

MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 20 July 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Liam Curran (Chair), Mark Ingleby (Vice-Chair), Andre Bourne, Amanda De Ryk, Eva Stamirowski and James-J Walsh

APOLOGIES: Councillor Suzannah Clarke, Councillor Sophie McGeevor

ALSO PRESENT: Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager), Michael Bryan (Service Group Manager, Waste Management), Jereme McKaskill (Senior Traffic Engineer, Project Centre), Simon Moss (Policy and Development Manager, Transport), Freddie Murray (SGM Asset Strategy and Technical Support), Wendy Nicholas (Strategic Waste and Environment Manager), Janet Senior (Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration), Kevin Sheehan (Executive Director for Customer Services) and Nigel Tyrell (Head of Environment)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2017

- 1.1 **Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June be agreed as an accurate record.

2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 Councillor James-J Walsh declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to item 7 as the founder of bakerloolinextension.com

3. Responses from Mayor and Cabinet

- 3.1 The Committee requested confirmation that the letter from the Mayor to neighbouring local authorities on home energy conservation and joint working had been sent. It asked to be updated regarding any responses.
- 3.2 **Resolved:** that the Committee request that it informed about any responses to the Mayor's letter regarding joint working and home energy conservation.

4. Fire safety in tall buildings

- 4.1 Kevin Sheehan (Executive Director for Customer Services) introduced the report. The following key points were noted:
- The report provided a comprehensive update of work that had taken place to date.
 - Three blocks of housing in Lewisham (Hatfield Close (two blocks) and Gerrard House) had been identified for remedial work.
 - It was hoped that contactors would be in place next week to remove and replace the cladding on these blocks, consideration would also be given to installing sprinkler systems in these buildings.
 - The only other group blocks managed by registered providers which were of concern were in Clive Terrace in Forest Hill (managed by London and Quadrant Housing).

- In terms of none social housing stock – responses had been received from all owners or managers of tall buildings in Lewisham, except Aragon Tower, which was still outstanding.
- None of the blocks in the borough, that had been assessed, had aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding.
- Almost all owners of tall buildings in the borough were working with the Council to carry out additional checks and safety measures.
- The list of tall buildings in the borough had been given to the borough commander – who had developed a programme to visit each of the high rise buildings with landlords to perform assessments.
- The newest buildings in the borough met the relevant fire safety standards and it was positive that none of them had ACM cladding.

4.2 Kevin Sheehan, Janet Senior (Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration) and Freddie Murray (Service Group Manager, Asset Strategy and Technical Support) responded to questions from the Committee. The following key points were noted:

- For those buildings that the Council had carried out the building control approvals on, there was information about the materials used for construction. This had been checked by officers and there were no issues identified.
- For those buildings that the Council had not carried out the building control on, information would be sought from developers.
- There was a limit to how much the Council could do to push private developers. Once owners had given reassurance that inspections were in place, that they had done their risk assessments and they had been engaged with the fire brigade, that was the point at which the Council would recognise that the owner of the building had taken responsibility.
- If there were particular complaints about a building from tenants, there were interventions the Council could make, though these complaints would have to be fairly consistent and detailed before action could be taken.
- The Council had been in touch with all owners or managers of tall buildings in the borough.
- There were named, responsible officers for each development who were accountable for health and safety and fire regulations in their own building.
- It was the responsibility of owners and responsible officers to satisfy the fire brigade that they were doing what they should be doing and that the systems that should be in place were in place.
- The Council had asked for reassurance that the appropriate systems were in place.
- The fire brigade would inform the Council of anything that they were concerned about regarding tall residential buildings.
- The Council did not have many powers or duties in relation to private blocks.
- The fire brigade had relationships with developers or agents managing buildings to assure fire safety.
- The Council did not have the power or the duty to give agencies managing private blocks a 'clean bill of health' regarding their responsibilities.
- The Council could seek reassurance from private developers and managing agents that they were doing the things they should be doing.

- For registered social landlords the regulator (the homes and communities agency) was responsible for overseeing compliance.
- In the Council's own stock – it could ensure that all the relevant risk assessments were in place and that the any issues discovered as a result of inspections were dealt with.
- If the Council was notified that there had been an error or failure in the application or sign off of a building control approval then it had powers to assure that a remedy was made.
- The Council had limited powers to compel private developers to act – so it had to build influence with partners to act.
- Private developers could have their own building control sign off for their developments. This was likely to be one of the issues considered as part of the Government's inquiry.
- All Lewisham schools had been checked as part of the recent work on fire safety. Once school had cladding on it, which found not to be ACM. The Council had written to all schools about updating their fire risk assessments.
- Officers had also been in contact with Lewisham Hospital about fire safety in its buildings.
- The health and safety risk assessments were being updated for all Council buildings.
- There was cladding on Eros House, officers would confirm whether or not this was ACM.
- Officers would check with Goldsmiths University about the safety in its halls of residence.
- The starting point for the recent fire safety work was tall buildings with cladding, which had a strong residential component, without 24 hour security arrangements. These were the highest risk buildings.
- Residential tall buildings were risky because they had families sleeping in them and most did not have 24 hour security services.
- Most non-residential buildings had plans for evacuation.
- The message for tall residential buildings was for residents to 'stay put' in the event of a fire.
- It was not easy to answer to questions about the potential for unaccounted for people living in residential buildings.
- There was not a mechanism for tracking who was and was not in any residential building at a given time.
- The Council knew who lived in each of its buildings – but it could not account for their location at any time of the day or night.
- A system to track residents' movements was likely to be intrusive.
- Costs for the replacement of cladding in Lewisham buildings had not yet been finalised but it was likely to cost millions of pounds.
- The Mayor had written to the secretary of state to request additional funding to cover the costs.

4.3 In the Committee's discussion the following key points were also noted:

- One of the key issues in many disasters was not that the systems to prevent or control risk were not in place – but that issues had slipped through the system on some level.
- It was important that the Council had robust systems in place to prevent issues being missed or overlooked.
- The outcome of the inquiry into the Grenfell tower disaster might lead to the tightening up of regulations and closer scrutiny of the techniques and systems used by developers to stretch the regulations.

- Councillors would be asking more questions about the quality and delivery of new developments.
- A public information campaign was required to ensure that residents were aware of the measures they could take to manage the fire risks in their households. This should include a particular focus on the safety of electrical items and might include proactive work in schools.
- There was a potential lack of in house expertise and experience to assess some of the complex equipment (including new heating and energy machinery) in new developments.
- There were examples where in house experts working for developers had mitigated down building planning regulations.

4.4 **Resolved:** that the report be noted. The Committee also agreed that it would write to the Chair of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority to encourage the commissioning of a public information campaign about fire safety. In addition, the Committee agreed that it would share its views with Mayor and Cabinet as follows:

- The Committee welcomes officers' report on fire safety in tall buildings. The Committee recommends that there be an ongoing commitment to full openness and clarity regarding the fire safety work taking place in the borough.
- The Committee requests that a publicly available list of all tall buildings in the borough be produced for ease of reference. This should contain a summary of fire safety activities, that can be cross checked against each building, with the action taken and assurances provided to date. This would include, for example, dates on key building control actions, whether private or council, fire safety inspections, LFB inspections, cladding checked or not etc.
- Officers have agreed to provide additional information about the Council's responsibility for buildings for which it has provided building control services. The checklist for buildings (requested above) would need to include actions taken by officers to meet all building control requirements in those buildings. This information should also be provided to the fire service.
- The Committee is concerned about the complex technical nature of some of the materials and machinery being used in new developments. The Committee therefore recommends that officers be tasked with considering what expert advice the appropriate Council Committees need when making decisions in relation to new developments.

5. Implementation of the cycling strategy

5.1 Simon Moss (Policy and Development Manager) and Jereme McKaskill (Senior Traffic Engineer, Project Centre) introduced the report. The following key points were noted:

- Officers had been developing a cycling strategy for Lewisham, building on from the work carried out by Lewisham Cyclists.
- The new strategy fitted in with the review of the local implementation plan and the Mayor of London's transport strategy.
- A range of data had been used to develop targets for Lewisham's cycling strategy.

- The maps circulated at the meeting set out areas which had significant numbers of collisions; this indicated where the Council should focus its resources.
- The rate of collisions in Lewisham was reducing.

5.2 Jereme McKaskill and Simon Moss responded to questions from the Committee, the following key points were noted.

- The purpose of the strategy was to get more people cycling, because the benefits associated with cycling were significant.
- The aim of the strategy was also to make Lewisham a place where it was easy and safe to cycle.
- The fear of being involved in a collision was the number one thing that kept people from riding bikes.
- Consideration would be given to placing additional cycle storage facilities around the borough.
- The strategy set out an action plan for major infrastructure developments. It was also a lobbying document for new schemes.
- Information about cycling lessons was available on the Council's website.
- Cycle training was offered to all schools in the borough.
- Work to improve cycling skills had to be accompanied by work to improve cycling infrastructure in the borough.
- The key issue with the timing of the implementation of the strategy was resources, particularly the allocation of resources from the Transport for London (TfL) business plan.
- Officers would review implementation dates to determine whether any of these could be brought forward.
- Officers were intending to take the draft strategy to Mayor and Cabinet in September. Comments on the draft from Councillors and from the Lewisham Cyclists would be welcomed.
- Some work had already been programmed for the first year of the delivery of the new strategy.

5.3 Representatives from Lewisham Cyclists addressed the Committee. The following key points were noted:

- The target dates in the draft strategy could be more ambitious, without being unachievable.
- This could be accomplished on TfL controlled roads by lobbying for the inclusion of Lewisham schemes in the Mayor of London's transport strategy.
- Lewisham Council was good at dealing with soft measures to improve cycling. But the borough needed safe places for cycling, through improvements to infrastructure.
- There were a number of issues that could be improved through the improved take up of cycling, including: reductions in obesity and obesity related disease, improvements in air quality and crowding on other forms of transport.

5.4 In the Committee discussions, these key points were also noted.

- It was important that the strategy maximised the opportunities for the development of a central cycle route along the A21.
- One of the key ways to get people cycling was to help improve their confidence on the road.

- Work should take place within the Council and with public sector partners to encourage staff to cycle.
- Consideration of issues relating to cycling was part of the Committee's remit and the conversation about cycling infrastructure would be ongoing.

5.5 **Resolved:** that the report be noted. The Committee also agreed to share its views with Mayor and Cabinet, as follows –

- The Committee recommends that there should be a communications campaign to encourage the uptake of the Council's cycle proficiency training.
- The Committee recommends that the programme of activities in the draft strategy be reevaluated to determine how the dates for implementation could be brought forward. The Committee would particularly welcome efforts to bring forward the work on the Transport for London Road Network.

6. Waste strategy implementation and performance monitoring

6.1 Nigel Tyrell (Head of Environment) and Wendy Nicholas (Strategic Waste and Environment Manager) introduced a presentation and the report. The following key points were noted:

- Lewisham sent very little waste to landfill. The incineration of waste at the South East London Combined Heat and Power plant (SELCHP) helped the Council to avoid approximately £5m in disposal costs each year, based on current costs.
- Until now, if the Council had wanted to increase its recycling rate, it would have incurred extra costs to do so because of the efficiency of the contract with SELCHP.
- When the SELCHP contract ended in 2024, incineration costs would increase.
- The current work to recycle food waste and improve dry recycling would help to avoid future costs at SELCHP.
- A large proportion of household waste (by weight) was made up of food.
- There were a number of drivers and opportunities informing the development of the Council's approach to managing its waste.
- The implementation of the new service had been delayed slightly, but changes recycling, residual waste, food waste and garden waste collection would be brought in together (in October 2017).
- Under exceptional circumstances, households would be provided with a larger refuse (residual waste for landfill/incineration) bin.
- A communication strategy was in place to inform residents about the new service. Letters would be sent to all kerbside properties, posters would be put up in prominent places and postcards would be handed out at a number of places around the borough to raise awareness.
- 'Waste advisors' would be holding roadshows and visiting homes to advise people about the new service.
- Complaints or requests would be dealt with through the Council's website. There would also be a dedicated email address for residents.

