

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

The Economy, Arts, Sports, and Public Realm Policy and Accountability Committee

Minutes



Monday 22 July 2024

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Rory Vaughan (Chair), Liz Collins, Adam Peter Lang, Ashok Patel and Jackie Borland

Officers:

Bram Kainth, Strategic Director of Environment
Mark Raisbeck, Director of Public Realm
Pat Cosgrave, Service Lead for Street Environmental Services
Ian Hawthorn, Assistant Director Highways
Simon Ingyon, Assistant Director, Parks, and Leisure
Charles Francis, Committee Coordinator

Before the formal meeting began, the Chair, Councillor Rory Vaughan, paid tribute to the former Mayor of Hammersmith and Fulham, Mr Charlie Treloggan who sadly passed away yesterday. Councillor Stephen Cowan, Leader of the Council also commended his service to the borough. A minute's silence was held at the start of the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Andrew Jones (Cabinet Member for the Economy), Sharon Holder (Cabinet Member for Public Realm) and Councillor Zarar Qayyum (Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Skills).

In the absence of the Cabinet Members, Councillor Stephen Cowan, Leader of the Council attended the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the Economy, Arts, Sports and Public Realm Policy and Accountability Committee meeting held on 22nd April 2024 were agreed.

4. UPDATE ON WASTE AND RECYCLING SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

Pat Cosgrave, Service Lead for Street Environmental Services gave a presentation on waste and recycling service developments. This update set out the progress made in the council's waste and recycling services through the roll-out of food waste recycling, the introduction of wheeled bins and garden waste recycling and other service developments.

The presentation drew attention to the following:

- The context of where Hammersmith and Fulham stood for waste minimisation and recycling in comparison to other London Boroughs.
- The benefits of a wheeled bin and food collection service.
- Details of the service roll out, the community engagement work which had been conducted and flexibility of the service.
- A sample of the feedback the service had received from residents.
- Food waste – statistics of how this had increased.
- Household recycling – Noting a 5-7% increase to date, as well as future forecasts.
- Details on the garden waste recycling service, including the use of green vehicles.
- Details on the social value implications of the service and how this had benefited communities.

Councillor Adam Peter Lang commented that waste generation affected every resident and noted that 47,000 food waste bins were now being provided. He explained that while there was scope to improve the service, he had found the Waste and Recycling Team to be helpful and responsive. Referring to lived experience data, he explained that after the last waste update at committee, he had contacted the Team and had been trained by Veolia in waste management. He commented that he was impressed by the way in which Veolia thought about the health and well-being of their staff which he felt was important. He also provided details of a waste collection round in Brook Green that he attended with the team's supervisor which had gone well.

Turning to garden waste, Councillor Adam Peter Lang asked if officers felt the new charge associated with the service had been publicised enough. In response, Mark Raisbeck, Director of Public Realm confirmed that the service was about to come online and the Council were doing a soft launch, so it would be announced initially

just on the Council's website and then promoted more heavily from September when most residents had returned from the holiday period.

Councillor Adam Peter Lang asked if the roll-out had been completed in Hammersmith and Fulham. In response, Pat Cosgrave, Service Lead for Street Environmental Services explained that the roll-out for core deliveries had been completed in terms of the kerb side residential streets that the Council wished to deliver to, and the Council would be revisiting some of the main roads again, but where it was thought there would be a lower eligibility for wheeled bins. Pat Cosgrave also highlighted there had been plenty of opportunities for residents to swap bins to ensure they had the right capacity bin for their needs.

In relation to the food waste bins, Councillor Jackie Borland asked what percentage of the bins were being used, as she had seen many bins with new blue tape on them which meant they were not being used. She noted that 120 tonnes per month was currently being collected and enquired what percentage this was of the potential 47,000 food waste bin collections. In response, Pat Cosgrave acknowledged that he had seen some residents were not participating in the food waste collection service and what he was referring to, was those properties where bins had been delivered by the Council. So, as the key core delivery phase had been rolled out, the Council would be returning to those streets again to identify (visually, through information management systems and feedback from crews) those properties where food waste containers had been delivered to, but which were not being used. It would then be a case of investigating this further to understand why some residents did not want to use the service. Pat Cosgrave commented that some people did not like food waste as it smelled, and others might not produce much food waste. However, the Council needed to identify what their barriers to participation were, and then work with them to see if these barriers could be overcome.

Pat Cosgrave explained, the experience in other boroughs was that food waste performance (in terms of tonnes collected) would eventually plateau and drop off a little as it drove behavioural change as people saw how much they were wasting and this might change purchasing and food behaviours. Pat Cosgrave confirmed that officers would be happy to report back to the committee on the work they were doing after the roll out had been completed.

Councillor Jackie Borland commented that everyone was guilty of buying things they did not end up using, so hopefully the food waste collection would help highlight this issue. Turning to logistics, Councillor Jackie Borland noted that there would be one rubbish collection for wheelie bins, the crews then needed to identify those properties which did not have wheelie bins, and then separate recycling sacks, so she asked if all collections would be conducted on the same day with several collection vehicles. In response, Pat Cosgrave provided details of how the collection service operated and how collection rounds had been designed to reduce vehicle mileage by only going to the tip in Wandsworth once (per vehicle).

Councillor Jackie Borland asked how the operatives would know which properties did not have the bins. In response, Pat Cosgrave explained that the presentation point of the bins was within the property boundary and as many of the properties were close together, crews could see where most of the gaps were. However, he explained that

embracing new technology was fundamental to the new waste and recycling contract. This meant the contract included a management information system, so the crews had started to use in-cab technology whereby the driver used a tablet which identified what the collection requirements were for each individual property along a particular street. This also meant that if there were issues surrounding the presentation or contamination of waste, this could be captured on the in-cab devices so that it would enable the Council to target its interventions and improve waste behaviours.

With regards to food waste, Councillor Liz Collins asked if you had food which had gone off, were you meant to scrape the food out and dispose of the packaging and food waste separately. Officers confirmed this was the correct action to take. In relation to garden waste, Councillor Liz Collins asked if a resident had a small garden which did not generate much green waste, what would happen if garden waste was put into general waste. In response, Mark Raisbeck commented that it was difficult to try and anticipate the individual circumstances for every resident in the borough, however, the new service that was being introduced was designed to provide choice through all the change which had been implemented. If a resident had a garden they might be able to self-compost if they were an occasional producer of green waste, alternatively they might choose to occasionally drive to the tip where the disposal was free instead of taking part in paying for a green waste collection. Mark Raisbeck explained, that by offering this choice, the Council was aiming to discourage people from putting their garden waste into their general waste because incinerating mixed waste was not good for the environment. It also cost more to dispose of and officers wished to maximise recycling.

Councillor Ashok Patel commented that he thought the contractor Veolia was doing a first-class job. He asked if it was possible for the wheeled bins to be collected from the garden, rather than the pavement. The reason for this request was that several disabled residents had explained they had difficulty moving the bins, that they blighted the landscape and finally, due to the security concerns the movement or non-movement of bins raised. In relation to the collection point for bins, Pat Cosgrave confirmed these had only been delivered to households where there was sufficient outside space within the boundary of the property for them to be stored. And after the collection, then bins should be returned to a point within the boundary of the property. He explained that an assisted collection service was available through the Council's website for those residents that found manoeuvring the bins difficult.

In relation to green waste, Councillor Ashok Patel commented that the £90 per annum charge did not seem very much. However, if a resident was in receipt of benefits, then this was an added cost of living pressure. He asked if there were any exceptions to the charge and whether this had been means tested or if it was a universal charge. Councillor Ashok Patel acknowledged that forty-nine collections per year was good value, however, he commented that his personal green collection was only three or four times a year, so in his view, not many residents would require forty-nine collections.

In response, Mark Raisbeck confirmed that the Council was not planning on making any exceptions. He highlighted there were a number of options residents could follow

to avoid having to pay and these included self-composting their green waste or taking this to the tip. He explained the green waste collection was a new service and officers would be monitoring its uptake carefully, so any anomalies to collections would be captured.

Councillor Liz Collins highlighted circumstances where a resident had sadly passed away and their empty bins were still being collected. In response, Pat Cosgrave asked for the details to be provided to him so the issue could be resolved.

The Chair, Councillor Rory Vaughan asked for further details to be provided on collections and whether the green waste was being collected on the same day as other waste. In response Mark Raisbeck confirmed that all collections would be on the same day and that green waste would become integral to recycled waste in terms of the tonnage total, as recycling waste was less expensive to process than general waste.

Councillor Rory Vaughan asked about the opportunity for residents to swap bins should the need arise. In response, Mark Raisbeck confirmed bins could be swapped by contacting the new bins email address and many residents had already done so given the myriad of issues that might prompt a change in bin size. Mark Raisbeck confirmed that the approach the Council had taken was to assess each property as best it could, and suggested residents contact the Council (if need be) after they had experienced and had time to assess the service.

At the invitation of the Chair, two residents were invited to ask their questions. The first question related to the different bin sizes that were available, and how residents were made aware of the smaller bin size as there had been little publicity on this. The Chair asked the resident if he was aware of how many streets had indicated they wished to use the smaller bins. The resident listed a series of local streets in Brackenbury ward which contained three or four bedroom houses with very shallow front gardens.

In response, Mark Raisbeck confirmed that the Council had assessed individual properties and what their perceived needs were, and in most cases, the smaller sized bins were not practical given the amount of waste a typical home generated. Mark explained the logistics of the bin roll-out was complex and the Council would continue to assess and reassess the service. And with the tablets, each crew would be using in the collection lorries, the Council would be able to slowly generate an accurate picture of what waste each household was presenting.

The Chair reiterated that residents had the opportunity to contact the bins service with the new email address should the need arise. And Mark Raisbeck confirmed that the Council would continue to monitor the service.

The second resident asked a question on green waste. It was felt that the council had not taken into account the contribution individual households made to the greening of the borough (through their gardens). The £90 charge for green waste was deemed to be not inconsiderable given that previously garden waste was disposed of through general waste without any extra charge. What plans did the Council have to encourage residents to plant their own gardens. It was also noted

that many of the Council's services were only used by a minority of residents, although the general rule was that all residents paid for services whether they used them or not.

In response, Mark Raisbeck explained the garden waste collection was a brand-new service and it was important to recognise that the service was not free to the Council when green waste was put into general waste as there were significant disposal costs and also an environmental impact. He added that it was about encouraging residents to treat green waste in the correct way and for the Council to support this. He provided details of who the service was for (in terms of a regular collection service). He confirmed that the £90 charge was an optional charge which residents could either accept or not accept. This offered exceptional value as other London Boroughs charged similar fees for a fortnightly collection service.

Councillor Stephen Cowan, Leader of the Council, provided the context of the development of the green waste delivery service. He explained it was a new service which had been developed for residents who enjoyed gardening. He highlighted that any refuse service was expensive to provide. The aim was to get residents to do more recycling as this saved money and was good for the environment. He explained that all other Council's charged for green waste collections.

Councillor Stephen Cowan provided a series of examples of current spending priorities (including children's free breakfasts, LET and free adult social care) and explained this was why the Council was charging for the green waste collection service. He confirmed that if there were any residents that could not pay, the Council might means-test in future.

In relation to the bin rollout, Councillor Stephen Cowan explained this process began in 2019 and the Council had listened to resident feedback which was why this had gone so smoothly. Asking the public to change behaviours was always a challenge but he confirmed that he had been sent more compliments on the bin roll out than any other issue.

Closing the item, Councillor Rory Vaughan thanked the residents for their questions and for answers that had been provided. He confirmed there had been a considerable amount of praise for how things had gone and the roll-out had been smooth. In terms of the garden waste, he confirmed the Committee was interested in the advertising and the soft launch that officers had mentioned.

RESOLVED

1. For the Committee to note and comment on the paper and presentation.

5. CAFÉ CULTURE, PLAY STREETS AND STREET PARTIES INITIATIVE

Ian Hawthorn, Assistant Director Highways gave a presentation on café culture, play streets and the street parties initiative. This focused on the ongoing efforts in civic renewal to promote increased community activities, with a specific focus on play streets and community events across the borough.

The presentation covered the following points:

- An explanation of what the initiative was and what it sought to achieve.
- The mechanics and steps required to enable street activities to take place.
- An across the Council approach with a team of enablers from many service departments working together.
- Building partner support, including contractors / consultants, Developers, Hammersmith bid and Football Clubs based in the borough.
- Details of those projects which had been delivered, and those planned for the future.
- Details of the Fun Under the Flyover project and the types of activities this supported and delivered.

Councillor Adam Peter Lang commented that some of the street parties had taken place in the road where he lived and also in the ward where he was a councillor. He asked what was being done to engage with those harder to reach groups and whether officers were speaking to residents' groups to ensure they were aware events could be held. Given the complexity of arranging street parties, he suggested that residents may well need assistance in getting events up and running.

In response, Ian Hawthorn confirmed that at the end of the meeting, Councillors could have his email address, and any Committee Member could email him with a proposal which he would do his best to facilitate. Moving forwards, Ian Hawthorn confirmed the Council would be developing a communications strategy, including a website to promote these concepts, provide guidance on best practice and make events easier to realise.

Ian Hawthorn confirmed the Council had to consider its messaging and how this would be achieved, either through the website, by adapting and updating its current information and pro-formas, as well as the use of word of mouth to best effect. Ian Hawthorn commented that when civic renewal through the street parties and community events was first proposed, it seemed a significant challenge. However, events such as a theatre production in Brackenbury ward would be taking place soon which illustrated what could be achieved.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Cowan, explained that the idea behind civic renewal (through events) was to activate people's goodwill and good neighbourliness in order to create greater social cohesiveness. He provided details of a street market which took place in Hammersmith Grove shortly after the Administration gained control of the borough and explained that residents had found they were a good way of people getting to know their neighbours. He commented that in any large city, there was a high degree of transience, so the question posed was whether there was a social benefit in making people feel a sense of belonging, which he felt there was. He commented that the Council was measuring the number of street parties that were taking place, and these had increased significantly. Councillor Stephen Cowan outlined what the challenges were in arranging street parties and the answer lay in trying to promote social entrepreneurialism. It was important to ensure residents knew across all communities, that if there was an event they aspired to arrange, the Council would encourage it.

Councillor Jackie Borland thanked officers for the presentation and for the work they were doing. She also commented the ideas and concepts behind civic renewal were wholly positive. She encouraged event organisers to think big and small, so events did not necessarily mean the closure of large sections of a road. As it could just be something low key, like a barbeque, which still brought residents together.

Councillor Liz Collins echoed these sentiments and stated it was a great initiative. She praised the work of the Law Enforcement Team (LET) and commented on how the recent Wandsworth Bridge event had gone well. She explained she was particularly interested in the scope for further theatre productions and steps to encourage residents into the Arts.

Councillor Ashok Patel agreed with the positive aspects of the scheme but highlighted that negative factors also need to be considered such as issuing traffic orders, arranging physical barriers, engaging in agreements with the Local Authority, extra Policing and site clearance. These were factors which needed to be paid for, and while he acknowledged these were joint ventures between the Council and local communities, it would be interesting to learn how events were financed.

Councillor Ashok Patel commented that he enjoyed the Wandsworth Bridge event, however, he felt it had been a missed opportunity and he would have preferred to have seen less stalls and more educational stands.

Commenting on the use of green spaces, he noted that within a 10-minute radius, there was Eel Brook Common, South Park and Parsons Green. He stated that any events held there would be cost free, such as the recent Festival for English Wines (at Eel Brook Common), so the innovative use of parks could be investigated further.

In response, Councillor Stephen Cowan explained that some of these decisions were based on the Administration's political decisions. He confirmed that parks were being used, such as the Community Day in Ravenscourt Park and the wine tasting at Eel Brook Common. Part of the reason why the Council closed roads and had special days was because the High Street was facing challenging times and also to develop a sense of community based on two factors. Firstly, that residents would visit somewhere immediately outside their front door, and secondly, that it was possible to then support local businesses.

He provided details of when the Council first closed North End Road and the committee heard that some retailers had taken a month's takings in a single day. Councillor Stephen Cowan reiterated the Administration's pledge for Hammersmith and Fulham to be the best location in Europe for business, which meant in turn a hard stretched retail and hospitality sector. So, when events were staged, residents enjoyed them and businesses thrived. In a post pandemic world where businesses were still struggling, the impact of the internet / e-commerce and punitive business rates, this was why local events , supporting the local economy were vital.

The Chair, Councillor Rory Vaughan commended the presentation which had illustrated the huge number of events that were being held. He noted that the number of activities had grown over recent years, which in turn meant the teams supporting these events had become more developed, so future events were easier

to hold. The Chair praised the work done by the Events Team, Ian Hawthorn and the host of officers for facilitating these events, as well as the work being done to engage with hard-to-reach groups to ensure events were fully inclusive. The Chair confirmed that the committee would be interested in monitoring how civic renewal projects and events developed in the weeks and months ahead.

RESOLVED

For the Committee to note and comment on the report.

6. UPDATE ON THE SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY FOR HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Simon Ingyon, Assistant Director, Parks, and Leisure, gave a presentation on the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Hammersmith and Fulham. This focused on the progress in developing the strategy following public consultation via the council's 'have your say' platform. The presentation outlined the next steps towards bringing forward a new strategy and action plan to a future cycle of the committee.

The presentation drew attention to the following:

- An overview of how the strategy was developing and details of the public consultation via the 'Have Your Say' platform.
- A reminder of the Five Strategic Themes of the Strategy.
- Details on the consultation feedback and the accessibility responses.
- An explanation of how other feedback: Beat the Streets, Playzones and GLL Annual User Survey would augment and feed into the Sports Strategy consultation feedback.
- Information on the co-production and community engagement initiatives.
- Details of what the next steps were.

Referring to the consultation, Councillor Jackie Borland enquired if the backbone of the strategy was going to be based on twenty-one consultation responses. She asked if the Council could re-run the consultation and why officers thought there had been such a low response rate. In response, Simon Ingyon, explained that the strategy would not be based on just the twenty-one responses, and highlighted that it would include the responses from: Beat the Streets, Playzones and the GLL Annual User Survey which provided a much-improved insight (over one thousand combined responses) into residents perceptions and thoughts on sports and physical activity in the borough. It was noted that over 13,000 residents had signed up to Beat the Streets, over 8,000 from GLL's research and 500 responses had been received from young people. Adding further comments, Simon Ingyon, mooted it may have been the time of year that the consultation went out, the impact of the European Football Championships and perhaps there could have been more publicity. However, he confirmed that the usual consultation process had been followed, key stakeholders had been written to and the consultation had been live for between five and six weeks from the end of April to the beginning of June. With this in mind, Simon Ingyon, confirmed that the Council did not want to delay the strategy any further as it had taken longer than anticipated to reach its current state of development.

Commenting further, Councillor Jackie Borland confirmed that it was fortunate the Council had the additional pieces of research to augment the consultation as the response had been so low. So few responses meant that any feedback in a specific area would have disproportionate weight. She acknowledged that there were some great facilities within the borough and a considerable amount of activities were taking place. In turn, this meant there were pressures on the Council's green spaces and challenges in balancing how these resources were used (paid for as opposed to community usage).

Councillor Adam Peter Lang remarked he was pleased with the strength of the co-production within the report, as its importance had been highlighted by the Chair at a previous meeting. He commented that he had been impressed by the work being done by the Youth Council and asked that officers sought its input. This organisation had good access to a range of partners and it was important to recognise the needs of young people which had been badly affected by the pandemic.

In terms of Play zones, Councillor Adam Peter Lang referred to the time he had recently been canvassing for the General Election and noted that he had discovered some areas which looked as though they could be possibilities (for Play zone sites) if the community was engaged. He acknowledged the timetable for the development of the strategy and thought this looked appropriate. He asked if the intention was for the final strategy to be presented back to the Committee in the new year. In response, Simon Ingyon, confirmed that the strategy would return to Committee in early February 2025.

Commenting on Playzones, Simon Ingyon confirmed that Young Hammersmith and Fulham did participate in the consultation (on Playzones) and he welcomed further feedback from Councillors on potential Playzone sites that they had identified within their individual wards.

Councillor Liz Collins asked what types of barriers had been identified for women to become more involved in sport and physical activity and what facilities had been identified as being under used, such as playgrounds. In response, Simon Ingyon confirmed that it was a challenging area and safety was integral to it. He highlighted the importance of the LET Team, how Community Champions could be used to promote well-being such as the use of the community gym in Hammersmith Park and how instructor led, well-advertised community sessions could be used to encourage participation. Apart from the role played by paid instructors, Simon Ingyon highlighted the valuable role played by the volunteer network to promote sports and physical activity. It was noted that it was important outside gyms were located in prominent places with good sight lines to improve public safety.

Councillor Ashok Patel commented that the consultation had taken the Council forwards, but further work needed to be done. He noted that only 22% of the responses were from ages groups 19 to 34 and 11% were from black British which was not reflective of the diversity within the borough. He explained that in relation to some sporting events, there was an opportunity to focus on groups where their religion / traditional values meant they could not participate in sports like other groups, so it was necessary there was wider consultation.

Councillor Rory Vaughan acknowledged the progress which had been made and asked if there were any quick wins that could happen between now and next March. He commented that the top priority was getting more residents physically active and the ways in which this could be achieved. Ideas included encouraging some of the voluntary networks to become involved, more instructor led outdoor gym sessions and advertising current facilities more.

In response, Simon Ingyon confirmed that the Council already had a range of sports development programmes (Active Minds, for example). He agreed that increasing participation in sport and physical activity was about getting the right information to the right people, at the right time, and that was where working with Public Health on the back of Beat the Streets and working through the Health and Well-Being Strategy were important. He confirmed the residents the Council wished to target through initiatives were the twenty to thirty percent that did not do any activity at the moment and to encourage them to become more active, without having to take part in any particular sport. Other work streams included the Council linking with GP referral schemes and health workers to identify those persons (including those with disabilities) that were at risk if they were not undertaking activity at the moment and then linking up and doing one to one sessions with them to help to encourage them to become more active. Simon Ingyon explained that Council had recently worked with a group of Somalian women to procure an additional hour at Fulham pool so there would be a women-only session starting in the next month.

The Chair, Councillor Rory Vaughan was encouraged to hear about these types of initiatives and underlined that this needed to be advertised better and be brought to the attention of some of the community groups within the borough. On a grander scale, the Chair echoed Councillor Lang's previous comments that the summer of sport and in particular the Olympic Games in Paris would hopefully inspire more people to become more active.

In response, Simon Ingyon confirmed that Officers could develop a communications campaign on the back of the Olympics, as well as the tennis at Wimbledon and the ongoing Test Match. He highlighted there already was an A to Z of sports available within the borough and more needed to be done to signpost information that was already available on the internet. The Chair also highlighted the success of the short videos on the council's YouTube pages which promoted services and events and suggested more could be made of this outreach, especially by advertising them through social media.

Simon Ingyon also highlighted that the Council's bi-annual sports awards would be taking place in September and so officers were in the process of writing to all the boroughs sports clubs in search of nominees for the awards. This was also another valuable opportunity to promote both the volunteers, coaches, and the sports clubs across the borough and this was being promoted at the moment and throughout the summer for those nominations.

Concluding the item, the Chair confirmed the committee looked forward to the further development of the strategy and he encouraged officers to implement those quick wins where possible. The Chair explained he was interested in how an increase in physical activity would be measured. He was encouraged by the work on co-

production which was a vital mission of the Council. He thanked officers for all the work that was currently taking place and confirmed that the Committee looked forward to a further update in the new year.

RESOLVED

That the committee note and comment on the report and the presentation.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 9.40 pm

Chair

Contact officer: Charles Francis
Committee Co-ordinator
Governance and Scrutiny
☎: 07776 672945
E-mail: Charles.Francis@lbhf.gov.uk