

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

**Wednesday, 21st September, 2022 5.30 pm**

### **Present:**

Councillor Leila Ben-Hassel (Chair)  
Councillor Kola Agboola (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Amy Foster  
Councillor Christopher Herman

### **Apologies:**

Councillor Scott Roche

### **Healthy Neighbourhoods –Briefing:**

Director of Sustainable Communities  
Director of Planning & Sustainable Regeneration  
Head of Strategic Transport  
Head of Highways & Parking Services

The Chair introduced the meeting explaining that it had been set up in accordance with recommendations scrutiny made both at Streets Homes and Environment Sub-Committee meeting and Call-In meeting of the TMAC decision (Transport Management Advisory Committee). The recommendations were for officers to provide details on 1/ Communication and Engagement plan and 2/data collection, monitoring/evaluation framework and analysis prior to implementation of the Experimental Traffic Management Orders. The Chair advised attendees that the feedback of this session would be provided at the 4<sup>th</sup> October Sub-Committee meeting at which the wider Active Travel policy area would be discussed.

The Chair asked officers to provide an overview first of the Healthy Neighbourhood policy history, information about the schemes about to be implemented on 30<sup>th</sup> September and update Members on the communication and engagement approach as well as on the data collection and monitoring.

The Head of Strategic Transport and Head of Highways & Parking Services went through a short presentation, which updated Members on the status of Healthy Neighbourhoods and the movement from Temporary Traffic Management Orders to Experimental Traffic Management Orders (ETMOs) on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022. Members heard that ETMOs enforced by Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) would only generate warning letters to residents who contravened the order for the first four weeks, after which violations would result in fines. Currently, due to the uncertainty of the TfL funding settlement, no future Healthy Neighbourhood schemes were being progressed until further notice.

Vehicle telematics data had been used to look at traffic around and through Healthy Neighbourhoods in addition to journey time surveys and Transport for London (TfL) bus data. Continuous monitoring equipment had been set up to capture traffic, pedestrian, cycling and air quality data; comparisons of road casualties from pre and post implementation would also be undertaken.

The Council website had been updated to inform residents of what was taking place around Healthy Neighbourhoods and how resident permits and exemptions could be obtained; officers recognised that this webpage would need further updates. Engagement was taking place most of which undertaken by externally appointed consultants, and additional engagement above the Traffic Changes statutory consultation requirements is being undertaken. These related costs are covered by the dedicated Healthy Neighbourhoods funding as officers advised and thus does not take away from any other departmental resources.

Members asked about how pedestrian traffic data was obtained before implementation of the schemes. The Head of Strategic Transport responded that data had previously been collected when implementing the 20mph speed limit in the borough and Vivacity (Artificial Intelligence) sensors had been rolled out after the temporary schemes were first introduced during 2020; these sensors gather data on traffic counts, pedestrians and cyclists movement.

Members asked how the objectives of the schemes would be met due to the possibility of increased through traffic from through schemes which relied on ANPR. The meeting were informed that changes to the highway would not be dramatic and that permits for residents would only allow them to drive within their own Neighbourhood. Members heard that implementations of the current Temporary Orders had already had a significant effect in reducing through traffic. The Director of Sustainable Communities commented that flexibility on the number of permits per household was a consideration that would be looked at.

The Chair referenced sector documentation highlighting the risks of issuing too many permits, which could reduce the potential benefits of the scheme to street scene improvement, cyclists and pedestrians. The Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that ridged surfacing would be introduced at the entrances to ANPR enforced Healthy Neighbourhoods to highlight the scheme to drivers. The Head of Strategic Transport added that street surveys would also be conducted which could highlight desired street scene improvements suggested by residents. However officers clarified that as part of the approved budget for the current schemes, there is no related capital funding for street scene improvements.

Members asked about signage and the public perception that Healthy Neighbourhoods were a means to generate money for the Council. The Head of Highways & Parking Services responded that advanced warning signage would be implemented in addition to the statutory signage that was required; the Chair highlighted that this had been one of the Sub-Committee's previous

recommendations and therefore asked for an example of this to be sent to Members for information. The Head of Strategic Transport explained that any income from derived from the schemes was statutorily ring-fenced for use on transport and that, in Croydon, it is mostly used to part-fund the Freedom Pass scheme; the Chair asked if this was included in any of the scheme's communication messaging and heard that it had not been included in the initial prospectus. Officers welcomed the suggestions and committed to include such clarification/information in later messaging.

The Sub-Committee asked how permits and ANPR would work with Zipcars and rented cars; the Director of Sustainable Communities explained that fines were issued to the car owner who would then pass these on to the driver or leasee. The Chair asked whether online map services had been updated to exclude Healthy Neighbourhoods from driving routes and heard that the key apps had.

Members asked about opportunities to promote related schemes alongside the Healthy Neighbourhoods schemes like cycling improvements, cycling quiet ways network and ZipCars and heard that this would be ideal but that residents often found it difficult to adopt these kinds of behaviour changes. The Head of Strategic Transport explained that they would like to conclude the statutory process on the Healthy Neighbourhood schemes before beginning to look at these related schemes and initiatives like cycle safety training. The Director of Sustainable Communities highlighted the Council's reliance on TfL funding for these kind of schemes and the importance of promoting Active Travel. Members asked whether webpages on cycle training were up-to-date and whether more information could be added; the Head of Highways & Parking Services explained that these pages were being updated and that updates will be added on future schemes being looked into.

The Chair asked whether there was scope to apply for funding to the newly set-up government body 'Active Travel England' and it was explained that the relationship between Active Travel England and London was still unclear but that one of the roles of 'Active Travel England' is to provide an oversight on the performance of Active Travel schemes at local authorities level in addition to monitoring the quality and impact of these schemes. The Chair asked about the risk of Active Travel England implementing monitoring framework that was different to that of the Council and the Head of Strategic Transport explained that the government's policy is very clear: Experimental Traffic schemes will remain in place unless there was strong evidence for them to be removed. The Chair highlighted residents' confusion about Healthy Neighbourhoods' national policy and it was agreed that this would be picked up in messaging going forward. The Head of Strategic Transport responded to comments from the Chair on managing expectations on the thresholds for not making the schemes permanent and agreed that messaging would need to be careful and accessible.

The Sub-Committee commented on the linkage of the schemes to the broader policy implications, including Climate Change or health outcomes, and asked for clarification on how surveys for qualitative data would be designed. Members heard

that a series of drop- in sessions were being designed alongside the use of professional polling companies to do door-to-door surveys but that this detail was still being developed.

The Chair asked about traffic displacement and whether the schemes would move traffic to already busy streets and low-income areas usually along high streets/busy streets with existing low air quality and that it was often a concern residents share about Healthy Neighbourhoods. The Head of Strategic Transport responded that national monitoring had shown there was often little traffic displacement to main road corridors; local monitoring would look at changes in traffic flows for major streets around the schemes as well as changes in air quality.

The Chair asked about the high potential for increased cycling and walking in the borough and the argument often heard from those who opposed Low Traffic Neighbourhoods that increasing the number of cycling lanes and crossings would be sufficient without Healthy Neighbourhoods. The Head of Strategic Transport explained that previous survey data had shown that people felt current road conditions were not conducive to cycling and this was backed up by TfL survey data on residents' fear of road danger when cycling. The approach of increasing cycle lanes and crossings had been in place for some time and there would be efforts to use the Healthy Neighbourhoods to create cycling corridors and quiet ways networks through the borough. The Chair commented on the complexities and perceived dangers of cycling as a barrier to increasing cycling rates.

Members asked about interventions to make roads more conducive to walking (incl. referencing issues around footway parking) and cycling and the Director of Sustainable Communities explained that a revised parking policy was being looked at following behaviour changes during the pandemic which it was hoped could help maximise/re-balance road space for cyclists and pedestrians. The Sub-Committee heard that there was a wider conversation happening around monitoring and enforcement of 20mph speed limits in the borough through communities in conjunction with the police. The Chair commented that more proactive engagement with communities on illegal parking that negatively affected street users should be increased. The Sub-Committee discussed the Council's current Highway Vehicle Crossovers policy and heard that these would be reviewed as part of the updated parking policy; the Director of Sustainable Communities explained that, whilst this was a good opportunity to engage the community, there needed to be a balance, for example, with the needs of emergency vehicle access.

The Chair asked whether monitoring information would be updated on the Healthy Neighbourhoods pages and heard that this would be the case. The Director of Sustainable Communities highlighted the importance of making any data accessible and easy to understand for residents. The Chair queried whether data from new bus shelters would contribute to data collection and monitoring as they are fitted with Bluetooth/Wi-Fi and with capacity to have air quality sensors. The Director of

Planning & Sustainable Regeneration responded that they would check on the feasibility, but that the advertising facilities could be used for Council messaging.