6.2 Information about fly-tipping and fixed penalty notices was circulated at the meeting and is attached to the agenda.

6.3 Nigel Tyrell, Wendy Nicholas, Kevin Sheehan and Michael Bryan (Service Group Manager, Waste Management) responded to questions from the Committee. The following key points were noted:

- The Council did not have responsibility for collecting fly-tipping on private land or that which was owned and managed by housing associations.
- Information about the tonnages of fly-tipping being collected each month indicated that it was not increasing. But as the number of street sweepers and collection rounds had been reduced, to save money, fly-tipping was being collected less quickly, which gave the perception that there was more fly-tipping taking place.
- A range of initiatives were taking place to reduce fly-tipping. Including the use of cameras.
- An approach was being trialled to enable residents to access CCTV cameras in order to preview the footage and pass the relevant information to the Council's enforcement team.
- This approach was currently being trialled with one resident in Whitefoot ward.
- The new food waste bins locked, to prevent vermin from accessing the contents.
- Dog waste could be placed in the residual waste bin or in bins in parks or streets.
- Officers had worked with boroughs that had already implemented new waste services, including new food waste collections, to learn about the potential issues and problems.
- One of the key things that officers had learnt from the visits to other Councils that that it was important to be clear about the Council's policies from the outset and to stick to the rules as much as possible.
- The waste service was collecting lots of information about recycling and waste in each ward. This enabled it to target work in particular areas that were experiencing problems.
- The communication campaign for the new service would include a range of leaflets as well as stickers and tags for bins.
- Introducing a 'community skip' in the south of the borough would be problematic, because it would likely encourage the creation of a new dumping ground in the borough, which would be quickly overwhelmed.
- Officers were reluctant to use fake cameras for fly-tipping because there was a risk that people (for example those who were victims of a crime in the vicinity of the camera) would anticipate that they could rely on the footage when this was not the case.
- Officers were using all available technology to maximise the effectiveness of their approach to enforcement.

6.4 In the Committee's discussion, the following key point was also noted:

- Councillors in Whitefoot ward had developed new leaflets about fly-tipping and waste that could be shared with other Members.

6.5 **Resolved:** that the report be noted.

7. Bakerloo line extension update

7.1 Simon Moss (Policy and Development Manager, Transport) introduced the report. The following key points were noted:

- Following TfL consultation on the Bakerloo line extension, a number of pieces of work were being developed.
- There was a significant opportunity for development at Lewisham station. The Council, TfL, the Greater London Authority and Network Rail had been working on a vision for Lewisham Station. The final report had been produced, and officers were considering it in detail.
- The other significant area of focus was New Cross Gate, officers were looking at creating a sense of 'place' as part of their exploration of development opportunities and potential improvements to the local economy. Work had already started to give consideration to options for New Cross Gate station.
- Partners (including Goldsmiths University) had ideas about how the roads in New Cross Gate might be improved, including developing cycling and pedestrian access.

7.2 Simon Moss and Janet Senior (Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration) responded to questions from the Committee. The following key points were noted:

- Officers had given consideration to carrying out work to improve the Lewisham Town Centre, beyond the Lewisham Gateway development, this had included putting in a bid for funding to TfL to improve the high street.
- Officers in planning were aware of the important features of Lewisham's town centres, including the distinctive and diverse local businesses that catered to Lewisham's different communities.
- Additional resources had been made available for developing the Council's approach to the Bakerloo line, including the recruitment of an officer to determine the resources that would be required to make the most of the opportunities it presented.

7.3 **Resolved:** that the report be noted.

8. Select Committee work programme

8.1 The Committee discussed the work programme, the following key points were noted:

- There was a short discussion about of the date of the next meeting.
- The Committee discussed a request from the Lee Forum to attend a future Committee meeting. Members were interested in the work of Lewisham's neighbourhood forums but it was noted that there was a great deal of work taking place across the borough in the different neighbourhood groups. It was agreed that, in the first instance, the Committee would prefer to receive a written submission from the Lee Forum.
- The Committee would continue with its review of the delivery of the Catford redevelopment.

8.2 **Resolved:** that the date of the next meeting be moved to 13 September; it was also agreed that information about the Council's key planning policies would be shared with Members of the Committee so that a further steer could be provided to officers in Planning about their report for September.

9. Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet

9.1 **Resolved:** that the Committee's comments under items four and five be referred to Mayor and Cabinet.

The meeting ended at 9.40 pm

Chair:

Date:
