

Community Safety and Environment Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes

Tuesday 16 March 2021

NOTE: This meeting was held remotely. A recording of the meeting can be found at:
<https://youtu.be/9MUzcR-nfVY>

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Bora Kwon (Chair), Iain Cassidy, Councillor Ann Rosenberg, Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler

Other Councillors: Councillors Sue Fennimore (Deputy Leader) and Wesley Harcourt (Cabinet Member for the Environment)

Officers: Sharon Lea (Strategic Director of Environment), Bram Kainth (Chief Officer - Public Realm), Hinesh Mehta (Strategic Lead – Climate Emergency), Jim Cunningham (Climate Change Strategy and Policy Lead), Richard Shwe (Assistant Director Street Environment Recovery)

Members of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Commission (CEEC):

Paul Beaty-Pownall (Chair)

Sian Alexander

Artin Amjady

Morag Carmichael

Helen Dell

Stephen Farrant

Yvonne Insh

Scarlett Knowles

Holly Larrett

Cecilia Tacoli

Pat Tookey

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fiona Smith.

2. ROLL CALL AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair carried out a roll call to confirm attendance. There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11th November 2020 and 25th January 2021 were approved.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair noted that the Committee had received questions and comments on both of the items on the agenda. The questions and answers can be found under Item 5, Climate and Ecological Emergency Commission and Item 6, Prototype Containerisation and Food Waste Collection Service.

5. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chair explained that the Committee had received some written questions/ comments from members of the public in advance of the meeting and officers would be invited to answer the questions or make a comment to address the main areas of concerns raised as follows:

1: A resident commented that keeping Hammersmith Bridge traffic free would send a positive message about the Council's commitment towards climate change.

Bram Kainth (Chief Officer - Public Realm) explained that there were many ways that the Council sent positive messages about its commitment towards climate change. Hammersmith Bridge was a key transport arteria for the borough carrying public transport and it was important to reinstate this, and this objective was aligned with the terms of reference of the Department of Transport Taskforce. The Council continued to work with the government, Mayor of London and Transport for London (TfL) to deliver transport related polices and drivers like Ultra Low Emission Zone that would help make great progress towards the Council's net zero carbon by 2030.

2: A resident suggested increasing the number and quality of cycling lanes and encouraging more people to walk and cycle more. They highlighted the physical and mental health benefits of walking and cycling.

Bram Kainth (Chief Officer - Public Realm) noted that the Council aimed to increase cycling and walking from 43% of journeys to 60% by 2030. The Council was building on a good foundation, with 72% of journeys by walking, cycling or public transport compared to 64% for London as a whole. Extensive temporary cycle routes had been in place since the beginning of the pandemic. New cycle hangars had been introduced to enable people in flats to keep bikes and added over 100 new Sheffield cycle stands at key locations across the borough to add to the Council's on street parking provision. The

Council was working with TfL on a number of new cycle routes in the borough from north to south along key strategic routes, these would be re-visited when new funding became available. Cycle training was also offered to all adults across the whole borough.

3: A resident applauded the ambition of the Council's 2030 zero carbon pledge, and of the excellent report from the Commission. But they felt that the Council was behind other boroughs in relation to cycle lanes and recycling rates and asked when would we see the kind of urgency and radical policies that the commission was encouraging?

In response Bram Kainth (Chief Officer - Public Realm) noted that recently the Council had seen very encouraging increases in the recycling rate in the food waste pilot areas. Collecting an average of 1.6Kgs of food waste per household, which was extremely good performance, with 6,000 kg per week waste reduction in the pilot areas. However, the ultimate aim was to minimise waste, which the Council had been very successful with to date by producing particularly low residual household waste. Various initiatives were being developed to help residents reduce waste, including the food waste pilot but also sharing initiatives such as 'Library of Things' and supporting local groups and businesses to use sharing platforms.

4: A resident commented that people should move towards a plant-based diet because of the climate and health impacts of animal products.

Bram Kainth (Chief Officer - Public Realm) explained that the Council agreed that diets and food were central- representing 10% of Londoners' household emissions, and 25% of global emissions. One study of canteen food found beef represented 3% of food but half of emissions. There was broad agreement about this, and the UK's Committee on Climate Change included it within their pathway for the UK to achieve net zero by 2050. The Council would look to increase plant-based options within its own food procurement and encourage others to do the same. This included opportunities to teach about the climate and health benefits of low-waste, sustainable diets, including at the Nourish Hub, due to open 2021. The Council would support residents to share food, preventing it from going to waste and ensuring everyone had access to good quality, sustainable food.

Paul Beaty-Pownall (Chair of CEEC) thanked the Council for the generous support and welcome the Commission had received in their work towards assisting the Climate Change Unit in developing the Council's draft climate and ecology strategy. He gave a presentation of the findings and recommendations of the resident led CEEC highlighting the following key points:

- The Council's reasons for setting up the CEEC were explained.
- The Council appointed thirteen local resident commissioners. The Commission conducted extensive research and engagement, within the Council and externally, to produce its findings.
- The following four principles and a summary of the proposed actions for achieving a net zero borough by 2030 were explained in detail:
 - o *Defining a vision* that encouraged change to a zero-carbon society

- *Communication and engagement* with the local community
- *Building knowledge* at a local level
- *Creating a road map* to net zero
- The CEEC would also recommend that the Council launched a series of “Demonstrator Projects” in key areas as examples of positive changes that could deliver zero-carbon ways of living.
- The Council had committed to setting up a community map that would provide everyone with the opportunity to share information about the great things that were already taking place in the borough.

The Chair thanked all Commission members and Council officers for their hard work towards the findings and recommendations on the CEEC report.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler also thanked all Commission members for the detailed and well thought out report, noting that it was aspirational, and the vision encompassed within the report was very important. She asked Councillor Wesley Harcourt (Cabinet Member for the Environment) for his views on the report.

Councillor Wesley Harcourt (Cabinet Member for the Environment) explained that he worked with the Commission on a day to day basis to support the work that had been carried out to date. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Cowan was responsible for leading and driving the agenda for change to meet the borough’s carbon net zero objectives. In a motion passed by the Council 2019, the Council announced the commissioning of a new Climate Emergency Unit to urgently tackle the environment impact of all aspects of the Council’s work. Therefore, the Council was fully committed to the issues surrounding climate change.

Councillor Wesley Harcourt (Cabinet Member for the Environment) felt that the work executed by the Council to take urgent action was both interesting and vital to tackle climate change and to protect the environment for the future generations. It was essential for the Council to define and implement a positive vision and embed a culture of change across the borough to achieve the Council’s net zero target by 2030.

Councillor Ann Rosenberg said that the Council needed to target the younger generation in schools and consumers to tackle the climate change crisis. She felt that offering the appropriate education to young people around the climate and ecological crisis played a key role in achieving this.

Scarlett Knowles (Member of the CEEC) noted that she was pleased to be given the opportunity to contribute towards the work of the CEEC as a young person. She felt that majority of the young people were passionate about this issue as it had an impact on the future of the younger generation. One of the main issues for young people was that they felt a disconnect around their involvement in the decision-making process. Therefore, a recommendation had been made to the Council to increase engagement with young people, listen to their views and consult them before making key decisions that would affect them.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler commented that she was impressed by the vision set out in the report. However, she raised some concerns about the viability of several of the recommendations due to the Council's ability to implement some of the actions.

Pat Tookey (Member of the CEEC), said that Scarlett's involvement on the work of the Commission had been beneficial and her participation was essential in gathering a fresh outlook on the issues relating to climate change. She felt that although young people were keen and invested in this matter, it was critical for the Council to embed a culture of change against carbon emissions with the Cabinet and Senior Leadership Team to ensure that the appropriate actions were being implemented as a matter of urgency.

Stephen Farrant (Member of the CEEC) commented that the Council needed to engage with local residents and communicate the changes that were required to tackle the climate crisis. Residents must be given a greater opportunity to their share ideas about how to reduce the emissions and increase opportunities for nature to thrive.

Councillor Iain Cassidy commended the work of the Commission and felt that this was a very ambitious report which included clear and aspiring recommendations. He asked how the Council could enable as well as encourage residents to shift towards a sustainable future. In response Paul Beaty-Pownall (Chair of CEEC) explained that the task of the Council was to change the culture of the entire borough through an effective and sophisticated communications strategy to help deliver the recommendations in the report.

Will Reynolds (Member of the CEEC) commented that there was a need for immediate action to meet the carbon net zero by 2030.

Pat Tookey (Member of the CEEC) concurred with Councillor Iain Cassidy's suggestion about establishing a plan to enable residents to change their behaviour and in doing so, reduce carbon emissions across the borough. She felt that the Council also needed to prepare a robust communications plan which explained the actions the Authority needed to take so that residents understood the climate change implications.

Paul Beaty-Pownall (Chair of CEEC) noted that imagine2030 was a collaborative website that was seeking partnership with CEEC, community and charitable groups, residents and the public sector across the borough. It had been set up by local residents and was seen as an engaging platform on which views and ideas could be posted to envisage and inform a vision of a carbon free world.

The Chair asked for further clarification to be provided on the immediate actions the Council would take from this report and to carry the recommendations forward. Councillor Wesley Harcourt explained that the

Council had a responsibility to ensure that some of the key recommendations were implemented as a matter of urgency.

Hinesh Mehta (Strategic Lead – Climate Emergency), provided a summary of the next steps, noting that the Council needed to adopt the Commission's recommendations. A number of working groups had been convened to help integrate the actions set out by the CEEC into the Council's road map. The Committee noted that the road map would be shared with the Senior Leadership Team and published on the Council's website when it was finalised.

RESOLVED:

That, the Committee noted and commented on this item.

6. PROTOTYPE CONTAINERISATION AND FOOD WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE

The Chair explained that the Committee had received some written questions/ comments from members of the public in advance of the meeting and officers would be invited to answer the questions or make a comment to address the main areas of concerns raised as follows:

1. A resident commented that there was no food waste collection system in place at Latymer Court.

Richard Shwe (Assistant Director Street Environment Services) explained that food waste collections from flats required a different approach to those living in street level properties. To ensure effective service delivery, careful consideration needed to be given to the siting of food waste bins and intensive engagement with residents and other key stakeholders was required. These activities were resource intensive and a dedicated project was crucial to achieve successful outcomes. Once the prototype scheme had settled in, the Council would look to make recommendations around expanding the food waste service to other settings.

1. A resident asked what percentage of residents used their food waste boxes in the pilot of 6000 households? And how quickly it could be rolled out to the rest of the borough?

Richard Shwe (Assistant Director Street Environment Recovery) noted that the food waste service had been welcomed across the prototype area. The Council was currently collecting an average of 1.6Kgs of food waste per household, which was good performance. Participation in the food waste service across the borough ranged from 45%-85%. The Council thanked residents for their engagement in the service. To ensure these positive results continued, the food waste service needed to be delivered alongside other service changes, like the current prototype area. This method would assist residents to contextualise their waste outputs and increase collection of both food and mixed recycling. In addition, these service changes contributed towards waste minimisation and we had seen weekly waste reduction savings of 6000kg in the prototype area.

The Council was keen to ensure high quality service delivery. To achieve this the number of properties within the service change area must be practicable and properly resourced. Therefore, any service changes need to be managed accordingly, with a gradual launch to achieve borough wide coverage. Once the prototype scheme had settled in, officers would evaluate the service and make recommendations.

3. A resident asked if there had been an assessment of the carbon footprint of carrying out the food waste scheme to assess how much carbon was saved?

Richard Shwe (Assistant Director Street Environment Recover) explained that waste and recycling was collected in the same vehicle, which reduced the number of vehicles required and the associated carbon emissions.

A carbon footprint assessment had not been carried out for the food waste collection; however, this was something officers were looking to do in collaboration with the Climate Emergency Team. Reducing and minimising waste was one of the best environmental options for reducing carbon emissions. The Council had a commitment for all the waste collection vehicles to be zero carbon by 2030.

