

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
21 July 2021 (7.00 - 8.00 pm)**

Present:

Councillors Maggie Themistocli (Chairman), Michael Deon Burton (Vice-Chair), Matt Sutton, Carole Beth and Darren Wise

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nic Dodin

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

The Sub - Committee noted the contents of the Sub – Committee’s Annual Report for 2020-21 and **agreed** that it be submitted to full Council.

3 QUARTER FOUR 2020/21 - PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Sub-Committee received a report and presentation which highlighted the quarter four performance indicators (PIs) update. The PIs were the standards by which performance of services were measured within the Council.

Five PIs had previously been selected to be monitored by the Sub-Committee.

The five PIs had been included in the report. The report highlighted by means of RAG ratings (Red, Amber and Green) as to how services were performing. However a RAG rating was only available for one indicator which was green.

In respect of Air Quality Annual Statues the team had reviewed pollution levels and the vast majority of the sites in the borough had seen decreasing levels.

As part of the Breathe London Project it was intended to trial a PM2.5 sensor in Romford.

Hosing Services were producing a net-zero strategy for the public housing stock which would include approximately 12,000 properties.

In relation to Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) the service continued to receive a low level of new licence applications.

The number of licences issued was lower than in previous years as the majority of landlords had already contacted the Council and licences had already been issued.

Enforcement operations had ceased during the Covid-19 lockdowns and had only recently resumed.

In relation to penalty charge notices issuance had been lower due to the pandemic lockdowns and tiers restricting motorists to only make essential journeys. However issuance was likely to increase now that restrictions were loosening.

The Sub-Committee felt it would be useful to have an update report on air quality at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee in September.

The Sub-Committee **noted** the contents of the report and presentation.

4 **TRAFFIC & PARKING SAFETY SCHEMES 2021-22**

The report before Members detailed the Council's Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) and Transport for London (TfL) Local Implementation Plan.

Attached to the report was an appendix which detailed traffic and parking schemes.

Members were advised that to date in this financial year no funding had been received from TfL. TfL were currently in discussions with local authorities to determine how much funding would be allocated to deliver transport schemes.

Also included in the appendix were the details of speed reduction schemes which had been implemented in the borough.

In response to a question relating to the effectiveness of speed reduction schemes officers advised that schemes were assessed over a five year period. Speed humps were no longer used in schemes and there had been a shift towards speed reduction by decreasing 30mph areas to 20mph.

It was noted that in some areas where speed limits had been reduced there had been no decline in accidents. Officers advised that in other areas both

in the borough and outside of the borough there was evidence that accidents had reduced.

Members felt it would be useful to be provided with a report on how effective the speed reduction schemes had been and what lessons could be learnt going forward.

The Sub-Committee **noted** the contents of the report and appendix.

5 RAINHAM CREEK - UPDATE

The presentation before Members gave an update of current issues relating to Rainham Creek

Officers advised that there had been a build -up of litter in the area and that despite some limited cleaning up by council staff using boats and nets it was apparent that more needed to be done to keep the area clean and safe.

Council staff were unable to undertake a full clean-up operation as there was a need for specialist equipment.

Officers were looking to arrange an annual clean-up using a specialist contractor which would ideally be carried out in the autumn.

Officers had arranged an interim clean-up during this month to clear as much of the litter as could be safely done.

The council's maintenance team undertook regular scheduled maintenance of the surrounding area this included grass cutting, shrub pruning, litter picking and litter bin emptying.

During discussions Members questioned whether there was a cost benefit to completing the clean-up every two years rather than annually.

Mention was also made of possible funding for the clean-up from the Environment Agency.

Following the presentation it was agreed that any possible formation of a topic group to look at the subject would be more prudent after officers had secured a contractor to carry out the clean-up

The Sub-Committee **noted** the details of the presentation.

6 WORK PROGRAMME

During discussions Members suggested the following areas to be considered by the Sub-Committee at future meetings:

Environment Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee, 21 July 2021

- Recent flooding in the borough and what could be done to prevent it happening again.
- The use of pesticides when weed spraying overgrown foliage on public highways.
- Climate change.

Chairman