

Scrutiny Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee

Meeting of held on Tuesday, 20 February 2018 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall,
Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Sean Fitzsimons (Chair);
Councillor Jan Buttinger (Vice-Chair);
Councillors Pat Clouder, Patricia Hay-Justice, Joy Prince and
Donald Speakman

Also Present: Councillor Robert Canning and Stuart King

Apologies: None

PART A

9/18 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2018 were agreed as an accurate record.

10/18 Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

11/18 Urgent Business (if any)

There were no items of urgent business.

12/18 Cabinet Member Question Time- Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment

Councillor Stuart King, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, provided a presentation to the Sub-Committee outlining the work that had been undertaken within his portfolio.

The presentation focused on the Successes, Challenges and Priorities of the key areas of his portfolio.

Successes

20mph- The roll out had almost been completed, 4 out of the 5 planned roll outs had been successful. The final was scheduled to be rolled out on the 12th of March

Air Quality Control- Following the successful air quality summit in June 2017 which resulted in over 600 Participants, a final action plan was produced and resulted in the implementation of a 5 year plan. The 5 year plan included the integration of services including Public Health on a 50 point action plan to tackle air quality issues in the borough.

Cycle Strategy-The paper went to Cabinet on January 2018 which sets out the strategy for the next 5 years. The papers were subject to pre policy scrutiny which influenced the final shape of the strategy papers.

Play Street- This was successful with many participants, including the award winning Love Lane which won street of the year two years in a row. Schools in the borough were being encouraged to take part in the scheme.

Street Lighting- Extensive work had been completed to bring works back to schedule and as a result of the investment programme to replace all street lighting, 38,300 street lights had been replaced. Additionally 8,400 illuminated signs had also been replaced.

Schools-72 Schools in the borough were signed up to the Sustainable Travel Accreditation Recognition for Schools (STARS) programme. More schools had actively participated on various awareness and healthy travel programmes offered around the borough.

Trees-Three and half thousand trees to be planted around the borough over the next year. The tree planting programme was to be linked to air quality and priority planting would be targeted at areas identified with poor air quality. Resident associations, and people in the community would be relied on to inform the council of location of vacant pits.

Brighton Mainline Upgrade- Following campaign for funding, the council was successful on lobbying for funding from Department of Transport (DFT) for the development of BML for the next 18 months.

Challenges

There were still challenges faced to deliver on actions such as the following:

- Safety around schools which is an issue that was increasingly raised by schools, resident, police and members. There had been pilots on restriction of cars in some roads during schools hours. Feedback to be assessed following consultation on this pilot.

- Ongoing work to be completed with Transport for London (TFL) on the Cycle strategy.
- Controlled Parking had presented many issues in the last 18 months due to large volume of applications received. Additional resources had been put into the team to manage the demand.
- Highway maintenance would be challenging as a result of the two year funding reduction period.
- Construction logistics as a result of work that would be carried out in central Croydon. Officers were working with contractors to manage this, keep vulnerable people safe and keeping Croydon open for business whilst attempting to ease congestions.
- Rail infrastructure as a result of BML upgrade challenge and Southern Rail who continue to impeded growth objectives of Croydon

Priorities

The Cabinet Member informed the Sub-Committee that his priorities included the following:

- To deliver actions under the Growth Zone
- The Delivery of the tree planting programme
- Increase in electric charging zones
- The delivery of the cycle strategy
- 20mphr programme, specifically around enforcement
- Completion of the Blackhorse Lane Bridge development and working with TFL to ensure delivered according to the timetable.

Members raised concerns regarding pot holes on the roads and stated that as a borough that had a cycling strategy in place, the Council needed to negotiate with contractors to ensure they are filled properly. Officers responded that there were plans in place to manage highway maintenance. Safety inspections were undertaken frequently. A condition of the current contract was for rigorous inspection of roads and where pot holes were identified, they were repaired as a permanent repair.

The Sub-Committee was informed that there was a planned programme of repairs in place as a result of the use of scanners used to measure the condition of roads. Almost 70% of works carried out to date were planned preventative work, with the department working hard to carry out inspections and repairs to clear backlog.

Members further learned that there was a reporting App that enabled reporting of pot holes in the borough. There was also work that was in process on an integration of highways system. A single interface to speed up processes.

In response to a Member question on the amount of air quality monitoring kits in the borough, the Cabinet Members stated that there were five monitoring kits spread around the borough which was enough to obtain the data required. The Mayor of London had provided kits to 400 schools to complete localised monitoring, and it had been considered that this idea may be useful in

Croydon schools. One of the actions as a result of the Air-Quality strategy was to produce supplementary planning guidance to ensure its objectives were considered as part of planning applications.

In response to a Member question on the policy on wood burning stoves which were thought to be on an increase, officers stated that a full ban cannot be imposed on the use of the stoves due to people investing in reduced emission stoves. There had been work done to inform and encourage residents on the type of fuel to be used.

The Sub-Committee learned that phase one of the joint programme with TFL on the Blackhorse Lane development had been completed. The bridge was currently accessible to pedestrians due to an agreed plan with contractors to minimise closure and disruption. It is envisaged that the work will be completed by January 2019.

Members asked for an update regarding crossovers and were informed that there had been a number of changes in the last year including additional information provided to residents on discharging of water. There had also been a restriction on the amount of crossover applications granted. In terms of enforcement, where it had been identified that cross over rules had not been adhered to, an investigation was carried out. Members were informed that there was however a difficult and lengthy process to enforce breaches of rules.

Members congratulated the work that was being done on planting of trees and asked what was being done to encourage residents to nurture the trees planted. The Cabinet members responded that councillors should play a role in their wards by informing residents of the plans, endorsing the plans through the community budget programme. There would be 3 different types of trees planted and maintenance would be a challenge. Signage would be placed alongside the trees to encourage residents to assist with nurturing and watering of the trees.

The Sub-Committee further learned that most of the trees had been planted in identified vacant lots under the principle that if there had previously been a tree in that position, there would be minimal objection from residents when a new tree was planted. Officers would deal with any objections received on a case by case basis to a tree planted in a new location.

In relation to questions regarding charging points, Members were informed that the charging points in the borough would mainly be overnight charging points and that there would be provision made for two rapid charge points on the A23. Members were also advised that multiple vehicle charging points at individual sites were not easy to obtain, more work was to be done on identifying locations to implement. Officers also stated that there would be a proportion of charging points identified for disabled badge holders.

The Sub-Committee raised concerns on the monitoring and enforcement of 20mph zones as it had been identified that there was little compliance in some

areas. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that enforcement proved to be challenging but reminded the Sub-Committee that this was a relatively new and it would take some time to see reduction in speeds.

The Council do not have enforcement powers but would be working with the police to ensure that restrictions were enforced. Intervention had been placed on many roads, such as crossings and speed vials and the council would continue to lobby TFL and the police for speed cameras in 20mph zones.

The Sub-Committee commented that they were pleased to learn that many schools had signed up to the STARS programme but were not aware of which schools were involved. It was requested for information on schools that were signed up to be circulated to Members in order that they may congratulate the schools that were signed up and use as an opportunity to encourage the schools in their wards not signed up to get involved.

There were a number of schemes that support walking to school policies and the more encouragement is given the better the outcome for children, the community and environment.

There had been a pilot of pedestrian only zones at some schools, with restrictions placed on roads that the school is on to not allow any cars during the AM and PM school run period. Exemptions were made for families and children with disabilities. This Consultation period was scheduled to end in March 2018 with evidence gathering and assessment to take place on the viability and suitability of extending to other locations.

In response to member queries regarding the next steps on the Cycle strategy and measuring success, Officers stated that there were currently target indicators used and would be updated each year on the delivery of each stage of the strategy. In the future targets may be included to measure success but at this stage the priority and focus was to deliver the large cycle network that had been proposed.

The Council had a moral and legal obligation to make roads safe for all cyclists and was looking at how this could be achieved such as through the provision of greenways and quiet ways for less confident cyclists.

In response to questions relating to public realm issues such as whether the Council had considered the use of LED for street lights and whether public water dispensers would be introduced to the borough, the Cabinet Member stated that the use of LED was currently not viable for Croydon but they were exploring other options. The introduction of public water dispenser and fountains in the town centre was being discussed and currently explored.

The Chair thanked Councillor King for the presentation, and Councillor Canning and officers for their contribution.

Conclusions

1. Information on schools that have an up to date travel plan should be circulated to Members.
2. Consideration should be given to the 'walking buses' initiative
3. Further information on electric points for disabled cars to be circulated to Members.
4. Provision of Air Quality monitoring equipment for schools to be explored
5. Revised Cross-Over policy/briefing be circulated to Members.

13/18 Work Programme

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the work programme for the remainder of the 2017/2018 municipal year.

14/18 Exclusion of the Press and Public

This was not required.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm

Signed:

Date:

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