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# Overview and Scrutiny

## Sustainable Development Select Committee end of administration report

Spring 2018

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### Membership of the Sustainable Development Select Committee 2014-18:

#### 2014-15

Councillor Liam Curran (Chair)  
Councillor James-J Walsh (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Obajimi Adefiranye  
Councillor Bill Brown  
Councillor Suzannah Clarke  
Councillor Amanda De Ryk  
Councillor Mark Ingleby  
Councillor Stella Jeffrey  
Councillor Helen Klier  
Councillor Paul Upex

#### 2015-16

Councillor Liam Curran (Chair)  
Councillor James-J Walsh (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Bill Brown  
Councillor Suzannah Clarke  
Councillor Amanda De Ryk  
Councillor Carl Handley  
Councillor Mark Ingleby  
Councillor Olurotimi Ogunbadewa  
Councillor Eva Stamirowski  
Councillor Paul Upex

#### 2016-17

Councillor Liam Curran (Chair)  
Councillor Suzannah Clarke (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Bill Brown  
Councillor Amanda De Ryk  
Councillor James-J Walsh  
Councillor Mark Ingleby  
Councillor Pauline Morrison  
Councillor Eva Stamirowski  
Councillor Pat Raven  
Councillor Paul Upex

#### 2017-18

Councillor Liam Curran (Chair)  
Councillor Mark Ingleby (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Abdeslam Amrani  
Councillor Andre Bourne  
Councillor Suzannah Clarke  
Councillor Amanda De Ryk  
Councillor Sophie McGeevor  
Councillor Eva Stamirowski  
Councillor Paul Upex  
Councillor James-J Walsh

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Lewisham has 54 Councillors, representing 18 wards. Lewisham also has an executive mayor, who is elected by the whole borough.
- 1.2. Nine of Lewisham's Councillors are chosen by the Mayor to form his Cabinet.
- 1.3. 45 non-executive councillors are all members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee usually met four times in each year of this administration to consider cross cutting issues of strategic importance. Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee also form six select committees, which take on the responsibilities of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for specific areas of work. In this administration, there have been six standing select committees, each has usually met eight times a year:
  - Children and Young People Select Committee
  - Healthier Communities Select Committee
  - Housing Select Committee
  - Public Accounts Select Committee
  - Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee
  - Sustainable Development Select Committee
- 1.4. This report provides a short summary the activities and achievements of the Sustainable Development Select Committee in the 2014-18 administration.
- 1.5. The Sustainable Development Select Committee has a responsibility for reviewing and developing policy in relation to environmental issues and infrastructure, as well as holding decision makers to account and monitoring the Council's performance. Throughout the course of this administration, the Committee has allocated time to respond to emerging issues and to review issues in depth. Each of the sections below sets out how the Committee has fulfilled its responsibilities over the past four years.
- 1.6. Over the course of the administration, the Committee has asked hundreds of questions of Council officers, guests and decision makers. It also has a formal option to send its views to the Council's executive Mayor and Cabinet through the use of referrals – to which the Executive is obliged to provide a written response. A link to the Committee's referrals is provided in the appendix.



## 2. Overview

### 2.1. Meetings

- The Committee met six times in 2014-15.
- It met eight times in 15-16, 16-17 and 17-18. It also held a joint meeting with members of the housing select committee to discuss the Council's progress with the housing action zones in Catford and New Bermondsey.
- In all there were 31 Committee meetings in 2014-18.
- The Committee has considered more than 200 reports totalling more than 4000 pages. The average length of an agenda was 150 pages.
- The Committee made more than 30 referrals to Mayor and Cabinet.

### 2.2. Terms of reference

2.3. Sustainable Development Select Committee's terms of reference are to exercise all the functions and roles of the overview and scrutiny committee in relation to the following matters:

- to examine issues relating to the protection of the environment including 'green' issues such as the conservation of natural resources, energy efficiency and conservation and/or the reduction of all types of pollution and make recommendations to the Mayor and Cabinet as appropriate;
- to comment and consult on and make recommendations to the Mayor and Cabinet in relation to the following:
  - i. sustainable development, economic development, business support, employment and training;
  - ii. the formulation of the Council's planning policies, (including the preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework and other local plans for the use and development of land, but excluding planning control and building control functions);
  - iii. highways, parking, traffic and transport, and urban regeneration;
  - iv. the environment including waste disposal, environmental health, street and market trading (but not the granting of licences and related matters);
  - v. public protection, refuse collection and disposal, street cleaning, consumer protection, cemeteries and crematoria;
  - vi. generally to examine the performance of the Mayor and Cabinet in relation to these matters.
- the review and scrutiny of the exercise by risk management authorities of flood risk management and coastal erosion risk management affecting the area.

### 2.4. Leadership

2.5. Councillor Liam Curran (Sydenham ward) has been the Chair of the Select Committee for the past four years. There have been three Vice Chairs: Councillor James-J Walsh, Councillor Suzannah Clarke and Councillor Mark Ingleby.

2.6. Deciding on the work programme

2.7. At the beginning of each year of the administration, the Committee considered a range of topics for its upcoming work programme. This was comprised of:

- items the Committee was required to consider by virtue of its terms of reference;
- issues of importance to residents;
- the capacity for adding items to each meeting;
- suggestions already put forward by Members;
- issues arising from previous scrutiny;
- follow up to Committee referrals and reviews.

