Chair asked whether speed limits were being harmonised with neighbouring boroughs. Slobodan Vuckovic explained that most neighbouring boroughs had 20mph limits on significant parts of their road networks and that work to reduce speed limits on connecting roads, such as Stamford Brook Road, was being done by other Councils.

The Chair asked whether buses would be restricted to 20mph when in 20mph zones. Jeremy Leach explained that from 2019 all new London buses would be fitted with Intelligent Speed Assistance which would limit them to the speed limit of the road they were travelling along.

7. AIR QUALITY REPORT

Gavin McIntosh introduced the report explaining that Hammersmith and Fulham had a major problem with air pollution. Many parts of the borough, especially town centres and areas around main roads, had Particulate (PM10) and Nitrogen Dioxide (NOx) pollution levels above the legal limits. There were 302 early deaths each year in the borough which were attributable to poor air quality. The main cause of NOx pollution was road transport, with gas boilers being the secondary source. The main source of PM10 pollution was also road transport, with resuspension being the secondary source.

The Council was required to produce an Air Quality Action Plan and this was in the process of being updated. The new version would not only be updated to fit a new London Wide template but would also incorporate the recommendations of the Council's Air Quality Commission. The plan would be put out for a public consultation on 18 July for around 3 months.

Gavin McIntosh explained that more monitoring was now taking place across the borough. An additional 20 diffusion tubes had been installed which took the total to 35; many of the new tubes were located in sensitive areas such as schools. The Council had also benefitted from money from the Mayor's Air Quality Fund; to be eligible for funding the borough had to retain its clean air borough status which meant that certain standards had to be met. Projects funded through the Mayor's Air Quality Fund included:

- Scrubs Lane Dust Suppressant Trial
- Clean Air Better Business Program
- Low emission logistics
- Idling engine awareness
- London Low emission construction Partnership
- Greening of Talgarth Road

Rosemary Petit, Chair of the Air Quality Commission, noted that the Scrubs Lane Dust Suppressant Trial was using Calcium Magnesium Acetate (CMA) and explained that the Air Quality Commission had not recommended the use of this substance. She asked what the Council's reason for trialling it was. Gavin McIntosh said that the Council was trialling the use of CMA near to heavy industrial sites where significant amounts of dust were created. Councillor Harcourt said that the results of the trial would be interesting as, whilst he agreed with the Air Quality Commission that CMA should not be used widely, if it could deal with the dust problems created by building sites it might relieve a lot of the pollution in some parts of the borough.

A resident said that they felt the closure of some side roads was causing journeys to be longer and therefore adding to pollution. Another resident said that the deterrent effect of longer journey times would be useful as it would encourage residents to consider alternative modes of transport.

Rosemary Petit asked whether there were plans to increase the number of Air Quality Monitoring Stations, as the borough currently only had one; she suggested that joint work with Imperial College might be possible. Nick Austin confirmed that the Council was trying to get more monitoring stations and said that officers would speak to relevant staff at Imperial College about the possibility of collaboration in this area.

Residents expressed concerns about the location of schools and new developments in areas with very high levels of pollution. Councillors noted that unfortunately there were not many alternative sites in the area where pollution was lower.

Rosemary Petit asked why the Council had chosen not to introduce a diesel surcharge on parking permits. Councillor Harcourt said that discounts were offered to residents who owned electric vehicles or those which met the latest emissions standards, however, the impact on the poorest residents, who might be unable to replace their car, had been considered and a surcharge rejected. The Council was also promoting the use of electric vehicles in other ways such as the launch of the BlueCity electric car club.

Councillor Cassidy noted that the Mayor of London was running an enhanced monitoring project for selected schools; he asked how schools were selected and what the benefits of the scheme would be. Gavin McIntosh explained that schools would be chosen based on pollution levels. Each school would be audited to identify how pollution could be reduced and what schools could do to make their sites greener.

8. WORK PROGRAMME AND DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The date of the next meeting was noted to be 18 September 2017. The PAC's work programme was noted.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 8.25 pm

Chair

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