



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

# DRAFT MINUTES

## City Management and Public Protection Policy & Scrutiny Committee

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **City Management and Public Protection Policy & Scrutiny Committee** held on **Wednesday 12 June 2019** in Room 18.2 and 18.3, 64 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QP

**Members Present:** Councillors Tony Devenish (Chairman), Barbara Arzymanow, Margot Bright, Paul Dimoldenberg, Matthew Green, Aicha Less, Mark Shearer and Shamim Talukder.

**Also Present:** Councillor Tim Mitchell, Sara Sutton (Executive Director of Environment, City Management and Communities), Annette Acik, Acting Director for Public Protection and Licensing and Mark Banks, Head of Service - Waste and Parks

**Expert Witnesses:** Richard Bradbury (Head of Environment Services), Camden and Jim Graham (Assistant Director, Cleansing Operations of Street Environment), City of London)

#### 1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 The Chairman sought any absences, apologies or substitutions to the committee's membership.
- 1.2 There were no changes made.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 The Chairman sought any personal or prejudicial interests in respect of the items to be discussed from members and officers, in addition to the standing declarations previously made.
- 2.2 There were no declarations made.

#### 3. MINUTES

- 3.1 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the City Management and Public Protection Policy and Scrutiny Committee held on 10 April 2019 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record of proceedings.

#### **4. CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND CITY MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW**

- 4.1 Councillor Tim Mitchell updated the committee on the Environment and City Management portfolio. He advised the committee that with regard to the Schools' Clean Air Fund (SCAF), all Westminster schools will receive Air Quality Audits which will provide recommendations to schools that they can take forward in applying to the Schools' Clean Air Fund. He confirmed that audits will be paid for by the CIL fund. Councillor Mitchell discussed the energy strategy advising that the council continued to develop the Westminster's Energy Strategy and the draft strategy was due to be published in Autumn 2019. He advised that the energy strategy focused on both internal and external energy reduction, with the Civic Centre's energy use down 40% since 2015.
- 4.2 With regard to transport matters, Councillor Mitchell advised that over thirty public realm schemes were being delivered on the ground at any one time, with further work being continually undertaken on design and development of new schemes. He advised that work was progressing on a number of local safety schemes, developer schemes, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funded schemes and the Local Implementation Plans (LIP) programme of work. Councillor Mitchell informed the committee that three new cameras had been installed in hotspot areas to assist with parking offences. He also advised that traffic orders enabling parking enforcement on Westminster Council housing estate land came into effect on 6 May for Churchill Gardens Estate. Councillor Mitchell advised that enforcement had begun on the estate via Warning Notices, with full PCN issue scheduled from 20 May.
- 4.3 Councillor Mitchell high-lighted the good performance of Waste and Parks, however graffiti still remains an issue near the Marylebone Road and felt that TFL could do more to help with the issue and that the Leader would be meeting with Mike Brown regarding TFL issues. Councillor Mitchell advised that the items would be discussed in more detail as part of the substantive item.
- 4.4 Members of the committee made a number of inquiries, Councillor Talukder congratulated officers on the funding from DEFRA, he queried if WCC officers would pass on their bid winning knowledge to other councils. Councillor Talukder queried how WCC dealt with smoke pollution in high profiled wards, he felt that the current laws were not strong enough and the new London cleaner air act should be rolled out across the UK and would help to mould future legislation. Councillor Dimoldenberg requested a list of the locations for cycling hangers and parking on estates, he also asked that the alternative locations also be listed.

Councillor Mitchell advised that there had been push back from local residents due to some confusion regarding the sites, he advised that further work with residents was needed. Councillor Mitchell informed the committee that funding was being sought to install a further 17 or 18 cycling hangers in the next financial year.

- 4.5 Councillor Dimoldenberg raised further queries regarding paying for parking on estates, the diesel surcharge and the 'idling fines', requesting that the council consider and a possible tougher approach. Councillor Less advised that she was happy to hear the updates regarding 'Active Streets' and the performance of Street Waste Action Team (SWAT). Regarding parking on estates, Councillor Less queried whether provisions could be made for the residents in the Little Venice Ward where a number of parking bays were suspended due to building works. She felt that residents had become frustrated and was concerned for vulnerable elderly and disabled residents. Councillor Less sought further information regarding WCC procedures for suspending parking bays for building works. Councillor Mitchell advised that he would discuss the matter with colleagues in Housing Services and update Councillor Less.
- 4.6 Councillor Bright congratulated SWAT on the results of the street survey, Councillor Mitchell advised that education was very important to the improvements, he informed the committee that SWAT had recently completed operations in Lancaster Gate ward and was currently active in Queen's Park ward. Councillor Bright mention the difficulties sending photo's through the 'Report it' app. Sara Sutton informed the committee that WCC IT team were currently working on a new version of the 'Report it' app. Councillor Arzymanow wondered if the DEFRA grant could be used to tackle the smoke problem on the Edgware Road and it was causing concerns, she also queried the types of coal burning. Annette Acik - Acting Director for Public Protection and Licensing, agreed to look into Councillor Arzymanow's query and e-mail the permissions granted. Cllr Arzymanow raised concerns regard the unlawful parking of commercial vehicles, Cllr Mitchell requested the details in writing so that the information could be fed into a wider discussion.
- 4.7 Councillor Green sought information on cost and impact on the council with regard to the Extinction Rebellion protests and the Banksy recently discovered in Marble Arch. Mark Banks agreed to provide the committee with a breakdown for the costs associated with the clean-up after the Extinction Rebellion protests. Sarah Sutton also advised the committee that the Banksy was being sufficiently looked after and officers were considering the best methods to protect the piece for the future.

RESOLVED: The committee noted the report.

## **5. CABINET MEMBER FOR LICENSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW**

- 5.1 Councillor Ian Adams provided a report of the Licensing and Public protection Member's portfolio. Members of the committee were invited by the Chairman to submit questions regarding the report to Policy and Scrutiny Officer by email after the meeting.

RESOLVED: The committee noted the report.

## **6. ACTION ON FLY-TIPPING REPORT**

- 6.1 Sara Sutton addressed the committee advising that the report was an opportunity for the council to demonstrate all its efforts so far in tackling fly-tipping and their plans for future initiatives. Mark Banks, Head of Service - Waste and Parks advised the committee that whilst fly tipping remained an issue to the council and all council across the UK, satisfaction with the council's waste collection and street cleansing services remains exceptionally high (93% and 91% respectively in the 2018 City Survey). Officer's advised that the report provided an overview of waste enforcement activity undertaken during 2018-19, the work of the Street Waste Action Team, and two new initiatives to tackle fly-tipping – the trial use of CCTV monitoring and utilising 'nudge' theories to improve behaviours.
- 6.2 Members were informed that much of the fly-tipping activity in Westminster happened around the 141 Big Black Bin (BBB) sites that were predominantly located in high density residential areas. Officers advised the committee that the sites were widely misused, with significant levels of recycling material in general waste bins and were hotspots for dumping. It was noted that from the City Survey, 30% of our residents feel that litter and waste on the street was a "big" or "very big" problem".
- 6.3 Mark Banks advised that they recognised the failure to comply often began with unintended ignorance, carelessness, or a lack of training and management control. It was felt that educating through the provision of information and advice, as well as serving notices that provide the opportunity to remedy the breach, were examples of the important tools that officers will use to manage risks. It was noted that in some cases failure to comply may risk causing serious harm, be the result of deliberate illegal behaviour, or failure to correct an identified serious problem. In these instances, officers will issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs).
- 6.4 Councillor Green advised that he was happy to see that fix penalty notices were up 150% in the Little Venice Ward, but still had concerns regarding the street sweepers stacking bagged rubbish by the street bins, this is attracting further additional fly-tipping, he asked if the current procedures could be looked at. Councillor Green also queried if the council would look at street bins which

allowed for recycling to be filtered, separate sections for different types of recycling. Mark Banks advised the committee that the manual street sweepers could only fit 4-8 bags on their cart and had no choice but to drop off some bags at specified drop off points and that the council were looking into ways of improving the current procedures. Mark Banks advised the committee that WCC had carried out a trial using filtered bins and it had been unsuccessful. He stated that information would be fed back to ward members in the form of ward updates, which would include identified hot spots and available resources.