2.8. The Committee considered, discussed and prioritised the work programme using:

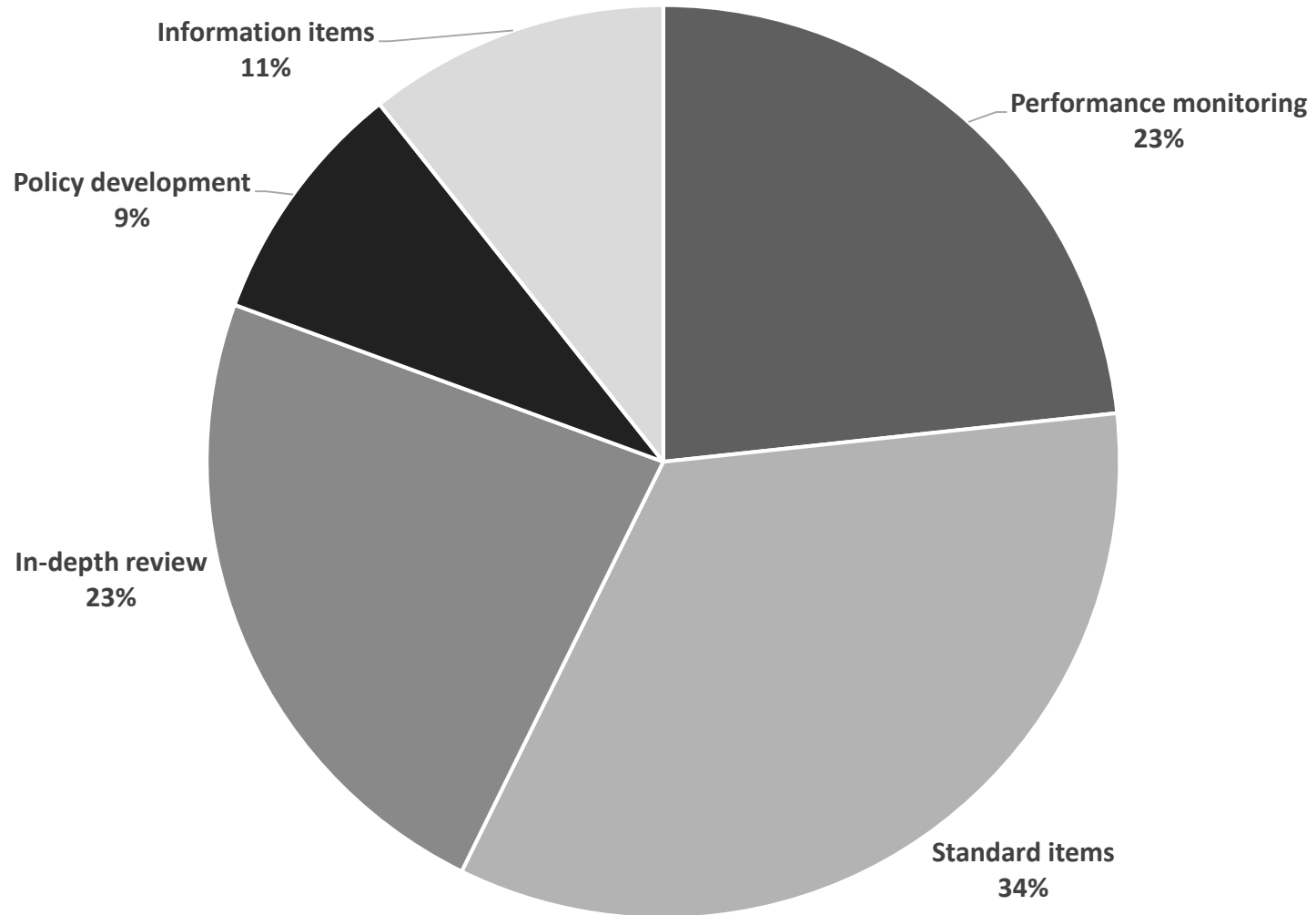
- the context for setting the work programme and advice from officers;
- criteria for selecting and prioritising topics developed from best practice.

2.9. At the end of each meeting the Committee reviewed the programme for upcoming meetings and decided on how the topics it had identified should be scrutinised. The Committee agreed at each meeting which items just required an information report to be provided to the Committee and which others required performance monitoring data or analysis to be presented. Typically, the majority of items took the form of single meeting items, where members:

- (a) agreed what information and analysis they wished to receive in order to achieve their desired outcomes;
- (b) received a report presenting that information and analysis;
- (c) asked questions of the presenting officer or guest;
- (d) agreed, following discussion of the report, whether the Committee would make recommendations or receive further information or analysis before summarising its views.

2.10. The chart below provides a breakdown of the different types of scrutiny the Committee has carried out in this administration. It is based on the number of agenda items that have been allocated to each of the different categories for each of the five types.

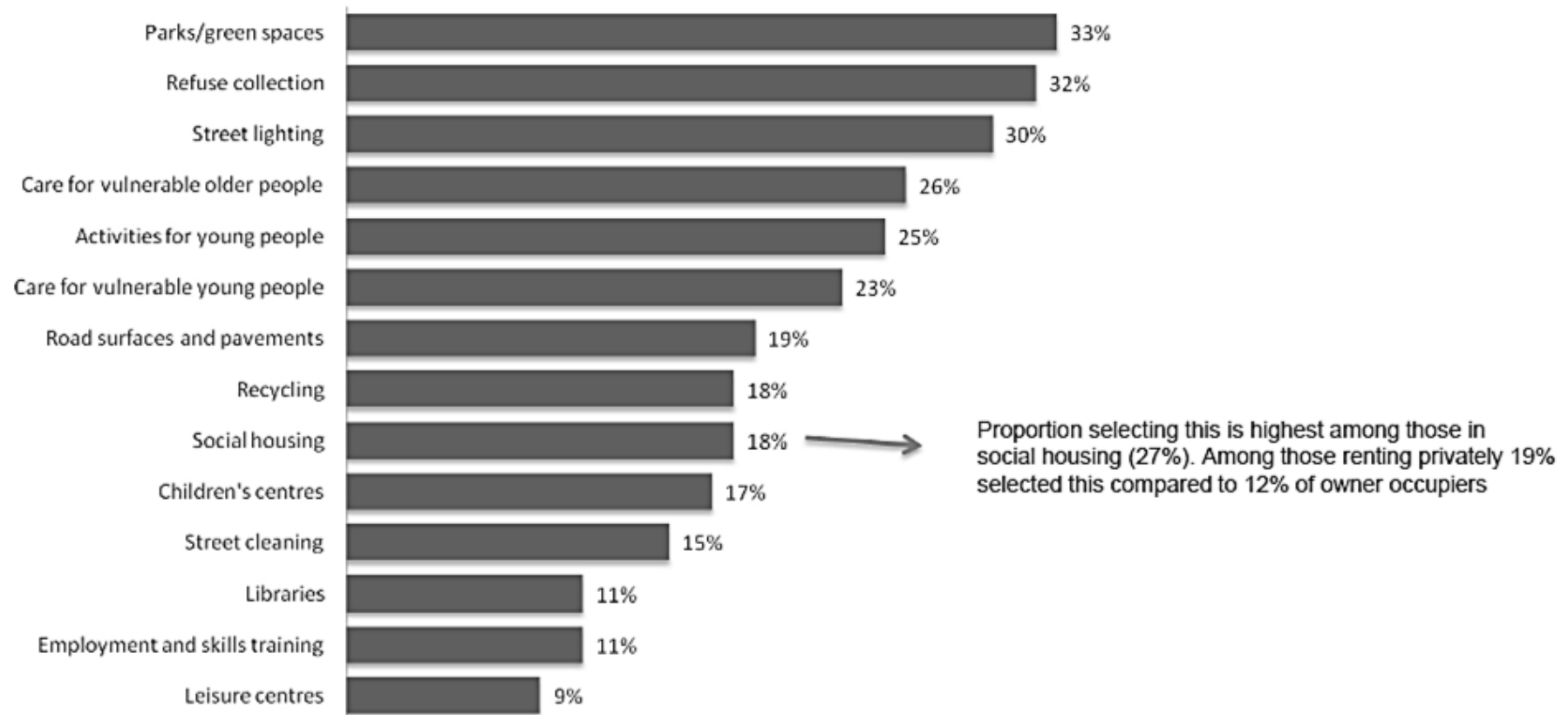
### Different types of scrutiny 2014-18



2.11. Issues of importance to residents:

2.12. Councillors have substantial knowledge of the issues of importance in their wards. They are also closely involved in their local assembly meetings and local groups. Each year, when deciding on its work programme, Committee members drew on their local knowledge to inform the development of the work plan for the year. Also, it is worth noting that Lewisham's 2015 residents survey<sup>1</sup> identified that the top three services of importance to residents are within the Committee's remit:

Thinking about what you expect from Lewisham Council, which three services do you think it is MOST important for Lewisham Council to provide? (all responses)



<sup>1</sup> Residents survey 2015, online at: <http://tinyurl.com/yd4dydbo>



### 2.13. Guests at Committee meetings

2.14. There have been more than 25 guests, experts and witnesses for reviews at the Committee's meetings in this administration. They attended to give their views on issues of importance, or to provide the Committee with information or analysis about a specific topic. In the case of Cabinet Members and the Mayor, they may also have been at the meeting to answer questions about the overarching vision for a policy - or to answer questions about the delivery of a service.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Item attended in relation to</b>
20-Jan-15	Jeremy Leach	'20s Plenty For Us'	Modern Roads Review
20-Jan-15	Tom Platt	Living Streets	Modern Roads Review
20-Jan-15	Symon Knightswood	Living Streets (Lewisham)	Modern Roads Review
20-Jan-15	Stephen Hedley	London Air Quality Network	Modern Roads Review
20-Jan-15	Jane Davis	Lewisham Cyclists	Modern Roads Review
26-Nov-15	Anthony Benson	Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners	Catford Regeneration Programme Review
26-Nov-15	Julian Kingston	The Lenox Project Community Interest Company	Build The Lenox
26-Nov-15	Helena Russell	The Lenox Project Community Interest Company	Build The Lenox
26-Nov-15	Sue Lawes	The Lenox Project Community Interest Company	Build The Lenox
26-Nov-15	David Aylward	The Lenox Project Community Interest Company	Build The Lenox
26-Nov-15	Rachel Onikosi	Cabinet Member for the Public Realm	Waste & Recycling Service consultation
14-Jan-16	Ian Chalk	Ian Chalk Architects	Catford Regeneration Programme Review
14-Jan-16	Tim Thomas	Transport for London	Catford Regeneration Programme Review
14-Jan-16	Carole Hope	Public	Beckenham Place Park Petition
14-Jan-16	Andrew Tonge	Public	Beckenham Place Park Petition
14-Jan-16	Jenny Kay	Public	Beckenham Place Park Petition
08-Mar-16	Edward Melconian	THCO	Asset Register Demonstration
29-Jun-16	Stewart Whitworth	Lewisham Cyclists	Lewisham Cyclist Cycling Strategy
14-Sep-16	Mayor Steve Bullock	Lewisham Council	Catford Regeneration Programme Review
08-Mar-17	Mole Meade	Communication Workers Union	Post Office changes
08-Mar-17	Peter Neech	Communication Workers Union	Post Office changes
14-Jun-17	Anne Crane	Transport for London Planning	Catford Town Centre Programme Review
20-Jul-17	Jereme McKaskill	Project Centre	Implementation of the Cycling Strategy
20-Jul-17	Lewisham cyclists	Lewisham Cyclists	Implementation of the Cycling Strategy

### 3. Policy development and pre-decision scrutiny

3.1. One of the Committee's important functions is to lead on the development of emerging Council policy and to make recommendations to Mayor and Cabinet with Committee views, recommendations, concerns and endorsements. The Committee has scrutinised the development of a broad range of Council policies and strategies over the past four years, some notable examples include:

#### 3.2. Delivery of the Lewisham cycling strategy

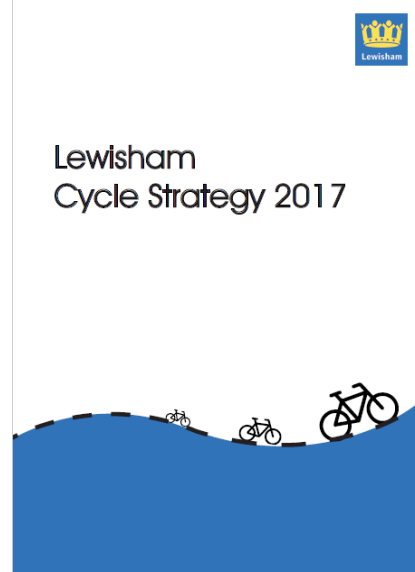
3.3. The Committee is extremely supportive of plans to improve cycling in Lewisham. The Council's cycling champion is a member of the Sustainable Development Select Committee and he is able to link the strategic work being undertaken by the Council to the work that is taking place at a grassroots level in the community.

3.4. The Committee ensures that cycling provision is given careful consideration during the scrutiny of other issues on the work programme. In discussions about the future plans for the redevelopment of Catford the Committee has been consistent and clear that there should be high quality pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. The Committee's scrutiny of the air quality action plans and the delivery of Lewisham's 20mph speed limit have also provided opportunities for the Committee to voice its support for cycling.

3.5. On a number of occasions, the Committee has welcomed representatives of Lewisham cyclists to address the meeting. The group works to improve the uptake of cycling in the borough and to lobby for the development of quality cycling infrastructure. The group has developed a close relationship with Lewisham's cycling champion and the Committee has benefitted from their shared enthusiasm: <https://lewishamcyclists.co.uk/at-last-a-cycling-champion-for-lewisham/>

3.6. In its 2015 'modern roads' review the Committee identified cycling as of prime importance for the health and vitality of Lewisham's communities. Seven of the Committee's ten recommendations to Lewisham's Mayor and Cabinet related to the importance of cycling in the borough. The Committee's recommendations were agreed by Mayor and Cabinet – and they have led to the development of a range of important improvements for cyclists in Lewisham<sup>2</sup>.

3.7. The joint efforts of the Lewisham Cyclists and the Cycling Champion led to the development of a new cycling strategy for Lewisham. The Committee has been instrumental in reviewing the progress of the strategy and holding officers to account for its ongoing improvement and submission to Mayor and Cabinet.



<sup>2</sup> See update to the Select Committee, March 2017 online here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybvm8mav>

3.8. Development of the air quality action plan

3.9. The Mayor of London's focus on improving air quality at regional level has been welcomed by the Committee. The Committee recognises that the Council needs to collaborate with partners in order to achieve its air quality objectives. It has also highlighted the role of political leadership in creating partnerships and developing coordinated responses to the issue of air quality. The appointment of an air quality champion by Mayor and Cabinet to sit on the Committee has been welcomed.

3.10. The Committee recognises that issues of air quality also relate to its work on transport and fuel poverty as well as the built and natural environment. Through its 'modern roads' review the Committee supported the provision of high quality cycling and pedestrian infrastructure as a means to improve air quality.

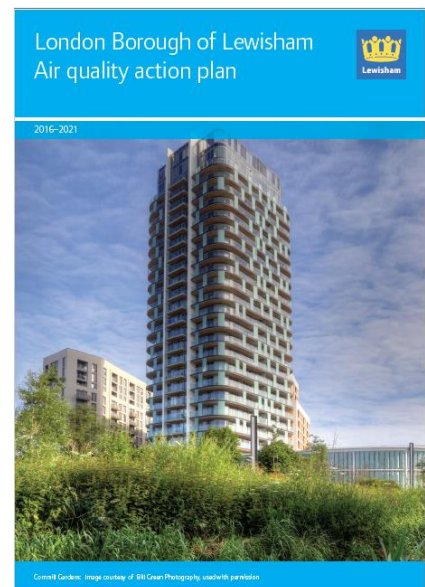
3.11. In December 2016, Mayor and Cabinet agreed a new air quality action plan<sup>3</sup>. Additions suggested by the Sustainable Development Select Committee on political leadership, electric vehicle charging points and an anti-idling campaign were incorporated into the action plan.

3.12. Ongoing improvements to planning policy

3.13. In each year of the administration the Committee has scrutinised the development of planning policy. A key issue in this administration has been the use of section 106 monies and the community infrastructure levy. The Committee has challenged officers to improve the process for allocating funding so that it is transparent and equitable. Officers have responded to this challenge by reviewing the process and developing new mechanisms for spending these funds.

3.14. The Committee has insisted that Councillors be closely involved in future plan making exercises in order to shape the vision for Lewisham. Correspondingly, officers have committed to regularly providing key dates for engagement and review of future planning policy.

3.15. The Committee has also used its influence to encourage the planning department to review the transparency of the viability assessment process for new developments. The Committee used examples from other London boroughs to argue that Lewisham's processes could be more open to scrutiny and that there should be a regular accounting of funds that had been reclaimed from developers following a reassessment of their planning liabilities.



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<sup>3</sup> London Borough of Lewisham- air quality action plan: <https://tinyurl.com/ybd7a43n>

#### 4. Holding decision makers to account

4.1. The Committee allocated a quarter of its work programme in this administration to performance monitoring. The Committee's performance monitoring scrutiny takes a number of different forms. It might include challenging decision makers on the decisions they have taken or it might relate more closely to the development of policy and include scrutiny of the Council's delivery of services in a particular area. Some examples are:

#### 4.2. Protecting pubs

4.3. The Committee recognises the importance of pubs as locations for the community to come together, to meet and to celebrate. It also acknowledges that there is important heritage value in pub buildings.

4.4. Nationally, pubs are facing a difficult operating environment. Changes in lifestyles and shopping habits as well as the demand for new development in combination with pub business models have resulted in the closure of many pubs.



4.5. The Committee's 2012 review led to comprehensive changes in the Council's approach to protecting pubs and other assets of community value and at the Committee's insistence, a stronger policy for protecting pubs was developed in order to avoid the loss of any viable businesses to development.

4.6. The Committee has kept its focus on the importance of pubs in this administration and it has received annual updates on the success of Lewisham's 'pubs planning policy', each time emphasising the importance of preserving local pubs. The most recent review of the policy<sup>4</sup> by Lewisham's planning department indicated the policy was still 'robust and relevant'. This is an issue that the Committee is likely to revisit in the next administration.

#### 4.7. The Catford town centre redevelopment;

4.8. The Council has ambitious plans to regenerate the town centre of Catford. These plans are intended to deliver major improvements to Catford's pedestrian and transport infrastructure while creating opportunities for new homes, shops and other amenities. In October 2015 the Sustainable Development Select Committee decided to carry out an in-depth review of the regeneration programme.

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<sup>4</sup> Pubs in Lewisham 2017: policy review - <https://tinyurl.com/ybrzpj2y>

4.9. During the course of its review, the Committee has received evidence from Council officers, officers from Transport for London, and local stakeholders. The Committee hoped to add further value to the ongoing process of decision-making and development in Catford by acting as a critical friend and challenging the approach taken by decision makers.



4.10. In the course of evidence gathering for the review, the Committee recognised that it would need to continue to monitor the performance of the programme over a longer period and as such, it resolved to receive quarterly updates on progress with the scheme. To date the Committee has made more than 30 recommendations in seven referrals to Mayor and Cabinet advising on the Committee's concerns and commenting on the overall progress with the scheme.

Sustainable Development Select Committee		
Title	Catford review end of year report	
Contributor	Scrutiny Manager	Appendix G
Class	Part 1 (open)	20 April 2017
1. Purpose		
1.1 To scrutinise the Committee's scrutiny of the Catford programme in the 2016-17 year.		
2. Recommendation		
2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes the content of the report;</li> <li>• Decides how it wants to scrutinise the Catford programme in 2017-18.</li> </ul>		
3. Summary		
3.1 London has significant demand for new homes and supporting infrastructure. The city's town centres, with their great quality transport links and local high streets are of primary importance to the future growth and vitality of London as a whole.		
3.2 Catford is a busy town centre in the heart of the London Borough of Lewisham. Its history as a hub of activity and a destination for entertainment was enhanced by good transport links with neighbouring areas and central London, as well as its supply of good homes and quality open spaces.		
3.3 Catford retains its fundamental strengths. Its connections to neighbouring areas and to central London still provide efficient ways to get in and out of the town centre and its homes and open spaces continue to provide choice and quality. Its diverse community is home to people from all across the world and it houses a significant proportion of South East London's workforce. However, the shopping experience and entertainment offer in the town centre have fallen behind many of London's other town centres.		
3.4 The centre of Catford is dominated by a 1960s shopping precinct, which incorporates an expansive multi-story carpark. Millford towers (the residential block above the precinct) is no longer considered to be fit for purpose. There are a number of vacant or underused spaces in the centre that have the potential to provide new homes for Lewisham's growing population, or new premises for Lewisham's businesses. The south circular (A205), which runs across the edge of the town centre provides access to other parts of South London and beyond but its layout makes travelling through the town centre difficult and time consuming as well as unpleasant and often dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists.		

4.11. The Committee has a particular interest in the quality and vibrancy of the public space in the newly developed Catford town centre. It has regularly reiterated its support for the development of a public square in the centre of Catford, which would frame the Broadway theatre as a centrepiece in the renewed town centre as well as providing a space for the community to come together.

4.12. The quality of public space is of principal importance to the Committee. Members have a vision of a town centre that is on a human scale – that provides opportunities for people not only to work and live, but also to relax. Currently, Catford town centre is dominated by the shopping centre, which it is agreed is no longer fit for purpose for businesses or for housing.

4.13. The town centre is also divided by the busy south circular, which is often congested and difficult to cross on foot. There is a lack of cycling routes across the town centre, which diminishes the potential for Catford to act as an accessible transport interchange for the surrounding areas. Accordingly, a specific focus for the Committee has been the options for the relocation of the south circular. The Committee repeatedly pushed for the decision about the relocation to be accelerated. It kept pressure on officers and decision makers to ensure that progress was being made<sup>5</sup>.

4.14. In July 2017, with the endorsement of the Committee, the Mayor made a decision to relocate the road to the south, thereby opening up the potential for public space and

<sup>5</sup> See the Catford review summary report 2016/17: <https://tinyurl.com/ycqv65ov>

improved infrastructure in the town centre. Since then, the Committee has been closely involved in the development of the masterplanning process. In autumn 2017, members contributed towards the sustainability brief for the evolving masterplan.

4.15. The Committee plans to continue to engage with the local community, stakeholders and Council officers to drive the programme forward. It will also carry out further work to the end of the administration and in the next in order to assure the quality and community focus of the masterplanning process.

4.16. The redevelopment of Beckenham Place Park

4.17. The Council has embarked on a major programme of redevelopment and regeneration of the park – which is the largest green space in Lewisham. It was previously dominated by a golf course and under used by the community in its immediate vicinity.



4.18. The Committee has taken a close interest in the redevelopment and members have engaged closely with the community to understand how the park is being used as it reopens to local people.

4.19. Whilst the Committee is supportive of the redevelopment, it has also been consistent and purposeful in its scrutiny of the delivery programme. The Committee has sought assurances about the phasing of the redevelopment and, in particular, it has asked the Executive to assure itself that the programme has sufficient financial controls in place and that work is being done now to ensure that future operating costs for the park are being taken into consideration.

4.20. The Committee has also examined the decision making process that led to the choice to delay the work on the Mansion House. The Committee was concerned that delays in renovating the House would mean that there would be an ongoing delay in the opening of this heritage asset to the community. Officers appeared before the Committee to justify their decision making and to provide reassurances that creative interim uses had been developed for the use of the buildings in the park. Given its high profile and the scale of the development programme, this is likely to be an issue that the Committee will return to in the next administration.

## **5. Performance monitoring**

5.1. Scrutiny regularly uses performance information and data to examine the effectiveness of services. In this administration there have been a number of issues that required the Committee to review initial proposals as well as results of consultation (where appropriate) before a change was implemented- and then to review the implementation of a scheme once it a decision had been taken.

### **5.2. Waste strategy**

5.3. In 2017/8 the Council commenced the implementation of a new waste strategy. The Committee scrutinised the proposals for the delivery of the new waste and recycling service and it commented on the communications that were carried out to make residents aware of the change in services.

5.4. Through engagement with local communities -as well as casework and local assembly meetings- councillors received first hand feedback from residents about the delivery of the new service. Officers presented an update on the implementation of the new services at the Committee's meeting in January 2018. The Committee heard that there had been some initial problems with the implementation of the new service in a small number of cases. The Committee was assured that officers had received and responded to its concerns about the implementation of the new service as well as the management and handling of complaints and casework.

5.5. One of the principal aims of the service is to improve recycling rates. Once data becomes available the Committee will consider whether the Council is achieving its objectives.

### **5.6. Implementation of the borough wide 20mph zone**

5.7. As part of its modern roads review the committee considered the programme for the implementation of the borough wide 20mph zone. Evidence for the review was received from road safety campaigners and Council officers. The Committee made a number of recommendations about the delivery of the scheme in order to ensure that it started successfully in September 2016 and remained so in the first year of its operation.

Programme timetable	Start	Finish
<b>Planning/inception stage</b>		
Data collection and analysis	May 2014	June 2015
Key stakeholder consultation	June 2015	Sep 2015
Review design guidelines, sign audits and design	Sep 2015	Mar 2016
Consultation and campaign messages	Jan 2015	Mar 2018
<b>Delivery stage</b>		
Traffic order applications	Mar 2016	July 2016
Implementation	Sep 2016	
Monitoring	Sep 2016	Mar 2018
Design options for roads with low compliance	Oct 2016	Oct 2017
Implementation of remedial measures	Jan 2017	Mar 2018

5.8. The Committee believes that Lewisham's roads should be safe and healthy for all residents. It is keen to ensure that cycling and pedestrian provision are considered in all new developments. The Committee continues to oversee the implementation of 20mph zones in the borough through to the implementation of adjustments and compliance measures in 2018.

## 6. Responding to emerging issues

### 6.1. Bakerloo line

6.2. The Committee is highly supportive of the plans for the extension of the Bakerloo line. Following from its consideration of options for the extension of the line in the last administration, it considered regular updates from officers and Transport for London about the development of the plans for the extension of the line to Lewisham and beyond. The Committee is supportive of the potential of the extension to bring benefits to the whole borough and to unlock new development in key locations.

6.3. The Committee has recommended that Mayor and Cabinet make it a priority to lobby the Mayor of London and Transport for London for the extension to continue to Catford town centre and onwards to Hayes (the current proposal is that the service would take over the operation of the national rail line beyond Catford). The Committee believes that the significant level of housing growth planned for Catford requires sufficient infrastructure to support it. The extension of the Bakerloo line would provide a sustainable means for the increased population of Catford to travel into central London for education, training and employment opportunities.

### 6.4. Changes to street lighting

6.5. The Committee was concerned about the limitations of the trial carried out to assess the impact of a streetlight dimming and trimming policy. Following from the joint private finance initiative with Croydon Council to provide new street lighting in both boroughs, an option became available through the use of new technology to reduce the brightness of individual street lights and to reduce lighting for set periods of time. As part of the drive for efficiency a new policy was developed to manage the process of reductions in lighting overnight.

6.6. The Committee reviewed the consultation exercise for the new policy. It was concerned that there would be a cumulative impact of dimming across an area. Accordingly, it requested that before a decision about the new policy was made, additional dimming trials should be carried out. The Committee's intervention ensured that there was a wider consideration of the potential issues arising from the timing and implementation of the programme before the Mayor was asked to make a decision about the implementation of the policy.



- 6.7. Fire safety in tall buildings
- 6.8. Following the devastating fire at Grenfell tower, which resulted in appalling loss of life and the destruction of the homes of an entire community, many councils commenced a programme of checking their tall buildings for hazardous cladding. In Lewisham officers moved quickly to assure residents that fire safety procedures were in place and that safety checks were up to date.
- 6.9. Following guidance from the Government, the Council assessed all buildings for dangerous cladding and where it was found, measures were put in place to keep residents safe.
- 6.10. The Housing, Overview and Scrutiny and the Sustainable Development Select Committee considered a detailed report from officers on the fire safety work taking place in the borough. The Committee welcomed the report – but it sought to ensure that additional information was made available about the Council’s responsibility for building control.
- 6.11. As a result of the Committee’s scrutiny, officers have provided additional information about the work of the Council’s building control functions as well as further updates on the work that has been carried out to assess the compliance of tall buildings in the borough. The Committee is concerned about the lack of information available in relation to some privately owned buildings as well as those managed by registered social landlords. The Committee has asked the Housing Committee to consider whether there are options open to the Council to encourage private landlords and registered providers to share information with the Council.

## **7. Future challenges**

- 7.1. The Council has been on a decade long programme of reductions in resources as a result of ongoing government austerity. In order to deliver the scale of the savings required, and to give consideration to the broader implications of changes in services, the Council established the Lewisham Future Programme. The programme board has led on the identification and delivery of cross-cutting and thematic reviews to achieve the savings required. Since 2010, the Council has delivered savings of £160.6m whilst reorganising services and meeting increased demand.
- 7.2. An additional £4.8m of savings are proposed for 2018/9 and in the years to 2020 it is estimated that further savings of £35m will be required, which will bring savings over the decade since 2010 to almost £200m. However, savings are becoming more difficult to achieve and the Council’s reserves have been used to balance the budget for the past four years.
- 7.3. Despite the level of savings already delivered and the Lewisham Future Programme’s systematic approach to identifying and delivering savings from cross cutting areas of activity, the Council’s progress with delivering savings has slowed. This has been combined with directorate overspends for a number of Council services. Projections for the end of the 2017/18 financial year are that the budget will be overspent by £13m, with more than half of this amount relating to savings that have been agreed but not delivered.

- 7.4. The medium term financial outlook for local government is one of uncertainty. In the summer of 2017 the Public Accounts Select Committee considered the Council's medium term financial strategy, which identified a number of areas of uncertainty and risk in the years to 2022. The Committee noted that the likelihood and impact of these risks remained uncertain:
- Government policy and funding changes;
  - Development and changes for London via the London devolution agenda;
  - Employment and business prospects impacting on the local tax take; and
  - Demographic change and the wider social implications resulting from the above.
- 7.5. Officers project that into the next decade, beyond 2020, approximately £10m per year of savings will be required in order to balance the Council's budget. As scrutiny committees consider their programmes of work for the 2018-22 administration, they will need to give close consideration to the areas of Council spending which fall within their remit, for the Sustainable Development Select Committee this includes asset management and environmental services, both of which were identified by the Lewisham Future Programme as the potential source of significant savings.
- 7.6. Over the course of the administration the Committee has heard that there are potential savings to be generated from the use of the Council's assets, as well as potential sources of income. The Committee was insistent on the completion and publication of the Council's register of assets. In the next administration the Committee might consider taking this work further and exploring new ways for the Council can maximise the use of its assets.
- 7.7. Scrutiny will continue to play an important role in the future of the Council's waste and recycling services. The Committee has recognised that as the Council's agreement with the South East London Combined Heat and Power plant for the incineration of waste is renegotiated the reduction and reuse of waste will become increasingly important. The Committee has a role to act as an advocate between Lewisham's communities and the Council. The decisive use of this role in the new administration will be vital.

## **Appendix:**

Appendix A – scrutiny committee terms of reference

Appendix B – a full record of the Committee's referrals - and responses from Mayor and Cabinet 2014-18 is available online here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybl37yjl>

## **Appendix A**

The following roles are common to all select committees:

### **(a) General functions**

To review and scrutinise decisions made and actions taken in relation to executive and non-executive functions

To make reports and recommendations to the Council or the executive, arising out of such review and scrutiny in relation to any executive or non-executive function

To make reports or recommendations to the Council and/or Executive in relation to matters affecting the area or its residents

The right to require the attendance of members and officers to answer questions includes a right to require a member to attend to answer questions on up and coming decisions

#### (b) Policy development

To assist the executive in matters of policy development by in depth analysis of strategic policy issues facing the Council for report and/or recommendation to the Executive or Council or committee as appropriate

To conduct research, community and/or other consultation in the analysis of policy options available to the Council

To liaise with other public organisations operating in the borough – both national, regional and local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working in policy development wherever possible

#### (c) Scrutiny

To scrutinise the decisions made by and the performance of the Executive and other committees and Council officers both in relation to individual decisions made and over time

To scrutinise previous performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives/performance targets and/or particular service areas

To question members of the Executive or appropriate committees and executive directors personally about decisions

To question members of the Executive or appropriate committees and executive directors in relation to previous performance whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over time or in relation to particular initiatives which have been implemented

To scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the borough and to invite them to make reports to and/or address the select committee/Business Panel and local people about their activities and performance

To question and gather evidence from any person outside the Council (with their consent)

To make recommendations to the Executive or appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process

#### (d) Community representation

To promote and put into effect closer links between overview and scrutiny members and the local community

To encourage and stimulate an enhanced community representative role for overview and scrutiny members including enhanced methods of consultation with local people

To liaise with the Council's ward assemblies so that the local community might participate in the democratic process and where it considers it appropriate to seek the views of the ward assemblies on matters that affect or are likely to affect the local areas, including accepting items for the agenda of the appropriate select committee from ward assemblies.

To keep the Council's local ward assemblies under review and to make recommendations to the Executive and/or Council as to how participation in the democratic process by local people can be enhanced

To receive petitions, deputations and representations from local people and other stakeholders about areas of concern within their overview and scrutiny remit, to refer them to the Executive, appropriate committee or officer for action, with a recommendation or report if the committee considers that necessary

To consider any referral within their remit referred to it by a member under the Councillor Call for Action, and if they consider it appropriate to scrutinise decisions and/or actions taken in relation to that matter, and/or make recommendations/report to the Executive (for executive matters) or the Council (non-executive matters)

(e) Finance

To exercise overall responsibility for finances made available to it for use in the performance of its overview and scrutiny function.

(f) Work programme

As far as possible to draw up a draft annual work programme in each municipal year for consideration by the overview and scrutiny Business Panel. Once approved by the Business Panel, the relevant select committee will implement the programme during that municipal year. Nothing in this arrangement inhibits the right of every member of a select committee (or the Business Panel) to place an item on the agenda of that select committee (or Business Panel respectively) for discussion.

The Council and the Executive will also be able to request that the overview and scrutiny select committee research and/or report on matters of concern and the select committee will consider whether the work can be carried out as requested. If it can be accommodated, the select committee will perform it. If the committee has reservations about performing the requested work, it will refer the matter to the Business Panel for decision.

The Sustainable Development Select Committee has these specific terms of reference:

(a) To exercise all the functions and roles of the overview and scrutiny committee in relation to the following matters:

- to examine issues relating to the protection of the environment including 'green' issues such as the conservation of natural resources, energy efficiency and

conservation and/or the reduction of all types of pollution and make recommendations to the Mayor and Cabinet as appropriate;

- to comment and consult on and make recommendations to the Mayor and Cabinet in relation to the following:
  - i. sustainable development, economic development, business support, employment and training;
  - ii. the formulation of the Council's planning policies, (including the preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework and other local plans for the use and development of land, but excluding planning control and building control functions);
  - iii. highways, parking, traffic and transport, and urban regeneration;
  - iv. the environment including waste disposal, environmental health, street and market trading (but not the granting of licences and related matters);
  - v. public protection, refuse collection and disposal, street cleaning, consumer protection, cemeteries and crematoria;
  - vi generally to examine the performance of the Mayor and Cabinet in relation to these matters.
  
- the review and scrutiny of the exercise by risk management authorities of flood risk management and coastal erosion risk management affecting the area.