

MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 12 September 2023 at 7.00 pm

In attendance: Councillors James Royston, Edison Huynh, Tauseef Anwar, Liam Curran, Sian Eiles, John Paschoud and Eva Stamirowski

Also present: Councillor Mark Ingleby, Councillor Brenda Dacres (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning), Councillor Louise Krupski (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate), Seamus Adams (Head of Commercial Operations and Development), Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager), Paul Boulton (Interim Director of Public Realm), Patrick Dubeck (Director of Inclusive Regeneration) and Nazeya Hussain (Interim Director for Place), Lucy Kirk (Environmental Protection Manager)

Also present virtually: Laura Ahern (LUF Lead Programme Manager), Sefkan Altuntop John Bennett (Head of Economy, Jobs, and Partnerships), Sidra Hill-Reid (Head of Community Education and Cultural Assets) and Dr Catherine Mbema (Director of Public Health)

NB: Those Councillors listed as joining virtually were not in attendance for the purposes of the meeting being quorate, any decisions taken or to satisfy the requirements of s85 Local Government Act 1972

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2023

- 1.1 **Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting on 19 June be agreed as an accurate record.

2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 Councillor Mark Ingleby declared an interest in relation to item five as a member of the Musicians Union.

3. Responses from Mayor and Cabinet

- 3.1 There were none.

4. Air quality action plan

- 4.1 Paul Boulton (Interim Director of Public Realm) and Lucy Kirk (Environmental Protection Manager) introduced the report noting the key elements of the report as well as a summary of the progress made in the first year of the delivery of the plan.
- 4.2 Paul Boulton and Lucy Kirk responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- Anti-idling signs had been put up at 75 schools around the borough – it was recognised that more could be done. A communications plan was planned, and more enforcement would take place in future.
- There had been a number of reports on air quality and the low traffic neighbourhood – an update to Mayor and Cabinet was forthcoming.
- It could be challenging to issue penalty charge notices for anti-idling – further information on the numbers of PCNs would be provided following the meeting.
- Further information would be provided on the availability of electrical points for vendors in parks.
- Officers would consider the impact of modal filters in the vicinity of Perry Vale ward.
- The intention of modal filtering was to discourage traffic from using residential roads and to choose active travel.
- A number of diffusion tubes monitoring air quality were co-located with air quality analysers, which allowed for the adjustment of data from the tubes for potential bias.
- Diffusion tubes were nonetheless an effective and cost-effective mechanism for monitoring air quality across the borough.
- The Government Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) required councils to adjust data collected by diffusion tubes for bias.
- The Council was required to report to DEFRA on its targets, but the Council was ambitious to meet the World Health Organisation (WHO) targets for air quality.
- Further work could take place with businesses to share the message about the importance of switching engines off when cars were stationary (anti-idling)
- There would be a number of upcoming opportunities to install new bike hangars. There was a cost to the Council to providing and maintaining cycle parking. Officers would further explore opportunities for funding.
- There had been ten school air quality audits. A number of different recommendations had been made – including a number that could be implemented across all schools. Key themes would be assessed and provided to councillors.
- It was recognised that the initial funding being provided for schools would be insufficient to make substantial changes, but it would be a start.
- The ‘school super zone’ project had been initiated by the Greater London Authority – work had taken place at the first school in Lewisham to access this funding, to assess its needs. If the school identified air quality as an issue, then the super zone funding could be used to implement measures from the air quality audits.

4.3 In Committee discussions the following key points were also noted:

- It is widely known that diffusion tubes were not accurate. The information on the Council website was also unclear about what it was monitoring and the difference between the WHO and DEFRA targets.
- Officers should consult local people (including councillors) on the potential locations for cycle parking.

4.4 Councillor Krupski was invited the address the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- Work was taking place with colleagues at Transport for London (TfL) to improve planting and greening on TFL managed roads.
- Further work would take place to consider the electrification of access points for ice-cream vans in parks.
- Improvements were being planned for monitoring levels of active travel.
- Work was planned to retrofit schools as funding became available.

4.5 **Resolved:** that the report be noted. It was also agreed that:

- The Committee would support the increased enforcement of anti-idling measures.
- That information would be provided on the number of penalty charge notices issued for idling. Members would also welcome additional efforts with businesses to improve signage (particularly at supermarkets and train stations)
- More information would be provided on plans to increase the availability of electrical points for vendors in parks (and that in future reports the effect on air quality should be considered).
- That additional data would be provided on the impact of modal filters on air quality (e.g., on Bishopsthorpe and Silverdale Road)
- That active travel should be prioritised, and that further funding should be sought for the implementation of new cycle hangars (not requiring public contributions)
- More information would be provided on the outcome of air quality audits for schools;
- That members would welcome further work on the interoperability of data on the Council website to enable comparison with neighbouring boroughs.

5. Levelling Up Fund update

5.1 John Bennett (Head of Economy, Jobs and Partnerships) introduced the report. John provided an overview of the initial stages of the three projects planned for Lewisham Town Centre (the market, Lewisham Library and the improved connectivity of the high street) utilising £19m of Government funding and £5m of match funding from the Council.

5.2 John Bennett, Sidra Hill-Reid (Head of Community Education and Cultural Assets), Seamus Adams (Head of Commercial Operations and Development and (Patrick Dubeck (Director of Inclusive Regeneration) responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- There were a number of risks being tracked and mitigated - timescales and funding were both key.
- ‘Value engineering’ described the process of specifying different qualities of materials and finishes to reduce costs – or to remove some items from projects, if required. Further funding was also being sought.
- Consideration was being given to different opportunities for new food markets and other potential options for the evening/night-time economy.

- Work had taken place to assess the options for relocating the library (nothing suitable had been found) – a programme of pop-up events was being planned (alongside the home library service and signposting to other local libraries)
- Engagement had been taking place with local people. Future work would take place with user groups to ensure that plans met the needs of all local people.
- There was a strong focus on accessibility and co-production.
- Work had been taking place with market traders to assess their needs and balance the opportunities for the market to expand its offer.
- Work was taking place to ensure that the look and design for was consistent across the different elements of the programme.
- Consideration was being given to the opportunities for music and performance through the Council's cultural strategy.
- Work was taking place to assess (and future proof) the IT offer for the library.
- Lewisham Library would remain the borough's largest library – with an extended and improved offer.
- Retrofit and energy efficiency improvements were being considered as part of the refurbishment.

5.3 In Committee discussions the following key points were also noted:

- Members were concerned about the amount of time that the library would be closed.
- The improvements to the market should not come at the cost of longstanding traders and the needs of the local community through gentrification.
- The new library should include suitable provision for study and work with desks and IT provision.
- Consideration should be given to the café/hospitality offer in the library to make sure it was a good fit for the building.

5.4 **Resolved:** that the report be noted. It was also agreed that the Committee would share its views with Mayor and Cabinet – as follows:

- The Committee recommends that further consideration be given to the development of the night-time offer in Lewisham Town Centre – including food and beverage options, as well as the potential for live music. This should build on existing knowledge and experiences of success elsewhere in London.
- The Committee believes that further work should take place with young people, people who are disabled and members of groups with other protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) – as well as a cross section of people from different socio-economic backgrounds to co-design the work taking place – particularly in relation to the accessibility and suitability of public spaces.
- The Committee recommends that further work should take place to communicate, to residents and business, the alternative arrangements in place following the temporary closure of Lewisham Library.

- The Committee believes that a system of impact measurement should be developed to ensure that the redevelopment is meeting its intended objectives. Members ask that this includes an assessment of the availability of workspaces in the refurbished library for students.
- The Committee notes the Council's objective to make the borough carbon neutral by 2023 – and it encourages the ambitious delivery of energy efficiency and retrofit measures as part of the renovation of Lewisham Library¹. Members would encourage bids for external funding to enhance this work.

6. Sustainable Streets

6.1 Seamus Adams (Head of Commercial Operations and Development) introduced the report.

6.2 Seamus Adams and Paul Boulton responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- The process for the consultation would be reviewed to ensure that the correct materials were being delivered to residents in the correct wards.
- A further update would be provided to all councillors about the future phases of the programme.
- The programme had the flexibility to deal with future issues caused by displacement of parking.
- As the programme was delivered it was anticipated that residents would see (and appreciate) the benefits.
- Lessons had been learnt from the first set of consultations to inform the future delivery of the consultation programme.
- It was recognised that some groups were overrepresented in the consultation (particularly car drivers) – and work was taking place to increase engagement with all groups.
- Some data cleansing was carried out to ensure that online responses to the consultation were valid.

6.3 In Committee discussions the following key points were also noted:

- The maps in the report were unclear (and appeared to have the old ward boundaries) – and some of the consultation materials had been sent to residents in the wrong ward.
- Members expressed their concern about the lack of progress in implementing recommendations previously made by the Committee.
- There was concern about the underrepresentation of some groups.
- Members would welcome the attendance of officers at ward assembly meetings.
- Further technical advice should be sought on the process for data cleansing and the validity of online submissions to the consultation.
- It would be difficult to weight the responses to the consultation based on the low numbers of responses from some groups.

¹ The Committee expects retrofitting measures to be in line with best practice – including the most recent PAS standards for whole building retrofit (rather than isolated improvements).

- 6.4 Councillor Krupski (Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport) was invited to address the Committee – the following key points were noted:
- Responses to the consultation were not weighted to correct for underrepresentation.
 - The consultations were not referendums. The Council had to make difficult decisions when necessary.
 - Work had taken place to engage with councillors through all stages of the programme.
 - Future parking pressure would come from outside of the borough.

6.5 **Resolved:** that the report be noted. It was also agreed that the Committee would refer its views to Mayor and Cabinet, as follows:

- The Committee reiterates the recommendations it made at its meeting on 19 June 2023 and requests that officers provide a comprehensive response:
 - that further information (and timelines) be provided on the implementation of cycle hangars, parklets and improvements to the transparency of communication around waiting lists for cycle parking.
 - that priority should be given to enforcing contraventions in areas with existing parking controls – particularly in the case of protected junctions, cycle lanes and anti-social pavement parking.
 - that the Committee would welcome further improvements and enlargement of protected space for active travel.
 - that the maps being used in the consultation should be updated with the current ward boundaries.
- The Committee also recommends that Councillors (particularly those in wards impacted by the programme) be engaged at an early stage of the development of proposals – and kept up to date as consultations are carried out. The Committee believes that lessons from each stage of the consultation should be learnt in order to improve the following stages. Members also believe that further consideration should be given to engaging more effectively with the views and concerns of underrepresented groups.
- The Committee recommends that consideration should be given to how best the advantages and benefits of active travel improvements (including new electric vehicle infrastructure, improved green spaces and cycle parking) can be communicated and enjoyed. Members believe that this should happen at an early stage of engagement with residents, in order to balance concerns regarding the potential perceived negative impacts, such as parking charges. Furthermore, the Committee believes that the improvements being delivered through the sustainable streets programme should be aligned with the Council's broader ambitions for active travel.

7. Select Committee work programme

7.1 The Committee discussed the work programme – agreeing that items on active travel and the Catford Regeneration be on the agenda for the meeting on 8 November.

7.2 **Resolved:** that the work programme for the meeting on 8 November be agreed.

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm

Chair:

Date:
