

## **Scrutiny Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee**

Meeting of held on Tuesday, 12 September 2017 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katherine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

### **MINUTES**

- Present:** Councillor Sean Fitzsimons (Chair);  
Councillor Jan Buttinger (Vice-Chair);  
Councillors Joy Prince and Donald Speakman
- Also Present:** Councillor Alison Butler and Robert Canning
- Apologies:** Councillor Pat Clouder, Patricia Hay-Justice and Phil Thomas

### **PART A**

#### **31/17 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2017 were agreed as an accurate record.

#### **32/17 Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

#### **33/17 Urgent Business (if any)**

There were no items of urgent business.

#### **34/17 Fiveways Croydon - A review of the design proposals subject to public consultation**

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment gave the apologies for the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment and attended in his place.

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment informed the Committee that he lived near the Fiveways Junction and was acutely aware of the issues suffered; including delays for motorists and the dangerous conditions for cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists. It was agreed that these issues would worsen over the coming years and that change was necessary, however the Council's position was that a road widening option was favoured over a fly-over above Duppas Hill Park and maintaining the Waddon Hotel.

While improvement works to the area had been consulted on previously in 2015, the previous consultation had not proposed any improvements to the Fiveways junction. It was stated by the Deputy Cabinet Member that the

current consultation proposal had taken into account the Council's view and Transport for London (TfL) was thanked for conducting a thorough consultation process.

The Deputy Cabinet Member highlighted to the Committee that the Council's preferred option of building a new bridge next to the current bridge would minimise disruption, and the proposal to change the junction to four-ways would improve traffic flow and safety. While these were outlined to be improvements it was noted that scope remained for the scheme to be further improved, particular for cyclists.

Thomas Holmes of TfL provided the Committee with a presentation which outlined the difficulties of the junction and recognised that the A23 was a strategic route which acted as a bypass to central Croydon. Furthermore, the importance of the link to the surrounding towns of Wallington and Carshalton was recognised.

It was stated that TfL noted that Fiveways was a strategic junction in south London, but was a hostile environment in particular for pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists, and would only worsen with the anticipated growth that Croydon would experience in the coming years. In addition, TfL recognised that the bridge over the railway line needed to be replaced by 2023 as it was coming to the end of its useful life.

The key project objectives were outlined to the Committee as increasing traffic capacity, reducing journey time, upgrading the pedestrian environment, improving cycle routes, and enhancing the 'place' function to develop Waddon as a local centre. In line with the draft Mayor's Transport Strategy there had been a focus on the healthy streets approach, and the proposed scheme had been measured with the healthy streets factors and was considered to meet over half.

The Committee were informed that replacing a bridge over a railway line was a difficult procedure so TfL were looking to make the process as simple as possible, and as such they were proposing a new bridge alongside the existing bridge which was anticipated to minimise disruption. However, it was noted that building the new bridge would require the acquisition of two commercial properties.

The proposals further sought to realign the road layout which would require the acquisition of a residential block, however would increase the length of time when the lights were green traffic and pedestrians. Furthermore the proposals included making Epsom Road two ways and introducing step cycle tracks in both directions.

TfL, it was stated, was looking to provide more green space and seating wherever possible within the scheme which would improve the pedestrian environment, including the planting of 30 additional trees in the area. In addition, improvement to cycling infrastructure were proposed including new cycling parking and advanced stop lines.

*Councillor Buttinger left the meeting at 7pm.*

It was anticipated that there would be additional capacity on Stafford Road which would enable people to do a left turn, and a bus lane along Stafford Road would be introduced to facilitate the movement of sustainable forms of transport.

While the deadline for consultation responses was 18 September, TfL stated they were happy to relax the deadline to receive responses from the Committee as part of the consultation. Once all responses had been received they would be reviewed and it was anticipated that a revised scheme would be released at the end of 2017.

TfL stated that it was felt that the proposals supported the council's aim to develop the Waddon area and recognised that it was not an easy problem to solve but that balance of needs had been sought. It was further stated that it hoped that the proposals could be improved in light of the consultation responses.

Mr Cheeswright, Secretary of the Stafford Road Action Committee, addressed the Committee stating that at least 20 local residents were totally opposed to the proposals. It was strongly suggested that no improvements to the junction would be experienced until the Experimental Realignment Scheme was removed as the current traffic light phasing did not align with traffic movements. Mr Cheeswright further called for Stafford Road to be left as it was and the proposals for parking bays to be removed to be scrapped as local residents used them.

The Stafford Road Action Committee further requested TfL noted the statement of traffic movements which had been undertaken in 2011. In conclusion, Mr Chesswright stated he would rate the Stafford Road proposals as one out of ten only as the scheme did not address the issues that were experienced by local residents.

Mr Cooper, Croydon Cycling Campaign, stated that he was also a resident of Waddon and a cyclist. Mr Cooper drew the Committees attention to figures that suggested that overall traffic in the area was down 16% and over Waddon Bridge was down by 15% in the last 15 years, however demand for cycling was up despite the dangers posed by the junction.

It was stated that a key change to the proposals would be at the junction of Epsom Road and Duppas Hill, which would require cyclists to cross fast flowing traffic to remain in the cycle lane. It was suggested that the solution was to have a two way cycle lane on the station side which would create a safe route into town.

With regards to the bridge, Mr Cooper noted that cycle lanes would be provided, but not in the section after the bridge and into the junction and it was suggested that there was space available that would enable cycle lanes

to be provided in both directions that would enable residents to safely cycle to Waddon Leisure Centre safely. Mr Cooper concluded that it was important to provide safe cycle options across the junction to enable cyclists to feel safer.

In response, TfL stated that the traffic data from the Department for Transport was that over the past five years demand had increased in the area. However, the suggestion that the cycle lanes on Epsom Road be moved to both be on station side would be reviewed as it the aim of TfL to improve cycle movement in the area.

With regards to the north/south cycle links on the A23, it was stated that it was TfL's policy to link cycle lanes to longer routes and there were no plans, at the time, to have a north/south route. Furthermore, a road safety audit had concluded that a merge location was not acceptable if there was a cycle lane on A23.

TfL further stated that due to limited highway space it would not be possible to have a dedicated bus lane, cycle lane and two lanes of traffic on Stafford Road. As such, a judgment call was required and with around 1,000 people per hour using buses through this junction it was decided that a bus lane was a more pertinent use of the highway space.

The Committee raised concerns that the omission of a north/south cycle route fulfilled the project objectives. In light of many people wanting to complete short cycle journeys, such as to the leisure centre, school, the station, and McDonalds, it was imperative that safe routes were provided otherwise people would cycle on the pavement. Concerns were further raised that many of those who would wish to cycle short routes were young people and it was the responsibility of TfL and the council to ensure safe routes were available.

In response to Member concerns, TfL stated that if a person did not feel safe cycling on the roads then they should not. It was important that people cycled only when they felt safe. While TfL wanted to encourage cycling and introduce segregated lanes, a balance was required when there was limited highway space.

The Chair noted that within the proposals being consulted on there was not sufficient space, however stated that if a small slither of land from the Morrisons site was purchased then sufficient space would be created to provide a safe cycle route. The TfL representative stated that he would request the Design Team review this suggestion.

Members were informed that step track cycle facilities were at a different level to the carriageway and that introducing signal control at all junctions would ensure that all crossings would have a green man function, which was not the current case.

The Committee noted that the left turn into Epsom Road would be removed and requested that this be reviewed. In addition, it was suggested that the proposals missed an opportunity to widen Epsom Road with the removal of a

electricity sub-station and small blocks of flats to provide for a wider road and development area. Concerns were further raised in regards to accessibility of Waddon Station and a request was made that the scheme was future proofed in light of possible future works to improve accessibility.

In response, the TfL representative stated that a survey was undertaken over several days and it was found that very few people did make a left turn into Epsom Road however feedback had been received and so it was being reviewed.

In regards to the suggestion of widening Epsom Road, it was stated that the proposals sought to limit the number of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) required. To successfully apply for a CPO it would be required to demonstrate that those properties would need to be removed for the road to be sufficiently wide. In light of the proposal already providing for two way traffic and two way cycle lane it would be difficult to prove. TfL were aware that some people did do drop offs outside the station, however given that there were double red lines it should not be done and it was not proposed to introduce.

Members noted that the report did not include reference to consulting disability groups despite the necessity to ensure places, such as Fiveways, were accessible. It was further noted that the proposals included the relocation of bus stops and concerns were raised that those with disabilities may find it difficult traveling the additional distance to the bus stop.

TfL, in response, stated that they consulted everyone but did not specifically target any groups. The Head of Transport confirmed that no specific groups were consulted in regards to this consultation exercise, however a walkabout had been undertaken the previous Friday and members of Vision Croydon and the council's accessibility team were involved. This walkabout had been very useful for receiving feedback on accessibility and improvements that could be made to the scheme.

The Committee stressed the need to ensure pedestrians and cyclists were kept apart from the traffic and stated that painted cycle lanes were not sufficient as motorists often intruded in such lanes.

Mr Cheeswright noted that there had been a number of instances of cyclists using the pavement around Fiveways due to safety concerns, and further raised concerns that the nitrogen dioxide fumes had not been taken into consideration.

Mr Cooper concluded that he was concerned that TfL were looking to spend £100m on a scheme that did not encourage cycling and stressed that painted on cycle lanes were not sufficient. In addition, Mr Cooper went on to raise concerns in regards to advance stop lines which were considered dangerous as they required cyclists to take off quickly and move out of the way of traffic so as to not impede traffic flow.

The Deputy Cabinet Member concluded that the Council were keen to ensure

that the best scheme was implemented, which included provisions for safe cycling. In light of the discussion, the Deputy Cabinet Member went on to note that prohibiting a left turn from Stafford Road into Epsom Road would remove the opportunity for station drop-offs and as such suggested a drop-off by Platform 1 may need to be considered ahead of possible future station improvements.

In conclusion, the Chair noted that the Committee was in broad agreement with the aims and that most of the proposals were not contentious as there was broad agreement on realigning the road and the introduction of a new bridge, which would cause less disruption and reduce conflict. Furthermore it was welcomed that the programme had been extended to include the Fiveways junction and the addition of public realm improvements.

The Committee were encouraged that there would be a review of the cycle lanes on Epsom Road in light of the comments of the Croydon Cycling Campaign, however recognised that there was not an unlimited pot of money for the improvement works.

Members, however, raised concerns that the proposals would lead to conflict between pedestrians and cyclists due to the lack of dedicated cycle facilities on the north/south route and the safety concerns. Due to these concerns it was hoped that TfL would take into consideration the suggestion that some land be purchased from Morrisons to provide for a cycle lane as it was important to take into consideration how cyclists would access Waddon, furthermore the Committee wanted to encourage residents in the local area to use the Waddon Leisure Centre. The Committee further requested that disability groups be given an extended deadline to respond to the consultation to ensure that their views were taken into consideration and that the scheme was as accessible as possible.

In reaching its recommendations, the Committee made the following

**CONCLUSIONS:**

- That the overall aims of the scheme were recognised and supported;
- That most of the proposals were not contentious and supported; including realigning the road and introduction of a new bridge;
- That the extension of the proposals to include the Fiveways junction was welcomed;
- The improvements to the public realm were supported;
- But that TfL should accept that this section of the A23 is a key part of the Waddon locality, and that Waddon residents, including pedestrians and cyclists use the A23 road and pavements for vital local trips
- And the committee was concerned that the proposals failed to meet all the standards set out in TfL's new policy of Healthy Streets especially the lack of north south segregated cycle paths from Epsom Road southwards.
- That some aspects of the proposals be reviewed to improve cycle provision to ensure segregated local cycle trips and avoid cyclists having to use pavements, which would to the detriment of pedestrians.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to Transport for London that:

1. To amend the proposals to ensure needs of local residents, pedestrians and cyclists are taken into account;
2. The cycle lanes on Epsom Road be reviewed to have both cycle lanes on the station side to improve cycle safety;
3. The scheme be reviewed to reduce conflict between cyclists and pedestrians;
4. Consideration be given to how cyclists would travel around Waddon safely, especially young people cycling to school, parks, the station and McDonalds;
5. A dedicated cycle lane north/south be provided south of Epsom Road;
6. The possibility of acquiring land from the Morrisons site be reviewed to provide for these segregated cycle lanes; and
7. Disability groups be approached to participate in the consultation to ensure the final plans are accessible to all.

### **35/17 Croydon's Growth Zone's Proposed Five Year Public Realm Programme**

The Director of Growth provided the Committee with an outline of the Growth Zone scheme, noting that Croydon's plans had been approved by Cabinet and the Government in the summer 2016 which enabled a loan to the council for infrastructure programmes. Key aspect of the Growth Zone project was public realm improvements.

The Interim Head of Spatial Planning informed the Committee that public realm had been developed under the Growth Zone to build upon previous projects to take into account the evolving priorities, including wellbeing, culture, and financial benefits. As part of the five year programme there would be a series of Cabinet reports, with the Growth Zone report due to go to Cabinet in December 2017.

While it was noted that to deliver such a programme would take time to design, consult upon and implement, it was important that the programme encouraged the activation of culture within the area. To ensure the best programme the Committee were asked to provide their views on the three questions outlined the report.

The Committee were informed that evidence showed that the quality of the public realm directly influenced the decisions of investors, and thus had a financial impact on the borough on the business rates achieved. The introduction of three large organisations to the opportunity area was seen in some part due to the improvements to the public realm, especially following the introduction the policy outlining the quality and building materials that should be used by private developers when delivering public realm.

The increased focus on delivering healthy streets was noted as an important factor in ensuring the delivery of successful spaces which enabled interesting activities for everyone throughout the day.

Lucy Saunders of the Greater London Authority informed the Committee that the healthy streets approach had been developed with the question of how we use public space and how it impact on our health at the core. The indicators included; are people choosing to walk and cycle, are the spaces easy to cross, are they safe, is there shade and stop points, and low pollution levels. It was stated that healthy streets were part of the Mayor's agenda as it was noted that if the streets improved then health improvements would be witnessed.

The Creative Director informed the Committee that public realm had an impact on cultural regeneration, with work beginning to make College Green from being one of the most unsuccessful examples of public realm to one of the most successful spaces.

The Committee were informed that it had been found culture could be used to develop other public spaces by animating or activating the space. Culture, it was stated, could change the character of the space and make it feel safer, and thus a more attractive area to be in and walk through.

Members were shown examples of Meanwhile projects which showed how interactions with sites could change with the introduction of cultural activities. Students were working with the council to change the way people interacted with Wandle car park through a Meanwhile activity. Additionally, at the end of 2017 it was planned there would be a large scale lighting projection project in Croydon across three sites. This project would be positive, celebratory and seasonal, and it was hoped would encourage people to visit the sites to see what was happening.

The Interim Head of Spatial Planning informed Members that they were looking to achieve a greater provision of public realm, and increased levels of walking and cycling which would facilitate in the continually changing perception of Croydon. It was noted that there had been some good interventions around East and West Croydon stations, however focus was to move to the mid-Croydon area including St Georges Walk and the Katherine Street area. It was further recognised that the Dingwall Loop tram proposal also provided an opportunity for further public realm improvements. The plan was that once the improvements to mid-Croydon were made then attention would be turned to the Old Town.

Members were positive about the work that had been outlined and that officers were looking towards the Croydon of the future and were pleased that there was an energy and desire to deliver the project.

Committees stressed that it was important that while the large schemes were being delivered that the health outcomes were being maximised with the areas being kept clean and tidy. It was further recognised that streets would be healthier if trees were replaced if felled and open space was protected and utilised, where possible.

In response the question posed in the report, Members stated that it was



important that the council was honest when undertaking the consultation as often the public felt that they had a strong influence on the outcome. It was imperative that relationships were built as it was a great opportunity to seek the views of the public and organisations.

Members stated they were pleased to hear that inclusiveness was an integral part of the public realm project and questioned whether safe spaces would be built into the public realm to enable those who felt threatened somewhere they could go.

In response to Member questions, the Interim Head of Spatial Planning stated that trees were an important component, however schemes needed to be well designed and greening needed to be in proportion but were recognised for their benefits, including the provision of shade.

The public realm projects being discussed would be part of the Opportunity Area which would see growth, and as such it was important that the developed areas provided open spaces for all ages and groups. To ensure high quality public realm was delivered the public realm design guide would be reviewed and the lifetime cost of the schemes would be taken into consideration.

Officers acknowledged the importance of providing appropriate facilities and safe spaces and were engaging with the Public Health team to develop the ideas which would be incorporated within the revised public realm design guide.

In regards to ensuring there was meaningful engagement officers confirmed that a communication strategy was to be developed and would include engagement with businesses. However, while the public realm projects would be focussed on the town centre it was acknowledged that the impacts would be experienced across the borough, and as such the Committee were assured that consultation would be undertaken across the borough.

The Cabinet Member for Homes, Regeneration and Planning confirmed that the council would need to be honest about the level of influence and what could be achieved. It was acknowledged that public realm improvements would benefit the whole borough, but people's expectations needed to be managed.

In response to Member question the Committee were informed that while greenery was not a specific indicator within the healthy streets indications, it was a contributor to all ten indicators.

Officers stated that parks improvements were part of a number of projects, of which the Growth Zone was one factor, and confirmed that legacy components would be picked up. It was stressed that the Growth Zone was around activation, however ensuring groups were working together would be ensured.

Members raised concerns that the works completed in South End had widened the pavements but had removed the cycle lane, which it was felt was not the right balance.

The Committee further raised concerns in regards to the East Croydon masterplan which it was felt was not properly consulted on and was business driven. The bridge across the railway line was also felt to have failed to deliver a meaningful connection to Addiscombe. The Chair further noted that road safety had not been improved on Addiscombe Road or Cherry Orchard Road, in particular for cyclists.

It was noted that it was important to be clear as to the outcomes of Growth Zone; which would include more homes in the town centre, more jobs, fewer cars; which would lead to the benefit of more art and culture.

The Committee noted that the public realm improvements would be focussed to Croydon town centre, but stressed that it would be important that the quality of the public realm did not degrade as soon as someone stepped out of the town centre and requested that the principles of good public realm would be extended to those within walking distance of the town centre.

The Director of Growth confirmed that they were looking at extending into the corridors that fed into the town centre. There were a mix of schemes and there was acknowledgement that there would be more people and so there was a focus on public transport to ensure it would be able to cope with the additional pressure. While it was noted that the car had been the dominant mode of transport to access Croydon in the past, and that it was important that traffic was able to flow through the roads, there were no projects that sought to increase traffic in the town centre. The Cabinet Member for Homes, Regeneration and Planning stated that one of the successes would be to slow traffic through Croydon, and as such work would continue to make Wellsley Road greener and increase the number of pedestrian crossings.

The Cabinet Member suggested that further aspects of the Growth Zone could be considered by the Committee at future meetings to ensure Members had a complete view of the projects. Furthermore, the Cabinet Member stated that they would be happy to arrange engagement sessions with councillors to discuss the plans before going to Cabinet, and the Chair confirmed that a walkabout that took place before the meeting had enabled Members to gain an understanding of the new spaces and how they were used.

In reaching its recommendations, the Committee made the following

**CONCLUSIONS:**

- That the aims of the programme were endorsed;
- The infrastructure needed to be built, both for those who lived and worked in Croydon presently and for those in the future;
- That the introduction of more street trees was encouraged;
- That the challenge of engaging with councillors and the public was recognised as ongoing; and
- That the Council needed to be more confident in communicating how

the town centre would change.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to Cabinet that:

1. The principles of the programme be endorsed;
2. The engagement programme be honest with the aims of the project and limitations to ensure people are aware of what can be achieved;
3. Future reports and engagement activities clearly communicate how the town centre would change from the Masterplan (2007/8) and into the future (2025); and
4. Those with disabilities are taken into consideration when designing schemes and consulting.

**36/17 Responses from Cabinet**

The Sub-Committee noted the responses from Cabinet following the recommendations made by the Committee at the meeting on 31 January 2017.

Members requested that the response to recommendation 21 be referred to the Director of Planning and Strategic Transport and a further response to be requested.

The Committee further noted that the response to recommendation 8 did not respond to the concerns regarding the most polluting cars and requested this be referred back to the Cabinet.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the responses from Cabinet.

**37/17 Work Programme**

The Sub-Committee received the work programme for 2017/18.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the work programme.

**38/17 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

This was not required.

The meeting ended at 9.38 pm

**Signed:**

**Date:**

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