

MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 4 December 2019 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Liam Curran (Chair), Patrick Codd (Vice-Chair), Obajimi Adefiranye, Abdeslam Amrani, Suzannah Clarke, Mark Ingleby, Louise Krupski, Pauline Morrison and James-J Walsh

ALSO PRESENT: Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager), Seamus Adams (Parking Service Manager), Alexandra Crush (Transport Policy and Development Manager), Josh Learner (Cycling and Walking Programme Manager) and Ralph Wilkinson (Head of Public Services)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2019

- 1.1 **Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 October be agreed as an accurate record.

2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 Councillor Louise Krupski declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to item four as a member of Lewisham Cyclists; and a non-prejudicial interest in relation to item five as a member of 'zip-car'.
- 2.2 Councillor James-J Walsh declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to item five as a member of 'zip-car'.

3. Responses from Mayor and Cabinet

- 3.1 There were none.

4. Cycling

The agenda was varied to consider this item before the parking policy update.

- 4.1 Josh Learner (Cycling and Walking Programme Manager) introduced the report. He noted that there had been more emphasis on cycling in the past year due to the Council's development of the healthy streets initiative - in line with the Mayor of London's transport strategy.
- 4.2 Brian Turpin from the Lewisham Cyclists was invited to address the Committee – the following key points were noted:
 - Lewisham Cyclists welcomed the report.
 - The proposals for the A21 corridor were vital to ensure the future of active travel in the borough. Its implementation would create a 'tipping point' in encouraging people to cycle and walk, rather than using their cars.
 - Healthy neighbourhoods and quiet way programmes were welcomed – but it was important that there were strategic links to London-wide cycling infrastructure.

- The Cyclists believed that there was more work that could be done in and around Deptford Church street (following on from the work being carried out for the construction of the Thames Tideway Tunnel) to link cycling routes in the area with the wider strategic cycling network.
- An outline feasibility study for Deptford Church street would be welcomed (this might draw on section 106 or community infrastructure levy funding).
- There had been a recent fatality in Catford at a junction which was recognised for being dangerous. Urgent improvement works were needed.

4.3 Josh Learner and Alex Crush (Transport Policy and Development Manager) responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- There were ongoing discussions between the Catford regeneration/road realignment and A21 corridor teams at Transport for London (TfL) and the Council to ensure that both pieces of work would be integrated.
- TfL was undertaking further modelling on the road layout in Catford– to determine the best options. Further meetings between key parties were forthcoming.
- e-scooters were illegal in London. It was possible that the law would change in the future – but the by-law being agreed by London Councils should be flexible enough to accommodate the use of e-scooters.
- The Council had made it clear to TfL that it wanted to protect the green spaces adjacent to the A21 as part of any upgrade to the cycling network.
- The current approach to the allocation of spaces in bike hangars could be better coordinated and managed. This was something that officers intended to do in future.
- Officers had also been in discussion with Lewisham Homes about the potential to put bike hangars on housing estates. The plan was to start doing this from next year.
- There was 93% occupancy of cycle hangars in the borough. The hangars were installed by the Council and managed by 'Cycle Hoop' (which was a company based in Sydenham). Residents were charged an annual fee (£60) for maintenance.
- The Council did not receive ongoing revenue from the hangars.
- Cycle Hoop provided an online map of all the cycle hangars in the borough.
- Further work could be done to determine whether cycle parking had been included by any wards as a priority for local community infrastructure levy funding.
- The Council's approach to assessing demand was based on the numbers of requests received from residents in specific areas. It was recognised that more promotion could be carried out. More engagement would be carried out as part of the approach to delivering the healthy neighbourhoods schemes.
- The Council had recently appointed a part-time 'healthy streets' officer. It was possible that this officer could be tasked with carrying out more work with employers in the borough to support cycling and the provision of cycling infrastructure – however – their time was limited and had to be prioritised accordingly.

- New cycling schemes were being developed ‘holistically’ to ensure that they took account of the surrounding environment – as well as the potential to use those routes at different times of the day and night.
- Work was being carried out by Govia Thameslink Railway – following a consultation period – to determine which of the proposals made through the ‘passenger benefit fund’ were feasible and deliverable.
- Once that work had been completed - a workshop with councillors and other stakeholders would be set up to determine the priorities for delivery through the fund.
- Officers had submitted an official response to the Rotherhithe movement plan detailing concerns about the potential impact on Trundley’s Road.
- Lewisham had submitted a number of proposals to mitigate the impact of the plans.
- Funding had been committed to the Waterlink Way crossing at Southend Lane. A design and plans had been developed and officers were currently carrying out a procurement process with the ambition of starting works early next year for completion by autumn 2020.
- There were a number of dockless bike operators in London.
- Electric dockless bikes were comparatively expensive to hire but it was hoped that innovation would lead to reductions in costs.
- Consideration would be given in the future to the management processes for dockless bike operators (with specific reference to the locations in which dockless bikes could be ‘parked’ by users).

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

- Members were supportive of the rollout of bike hangars across the borough.
- Members also asked about the potential for a borough wide communications campaign to support the delivery of the A21 spine.
- There was a discussion about the proposals for the redevelopment of Catford – and the delivery of a ‘cantilever’ bridge extension for the bridge over the Hayes line.
- Members noted the dangerous conditions for cyclists in Catford and committed to raising the issue of cycling again in future discussions about the redevelopment of the town centre.

4.5 **Resolved:** the Committee agreed to refer its views to Mayor and Cabinet (see item 7).

5. Parking policy update

5.1 Ralph Wilkinson (Director of Public Services) introduced the report. He provided an overview of the consultation and set out an overview of the key changes that were going to be proposed to Mayor and Cabinet. He reported that the consultation had received the highest number ever of responses to a Council consultation and that consultees were broadly in agreement with the changes that had been proposed (with some exceptions).

5.2 Ralph Wilkinson and Seamus Adams (Parking Services Manager) responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- There was a process for Lewisham Hospital to request permits for members of staff.
- There was a type of parking permit that could be issued by London Councils for healthcare staff.
- There were 126 parking permits issued to Lewisham Hospital.
- Officers recognised that more work needed to be carried out with the hospital in order to encourage sustainable forms of travel.
- Any surplus generated by the parking service had to be spent on parking and highways related activities.
- In order to limit the ability of people to bypass the controls on short-term parking bays (by using mobile payment to pay for parking remotely) officers were intending to change some two hours bays to 'one hour' no return operation.
- Plans were being developed enable carers to easily access short-term parking permits to enable them to carry out their duties.
- The proposed charges for carers' permits would be met by the Council and the NHS. The new system would allow for the better capture of data in relation to the use of carer permits – and better targeting for those in the most need.
- The future roll out of technology for short term parking would enable the collection of useful data. Eventually, this would enable differential emissions based charging for short term parking. It would also allow for the setting of different charges in different areas of the borough.
- It was agreed that a balance needed to be struck between a number of different issues. It was recognised that the implementation of fifteen minute parking slots might encourage drivers to make more regular (and possibly unnecessary) short journeys. The collection of data would provide more information about the extent of short journeys and allow the Council to focus future enforcement and policy changes.
- There were proposals to make improvements to the Holbeach carpark in Catford – it was intended that these would include: new lighting and CCTV as well as an enhanced cleaning schedule.
- Officers had consulted on a range of charges for an hour's parking - on a scale from nothing to £2. The most popular response was £1.20. A charge of £2 an hour was being proposed (with the ability to pay in fifteen minute slots).
- It would be difficult to predict the income from the changes to the parking policy. This was because the proposals were designed to bring about change in behaviour (encouraging drivers to opt for less polluting vehicles) and it could not be predicted how quickly that behaviour would change.
- The expansion of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone into the borough in 2021 would force substantial changes to people's behaviour.
- The issue of parking was emotive – finding a balance between competing issues was a difficult balance to find. Nonetheless, officers believed that they had managed to find that balance in the current proposals.
- There were plans to review the Council's parking pages on the website.

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

- The Chair recognised the quality of the report and the high quality of the consultation process that had been carried out.
- There was a disagreement in the Committee about the appropriate charge for parking in the borough. Some members believed that the prices for parking should be higher (in order to encourage people to use public transport or other more sustainable forms of transport) – other members were concerned about the potential impact of increasing charges on the viability of high streets as well as on people who had become reliant on using cars (the examples of people with limited mobility; women concerned about safety at night time and; parents with young children were given – as well as the resultant equalities issues).
- Members would welcome work with neighbouring boroughs to encourage car club usage (through flexible controlled parking zone permits).

5.4 Councillor Sophie McGeevor (Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport) addressed the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- It was recognised the people had deep psychological connections to the cars – some of the issues (such as those around safety) might be unfounded. There had been a ‘car lobby’ for most of the 20th century – telling people that they needed cars and that their cars kept them safe. However, 50% of households in Lewisham did not own a car – which might be through choice – but it might also be due to affordability. It was the Council’s responsibility to ensure that the public realm was also safe for those residents- and that there was good quality public transport as well as options for sustainable travel.
- It was not possible to support car use at the same time as public transport and sustainable travel gains. This is the issue that the Council was trying to deal with.
- As much as the Council had tried to encourage non-car drivers to complete the consultation – the vast majority of responses had been received from car drivers.
- The group of people most impacted by car usage – and the associated issues of pedestrian/cyclist safety and pollution had not been consulted – and that was children.
- The Council had committed to considerably reducing emissions over the next ten years – and this consultation was just the start of the work that would be needed to bring about significant change.

5.5 **Resolved:** that the Committee would refer its views to Mayor and Cabinet (see item 7).

6. Select Committee work programme

6.1 The Committee discussed the work programme for the meeting on 21 January. There was also a discussion about the appropriate place in the meeting agenda for making referrals to Mayor and Cabinet. In addition, there was a discussion about the appropriate committee to carry out scrutiny of the climate emergency action plan. A member believed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be best placed to scrutinise the plan (rather than

Sustainable Development Select Committee). A vote was held and lost on this proposal.

- 6.2 **Resolved:** a) that at future meetings of the Committee, Members would agree decisions (including the content of referrals to Mayor and Cabinet) at the end of each agenda item (rather than at the end of the meeting) – b) that the climate emergency action plan and the draft local plan would be considered at the next meeting. It was also agreed that the Environment Agency would be invited to attend for the item on flood management (specifically to answer questions about the capacity of the Thames Barrier to protect London from the anticipated rise in global sea levels).

7. Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet

7.1 The Committee discussed the referrals for items four and five.

7.2 **Resolved:** that the Committee would refer its on cycling (agenda item four) to Mayor and Cabinet, as follows –

- The Committee recommends that officers should investigate the potential use of the Commonplace platform to identify locations for the installation of cycle hangars.
- That options should be explored for the development of a borough-wide campaign supporting the A21 cycling corridor.
- That options should be considered for the commissioning of feasibility work in and around Deptford for improvements to the cycling and pedestrian environment (to link with the completion of works for the Thames Tideway Tunnel).
- That work should be expedited in Catford Town Centre for the protection of cyclists – and in particular across and under the two railway bridges. The Committee believes that this work should progress in advance of other work to develop the town centre.
- That officers responsible for cycling and those working on neighbourhood community infrastructure levy spending should work together to determine whether there are options for using NCIL on the installation of cycle hangars in areas of recognised demand but insufficient identified funding.
- The Committee also supports further work to ensure that spaces in cycle hangars are prioritised for people without space to store bikes at home.
- The Committee recommends that further options should be explored for enabling the safe use of cycle routes at night. It believes that this should include consideration of options for reflective ‘cats eyes’ in dimly lit areas. The Committee also believes that the routine for closing park gates at night should be reviewed to enable cyclists access through principal routes until as late in the evenings as is feasible.
- The Committee is concerned about the imbalance of cycling schemes for the north and the south of the borough. It recommends that further consideration should be given to the equal distribution of schemes across the borough.
- The Committee believes that the Council should be at the forefront of the London approach to the management of dockless bikes – it recommends

that officers should investigate options for the management of dockless bikes that would work best for Lewisham.

7.3 It was also **resolved** that the Committee would refer its views on the parking policy update to Mayor and Cabinet, as follows:

- The Committee commends the report and recognises the work that officers have put into designing and managing the consultation.
- The Committee recommends that parking charges should be reviewed annually in light of the data being collected by the new parking machines. It believes that specific consideration should be given to the ongoing impact of the climate crisis as well as: the impact of the implementation of fifteen minute parking slots; and the health of businesses on high streets.
- That consideration should be given to the management of parking (and enforcement) in the vicinity of Lewisham Hospital – and that additional consideration should be given to management and enforcement of parking around other institutions in the borough that attract large numbers of users.
- That the changes to the enforcement of disabled parking bays should be communicated to residents. The Committee would also welcome further details about the process for the review of mandatory disabled parking bays – particularly in instances in which users no longer require them.
- The Committee recommends that further consideration should be given in future reports to the potential equalities impact of any proposed changes to parking policy.

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm

Chair:

Date:
