

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE
Virtual Meeting
1 December 2020 (7.00 - 9.00 pm)**

Present:

Councillors Carole Beth, Maggie Themistocli (Chairman), Michael Deon Burton (Vice-Chair), Darren Wise, Nic Dodin and +Timothy Ryan

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Matt Sutton. Councillor Timothy Ryan substituted for Councillor Matt Sutton

21 PROTOCOL ON THE OPERATION OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESTRICTIONS

The Sub-Committee noted the protocol on the operation of meetings during the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions.

22 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2020 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman at a later date.

23 CRM - GARDEN GREEN WASTE DISCOVERY- SHOW & TELL

Following support from an external company, the Green Waste service had received an excellent response from a recent user survey. As of 1st December 2020, work was being undertaken looking at how to optimise the service, addressing issues resulting from feedback of external and internal sources.

Overall aims of the service review included:

- Designing the service around a resident-centric approach
- Where possible automating manual tasks and functions
- Reducing carbon footprint by shifting paper processes to online or email

It was clarified that, under the revised Green Waste Programme, digital information would be an opt-in service so paper based information would not be abolished completely, allowing residents without internet access to still use the service.

Transparent communication from residents emailing or texting would mitigate the need to chase information and result in less ambiguity.

Whilst a lot of residents taking up Green Waste were over 60's, discounts for this age groups were not being considered at this point.

The Sub-Committee noted the position.

24 QUARTER 2 3030/21 - PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Environment Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee had previously selected 5 key performance indicators which will be monitored:

- " Improve air quality in the borough by reducing NO2 levels
- " HMO licences issued
- " HMOs enforced against
- " Total Penalty Notice Charges (PCNs) issued in a month
- " Response rate for PCN Challenges and Representations

The improving of borough air quality was monitored on an annual cycle so there was little new information to how this was progressing. The Air Quality Action Plan had however been used to inform the activities that will support the improvement of air quality.

Section 106 funding for the air quality monitoring station within the Beam Park development had been secured.

HMO licences issued has dropped from 28 to 12 as all the compliance landlords are now licenced. There had been one instance of HMO licence enforcement.

The Sub-Committee noted the performance report.

25 AIR QUALITY - ACTION PLAN

The air quality action plan was approved by Cabinet in 2018, it was laid out to accomplish compliance with the national air quality goals. The plan outlined the actions Havering Council will take to improve air quality within the Borough between 2018 – 2023.

There was a £125,000 budget for the 2020-2021 period.

There were four main areas within the action plan:

- Air quality modelling and monitoring
- Public health awareness and encouraging smarter travel
- Building emissions and development

- Transport emissions

Air quality was monitored by assessing the levels of Nitrogen Monoxide (NO) and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) in the air. These gasses were measured using diffusion tubes – small plastic tubes which are placed above ground in key monitoring areas. Looking at statistical data, the worst polluted areas in the Borough came from areas with a high flow of traffic. Levels of NO had been on a downwards slope since 2014 in all locations.

Air quality awareness has been brought to local Havering schools, for example the “walk to school” week was promoted by 15 separate schools between the 5th and 9th October 2020.

The Council was continuing to promote the Smarter Travel initiatives to businesses in monthly bulletins. In addition, the idling of vehicles was an area of focus, with the Council joining the London-wide Anti-Idling campaign (funded by the Mayor’s Air Quality Fund) with an aim to prevent unnecessary traffic emissions within the borough.

New major developments within Havering were required to be air quality neutral and would be assessed via annual monitoring by investigating the number of planning applications with these restrictions applied.

There was ongoing work towards a new energy strategy covering a total of 12,000 homes, aiming to be launched in April 2021.

TFL was aiming to make all buses in Havering EURO VI standard, meaning their NO_x emissions can be up to 95% lower than the previous EURO V models.

Electric Vehicle charging bays were also under consideration which would be installed in the Town Hall car park as well as in other areas in the Borough. This would be funded externally from sources such as the GLA.

Although Havering had much cleaner air than most other Metropolitan boroughs, certain locations still did not meet the pollutant concentration level objectives. The stopping and starting of car engines did in fact result in less pollution in comparison to idling.

The Sub-Committee noted the position.

26 **UPDATE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE REVIEW**

The council currently had a number of Environmental and Climate change themed policies, however these needed to be updated and modernised to reflect the contemporary way Havering Council was operating.

Success was based on having outlined clear actions which can be measured by strong governance and effective consultation.

Member discussions had developed key emerging themes that there should be an emphasis on practical actions which benefit residents, businesses and the wider stakeholders in the Borough.

Havering had a number of existing policies relating to areas of Council activity including: waste, transportation, energy management, regeneration, planning, procurement, management of the green space and housing. Work in these service areas was often carried out in individual discreet projects meaning the impact they had could be diluted. It may be important to revise the achievements and policies to bring it all under one easy to manage framework. This would allow the Council to review its actions and be clear about the direction in which it was heading.

It was clarified it was a decision of full Council whether to declare a climate emergency, however if this was to be the case at any point, it would be important to have the policies set up to back up the declaration.

Details were given to the Sub-Committee of what other Councils had done in this area, what had been recommended by the Climate Change Committee in central Government and what seemed to be practical major areas of activity.

It was agreed that Members of the topic group on climate change would be sought both from the Sub-Committee and from any other non-executive Members who may be interested. The scope of the review would be agreed at the first meeting of the topic group and then brought to the Sub-Committee for approval.

Chairman