

# Transport, Environment and Residents Services Select Committee Minutes

Monday 13 January 2014

## PRESENT

**Committee members:** Councillors Steve Hamilton (Chairman), Michael Adam, Iain Coleman, Gavin Donovan, Robert Iggulden, Wesley Harcourt (Vice-Chairman) and Lisa Homan

**Other Councillors:** Councillors Botterill, Brocklebank-Fowler, Loveday and Smith.

**Officers:** Nigel Pallace, Bi-Borough Executive Director, Transport and Technical Services, Jane West, Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Governance, Mahmood Siddiqi, Bi-Borough Director, Transportation and Highways, Mark Jones, Director of Finance, Chris Bainbridge, Bi-Borough Head of Transport Policy and Network Management and Owen Rees, Committee Coordinator.

## 22. MINUTES AND ACTIONS

Councillor Homan asked for an update on Item 15. Western Riverside Waste Authority. Councillor Smith said that he was chairing the committee of authority members who were preparing recommendations. He said that the WRWA constitution needed to be updated to be brought in line with modern practice. He said that the changes, which he believed necessary, would be agreed by a vote amongst the appointed representatives.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2013 be agreed as true and accurate.

## 23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors De Lisle and Law.

## 24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## **25. REVENUE BUDGET 2014/15**

The Committee received a report on the revenue budget for 2014/15, accompanied by presentations from Jane West, Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Governance on the Council's budget and Mark Jones, Director of Finance, Transport and Technical Service and Environment, Leisure and Residents Services, on departmental budgets.

In relation to the overall budget, the Committee heard about the budget process, including the level of grant support offered by the Government, the assumptions in relation to wage and price inflation used in setting the budget, the agreed levels of fees and charges, the identified budget risks, and the identified growth areas and areas identified for saving. The presentation also focused on National Non-Domestic Rates, noting that the Council remained within the safety net. Ms. West also explained the ongoing issues with valuation appeals at Westfield. The Committee asked questions about the effect of the economic recovery on rates valuations at Westfield, and about the provisions made against future appeals and sought assurances that the Valuation Office had learnt lessons with regards to the Westfield extension.

The Committee also asked questions about the provisions for a Hammersmith SPD, and the total cash value of the Council Tax reduction: Ms. West agreed to supply the Committee with a separate response on the latter point.

In relation to the budgets for TTS and ELRS, the Committee heard information on the savings required and identified, the increase (RPI) agreed for fees and charges and the exceptions to that increase, and the financial risks identified, first in ELRS, and then in TTS.

In relation to ELRS, the Committee sought clarification as to the nature of the risk in relation to the all weather pitch, and heard that this was due to potential delays as a result of the planning process; questioned why a higher increase had been applied for park pitches hire to private schools, and heard from the portfolio holder that prices were based on an assessment of what the market would bear; and questioned whether separate charges for changing facilities at sports pitches was a new development. Officers undertook to give a response on the last point. The Committee also asked questions for clarification around the inclusion of parks services in the Safer Neighbourhoods directorate and the S106 funding for police enforcement.

In relation to TTS, members sought clarification around the potential impact of changes to driver behaviour, as was hoped for, leading to fewer contraventions and a consequent reduction in income from moving traffic offences, with officers confirming that there was a financial risk and it was of unknown quantum.

They also asked questions regarding the source of investment in Hammersmith Library, and why the Council levied a fee on filming income from community centres, with members told that this was S106 funding and as a result of finders fees respectively.

## **26. TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM**

The Committee received a report regarding traffic congestion in Hammersmith and Fulham, with an emphasis on the enforcement of parking and moving traffic offences. The report was presented by Chris Bainbridge, Head of Transport Policy and Network Management, and Mahmood Siddiqi, Director of Transport and Highways.

The Committee heard that traffic congestion was an issue in the borough and had been so for some time. There were a number of strands to the approach taken by the Council, namely Network Management, which was work undertaken to minimise the impact of road and utilities works on traffic via coordination and the London Permit Scheme, Planning, which was the work undertaken through the planning system to ensure that new development did not exacerbate the problem of congestion, Engineering, which was the work undertaken to improve road layout to reduced congestion, Education, which was the work undertaken to improve driver behaviour, and Enforcement, which was action taken against drivers who caused increased congestion by breaching the Highway Code. Officers argued that enforcement was necessary to give force to the other work undertaken.

The Committee heard that enforcement of parking had been in place since the 1990's with restrictions such as controlled parking zones being introduced as early as 1969 in parts of the borough. The Committee heard that statistics bore out that cameras had an effect, with a reduction in infringements over time. These had contributed to a reduction in bus journey times, the preferred measure of congestion.

Members asked questions about the congestion on Wandsworth Bridge Road and the works suggested for Carnwath Road, school travel plans and the reasons for the Council's success rate at the Parking Appeals Tribunal. On the subject of school travel plans, officers said that schools' enthusiasm had varied and had fluctuated, and that while the process was now embedded, the withdrawal of incentives by TfL would have an uncertain effect. On the subject of the Parking Appeals Tribunal, officers said that this reflected the quality of the Council's work, and the decision by some boroughs not to contest appeals.

Members asked about traffic around Hammersmith Broadway prior to Christmas in relation to cars bound for Westfield, comparative levels of enforcement at Fulham Cross and the Askew Road, and camera enforcement of loading bays. Officers said that 80% of customers arrived at Westfield by public transport, but that a closure of the West London line on the weekend before Christmas had increased traffic. Officers said that, in light of TfL's preference to encourage loading outside peak hours, loading bays were likely to require enforcement.

Members asked whether more could be done to regulate deliveries through the planning system. Officers said that it was doubtful that such conditions would be enforceable or stand up to appeal, and would require CCTV to police. Members asked about the process for CCTV monitoring and officers confirmed that there was no link between CCTV monitoring and the presence of Parking Enforcement officers.

Members asked officers to respond to the allegation that the Council refused to adjust the signals at the Bagley's Lane junction. Officers said that traffic signals were under the control of TfL, and the Scoot system varied timings based on levels of traffic; as such there was no Council involvement in signal timings.

Members also asked officers for an update on lane rental proposals, and heard that the scheme was being piloted by TfL and Kent County Council, with TfL due to report shortly on its initial success.

**27. WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee agreed the Work Programme for the remainder of the year.

**28. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Committee noted that the next meeting had been rescheduled to be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

**29. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED THAT**

That, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business, on the grounds that they contain the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the said Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption currently outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**30. EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED THAT**

The exempt minutes of the previous meeting be agreed.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm  
Meeting ended: 8.35 pm

Chairman .....

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