

**Date:** 25 April 2023

**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 6 March 2023:**

- 08/03/2023 - Procurement of Contracts for Round Trip Flexible and Geofence Car Sharing Services
- 22/03/2023 - New Kerbside Permissions' Charging Model
- 24/03/2023 - Electric Street Cleansing Vehicles – City Wide
- 24/03/2023 - Continental Landscape Contract Extension April 2023

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

**2.1 City Management**

**2.2 Food Waste Recycling Update**

By spring 2023, all remaining wards in our pilot will have food waste recycling services rolled out to all eligible households. The final wards to receive this service will be West End, St James's and Marylebone. To date approximately 42,000 households now have access to either a kerbside, a communal or an on-street neighborhood food waste recycling service. Figures are outlined below.

Number of properties with access to a kerbside service	34,678
Number of properties with access to a communal service	15,920
Number of properties with access to the neighborhood on-street bin service	9,137
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>59,735</u></b>

**2.3 Reduction and Recycling Plan (RRP) April 2023- March 2025**

In aligning ourselves with Mayor of London's overall waste strategy targets, in late autumn 2022 we submitted our draft RRP to the GLA for further feedback. I am happy to report that they welcomed several points in our proposal which included aspirations on increasing our household and local authority collected waste recycling rates, our initial roll out of the food waste service, our proposed contamination action plan, and communications materials.

Given the feedback from the GLA and Members officers have now updated our proposals to strengthen links to our Fairer Environment aims, our updated Air Quality Action Plan, and Responsible Procurement & Commissioning Strategy and formally submitted our proposals to the GLA.

## **2.4 Waste Action Squad (WAS) Update**

Since the WAS programme commenced in October 2022, the Team have now completed the following wards as a part of its pilot programme, Hyde Park, West End, Pimlico North, Marylebone, Harrow Road, Church Street, Queens Park, Maida Vale and Lancaster Gate. This equates to over 1700 engagements with people on our streets about waste and street cleanliness, understanding their concerns and educating residents on how to dispose of their waste appropriately.

The Team has taken on feedback from this engagement (including areas of improvement) and are already enhancing the way the service is delivered centred on responding to local issues. This includes deep cleaning problematic pavements, in parallel with an education campaign to businesses around how to keep pavement stain free and a photographic audit in place to support any subsequent enforcement. A full report on the WAS will be discussed at the April session for this Committee.

## **2.5 Public Conveniences Update**

Following the tragic fatal accident involving a maintenance worker at the Cambridge Circus 'pop-up' urinal, the Council has temporarily closed all street urinal and Automatic Public Toilet facilities whilst health and safety compliance checks are conducted by external experts. These compliance checks will then inform officer recommendations on whether to repair, replace or remove facilities.

## **2.6 Cleansing Update**

There has been a notable recent increase in graffiti incidents being reported to the Council, because of this the resources deployed to tackle graffiti are currently being reviewed. Work is also continuing on changing the cleansing vehicle fleet from diesel to electric. To date, 50% of all street cleansing vehicles are now electric powered and plans have been approved to replace a further 25% of vehicles in 23/24. There are currently no electric powered options for the final 25% of cleansing vehicles and officers are working closely with manufacturers to develop this new market.

## **2.7 Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Update**

As set out by the ambitions of the EV Strategy 2019, I am happy to report that as of April 2023 we will have a total of approximately 2,253 charge points throughout the City. We have more than doubled the on-street charging provision over the course of the past year, with the majority of this uptick to the installation of shared power supply charge points (commonly referred to as lamp column charge points or LCCP) for residents, with over 2,000 units being supplied by *Siemens* and *Ubitricity*.

This year officers will be reviewing our outcomes to date and will be focusing on our rapid charger provision as well as upgrading our current stock. We are committed to engaging

further with stakeholders and businesses to extend our network particularly with the rollout of our EV Waste Fleet.

Date	5.5kW LCCP (Lamp Column Charge Points)	7-22kW Fast charger	50kW rapid charger	Total charge points
31 Mar 2022	920	170	22	1,112
9 Mar 2023	2,005	200	28	2,253

## 2.8 Queensway Strategy Group Update

The Queensway Strategy Group met last on 1 March 2023, to review progress from their last session. Notable topics included tackling substance misuse related ASB in a collaborative effort between external partners, MET colleagues and the Public, Protection & Licensing Service. Reflecting upon the work the Waste Action Squad conducted in late February 2023, and discussion on Parking Marshalls wearing body cameras following an assault on a Parking Marshall in January 2023.

## 2.9 Active Travel Update

At Full Council on 8 March 2023 the Council approved the 2023/24 budget. In total the budget allocates £35m towards active travel throughout the City in alignment with our Fairer Westminster aims to improve air quality and become a net zero council by 2030 and a net zero city by 2040. The funds will allow for measures such as improvements to streets and footways to increase accessibility and remove dangerous obstructions; increase in cycling provision such as cycle lanes, cycle stand spaces and cycle hangars; and implementing more School Streets schemes.

With this budget the Council is committed to drop 100 kerbs to make our streets more accessible for all and especially for those with wheelchairs, mobility scooters and buggies, with a £2m annual program of pavement renewals to maintain the high quality of Westminster's footways. Delivering over 450 new residential cycle storage hangar spaces from April 2023 to March 2024. Creating 15km of new or upgraded cycle lanes, which will result in almost all residents living within 400m of a high-quality cycle route by the end of 2025 and establishing two-way cycling on 20 more one-way streets by the end of 2025.

## 2.10 Cargo-Bike Launch

As a part of our commitment to active travel on 29 March we launched a new sustainable transport scheme with micro-mobility provider *Beryl*. A number of new e-cargo bikes will be available to hire in Westminster as part of a new pilot designed to help residents and businesses travel across the city in a greener way.

Fitted with an electric-assist motor for extra power, the bikes are ideal for transporting small to medium loads, such as work tools, shopping or sports equipment. They can be used on cycle lanes, making them a sustainable alternative to vans and cars, helping reduce carbon emissions and traffic congestion while improving air quality.

## **2.11 Tree Pits in Westminster**

As aligned with our Fairer Westminster vision of community participation, improving the appearance of streets, enhancing biodiversity, and promotion of well-being, officers have been working on guidance for residents regarding community gardening in tree pits. We define this as introducing flowers, grasses, or shrubs into existing tree pits on public highway by individual residents or groups of residents. Guidance and examples of tree pits will be online on our website in due course.

## **2.12 Public Realm - Covent Garden NTM Scheme**

Following a joint consultation with the London Borough of Camden, 66% of people have given their support in making the Covent Garden Traffic Management Scheme permanent. Our main aim of the scheme was to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, restricting vehicles to encourage walking, and to make the area feel safe. For local businesses this will also create a more pleasant experience for shops, restaurants, and outdoor dining. The changes made permanent by the scheme will also be better for the environment and air quality, by reducing pollution and traffic congestion.

## **2.13 Westminster Bus Network Changes**

Following TfL's public consultation on cuts to the central and inner London bus network, TfL has confirmed that several Westminster routes below will be changed. We continue to work with TfL on communicating these changes with those who live, work and do business in the City and we encourage those affected to check the TfL website for changes. The changes will be introduced on 29 April 2023. Routes with major changes include:

- **Route 507 (Victoria Station to Waterloo Station):** Route 507 will be withdrawn.
- **Route 332 (Paddington to Brent Park Tesco):** Route 332 will be withdrawn and be replaced by revised route 16.
- **Route 59 (Euston Station to Streatham Hill):** Route 59 will be rerouted at Holborn station to St Bartholomew's Hospital and no longer run to Euston station.
- **Route 3 (Whitehall to Crystal Palace Bus Station):** Route 3 which will be rerouted at Lambeth Bridge to Victoria following much of the current route 507 between these two points.
- **Route 26 (Waterloo Station to Hackney Wick):** Route 26 will be rerouted at Aldwych to Victoria station instead of serving Waterloo.
- **Route 23 (Hammersmith Bus Station to Westbourne Park Bus Garage):** Route 23 will be rerouted from Hyde Park Corner to Aldwych, replacing route 6 between these points.

## **3. Air Quality in Westminster**

### **3.1 Air Quality Action Plan**

Internal work is progressing on the council's emerging Air Quality Action Plan, to replace the existing 2019-24 AQAP. A public consultation on the new Action Plan is expected to take place in the summer of this year.

### **3.2 AQ Monitoring Locations**

Funding has been secured for the rationalisation and redeployment of automatic AQ monitors in the Oxford Street area. This will allow us to maintain monitoring in Oxford Street, while also extending the capabilities of some of our other sites by increasing the number of pollutants

being measured at those locations (e.g. Covent Garden) and also allow us to install a new site in Queen's Park.

### **3.3 External Funding award: Clean Air Walking Routes**

The council has been awarded £70,000 from Defra's Air Quality Grant programme to deliver the development of a Clean Air Walking route tool to support users in reducing their exposure to air pollution in central London. This project is made possible by the ongoing development of the Council's Air Quality Data Platform, which will be updated on in the next version of this report.

### **3.4 External Funding award: Smarter Greener Logistics**

Cross River Partnership (with Westminster as its lead Authority) has been awarded £1m from Defra's Air Quality Grant programme to deliver network of Mini-Freight Hubs in central London that are serviced by river freight and Zero Emission Last Mile Deliveries. Westminster is one of 14 boroughs partnered on the project.

### **3.5 External funding award: Smoke Control Areas**

The Council has been awarded £11,000 by Defra to support our ongoing work as a Smoke Control Area. Officers are scoping the best use of this new funding, which may support the implementation of new powers for local authorities to bring river vessels and canal boats under existing Smoke Control Area requirements.

### **3.6 Anti-Idling in Westminster**

In an absence of national legislation on idling and delayed publication of the Transport Bill, officers continue to work with stakeholders across the City to promote anti-idling in alignment with our fairer Westminster aims. We are currently working with the *Mums for Lungs* group and with their help we will introduce 'Switch off engine' posters outside schools within the borough.

### **3.7 Planning policy update and Air Quality**

The GLA has finalised and published its new Air Quality Neutral and Air Quality Positive guidance, which is aimed at ensuring that new development does not exceed certain emissions thresholds for building emissions or associated transport emissions. Westminster played an active role in the consultation process of these new policies, and we welcome them as being stronger than the previous iterations. The policies are already referenced to in the City Plan and Environmental Supplementary Planning Guidance.