

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
30 November 2021 (7.00 - 8.16 pm)**

Present:

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

11 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

12 QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The report and presentation before members updated the Sub-Committee on the Quarter 2 2021/22 performance information.

5 performance indicators had previously been selected by the Sub-Committee which were as follows:

- Improve air quality in the borough by reducing the level of NO2
- HMO licenses issued
- HMOs enforced against Total Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued in month
- Response rate for PCN Challenges and Representations

Members were advised that in the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) during the quarter, fine particulate matter monitoring equipment had been installed throughout the borough and was measuring NO2 levels.

School engagement in regards to travel plans and air quality programmes was on-going.

A further application for the installation of electric vehicle charging points for 13 Council car parks was submitted and awaiting decision. Another funding bid for more EV points was also being prepared.

With regards to HMOs the service continued to focus new licence applications.

It was noted that the recent easing of travel restrictions has seen an increase in the issuance of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) and this had affected response times for challenges and representations. However, recent recruitment would decrease these in future.

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

13 **REVIEW OF PESTICIDES USED BY HAVERING**

The report updated Members of the Sub-Committee on a review that had been requested following publicity surrounding Glyphosate (a commonly used weed killers of pesticides). The report referred to herbicides (substances used to kill undesirable plants) rather than pesticides (chemicals used to kill pests or eradicate disease).

It was to be noted that a report was previously produced for Cabinet in November 2019 and therefore this was an update to Members on the Council's position.

It was explained that Havering Council had adopted an integrated approach to weed control on its highways, council land, and parks and open spaces. This included the use of the herbicide Glyphosate, as well as manual removal, mulching and growth suppressants within parks and open spaces.

Havering continued to conform to the EU's Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive, which recommended minimising use of herbicides and taking reasonable precautions during application.

Glyphosate was recently re-licensed by the European Pesticides Commission for five more years. However, recent well-publicised studies have asserted that the product poses potential risks to humans, animals and biodiversity, and groups including the Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN UK) campaign for its use to be phased out, along with other pesticides and herbicides. Other studies had concluded there to be either no such links, or links only associated with high levels of contact.

It was noted that the report also reviewed the current weed control measures and described alternative methods that were currently available within the industry. Equalities impact assessments would also be carried out to identify any alternative methods following procurement of a new contractor.

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

14 **TRAFFIC AND PARKING SAFETY SCHEMES UPDATE 2021-22**

The report presented to the Sub-Committee updated Members on the Traffic and Parking Safety Schemes that were in line with Transport for London's (TfL's) actions for local authorities in London. The Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) set out objectives including healthy streets and provision of a good transport experience as key parts of the MTS policy framework.

It was noted that the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) was an allocation of funding to the London boroughs by TfL to spend on projects that support the MTS and shape London's social and economic development to encourage active travel and make provisions for both walking and cycling.

It was explained that Vision Zero was a part of the MTS and was an initiative first introduced in Sweden in 1997. Vision Zero was an action plan which focused particularly on reducing road danger on the road network, by implementing schemes which would reduce crashes and improve road safety.

The Council recognised there were additional measures that could be implemented to improve the environmental aspects of areas within Havering to improve road safety to reduce casualties of all road users on both Transport for London Road Network (TLRN) and borough roads, especially in the vicinity of schools.

Havering was investing significant levels of its' LIP funding on physical infrastructure measures to encourage modal shift. A substantial element of LIP funding was also spent on measures focused on securing behaviour change and presenting alternative travel choices for journeys.

These measures often encompassed educational initiatives delivered in schools, to businesses and other community groups to encourage people to consider making choices involving smarter travel and road safety education initiatives. The aim of these was to encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport to/from their destination and ultimately see a reduction in journeys by private vehicles.

School Street schemes which were funded by TfL offered a proactive solution for school communities to tackle air pollution, poor health, and road danger reduction. A School Street scheme would encourage a healthier lifestyle, active travel to school for families and lead to a better local environment. These schemes were a current Council priority as they were mainly self-enforcing with the use of closed-circuit television (CCTV) at timed closures points operational during school drop off and pick up times.

It was explained that following on from the EOSSC meeting held on 21st July 2021 thereport set out the types of safety schemes implemented since financial year 2015/2016, KPI details (where available) and before and after speed data to ascertain if safety had improved. Details of which could be found in Appendices A and B which were appended to this report.

The Sub-Committee **noted** the report.

15 **RAINHAM CREEK UPDATE**

The report and presentation before Members of the Sub-Committee updated Members on the progress of the clean-up of the Rainham Creek

area and was in response to a motion that was agreed at full Council on 24 March 2021.

The presentation contained before and after pictures of the progress of the clean-up of the Rainham Creek area and it was explained that the situation would be monitored.

The report and presentation were **noted** by the Sub-Committee.

Chairman