

Minutes of the Sustainable Development Select Committee

Wednesday, 13 March 2024 at 7.00 pm

In attendance: Councillors Edison Huynh, Sian Eiles, John Paschoud and Eva Stamirowski

Apologies: Councillors James Royston and Liam Curran

Also present: Councillor Tauseef Anwar (Speaker of Council), Councillor Mark Ingleby, Councillor Louise Krupski (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Climate Action), Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager), Patrick Dubeck (Director of Inclusive Regeneration), Nick Fenwick (Interim Director of Planning), Aaron Lau, Martin O'Brien (Climate Resilience Manager) and Petros Ximerakis (Head of Strategic Transport and Highways)

Also present virtually: Marcus Gayle, Nazeya Hussain and Zahur Khan (Flood Risk Manager) Nazeya Hussain (Executive Director for Place), Zahur Khan (Director of Public Realm)

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 9 January 2024

- 1.1 **Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2024 be agreed as an accurate record.

1. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 Councillor Paschoud declared an interest under item six as Council appointee, trustee and treasurer of the Road Safety Council (which had been in receipt of sponsorship from Cycle Confident (the Council's cycle training provider))

1. Responses from Mayor and Cabinet

- 3.1 Members considered the responses from Mayor and Cabinet.
- 3.2 **Resolved:** that the responses from Mayor and Cabinet be noted.

1. Planning Service: Local Democracy Review update

- 4.1 Aaron Lau (Team Leader, Development Management) introduced the update. Aaron provided an overview of the process for formally recognising amenity societies in the planning process.
- 4.2 Aaron responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:
 - It was correct that a range of community groups were recognised as amenity societies. Neighbourhood forums were a more recent

development in planning statute – and there was a specific role (in relation to neighbourhood planning) for formally constituted and recognised forums.

- It was not anticipated that there would be any equalities impact from the implementation of the recommendations in the report.

4.3 In committee discussions – the following key points were also noted:

- That further clarity should be provided (and publicised on the Council website) on the distinction between community groups, amenity societies and formally recognised neighbourhood forums.
- Members would welcome further information on the Council's website about the representativeness of the community groups being consulted in the planning process – and the potential ways in which all members of the community could be notified of upcoming planning applications (also to be publicised on the Council's website).

4.4 **Resolved:** that the information requested by the Committee (under 4.3) be provided and that report be noted.

1. Flood risk management

5.1 Marcus Gayle (Flood Risk Manager) introduced the report with a presentation (which is included with the minutes) – this provided an update on the implementation of the Council's flood risk management strategy.

5.2 Marcus Gayle and Martin O'Brien (Climate Resilience Manager) responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- Consideration was being given across the borough to natural flood alleviation measures – and community infrastructure funding was being sought to finance measures through the infrastructure delivery plan.
- There had been a number of major flooding events in Lewisham over the past decades (including a major flood in 1968)
- As a lead flood authority – the Council had a role to understand and manage the risk in the borough. Work was taking place with partners to ensure that the borough was as prepared and resilient as possible.
- Flood risk mapping for the borough (included in the strategic flood risk assessments) indicated which properties in the borough were most at risk.
- A number of means were used to communicate with residents about the risk of flooding and the measures in place to improve resilience.
- Flood mapping was publicly available – but localised flooding could happen in any part of the borough. It was important that the Council continued with a balanced approach to communicating risk.
- The Environment Agency updated flood risk mapping every couple of years in collaboration with the Council (reflecting local work to mitigate flood risk)
- Modelling was available for larger flood alleviation measures – but this was not aggregated for smaller schemes.
- Work was forthcoming which would provide information on the cost benefit of flood alleviation measures.

- Council officers submitted bids for funding when it became available and worked to ensure that funding was spent to ensure the greatest level of impact.
- Procedures and policies were in place to ensure that opportunities to increase flood resilience were distributed across the Council.

5.3 **Resolved:** that the report be noted. It was also recommended that there be greater engagement (through a variety of accessible channels, including making the 'postcode search' for flooding risk more visible on the Council website) with residents about the risk of flooding – and the actions that could be taken to increase public engagement on the issues to enhance community resilience. The Committee also strongly commended and supported the work of the Climate Resilience Team.

1. Active travel update

6.1 Councillor Paschoud declared an interest under item six as Council appointee, trustee and treasurer of the Road Safety Council (which had been in receipt of sponsorship from Cycle Confident (the Council's cycle training provider))

6.2 Petros Ximerakis (Head of Strategic Transport and Highways) introduced the update – Petros noted the responses to the Committee's questions and concerns on issues raised at the last meeting related to active travel.

6.3 Petros responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- The draft integrated active travel strategy would be shared with the Committee.
- The figures provided in the report for cycle training were for 2023-24. £233k was used from local implementation plan funding to pay for cycle training.
- A key constraint to providing cycle training in house would be resourcing – particularly in terms of officer time and expertise.
- Funding had not been provided from dockless bike hire companies for cycle training.
- Transport for London publicly provided information about funding for cycle training with its yearly funding settlement notices.
- Data was available on the response times of dockless bike companies.
- Information was not available on collisions and accidents on dockless bikes that do not involve personal injuries, and such data may be difficult to collect.
- There were a number of opportunities as part of the Sustainable Streets, Healthy Neighbourhoods, road danger reduction, and other programmes to implement new signage and integrate safe routes for active travel.
- The Deptford to Downham (A21 spine) route would be greatly improved by the ongoing works on Deptford Church Street.
- The development of the integrated active travel strategy would help with prioritising future improvement works.

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

- Councillors were aware of the challenge facing officers in terms of resourcing and funding for their work in the context of years of cuts.
- Further information would be welcome on the numbers of accidents and collisions on dockless hire bikes.

6.5 **Resolved:** that the report be noted. Members also welcomed the opportunity to review the integrated active travel strategy – and recommended that funding should be sought from dockless bike companies to provide cycle training. Further information would also be welcomed relating to accidents and collisions involving dockless bikes.

1. Implementation of the transport strategy

7.1 Petros Ximerakis (Head of Strategic Transport and Highways) introduced the report. Petros highlighted the challenging financial and resourcing environment facing the Council and the multi-year service transformation programme that is in progress, as well as some achievements and successes in the past year.

7.2 Petros responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- There was no statutory time requirement between informal consultation and statutory consultation on controlled parking zones.
- The best supplier would be selected for future controlled parking zone consultations. This was separate from the work designing and delivering the measures to implement new controlled parking zones.
- The Council had governance process and management oversight in place to assure consultations carried out by consultants.
- Work was taking place to create the circumstances to attract funding to key infrastructure projects.
- Better performance in terms of delivery of infrastructure would enable the borough to attract additional match funding.
- Work was taking place to ensure that all funding was tied to the delivery of specific projects.

7.3 **Resolved:** that the report be noted. It was also agreed that Cllr Krupski would be asked to follow up with TfL about a pedestrian crossing outside Lewisham Islamic Centre (following a question from members regarding a petition from members of the public).

1. Select Committee work programme

8.1 The Committee discussed the completed work programme for 2023-24 and put forward the following suggestions for consideration as part of the 2024-25 programme:

- Support for electric vehicle adoption (including options for charging for people who could not install their own chargers)
- Catford Regeneration Programme
- Retrofitting

- Lewisham Town Centre Regeneration/Levelling Up and future plans for the shopping centre
- Consideration of community infrastructure funding, including a re-evaluation of collection rates and comparisons with other boroughs.

8.2 Resolved: that the completed work programme report be noted – and that the Committee’s suggestions for the 2024-25 programme be submitted for consideration by members of the Committee in the new municipal year.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm

Chair:

Date:
