

ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMITTEE

30 March 2017 at 7.30 pm

MEMBERS: Councillor Jill Whitehead (Chair), Councillor Nighat Piracha (Vice
(*Absent) Chair) and Councillors Manuel Abellan, Adrian Davey, Richard Marston, Patrick McManus, Steve Penneck, Tony Shields, Paul Wingfield and Hanna Zuchowska.
Councillor Ruth Dombey (ex-officio).

29. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed all those present.

30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATIONS OF SUBSTITUTES

Apologies were received from Councillor Adrian Davey, with Councillor Joyce Melican attending as substitute.

31. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2017 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

32. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were made.

33. PETITION: NEW WASTE RECYCLING

The lead petitioner Sharon Ashby, representing the Circle Residents Association, was invited by the chair to address the committee. The principal issues raised by the lead petitioner were:-

- The meeting organised and held prior to the committee was insufficient and not widely advertised
- A fortnightly general waste collection will create a hygiene risk, is bad for the environment and could lead to an increase of foxes, rats and other vermin.
- The box sizes are too small for the average family and the increased quantity of boxes offered is impractical
- Biodegradable bin bags need to be purchased
- Concerns for how the elderly will manage with the bins.

The Executive Head of Environment Commissioning, Matt Clubb, responded to the lead petitioner stating that a 10 hour event had been held at St Helier in response to the petition prayer and visits had also been made to each Local Committee, as well as four other drop in sessions in High Streets in the borough and at Kimpton Park. The Executive Head detailed the advertising campaign which consisted of bespoke leaflets, booklet, articles in Sutton Scene, bus stop advertising and 65 posts on social media. He said further that the Council had worked closely with Veolia and the South London Waste Partnership (SLWP) to communicate with residents, and the benefits of the new recycling system can be found at 4.1 of the report.

The Chair commented that the public event was held on 21 March 2017, so the requirements of the petition prayer had been achieved.

The Strategic Director of Environment, Housing & Regeneration, Mary Morrissey explained the Council had met their responsibilities in communicating the waste changes in advance of the start of the new waste service on 3rd April. Residents could still find out information via the website www.sutton.gov.uk/recycling.

RESOLVED: that the petition was considered and the course of action taken as set out in 4.3 of the report was noted and agreed to be sufficient.

Eight members approved the course of action but Councillor Tony Shields expressed his disagreement.

34. PETITION: HACKBRIDGE RAILWAY BRIDGE

The lead petitioner Susanne Horrox, representing the Wandle Valley Forum, was invited by the chair to address the committee. The principal issues raised by the lead petitioner were:-

- The railway bridge was a physical connection to a large untapped area of South London, 3 times bigger than Hyde Park
- A need for access to this area is outlined in the Local Plan
- The Leader of the Council has expressed her support for pedestrian access
- A new school is being built nearby and will require access
- The petition is calling for the Council to provide support and backing for a replacement bridge and not asking for funds

The Executive Head of Safer and Stronger Communities, Warren Shadbolt, responded to the lead petitioner that the Council shared the disappointment at Network Rail's decision to demolish the bridges and did approach Network Rail to find ways to try to save the bridge. The Executive Head explained that there were no public rights of way over the bridges and they had not been accessible for some years. It was estimated that it would cost about £1 million for the erection of a new

bridge and Council funding was currently not available for something that was not its legal responsibility and also in times of financial restrictions.

The Executive Head explained the two options suggested to the Committee at section 5.1 of the report. Councillor Hanna Zuchowska commented that the Council could not commit to option 1 due to the current financial situation and that option 2 did not support the petitioners. Councillor Zuchowska then proposed an Option 3 to invite the Wandle Valley Forum to take the lead, with interested community groups, to investigate and apply for external funding for a replacement pedestrian bridge (and approaches) in the vicinity of the new Hackbridge School site, recognising that such groups can apply for funding from sources that are not open to local authorities.

Indicative capital budget required is in excess of £1m, plus ongoing revenue for maintenance.

RESOLVED: that the petition and options at 5.1 of the report were considered and it was agreed unanimously to adopt Option 3.

35. JOINT HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND BIDS

The Executive Head of Wellbeing, Jan Underhill presented the report which focussed on the 4 successful bids which had been made, updates on the current position and timelines of the Beddington Park and Whitehall Projects, and a future HLF bid for Nonsuch Park.

Following the presentation members questioned whether Little Holland House could be resurrected. The Heritage and Arts Service Manager, Jane Allen explained that Little Holland House was a fragile site and the guidance from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) was that safe visitor access needed to be looked at. Initial work on the interior of Little Holland House will begin next month.

Members asked if a site visit with officers to Beddington Park could be arranged for members of the committee. The Technical Services Manager, Bill Wyatt confirmed this could be arranged.

Members queried what the difference in costs were between creating a river channel and dredging the lake in Beddington Park, and also what measures were being taken into account for existing wildlife near and on the lake. The Technical Services Manager explained that there was a significant difference in price and as the proposed river channel posed a risk to losing the lake, dredging was the safer option. The service is aware that it has a responsibility to wildlife. Consideration had been given to birds following appropriate advice from wildlife agencies and groups, and there would be replanting of a variety of shrubs and mature trees.

RESOLVED: that the recommendations of the report be noted and agreed that authority be delegated to the Strategic Director Environment, Housing and Regeneration, to agree the change to design as described at 4.4 of the report and any further adjustments to the Beddington Park Heritage Lottery Fund project designs.

36. VOLUNTEER PILOT - LIBRARIES

The Executive Head of Wellbeing, Jan Underhill presented the report which focussed on the progress of the libraries volunteer pilot scheme, the purpose of the scheme and the interim findings of the project.

A member questioned whether volunteers could help to revive the mobile library service. The Executive Head of Wellbeing explained that when the mobile library service was ended, a volunteer run housebound service was created which reaches more people than the mobile service.

Members asked about the LGA peer review of Library and Cultural Services, held on 24/25 January 2017. The Executive Head of Wellbeing pointed out that the Council had bid for the peer review from the Local Government Association (LGA). Sutton was one of only four Boroughs that had succeeded in obtaining a review. The final report has not yet been received, but the verbal and draft review of Sutton's services were extremely good. The report will be made available to the committee once received.

RESOLVED: that

1. The rate of progress made with the recruitment of volunteers and development of the volunteer role at Cheam and Circle libraries, through the pilot, be noted.
2. The additional, continued development of a range of opportunities for volunteering across the Libraries, Heritage and Arts Service, be noted.

37. CROSS-OVER POLICY

The Group Manager of Highways and Transport, Mervyn Bartlett presented the report and commented that the new policy would take effect from the 1 October 2017, that it placed more emphasis on protecting grass verges, encouraging sustainable drainage and improving highway safety.

The Chair asked for clarification as to whether this was a joint policy with Sutton and Kingston Council. The Group Manager of Highways and Transport confirmed the

policy was just for Sutton Council and the new policy for Kingston Council had not yet gone to their committee for consideration.

Members asked what the enforcement rules were for parking on dropped kerbs. The Group Manager explained that the cross-over policy does not deal with enforcement. The Executive Head of Safer and Stronger Communities added further that Indigo the Council's parking contractors handled parking enforcement and this was not an issue covered by this report. Members asked for clarification of parking regulation enforcement and the Executive Head confirmed that officers will provide a briefing.

One member questioned why the length of a crossover had the specified measurement of 4.8m. The Group Manager explained that there was no change in the dimensions from the existing policy and 4.8m was the industry standard used by all local authorities as advised by Government.

Members questioned why only paper applications could be submitted, as online applications should be used. The Executive Head and Group Manager confirmed that online applications will be looked into in due course, and submission could be made by email.

Members questioned if there were any specific parameters for an electric car needing a dropped kerb to access a charging port. The Executive Head clarified there was no distinction between electric and non-electric cars. The Chair noted that this committee would be considering electric charging policy later this year.

Members queried whether the new policy took into account advice on accessibility from the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) and what the policy was in regard to trees. The Group Manager answered that the policy is seeking to protect existing trees unless there was a safety hazard, and the new policy standards take into account accessibility.

RESOLVED: that

1. The progress made on the review of Sutton Council's Vehicle Crossover Policy by the Shared Highways and Transport Service be noted
2. The adoption of the new Sutton Council Vehicle Crossover Policy, as detailed in Appendix A of this report, to commence from the 1 October 2017, be approved.

There were seven votes in favour of the new Crossover Policy. Councillors Paul Wingfield, Patrick McManus and Tony Shields voted against the adoption of the Sutton Council Vehicle Crossover Policy.

38. NEW HIGHWAYS CONTRACT

The Group Manager of Highways and Transport, Mervyn Bartlett presented the report which focussed on the proposal to split the main contract into 4 individual contracts with a provision made for Kingston Council to participate in the contract at a later date, if they so desired.

Members questioned how the replacement programme for LED lights was progressing and information was sought as to whether there was a KPI for this. The Executive Head of Safer and Stronger Communities said progress information could be provided after the committee meeting, and the performance of the project will be on the Covalent system.

Members raised concerns over extending the maintenance contract and the monitoring of contractor quality standards. The Group Manager explained that with any failures in road surfacing the contractors would have to re-do work, and there were options to terminate the contracts.

Members asked what the reasoning was for the number of lots being re-allocated. The Group Manager responded that the lots were split to reflect and align with industry standards and to get the best value for the Council.

Members commented on the lack of reactive maintenance repairs to potholes and gullies. The Chair noted that this year London had not been included in national pothole funds which had reduced the funding available for road repairs. The Executive Head said further that there had been national underfunding for roads repair from successive governments over the last ten years or so.

The Chair commented that closer performance monitoring of contractors was needed.

RESOLVED: that

1. The progress made on the procurement process being carried out to secure new highways and street lighting works term contracts, to commence on the 1 October 2017, be noted.
2. The procurement of new highways and street lighting works term contracts (arranged as 4 Lots in a framework agreement) be approved, and be progressed to secure these contracts, commencing on the 1 October 2017, for the following Lots:

Lot 1 – Ad hoc reactive and minor highways planned maintenance

Lot 2 – Planned highways improvements (schemes)

Lot 3 – Planned (machine) carriageway resurfacing

Lot 4 – Street Lighting (planned, reactive, structural & electrical testing)

3. It be noted in the interim period whilst the procurement for the new contracts is carried out, that Sutton's existing highways works contracts, listed below are to be extended by contract variation by a further 6 months from their expiration date of the 31 March 2017.
 - Planned Highways Maintenance and General Works Term Contract - Contractor: FM Conway Ltd
 - Reactive Highways Maintenance Services – Contractor: RJ Dance (Contractors) Ltd
 - Street Lighting Maintenance and Improvement Services: Kier Integrated Services Ltd
4. It is agreed to use the London Highways Alliance Contract (LoHAC) framework established by Transport for London (TfL), if and when required, for highways maintenance, street lighting and improvement works, (should the extended contracts, or new contracts, not fulfil the Council's performance expectations).
5. To delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration, in consultation with the Chair of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee, to consider the tender evaluation outcome and officer recommendations, and award the contract lots referenced in recommendation 2.2 above, in accordance with the procurement process.

39. REVIEW OF THE NEW SHARED ENVIRONMENT SERVICES

Interim Transformation and Change Manager, Graham Beattie, presented the report which focused on the outcomes of joint service reviews, the success of the service and recommendations for future development.

Following the presentation, members commented on the performance indicators (PI's) for customer service and suggested that the Service Level Agreement (SLA) needed to be set out in detail. The Strategic Director of Environment, Housing & Regeneration, Mary Morrissey, said that the customer service PI's were based on the Council's Bi-Annual Residents' Survey and that customer service has most likely been maintained at the same level. The Interim Transformation and Change Manager said that once issues are addressed the service will be on a stronger footing to implement more efficiencies, moving towards common policies and procedures.

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Members said that they would like to see the implementation plan, and have a report back on this item at committee later in the year. The Strategic Director confirmed that the implementation plan will be shared with members and the item will be considered at committee later in the year.

Members asked if the implementation plan will look at recruitment and the learning from earlier mergers of Council Services. The Interim Transformation and Change Manager confirmed that the plan will look at developing management to recruit the right people. The Executive Head of Safer and Stronger Communities explained that lessons from previous mergers were being fed back through corporate avenues. The Interim Transformation and Change Manager explained that they were trying to build flexibility and versatility by reviewing job profiles, and they were looking at a new organisational development structure to come out of consultation.

RESOLVED: that

1. The Shared Environment Service should continue to provide shared Highways & Transport and Regulatory Services for Kingston and Sutton with a service development focus on completing the delivery of the opportunities for improvement, reconsidering the commissioning arrangements, some structural management realignment as determined by Officers and the implementation of a programme of cultural and behavioural change.
2. To delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Environment, Housing and Regeneration to implement the recommendations arising from the review report in liaison with the Director of Place at the Royal Borough of Kingston.

40. LIP ALLOCATION

The Team Leader for Strategy and Commissioning, Ian Price, presented the report which focussed on the TfL transport relation programmes.

Members commented there was a need for urgent parking restrictions on the slip road to Kimpton Industrial Estate and questions were asked about the Woodmansterne Lane junction and St Dunstan's School areas. The Lead Officer responded that the Council has received in year funding that may expedite the parking restrictions required, and that Woodmansterne and St Dunstan's were relatively new schemes.

RESOLVED: that

1. The schemes and measures detailed in this report receiving LIP funding become part of the Highways and Transport work programme for 2017/18;

2. It be agreed to incur capital expenditure of £2.212m for the capital schemes identified in the LIP settlement for 2017/18 so that schemes can proceed. A sum of £0.168m for various revenue initiatives which has been approved for 2017/18 and is included in the revenue estimates.

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3. It be agreed to allocate the £0.1m Local Transport Funding element of the settlement to Local Committees on a per capita basis;
4. The Executive Head of Safer and Stronger Communities, be authorised to take all necessary steps to implement the schemes, including commencing any necessary statutory consultations.

41. SUTTON PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2017-2018

The Highway Manager Gary Mersh, presented the report outlining the planned highways maintenance programme.

RESOLVED: that

1. It be agreed to incur capital expenditure of up to £1.2m proposed highway maintenance programme for footways and carriageways for 2017/18 so that the schedule of works identified under Appendices A and B can be undertaken.
2. The prioritised planned highway maintenance programme for 2017/18, as detailed in Appendices A and B be approved, with delegation to the, Executive Head of Safer and Stronger Communities, to deal with any in-year changes that may prove necessary.

42. ANY URGENT ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE DIRECTION OF THE CHAIR

No urgent business was raised.

43. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee is the 22 June 2017.

The meeting ended at 10.05 pm

Chair:

Date:

