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Scrutiny Streets, Environment & Homes Sub-Committee

Meeting held on Tuesday, 28 September 2021 at 6.30 pm in This meeting was held remotely via Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Leila Ben-Hassel (Chair);
Councillor Jeet Bains (Vice-Chair);
Councillors Kola Agboola and Jade Appleton

Also Present: Councillor Muhammad Ali, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Croydon
Councillor Michael Neal
Councillor Robert Canning
Councillor Clive Fraser
Sarah Hayward, Interim Executive Director of Place
Stephen Tate, Director of Housing, Estates and Improvement
Heather Chesbrough, Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration
Steve Iles, Director of Public Realm
Jamie Perkins, Head of Environment Services & Sustainable Neighbourhood
Scott Edgell, General Manager, Veolia
Andrea Lowe, Resilience Contract Manager, Veolia

Apologies: Councillors Luke Clancy, Louis Carserrides and Caragh Skipper

PART A

24/21 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

25/21 Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

26/21 Urgent Business (if any)

There were no items of urgent business.

27/21 Place Department Update

The Interim Executive Director of Place introduced the item and details were outlined by relevant Directors in a [Presentation](#)

Following the presentation, Members had the opportunity to ask questions

During the consideration of the recommendations, the Committee discussed the following:

- Growth on income had been built into the budget in relation to ANPR cameras, camera enforcement was an efficient way to ensure people were abiding by the law. Income for enforcement would be a significant increase on previous years. Parking income was used to offset concessionary travel such as the freedom pass scheme which contribution for is laid to London Councils
- Once motorists start to comply with restrictions, there may be a reduction in projected revenue from penalty charges in areas where ANPR 's operated. This had been built into the model as income projection was based on a compliance process which had been over and under estimated at different periods.
- After the deduction of the cost of running the service, all surplus funds goes into the freedom pass scheme, once the surplus exceeds the cost of the freedom pass, the Council is required to put the funds into other road schemes.
- The Council has shifted from a reactive service on maintenance of highways. The budget to deal with reactive maintenance such as effects of potholes as a result of adverse weather was amended to allow for growth in the budget to allow for the repairs to be made.
- The majority of money for Croydon works initially came from the growth fund
- The end of furlough and reversal of uplift to universal credit was concerning and there were a number of strategies that had been out in place by the Council to mitigate the knock on effect such as additional funding which had been secured from DWP to keep Croydon Works running. Working with adult learning, Croydon College and John Ruskin colleges to ensure delivering what needed for residents in terms of training. Working with DWP and other providers such as SWLP to blend different approaches from different providers.
- The development of the community safety strategy would address and target resources in the right way in the antisocial behaviour teams. In being very clear about roles and responsibilities, work had been undertaken to ensure that queries were being routed to the right departments to make sure queries were dealt with more quickly and efficiently. All information on had been made clear on the Councils website.

Request for information

1. Briefing from Public Realm on projected income from ANPR
2. Briefing on fee income and total expenditure on the Planning Service

The Sub-Committee concluded that

1. The Place department always achieved savings as required. There was however a concern about the impact this was having on the

department such as the increase in complaints in some of its service areas. Consideration to be given to the possibility of a deep dive to be undertaken by the Sub-Committee on plans to address issues arising from cuts to the budget to be undertaken.

2. There was a concern about the impact of non-compliance with planning conditions as well as issues with the planning enforcement team resource.
3. That's a report on Landlord Licensing be brought before the Sub-Committee prior to being presented at Cabinet in November 2020
4. The proactive partnership of all agencies was reassuring

28/21 South London Waste Partnership Contract

The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Croydon introduced the item by providing context and advised that the contract was entered into in 2018 for waste collection as well as street cleaning. Veolia collect 1.8million household waste collections per month, and 2703 miles of streets were cleansed monthly. Recycling rates had improved significantly over the years, this was attributed to implementing different ways to encourage residents to take ownership and recycle more. A service improvement plan had been put into place following the Pandemic to address issues and improve on service delivery. This plan had been impacted by the National HGV shortage issue. Growth increase due increased households and increased waste remained a challenge.

The General Manager and the Resilience Contract Manager from Veolia outlined details in a [Presentation](#)

Following the presentation, Members had the opportunity to ask questions

During the consideration of the recommendations, the Committee discussed the following:

- Officers stated that prior to the National issues with HGV drivers, there has been improvements in collections performance in the last year despite challenges and the service had performed well.
- Reporting of missed collections were usually completed online but the small number of residents that are unable to complete reporting online they are able to report by calling the contact centres to report.
- Useful breakdown on street cleansing per borough, similar information on bin collection per borough and missed per ward would be useful
- Concerning reports regarding behaviour of crew by some residents and officers were clear that any behavioural issues that were reported were dealt with. There were cameras on vehicles to capture any issues. Members welcomed the information of on board cameras and felt this should be publicised. Officers were exploring ways to update the cameras to enable direct feed to the office or live feedback as this was currently not possible. There were factors to be considered such as

costs, data protection and resources which would be part of upgrading of the systems.

- Officers clarified that there were many reasons that fed into the shortage of HGV drivers, in 2019 road haulage association published that there were approximately 60K shortage, this had now risen to approximately 100k. This was desperate and challenging times as agency providers did not have the staff available to provide in this current climate from a backdrop of an already struggling industry .Veolia had been exploring several ways to address the issues such as overhauling recruitment process, upskilling current staff through a bespoke programme to assist them in obtaining the appropriate licensing. A retention bonus had been provided and increase in recruitment package. Prices had to be increased for commercial partners to be able to fund the additional money that was going into recruitment and retention of staff.
- Croydon internal staff as well as some DWP staff were currently being trained in Croydon. This commenced as of June 2021 as were not able to train any staff in 2019. Prior to 2019 there had been an apprentice training scheme in place but not on the current scale. There were current extensive packages for staff such as overtime, bonuses, pension package and training package.
- At the time the fleet was Purchased in 2018, there wasn't and electrical dustcart available. There are more reliable and environmentally friendly fleets coming onto the market but they are extremely expensive. The current fleet was Euro 6 compliant which was encouraging. Technology was changing quickly but there was a substantial capital outlay to change the entire fleet and it could only be changed every 8 years.
- Out of the four authorities on the SLWP, two were not currently showing as experiencing issues but there had been issues in all the Local Authorities at different stages.

Request for Information

1. Request for comparative data on collection rates with other boroughs
2. Request for comparative data on collection rates by wards

The Sub-Committee Concluded that:

1. Workforce planning should be an area of focus
2. Improvement needed on online communication
3. Clear labelling of bins in HMO's and properties with communal areas

The Sub-Committee Recommended that:

4. Veolia and the Council to work together on improvement to technology and interface connections
5. Veolia to conduct a survey of bin locations in the Borough
6. The Chair to write to the government to lobby for a similar approach to Iceland on use of CCT for flytips and environmental enforcement

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29/21 Work Programme 2021/2022

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the work programme for the remainder municipal year.

30/21 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The meeting ended at 10.52 pm

Signed:

Date:

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