- 6.5 Councillor Shearer queried how fly-tipping was being dealt with by other countries and sought further clarity regarding the number of warnings and FPN's issued. Sara Sutton advised the committee that issuing FPN's were complicated and depended heavily on evidence, which was difficult to find in the rubbish fly-tipped (1 in 3 hit rate of rubbish searched). Mark Banks advised the committee that the demographics and culture of another country played a large part when comparing fly-tipping and referred to Japan. He advised that for example Japan was of similar size but has a smaller fast food industry and a culture of bring their litter home, therefore had different needs to the UK.
- 6.6 Councillor Arzymanow queried the process of identifying offenders and why FPN and convictions rates were not higher. She also sought confirmation on the regularity of ward sweeps. Councillor Green queried the process of making a statement to prosecute offenders and picture quality on the 'Report it' app. Annette Acik confirmed that the person reporting would need to make a statement, which might discourage some. Ms Acik also confirmed that Ward sweeps happen three times per year and ward members are invited. She advised members that each ward sweep would be tailored to a specific ward and would email list and dates to the committee.
- 6.7 Members praised Barking and Dagenham for the CCTV YouTube Channel and questioned whether WCC should adopt a similar approach. Sara Sutton advised the committee that she would be happy to trial something similar and that the behavioural team are open to ideas. Mark Banks advised that there were over 50 commercial waste companies operating in Westminster not just WCC, any initiatives would need to include these companies. Councillor Dimoldenberg queried the council's bulky waste collection service, comparing the service, costs and waiting times to other local authorities.
- 6.8 Councillor Less queried how the bulky waste services had been communicated/advertised to residents, comparing WCC rate of 5 items for £25 to RBKC's 10 items for £32. Councillor Less also raised queries regarding the education of residents with regards to fly-tipping and dates of the ward sweeps as the Library on Church street was in urgent need of cleansing due to strong smell of urine. Mark Banks agreed to circulate to members the details of the income generated from the WCC bulky waste collection. Mark Banks also agreed to circulate the wet map for cleansing, he advised that the Church Street Library

will be visited to establish root causes of odour and added to wet map if need be. Councillor Talukder felt that improvements were needed on Looper Street and the west triangle route.

- 6.9 Councillor Arzymanow felt that daily inspections, two or three times a day were needed in known hotspots area like Church Street Gardens Estate. Mark Banks advised that City West Homes issues would be resolved now that they are back in house. Richard Bradbury (Head of Environment Services), Camden advised that Camden's rate for Bulky waste collection was the same as WCC (5 items for £25). He advised that Camden made 6,000 bulky waste collections a year which generated an income of £80,000, though this did not cover the cost of running the service. Mr Bradbury felt that Hertfordshire County Council had had some successes and could be a great source for improved outcomes for WCC. He advised that Camden were having similar issues with CCTV image quality and that the most impactful initiative was education and awareness raising by local campaign groups.
- 6.10 Jim Graham (Assistant Director, Cleansing Operations of Street Environment), City of London (COL) addressed the committee advising that the City of London had 7,000 residents, most were businesses and that there were 4 housing estates. He advised that the COL rate for bulky waste collection was £34 for 4 items, assisted residents were able to use the service for free. Mr Graham advised that the COL use millennium bags and residents also had two bins, however these would still become full and overflowing with rubbish. He also advised the committee that the COL had 60 bins in a square mile, each site was very carefully selected for maximum impact.
- 6.11 Councillor Less reminded the committee of the recycling centre visit some committee members attended in LB Southwark last year and queried the possibility of another trip being arranged.

RESOLVED: The committee noted the report.

## **7. COMMITTEE TRACKER AND WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

- 7.1 Artemis Kassi (Policy & Scrutiny Officer) presented an updated report on the current version of the work programme for 2019/2020 and also provided an update on the action tracker.
- 7.2 The committee reviewed the progress of items on the 2018/19 work programme, committee members were asked to note the unallocated items and prioritise, where required. The committee was also asked to consider items for the 2019/20 work programme and note the action tracker. The suggested focus for the item for the meeting on 10th September was a reviewed, Ms Kassi advised that after

discussions with Sara Sutton (Executive Director of Environment, City Management and Communities) the focus would be on Serious Violence as it was made clear that tackle county lines did not fall within the City Management and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee's remit.

7.3 Ms Kassi advised that issue of County Lines sits within the Family and People Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee, however it could be looked at under the sub-context of the substantive item of Serious Violence. The Chair agreed to take the discussion off line and liaise with Councillor Adam and Councillor Mitchell regarding content for the Serious Violence item.

7.3 RESOLVED: The committee noted the report.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

8.1 There was no other business

## **9. FUTURE DATES**

Wednesday 10 September 2019 at 7.00pm

Wednesday 20 November 2019 at 7.00pm

The Meeting ended at 8:26 pm.

CHAIRMAN:\_\_\_\_\_

DATE:\_\_\_\_\_