



Environment Policy and Scrutiny Committee Briefing

Date: 8th September 2015

Briefing of: Cabinet Member for Parking and Sustainability

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1 Greener City Action Plan

- 1.1 The Greener City Action Plan has been formally approved and is available to view online. A formal launch event will be held shortly with support from the Victoria BID. Progress on the plan will be reported annually to Policy and Scrutiny.

2 Biodiversity and Open Spaces

- 2.1 Officers and Historic England are working with The Northbank BID on their Tree Strategy. This will include an assessment of the current situation in terms of tree cover and health, and will propose a future strategy. The strategy will be presented at the next public realm steering group.
- 2.2 Links have also been made with the Wild West End (partnership of five land holders) working on environmental health, habitat and waste.

3 Public Health (PH) / Sustainability projects

- 3.1 Food growing at the pilot sites in Church Street continues to go well. At the Fisherton Estate, there are 20 plots and the first crop of potatoes was harvested last week. The Hammersmith Community Gardeners Association is running the community gardener sessions fortnightly. A "smoothie bike" by the food growing plots generated interest from local children. They hope to engender further enthusiasm by organising a trip to Spitalfields City Farm.

4 Air Quality Lobbying

- 4.1 After sending a joint lobbying letter from Westminster City Council (WCC) and Corporation of London (CoL) to DEFRA asking for more Government action to improve air quality in the capital, with a member of CoL and an officer from WCC and CoL, I met with Parliamentary under Secretary of State for DEFRA, Rory Stewart. I highlighted the need for DEFRA to take firmer legislative action on air quality, including a review of the UK Air Quality Plan (a plan submitted by DEFRA detailing how to limit Nitrogen Dioxide levels) and financial support for zero emission vehicles and low emission infrastructure.
- 4.2 The City Council responded to amended consultation for Transport for London's (TfL's) proposed Ultra Low Emission Zone having initially responded to the first request for consultation in January 2015. The preferred option in this second round of consultation is weaker than originally proposed. We are very clear that the proposals do not go far enough and fall short of the necessary levels required to improve the air quality in central London.

5 Low Emission Neighbourhood bid

- 5.1 In July the City Council submitted an application for £25,000 seed funding from the Greater London Authority to pull together a full bid for a 'Low Emission Neighbourhood' which would focus on Bryanston and Dorset Square and Marylebone High Street wards. The initiative would include freight/waste consolidation, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and encouraging cycling and walking. BIDs and landowners are supportive of the proposal.

6 Neighbourhood for the Future

- 6.1 The City Council submitted has also submitted a bid for a funding stream available to London Councils focused on supporting the uptake of Low Emission vehicles. The WCC element of the bid focuses on the use of zero emission capable taxis, particularly around our transport hubs of Marylebone, Paddington, Victoria and Charing Cross stations.

7 Residential Electric Vehicle Recharging Proposal

- 7.1 The Council is in the final stages of developing a scheme with a potential investor to pilot a residents-only electric vehicle recharging network. Three areas have been identified (based on market demand and requests from residents), providing two recharging bays at each location for resident use. Dates for the installation programme are yet to be confirmed.

8 Zip Car (car club) Electric Vehicle Charging points

- 8.1 A number of car club bays have been identified as locations for installation of an Electric Vehicle charging point to support a hybrid electric car club vehicle. The feasibility work for fully determining which sites are suitable is underway and the intention is for 25 double posts to be installed to service 50 car club bays. A timetable for installing the charging points is being drawn up.

9 Blue Point London (Source London) / Point to Point (Car Club)

- 9.1 The City Council continues to meet with Blue Point London to discuss key points of their proposal to ensure the scheme is suitable for Westminster. Officers do liaise with our neighbouring boroughs to ensure that the offer and terms are, where appropriate, consistent. Officers are also continuing to engage with other EV charging point suppliers.

10 Car Club Strategy

- 10.1 Following the release of TfL's Car Club Coalition Strategy, the City Council is now looking at how that strategy sits alongside the aims and objectives of its own transport and sustainability policies, particularly given the changes in the car club marketplace, an evolving 'point to point' and more flexible model, and the challenges of an aspirational purely electric fleet.

11 Connected Vehicle Pilot

- 11.1 The City Council has tested a new parking system which will allow a "One Click Parking" payment system for vehicles. The technology uses a device that effectively connects the car to a user's smartphone. Users confirm their location on arrival and start their parking session using an app; when they return to their car they can simply drive off and their parking session will stop automatically. External funding financed the trial.
- 11.2 This pioneering work and innovative technology such as bay sensors and pay by phone has created opportunities to enhance parking.

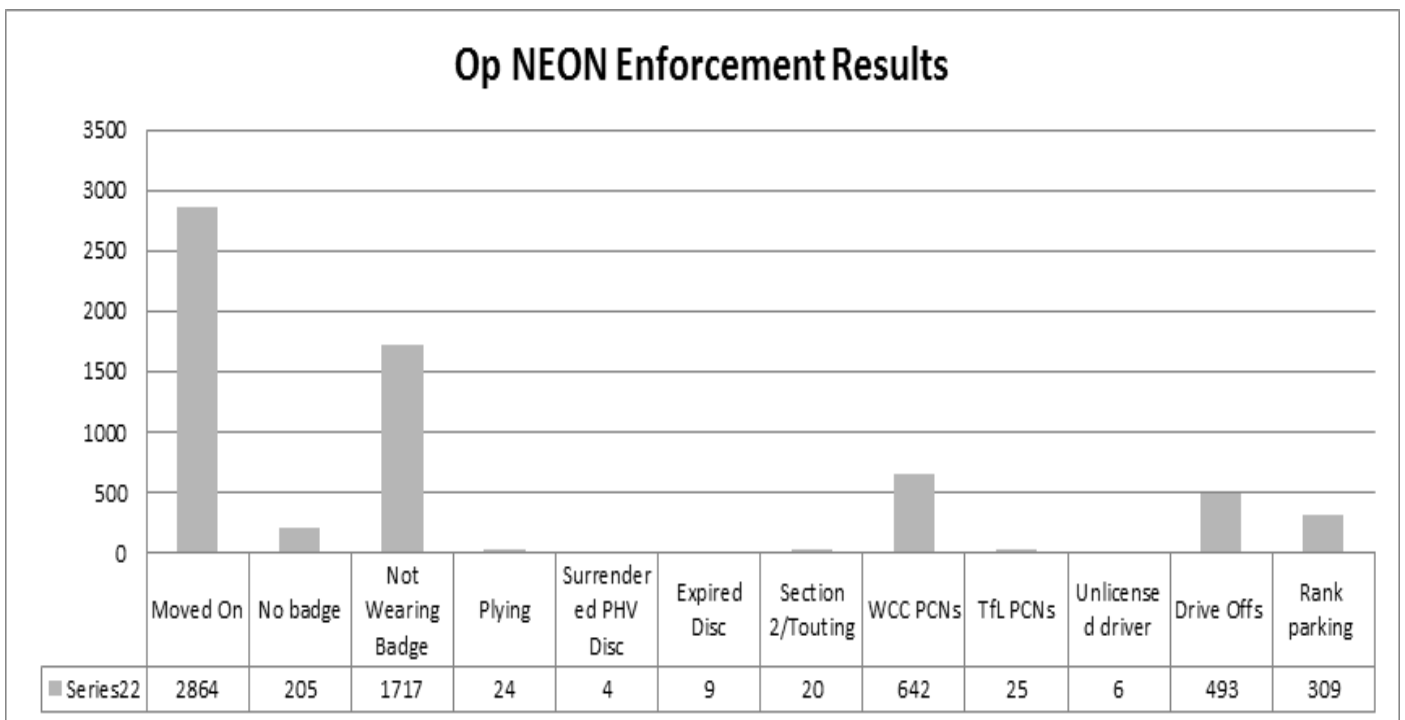
12 Operation Neon

- 12.1 Operation Neon, the partnership between TfL, Westminster City Council's Parking Services, The Metropolitan Police Service and the City of London Police, supporting the licensed taxi and private hire trade by deterring and disrupting illegal cab activity has been extended until the end of December to focus on;

- Tackling touting and illegal plying for hire
- Taking action against parking and idling contraventions
- Protecting taxi ranks

12.2 The operation focuses on known ‘hotspot’ locations throughout the City including Berkley Square/ Street, Langham Street, Ganton Street and Stratton Street. Operation Neon has increased the levels of visible enforcement in central London, combating touting and other illegal activity and tackling engine idling. It is keeping ranks clear to support legitimate taxi and private hire drivers and has received positive feedback from the trade associations.

12.3 The chart below details the actions taken to 15th August.



13 White Disabled Badge Bay - Electronic Permit Trial

13.1 A ‘Proof of Concept’ of Electronic permits at 100 White Badge Disabled bays is currently in the testing phase. Permit holders will be issued with Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) tags which have had sensors installed in their bays.

13.2 The system will transmit real-time bay status reports to Marshals to ensure more efficient management of the kerb-side space and improve access for the customer to their dedicated parking space. The scheme is being supported and part funded by TfL.

14 2015 Parking Occupancy Survey

- 14.1 A final version of the 2015 Parking Occupancy Survey summary report should be approved for publication during September.
- 14.2 The next stage of the commission is now underway, which is the downloading of the survey's substantial database onto the City Council's Parkmap system. This will enable Parking, Planning and Transportation colleagues to make invaluable use of such data when developing schemes or assessing local planning applications.
- 14.3 The survey will become a key source of evidence, alongside other sources, to the future work of the Task Group of this Committee. A separate report will be submitted for the first meeting on 21st September.

15 The Walking Strategy

- 15.1 Steer Davies Gleave was appointed to lead on the walking strategy and consultants have met with officers and road safety campaigners (including 20's Plenty for us, Westminster & London Living Streets, Westminster Cycling Campaign & Vision Zero London) in a series of pre-consultation meetings. The next meetings are with local business groups, land owners and estates and amenity groups. The consultants will also meet the Policy & Scrutiny Task Group at the end of September.

16 Cycle Schemes

- 16.1 After the successful launch of the bike loan pilot where local residents interested in learning to cycle were loaned a folding bike and given a programme of support. The scheme has been revised and implemented in a few locations.
- 16.2 The refreshed programme of themed led-rides is proving successful with Westminster's Christmas ride expected to be popular.
- 16.3 Officers are seeking a new venue for the bike building scheme as a potential scheme using Westminster Academy has not progressed.
- 16.4 The first video informing the public about our cycle training programme as well as messaging all road users about good practice was released on the 4th August and a second on the 25th August. The videos have been widely promoted and viewing figures have been high for a local council video, with the first receiving 1,300 views. Officers are monitoring cycle training sign up numbers.

16.5 In conjunction with Public Health, officers are in the process of developing a smartphone app providing an incentive scheme to encourage walking and cycling. A pilot is expected to be launched with Tri Borough staff in the autumn.

17 Central London Cycle Grid

17.1 Design development is continuing on the ten quietway cycle routes within the City.

17.2 Consultation on the first three quietway cycle routes has been completed and Cabinet Member reports are being prepared with a view to progress each route to implementation.

17.3 Consultation on two further routes is due shortly. Details of the proposals will be available online at <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/cycling-consultations>.

17.4 Consultation on Cycle Superhighway 11 (Avenue Road, Outer Circle and Portland Place) is being led by TfL. Public consultation has been postponed from August 2015 to Autumn 2015 whilst TfL undertake further design and modelling on the route outside of the City. As part of CS11, Westminster City Council supports the introduction of a 20mph zone in The Regent's Park, with camera enforcement technology.

17.5 A Cabinet Member Report for the East West Cycle Superhighway has been approved. Based on the decisions in the report, work will commence soon at Parliament Square and the Lancaster Gate gyratory.

18 Nine Elms to Pimlico Bridge

18.1 Stage 2 of Wandsworth's Nine Elms to Pimlico Bridge Design Competition launched in May and asked the 4 selected design teams to develop their proposals for a bridge between the site of the American Embassy and Pimlico Gardens.

18.2 The Stage 2 designs were displayed at public exhibitions in Wandsworth and at 51 Broadway in July – each attracting over 100 visitors, after which the Stage 2 teams were subject to technical, resident and jury panel assessment.

18.3 WCC officers have reiterated Westminster's significant concerns regarding the bridge's likely impact, including but not limited to, the loss of trees and public open space, impact on the highway and on residential amenity.

18.4 Wandsworth Council are due to announce their chosen winning team in late September/October this year.

19 Lambeth Bridge Roundabout

19.1 I have a meeting with TfL later this month to discuss their proposals to improve the safety of this junction.