Richard Shwe (Assistant Director Street Environment Recovery) introduced the report and provided a summary of the key points. He noted that the prototype collection service for food waste and wheeled bin household waste and recycling commenced on 9th November 2020. It had been scheduled to start in September 2020 but was postponed due to Covid issues. The report sets out how the scheme areas were arrived at, the communications with residents and stakeholders prior to collections commencing, the consultation that had been ongoing throughout the roll out of the service, and the planned consultation that would take place to gauge residents' experience of the scheme.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler explained that she had some concerns regarding delivery, security and the safety aspects of the food and waste collection trial. She felt that had residents in the trial roll out areas been consulted at the outset; then there would have been better buy-in for the scheme. In response Richard Shwe (Assistant Director Street Environment Services) said that the bins were not congregated in one place and were emptied into the vehicles one by one and put back in an appropriate place outside the homes of residents. In addition, residents were also consulted about the size of the bins for refuse and recycling as the trial was rolled out.

The Council had worked with some residents in the borough to offer a sharing bin solution on the streets where residents had concerns relating to safety and space along the pavements.

Sharon Lea (Strategic Director of Environment) explained that this was a prototype service and itself was a consultation exercise. When the trial was completed a survey would be conducted to capture the views of all residents. In addition, the Council had received a very low level of complaints as a result of the trial.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler referring to page 59 of the agenda pack asked for clarification to be provided on if a decision had been made by the Council to implement the food waste pilot collection scheme across the entire borough. In response Richard Shwe explained that the pilot would usually run between 12-18 months to analyse all the data and receive feedback from residents of the services that had been undertaken before a decision could be made by the Council to extend the scheme across the borough.

The Chair said that it was pleased to hear that the Council had received a low level of complaints for this scheme. She noted that some residents in her ward had not received information regarding the roll out of the food waste collection pilot and asked for further clarification to be provided on how residents across the borough were informed of the pilot, prior to this being implemented. In response Richard Shwe (Assistant Director Street Environment Recovery) explained that proposals for resident engagement were noted in that report. These included a proposal for extensive door to door engagement with residents. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the measures put in place nationally from March 2020 officers were unable to engage face to face with residents. As a result, communication prior to the prototype commencing was carried out more remotely, either online or by post. Officers were able to carry out much greater face to face engagement at the delivery phase of the prototype and had approximately 1000 contacts with individual households when it was appropriate and safe to do so.

Councillor Wesley Harcourt (Cabinet Member for the Environment) commented on the reasons why the Council was keen to carry out the food waste collection pilot during the Covid-19 pandemic. He also shared his views on the delivery of the consultation process, the outcome of the pilot to date and the action taken by the Council on communications with residents prior to and after service commencement.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler raised some concerns around the shortage and the reduction of deliveries of the clear recycling bags provided to recycle in the regions where the food waste collection pilot had not yet been implemented. She noted the potential impact that this would have on the recycling rates in these locations in comparison to where the scheme had already been introduced.

Action: Richard Shwe to provide a formal response to Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler on this matter.

Councillor Iain Cassidy asked if officers had any information on the impact of the levels of waste collected during the Covid-19 pandemic. In response Richard Shwe (Assistant Director Street Environment Recover), provided a summary of the recycling data gathered and analysed to date.

Councillor Iain Cassidy commented that the Council needed to ensure that the communications strategy and consultation process during the final stages of the food waste pilot needed to be robust and effective so that residents'

concerns were being heard and taken into consideration. Richard Shwe (Assistant Director Street Environment Recovery) outlined the steps that would be taken by officers in collaboration with residents and the relevant departments of the Council to develop a plan to help manage all expectations in the best way possible.

The Chair enquired if any advice relating to best practice had been shared with officers on how the food waste collection pilot could be improved in the future. In response, Richard Shwe (Assistant Director Street Environment Services) explained that officers had drawn on their experience of managing similar rollouts at other Authorities. He also confirmed that the Council had been diligent and had conducted its own research, as well as drawing on the learning from case studies to improve and enhance the service.

RESOLVED:

That, the Committee noted and commented on this item.

7. FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

That, the Committee noted the future meeting dates.

Meeting started: 6:30pm
Meeting ended: 9:00pm

Chair

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