



City of Westminster

Communities, City Management and Air Quality Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	12 December 2022
Portfolio:	City Management & Air Quality
The Report of:	Councillor Paul Dimoldenberg
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1. Key decisions made in the preceding period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 13 September:

- 24/10/22 - Admin Charges for Unauthorised Parking Suspensions
- 02/11/22 - Extension of the Parking Service Debt Management Contract
- 09/11/22 - Highways Contract Arrangements - Traffic Management Order (TMO) Service
- 14/11/22 - Westminster Neighbourhood CIL – Autumn 2022 Allocation

2. The following report includes my priorities and delivery progress to date of the new administration.

2.1 City Management

Waste Action Squad (WAS) Update

The Waste Action Squad has been engaging with businesses across the City, spending over 40 hours talking to residents. They are undertaking an audit of staining along the highway, identifying potentially responsible commercial premises and Section 47 notices have already been served to try and address the issue.

Veolia undertook deep cleans on ten hotspot areas and an overall action plan is being developed in consultation with the local community. This will focus on the top three areas identified by the community and document how we propose to resolve these concerns.

In December the WAS is expected to pilot in Harrow Road and Church Street, moving to Queen's Park and Maida Vale in the new year. Councillors will continue to be notified before the WAS comes to their ward.

Leafing Plan – Autumn 2022

The Leafing Plan has been implemented, with an estimated 1,000 additional tonnes of leaves expected to be cleared. We drafted in 11 agency staff with 2 extra waste collection vehicles to meet the demand. We have also sourced additional equipment including new electric leaf blowers, which

are being trialled to help reduce noise in residential areas in mornings. We are pairing-up the regular street sweepers across the north of the Borough, and other specific locations, to help meet the challenge. However, we understand that this means the overall frequency will reduce but with more than double the output from having two street sweepers.

Keeping Our Gullies Clean

50 additional gully sensors will be installed across the City to inform the Gully Cleansing Programme. A rain gauge has also been installed in Maida Vale Ward to provide more accurate and localised rainfall data to inform service decision making.

Public Conveniences

As Thursday evenings are now significantly busier post-Covid-19, the weekend deployment of 30 temporary urinals/portaloos has now been extended from Thursday to Monday every week. We continue to monitor the effectiveness of this approach.

The specification and costs for the refurbishment of Parliament St and Carnaby St toilets, including the installation of contactless payment barriers, is being finalised.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charge Points

The current total of EV charge points on our streets is 1,470. This consists of 1,256 shared supply charge points for residents, 188 fast charge points and 6 rapid chargers. We are due for the imminent completion of 26 more Source London 22kW fast charging bays across the City and the commissioning of 2 rapid chargers in Lisson Grove.

Looking slightly further ahead we will see the completion of the present rapid charger programme with 2 units in Prince Consort Road and 1 in Harrow Road and the move of the unit in Rochester Row to a new location in Horseferry Road, alongside the existing rapid charger. At this time we are awaiting grid connection dates from UKPN for all 3 sites.

Source London will be replacing the Pod Point stand-alone charge points at 8 sites with a start in November likely once electrical validation of the new charge point has been approved by our service provider. EV bays to be doubled at 7 of these sites.

Dockless Bikes in Westminster

All operators have provided comprehensive data sets on their operating models, including location hotspots and parking data. This will help us to identify the total number of bays needed to meet demand and accurately predict the potential loss of revenue from the repurposing of any parking bays across Westminster.

We have met with operators for talks, and their preference is for a bay-based approach, with other boroughs moving towards this model. Density and coverage of bays are considered to be the primary factors when trying to deliver an effective scheme. Smaller but more frequent bays are

optimal for the scheme to work, rather than larger and less frequent bays. We are working with the GLA and officials at TfL as part of the longer-term strategy.

School Streets

Under the trial, there are 11 School Streets installed with signage and lining, with a further location earmarked for installation by March 2023. An interim review was carried out in Summer 2022, where the following School Streets having been identified as requiring CCTV enforcement to further help compliance of the schemes, of which is in progress:

1. All Souls, Riding House Street
2. ARK Atwood Academy Primary School, Amberley Road
3. George Eliot Primary School, Marlborough Hill
4. Queens Park Primary School, Droop Street
5. St. James and St Johns, Craven Terrace
6. St Mary's of the Angel RC Primary School, Shrewsbury Road:
7. St Peter's Eaton Square C of E Primary School, Lower Belgrave Street

Cycling in Westminster

S106 funding has been sought to undertake a Cycle Parking Occupancy survey for the continuous roll-out of insecure/cycle stand roll-out programme, expected to start next year. We have been working with TfL on our Cycle Routes Programme on proposed new cycleway routes for the forthcoming bidding round. Routes are determined by assessing which align best to the Strategic Cycling Analysis mapping and what best serves the boroughs demands.

Update on Relations with Transport for London (TfL)

TfL have re-emphasised the need for Boroughs to work with them and the Metropolitan Police on London's 'Vision Zero' target to eliminate all fatalities and serious injuries by 2041. As a Council we have ensured our Healthy Streets Delivery Plan bid to TfL majors on Vision Zero related schemes, including improvements for vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists. Westminster currently records the highest number of casualty related collisions.

TfL and central Government have agreed a long-term bail-out which includes a number of conditions in respect of daily public transport cutbacks. We are aware of these conditions, and as they emerge we will lobby on behalf of residents to the Deputy Mayor, TfL and central Government.

Public Realm Update

We are establishing a joint project team to deliver a permanent scheme for Regent Street, building on the success of the temporary scheme currently in place. We have been in ongoing discussions with stakeholders to ensure our permanent scheme is a success.

Villiers St project involves public realm improvement to provide a safe and high quality pedestrian environment for the high level of footfall from residents, commuters and tourists. Proposals include additional security measures to reduce the vulnerability of the street to terror attacks, these works are on site and due to be completed late 2023.

The Covent Garden Neighbourhood Traffic Management Scheme is intended to reduce the level of non essential traffic across the Covent Garden district (rat running journeys and vehicles with no purpose in the district). Introduced in December 2021 on an experimental basis and in partnership with LB Camden, we are now conducting a final public consultation and are asking that a questionnaire is completed to seek views on the scheme. The outcome of the public consultation will be considered by both councils in reaching a decision on whether to make the scheme permanent. The current consultation opened on 14 November and will run until 16 December.

All remaining trees on the Strand Aldwych are currently being planted. Next on the highway build outs programme are St Stephens Gardens and St Georges Drive. Palace Court proposals are being reconsidered.

St Johns Wood High Street

The St John's Wood High Street Public Realm Project proposes highway improvements to the High Street to improve pedestrian space and accessibility, traffic management, greening, whilst providing space for continued al fresco dining. The design includes the retention of one-way traffic from northbound to southbound, footway widening along the whole length of the High Street by approximately 1 metre on both sides, with larger buildouts and raised tables at junctions to provide crossing opportunities, 14 new street trees, benches, and new street lighting columns.

The second formal consultation on the highway design was held for three weeks between Wednesday 28th September and Wednesday 19th October. It combined the statutory traffic order consultation (TMO) with general scheme information. The consultation activities and materials included a new website www.sjwhighstreet.co.uk, a letter drop to 3600 addresses in the area, emails to statutory consultees, information and posters at the local library and in a High Street shop window, and use of social media channels to promote the scheme.

There were 1756 responses to the on-line questionnaire over the three weeks. A Cabinet Member Report is expected shortly to approve the publication of the consultation results and recommend decision(s) on next steps.

Warwick Way Town Centre Highways Scheme

During COVID-19, a temporary al fresco scheme was implemented on Warwick Way and Churton Street in summer 2020 to help the local hospitality businesses. The scheme was strongly supported locally, a permanent scheme has been developed to build upon this success, providing an improved space for pedestrians, better accessibility and more greening possibilities, improved lighting and drainage to the area to create a better place for local residents and visitors.

A public consultation on the scheme is planned for December and into January 2023 to seek feedback on our proposals ahead of further design development. The consultation will include a website and online survey to collect feedback, letter drop, engagement session(s) with local ward councillors and resident associations alongside promotion by the Communications team.

Open Spaces Update

New hanging basket contracts commenced on the 1st of October and the Parks Officer has ensured all baskets are peat free. The electric fleet is in place and rain harvesting is now underway.

Parks and Cemeteries have had an exceptional year with excellent results for Green Flags, London in Bloom and London Garden Squares, giving the team a high level of external verification on their quality standards. Additional public access pathways are planned for the cemeteries due to the continued demand for burial space and the 3rd year of tree replacement is planned for this autumn-winter period.

Pimlico Gardens

We will be running a public consultation until 14 December on the future of Pimlico Gardens. The aim of which is to provide inclusive outdoor space including Community Hub environments to meet the diverse need of residents. We are proposing several upgrades to the park such as a toilet block, viewing platform, and a café/facility able to serve refreshments.

2.2 Update on Air Quality in Westminster

Queen's Park Automatic Monitoring Site

The Queen's Park area of Westminster has been identified as a location for a new automatic monitoring station. This area meets a number of criteria, including filling a geographical gap in the city's monitoring network, and providing the opportunity for a background site that can capture both PM2.5, and Ozone, two pollutants of increasing concern that are not well covered from background sites in Westminster's current network of automatic monitors.

There are opportunities to engage with the local community in Queen's Park on the monitoring site, location, and how they can access and utilise the data provided. It is proposed to engage with ward members and the Queen's Park Community Council (QPCC) Place Committee, which covers air quality. Officers will be presenting a paper at the next Place Committee meeting on 23rd November to start this engagement process.