

## **THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN**

At a meeting of the **CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on **MONDAY, 15TH JULY, 2024** at 6.30 pm in Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE

### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE PRESENT**

Councillors Awale Olad (Chair), Camron Aref-Adib, Nina De Ayala Parker, Sharon Hardwick, Matthew Kirk, Izzy Lenga and Stephen Stark

### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ABSENT**

Councillors Rishi Madlani

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Councillor Pat Callaghan (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities) (remote attendance)

**The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.**

## **MINUTES**

### **1. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **RESOLVED –**

THAT the Committee's terms of reference be noted.

### **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rishi Madlani.

### **3. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF STATUTORY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS, COMPULSORY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND VOLUNTARY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN MATTERS ON THIS AGENDA**

There were none.

### **4. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)**

The Chair announced that the meeting was broadcast live by the Council to the Internet and could be viewed on the website for six months after the meeting. After that time, webcasts were archived and could be made available on DVD upon request. Those who were seated in the room or participated via Teams were deemed to have consented to their contributions being recorded and broadcast and to the use of those sound recordings and images for webcasting and/or training purposes.

**5. DEPUTATIONS (IF ANY)**

The Chair advised that one deputation request had been received but not accepted from Save the London Motorcycling Group, as he could not see any more that could be done at scrutiny level, further to their appearance at the Culture and Environment Scrutiny meeting in February 2024.

**6. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT**

There were none.

**7. MINUTES**

A Committee member queried whether there was any response to an issue that he had raised at 6<sup>th</sup> February meeting regarding steps that had been taken to resolve issues raised by a disabled resident in Hampstead Town Ward.

Officers agreed to provide the member with a response.

**Action By Director of Environment and Sustainability.**

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the minutes of the meetings held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024, 6<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024 be signed as accurate records.

**8. CAMDEN CLEAN AIR ACTION PLAN 2023 - 2026: YEAR ONE PROGRESS UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Environment and Sustainability.

In response to questions, the Air Programme Quality Manager Tom Parkes and Richard Bradbury (Director of Environment and Sustainability) made the following points:

- It was difficult to separate Camden's effort in reducing emissions from other boroughs without there being a significant investment in atmospheric modelling. It was difficult to determine the exact contribution of Camden projects and policies on air quality.
- The technological improvements to vehicles had made a significant improvement in air quality, Camden's transport strategy had also supported a move away from private vehicles towards sustainable active travel with the use of public transport also strengthening the reduction in air pollution seen from regional policies.
- The reduction in particulate matter 2.5 air pollution was more affected by emissions from other parts of the country as well as internationally.
- Camden through its air quality programme tried to lead by example using case studies to encourage other local authorities to adopt a similar approach in tackling local emissions and also setting a framework for looking at various different types of activities collectively.
- With regards to benchmarking, each borough had a statutory obligation to monitor air quality but there was not a unified approach to the types of monitoring locations chosen.
- Although reductions in air pollution might be compared yearly between different Councils it was not necessarily a true reflection of the amount of success that had been achieved in those areas. However, the statutory framework enabled Councils to assess whether they were legally compliant with air quality levels.
- The Council had a good working relationship with London Cleaner Initiative over the past 4 years, which included the distribution of air quality sensor networks in the borough, worked with different schools in the borough to promote among pupils and parents the idea of air quality being one of a different mixture of environmental issues that schools could take positive local action to challenge.
- The Council's interaction with London Cleaner Initiative had enabled them to become a London wide organisation. From the Council's point of view this had proved extremely useful in having a leverage into the commercial sector and also serving as an advocate for policy changes. The Council would continue to work with this organisation.
- The Air Quality Team had a good working relationship with the Green Spaces Team, both teams had fed into each other's respective action plans, though the Air Quality Programme did not focus too much on greening and trees because that was sufficiently covered in the green spaces programme.
- There was more focus on having the right type of green space for the location, this mostly involved working with other organisations to understand what was right for different places, such as encouraging the creation of green walls and vegetation to serve as physical barriers on roads next to school playgrounds.

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- In terms of the linkages between monitored air quality and health outcomes it was quite difficult to attribute direct outcomes to measured air quality.
- The annual mean concentration of air pollutants did not capture the fact that there might be extremely high levels of pollution for example during high levels of pollution at times of rush hour traffic. There were also periodical episodes of flight pollution during winter when lots of people had their heating on when it got really cold. In summer during heat wave events there were high ozone air pollution levels which was damaging to people's health and might not be captured.
- For this type of analysis, the reason for choosing these particular monitoring sites was because these were the Council's standard monitoring location and the type of instrumentation approved for statutory monitoring purposes.
- A mixture of different monitoring locations was used to understand what had changed and proportionally what had improved at a higher rate than other monitoring sites.
- The type of monitoring used measured air pollution on an hourly basis which was a lot more data than could be presented in the graph in the report.
- The Council was looking at opportunities to assess the number of pupil days missed at schools as a result of asthma which could indicate whether some of the Council's engagement and awareness raising projects were helping to support families.
- The significant reduction in air pollution since 2012 on Euston Road compared to Swiss Cottage was because a higher proportion of pollution measured there was attributed to roadside traffic.
- The Ultra Low emission Zone (ULEZ) also saw earlier benefits realised in terms of pollution reduction on Euston Road as a boundary road compared to Swiss Cottage as well as the instrumentation used. For example, the positioning of the sensor affected the measured data collected. One metre further down the road would skew the data to be more affected by building emissions while for the Swiss Cottage site the sensors were more set back from the road. The positioning of the sensor may have contributed slightly to Euston Road being more directly affected by road vehicles compared to Swiss Cottage which was why there had been a quicker reduction in pollution at that site.
- With particulate matter evolution there had been less of a difference in measured data between the 3 sites because a larger portion of PM 2.5 air pollution came into the borough from outside Camden.
- The testing regimes for new vehicles had also tightened up over recent years so newly registered vehicles were a lot cleaner.
- The Council looked to ensure it prioritised its efforts in the areas considered to be at high risk and susceptibility of air pollution.

The Air Programme Quality Manager was thanked for the excellent report, time taken to attend the meeting and comprehensive responses to questions.

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted.

**9. CABINET MEMBER FOR A SUSTAINABLE CAMDEN RESPONSE TO THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY PANEL REPORT.**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Environment and Sustainability.

In response to questions, Richard Bradbury (Director of Environment and Sustainability) made the following points:

- Officers agreed with a member's suggestion that school children could be allowed to bring in food boxes to take leftovers home after school.
- In terms of magic breakfast there were different products within that offer, Community Safety colleagues were doing some work around moving surplus food within the community in a more sustainable way. Officers agreed to provide the Committee with information on the work the Council was doing on the magic breakfast within the community.

**ACTION BY: The Director of Environment and Sustainability.**

- With regards to food waste and most of the initiatives being on-line, the suggestion to include the information on the community recipe book and recipes in the Camden seasonal magazine to reach the digitally excluded was a good idea which could be considered.
- In relation to food recycling, the Council was investing a lot in the collection of food recycling. The problems with these collections from flats above shops was an issue which the Council was working on with other boroughs as it was more of a city-wide issue.
- With regards to the comment about the initiatives not reaching the north of the borough, the Council had worked where it could with all communities including Kilburn where work was carried on with the library of things.
- With regards to textiles, the Council was working with all groups across schools to promote and encourage the school clothing initiative.
- The food waste recycling was a separate structure to the recycling of general waste.
- The work of the Circular Economy Panel, the process and ideas developed had been helpful for the Council.
- As had been highlighted by the Circular Economy Panel Camden did not have all the levers to generate change, it could play an advocacy role and identify key stakeholders in the borough such as the Climate Change Alliance of which ASOS was a member.
- Engaging at a London level by using organisations such as the World Living Project could help drive some of the initiatives suggested by the Circular

economy Panel through the Council using its soft power in those conversations.

- With regards to listing all the different charity shops on the Council's website, it would be much better if users went straight to the general search engine on the internet rather than the Camden website. As when these things go on the Council's website it was a huge resource issue for the Council to keep updating it. However, some thought could be put into how the Council could provide a link to this level of information.
- The decision that food waste collections be expanded to cover all properties in 2025 was the development and evolution of the Government's national strategy.
- With regards to the impact of vaping legislation in Camden. from a trading standards perspective any new regulation that was introduced involved the Council working with businesses to ensure compliance and inspection.

Members referred to an email that they had received recently from Climate Emergency Camden where they had asked the Council to address a number of issues. Officers agreed to look at the issues raised and respond to Climate Emergency Camden updating the Committee.

**ACTION BY: The Director of Environment and Sustainability.**

Members also requested that a further update be provided in the New Year about the Council's work towards a more circular economy.

**ACTION BY: The Director of Environment and Sustainability.**

The Director of Environment and Sustainability was thanked for the report, attending the meeting and his responses.

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted.

## **10. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS - UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director Corporate Services.

Members made the following comments:

- It was a good idea that for every licensing application, applicants were encouraged to sign up for the Ask Angela scheme which promoted women's safety.
- The Council's initiative of raising public awareness highlighted in 5.2 of the report was to be applauded. It was very similar to the Mayor of London's

campaign and was a very effective means of reminding people not to be inappropriate. The more places this could be highlighted the better.

- It was a good idea to start educating young people as early as possible raising their awareness by including this in the education system even at pre-school age.
- There was no statistical data in the report highlighting the number of incidents reported to the Police, comparisons with previous years incidents and how Camden compared to other boroughs in these types of incidents.
- The Cabinet Adviser on Reducing Violence and Abuse for Women and Girls should be commended for her report, recommendations made and the self-defence initiative was a good way of empowering women.

In response to questions, Jamie Akinola (Director of Public Safety) Shaheda Rahman (Community Safety Programme Manager) and Caroline Thomas (Community Safety Partnerships Coordinator) made the following points:

- Included on the Committee's Work Programme for later in the year was for the Police to provide this information as part of their report. The Committee was informed that officers would ensure that specific information relating to violence against women and girls would be provided by officers and the police.

**ACTION BY: Director of Public Safety**

- A number of initiatives were being developed by the Council with its partners, officers were looking to assess the overall impact and then provide specific data to the Committee.
- In terms of including Ask Angela as a standard condition on all new licensing and variation applications, the Licensing Act forbade licensing authorities setting standard conditions for all licence applications as each application was required to be considered on its own merits, however the Council could look into having model conditions on every application that came through.
- Officers did carry out spot checks on those premises signed up to Ask Angela to determine whether it was being implemented in practice.
- In terms of educating people at a young age that was one of the things discussed at the last Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategic Board meeting and was a discussion point which would be high on the agenda for the annual event taking place in the autumn. This would involve looking at how behaviour change in young people could be delivered at as early an age as possible.
- With regards to the self-defence classes initiative put forward in the Cabinet Adviser on Reducing Violence and Abuse for Women and Girls report, the Police had committed to establishing a Strategic Partnership Board made up of Council Officers and the Police to take forward this initiative.
- With regards to whether there had been any progress on women's safety in the on-line space, that was on the agenda for discussion at the next Women's

Safety Working Group meeting. This was one of the priorities going forward this year. Officers agreed to provide an update later on in the year.

**ACTION BY: Community Safety Programme Manager**

- With regards to pathways out of hostels for women fleeing domestic violence, there was a pathway that existed but this depended on the relationship between a number of safeguarding services such as the Camden Safety Net Service and the Housing Service. Members were asked to email details of the specific cases referred too to the Director of Public Safety so he could provide details of the pathway out.
- With regards to the recent cross bow killings in Bushey, Hertfordshire, Camden's immediate response was to pick up the issue through its serious incident notification procedure. There had not been any specific link to Camden with this incident. However, from a Community Safety perspective a briefing was being provided to the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities of the impact of on-line sales of weapons such as cross bows and the challenges across the UK in terms of enforcement of this legislation.

The Cabinet Member for Safer Communities commenting on the self-defence question raised by a member, informed the Committee that this was being considered including how it could be introduced into schools enabling children at a young age to defend themselves and provide them with confidence. All new Licenced premises were being asked to do the WAVE training and Ask Angela. Officers were also visiting all licensed premises in the borough to ensure that the licensee was actually working within a framework where Ask Angela was part of their normal business.

The Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Officers were thanked for their work, time taken to attend the meeting and their responses.

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted.

**11. INSIGHT, LEARNING AND IMPACT REPORT - QUARTER 4/END OF YEAR 2023-24**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Directors of Supporting People, Supporting Communities and Corporate Services.

Officers agreed in response to a member's query to provide an explanation relating to the dramatic drop in residual household waste per household from 406 in 2021/22 to 358 in 2022/23.

**ACTION: Director of Environment and Sustainability**



**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted.

**12. WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director Supporting Communities.

Members discussed the work programme and suggested that the following items be moved:

- Royal Mail to discuss issues with missing post-delivery in the borough to be considered at the November 2024 meeting.
- Update on Response to Circular Economy Panel – this should be brought back to January 2025 meeting.
- Update on Social Media Companies response towards Violence against Women and Girls (bring back to the October 2024 meeting)

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted

**13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was none.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm.

**CHAIR**

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**MINUTES END**