

Date:	6 March 2023
Portfolio:	City Management & Air Quality
The Report of:	Councillor Paul Dimoldenberg
Report Author and Contact Details:	Alexandra Deolinda Severino adseverino@westminster.gov.uk

1. Key decisions made in the preceding period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 23 December 2022:

- 30/11/2022 - St Johns Wood High Street Public Realm Improvement Scheme
- 12/12/2022 - Piccadilly Road Underpass Ventilation Fans – Stage 1 – Design and Interim Safety Measures
- 16/12/2022 - Dockless e-Scooters & e-Bike Schemes
- 16/12/2022 - Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) Programme for 23-24
- 21/12/2022 - Award of the Parking People & Resources Contract
- 21/12/2022 - Award of the Parking CCTV Camera Enforcement Contract
- 21/12/2022 - Award of the Parking Business Processing Contract
- 21/12/2022 - Award of the Parking Vehicle Relocations & Abandoned Vehicles Contract
- 11/01/2023 - Amendment to Replacement of Waste and Recycling Vehicles and Supply of Power to Landmann Way Waste Vehicle Depot
- 25/01/2023 - Sackville Street & Vigo Street

1. The following report includes my priorities and delivery progress to date:

2.1. City Management

2.2. Food Waste Recycling

The latest phase of Westminster Council's Food Waste Recycling service is currently in Hyde Park, Bayswater, Lancaster Gate, Westbourne (south) and Knightsbridge & Belgravia Wards. The service has been very popular among residents and includes a kerbside service for individual households and small mansion blocks with off street space for the storage of small bins. For mansion blocks and estates, there will be a communal service with larger bins, and a neighbourhood service with 'on-street' communal bin access for properties without off street storage for bins, such as flats above shops. This is an opt-in service with those properties wishing to use it signing up online. Current rubbish and recycling collection frequencies will not be changed. The next phase of the service will be for St James's, Marylebone and West End Wards.

2.3. Snow and Ice Removals – Winter Provisions 22/23

In preparation for rough winter weather, we have a full Salt Barn in Alperton holding 1,500 tonnes of rock salt and we will order more salt as we use the stock. We have also purchased over 20 tonnes of bagged white salt and specialist corrosion-inhibiting de-icer (for schools, estates, footbridges and council properties). There are 7 carriageway gritting vehicles, each able to distribute 8 tonnes of salt, 5 smaller vehicles for mechanically gritting the pavements and segregated cycleways, almost 200 on-street salt bins across the City for sweepers to use in gritting pavements, and 3 weather sensors, giving us real-time road surface temperatures.

This plan is in effect from 1 November each year and provides four levels of mobilisation: Parks & Bridges is a response to marginal conditions in only the most exposed parts of our network on frosty nights when most of the City would not need to be treated. Precautionary salting is carried out in susceptible areas (e.g., parks and exposed carriageways). Pre-treatment is a response to definite warnings of snow, provided there is no wind or rain forecast that would blow or wash the salt away before snow arrives, and Full Winter Service involves the treatment of roads and pavements in accordance with a specified hierarchy of priorities in descending numerical order (Priority 1, then Priority 2, then Priority 3).

2.4. Dumping Hot Spots in Westminster

We are now working on a trial using CCTV cameras located in three dumping 'hot spot' areas of Westminster, Denbigh Street junction, Foley Street and Warlock Road junction. Cameras have now been installed at these locations and will send footage to the viewing platform which uses Artificial Intelligence to identify suspected fly tippers. Our City Inspectors review the footage and where a vehicle is identified as being involved in a fly tipping incident, the registered vehicle keeper details that will be requested from the DVLA. Once an alleged offender is identified, formal enforcement action will commence either by way of an interview under caution or by the issuing of a penalty notice. If this trial is successful we will extend it across other 'hot spots' in the City and continue to take strong action against the rubbish dumpers.

2.5. Waste Action Squad (WAS) Update

The Waste Action Squad has undertaken over 1861 enforcement actions against residential waste so far this financial year with an expected total of around 3200 enforcement actions for the full financial year. Since the pilot programme began on 10 October 2022, the WAS Team has made contact with over 686 people throughout the borough. The team have worked with our waste partners Veolia to deep cleanse 50 dumping hotspots and City Inspectors have carried out 209 waste interventions. This includes 32 Section 47 notices to businesses and 6 to residents. We have also issued 18 waste transfer notices to ensure that businesses have the right waste disposal contracts in place.

On street engagement with residents has been welcomed by local communities and is providing valuable insight into local street cleanliness issues that we can resolve. Stakeholders are widely supportive of the activity and feel that it signals that tackling on street dumping is a priority for the Council. The communications promoted through local social media has been very successful, with a high engagement rate, despite a limited budget.

2.6. Public Conveniences Update

2.6.1. Broadwick Street toilets

The street level toilets at Broadwick Street are now fully accessible and will re-open imminently after undergoing refurbishment. Any leasing of the underground facility will enable the sustainable funding of new toilets in the area and their upkeep.

2.6.2. Carnaby Street toilets

The Carnaby Street toilets have now reopened to the public, following previous cottaging incidents witnessed by children. The Police raised this as a safeguarding issue and instructed us to either close the toilets or deploy a permanent security presence and restrict entry to one male at a time. We continue to work with the MET and security guards on how best to deter cottaging activity. Since 1st February, an attendant has been on site at Carnaby St during all opening times and signage will alert people to this presence.

2.7. Parking Occupancy Survey

Our last Parking Occupancy Survey was carried out in 2018 and since then there have not been any significant changes in the hours of operation in the City's parking zones. Between the survey years (2018 and 2022) the most significant findings were an overall decrease of 2,547 parking spaces available, a decrease in the number of theoretical spaces at single yellow lines of 2,548. The number of loading bays throughout the City has increased by 229 spaces, and the number of electric vehicle charging bays has increased by 40%. Across all zones the pay to park weekday daytime occupancy has increased and the average citywide pressure is over 80%.

In line with our Fairer Environment ambitions, we have installed/converted a number of dedicated resident electric vehicle (EV) charging bays within resident bays to help alleviate the demand pressure on the general EV charging bays and to encourage continued take up of EVs. At the time of writing there are roughly 434 lamp-column charge points for the exclusive use of EV resident permit holders, and their implementation continues at pace.

2.8. Cycling

2.8.1 Santander Cycle Stands

Discussions are ongoing and a bid submitted with Transport for London (TfL) on the transfer of 5 docking stations and associated equipment with plans to locate them in the North-West of the City. Installation has begun with one at Maida Hill, to be followed by one at Westbourne Green which requires a revised planning application. The other three will follow and we are awaiting installation dates. We are also discussing finding a site for the new Santander e-bike pilot self-charging docking stations and agreed to find a suitable location in the West End.

2.8.2 Cleveland Street Cycleway

On 31 January we opened a public consultation with Camden Council on the proposed Cleveland St Cycleway, between Maple St and Mortimer St. This section of Cleveland St is a one-way Northbound boundary road between Westminster and Camden, which we are proposing to make two-way for cyclists. The consultation will run until 3 March 2023, and we encourage all residents and stakeholders to participate. Aside from the two-way cycling boundary, a summary of the proposals includes a new zebra crossing at Maple Street, Segregated contraflow link to Cycleway 27 on Clipstone Street, and a 'no loading' restriction along Cleveland Street to make cycling safer and more continuous.

2.9 Dockless Bikes in Westminster

We continue our efforts to enforce against dockless bikes which pose a hazard or cause an obstruction to those travelling on our pavements. Since 8 August 2022 we have seized 22 dockless bikes and received over 330 complaints from the community. We continue ongoing dialogue with providers to ensure our streets are being kept safe. Officers are currently working with the bike companies to identify approximately 200 locations parking bay locations across the City.

We are disappointed by central government's decision to postpone the Transport Bill as officers have been working with TfL and London Councils on developing a pan-London dockless vehicle byelaw to provide consistent approaches to managing the dockless market, which will include e-scooters, dockless bikes and other dockless modes which may emerge. This work is no longer being progressed as any byelaw made is expected to be superseded by any new primary regulatory controls introduced under the new Transport Bill in 2024/2025.

2.10. School Streets Update

Following updates to our School Streets Pilot programme in late 2022, most of our School Streets have received CCTV installation. Installation at All Souls CE Primary School and St Peter's Eaton Square Primary School is programmed for late February 2023. Vehicles on all other School Streets (who have had CCTV installed) can now be issued Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs). PCN numbers remain low, however, officers are monitoring trends which will be fed into the development of the refresh of the School Streets programme in March 2023.

2.11. Public Realm

2.11.1. Connaught Village Green

We are making progress with the Connaught Village Green proposal in Hyde Park Ward. The small area of public realm at the junction of Connaught Street and Kendal Street currently provides little amenity but this has the potential to become the heart of the village. Additionally, Connaught Street is a route for East/West traffic through the area that has generated complaints from the Residents' Associations about the negative impact of vehicle levels in what is predominantly a residential district. The scheme proposes a raised table to calm traffic along Connaught Street but does not propose any measures to reduce traffic. It is understood that a new traffic management strategy will be considered for the area to address this issue. A public consultation will begin in March.

2.12. Park Lane Cycle Lane

In response to Transport for London's (TfL) public consultation on plans for a temporary cycle lane on Park Lane our submission to TfL stated that we welcome the improvements made on Park Lane for walking, cycling and bus use and hope these changes made by TfL are retained, as it provides enhanced options for safe and pleasant onward journeys. However, we are looking for assurances from TfL that they will consider further improvement measures to minimise potential conflicts and to support the safety for all road users. We look forward to seeing the results of the consultation in due course.

3.1 Air Quality in Westminster

3.2. Electric Cooking

We are in discussions with Officers, Landowners, and stakeholders about encouraging the hospitality industry to replace gas hobs with electric induction hobs in order to reduce PM 2.5 particulates. Positive activity on this initiative would lead to improved air quality throughout the borough.

3.3. Transport Based Air Pollution

Officers continue to progress discussions with stakeholders on taking forward actions under our Freight, Servicing and Deliveries Strategy to improve air quality in the City. We are currently seeking stakeholders' permission to expand learnings out to other partners as part of the Sustainable City Charter's toolkit as a case study.