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THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

At a meeting of the **CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on **TUESDAY, 10TH MARCH, 2026** at 6.30 pm in Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE PRESENT

Councillors Awale Olad (Chair), Nina De Ayala Parker, Sharon Hardwick, Matthew Kirk, Izzy Lenga and Liam Martin-Lane

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ABSENT

Councillors Rishi Madlani and Stephen Stark

ALSO PRESENT

Councillors Joseph Ball (Cabinet Adviser on Food Waste Recycling) and Adam Harrison (Cabinet Member for Planning and a Sustainable Camden)

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. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rishi Madlani and Stephen Stark.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Nina de Ayala Parker, Izzy Lenga and Awale Olad.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. DEPUTATIONS (IF ANY)

The Chair informed members that two deputations had been received and accepted, copies of the deputation statements were included in the supplementary agenda.

The two deputations were from local residents, Tom Symes and Nick Michaels and related to consultation proposals around existing road changes to traffic that would affect Parkhill Road, Lawn Road and Fleet Road

Consideration was given to the deputation statements referred to above.

The deputees raised major concerns about proposal 2 in the consultation. They said:

- The plan would close Park Hill Road and Lawn Road at Fleet Road for through-traffic.
- This would force more cars past Fleet Primary School, making the road busier and less safe for children.
- Their own counts showed about 30% of cars usually turned into Park Hill Road before reaching the school. These cars would instead be pushed past the school.
- They estimated traffic past the school could increase by up to 40%.

More cars would also mean:

- Higher pollution
- Slower emergency vehicles
- Rat-running” on very narrow side streets.
- They felt there was not enough data, no full traffic model, and no safety audit for the cycle routes.
- They asked the Council to pause the scheme until a proper traffic study was done.

The following response was given by the deputees to members questions:

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- Reversing the direction might help slightly but would still cause problems such as rat-running through other narrow streets and they could not see how reversing it would solve the issue of increased traffic on single-use roads.
- The streets were simply too narrow for the levels of traffic displaced from Park Hill Road.
- Mansfield Road and South End Green already had choke points.
- They supported making streets safer, just not this design.
- They had not engaged with the Council as the consultation had only recently opened. They felt the proposal counteracted the goal of reducing traffic near the school.

Karl Brierley Safe and Healthy Streets Team Manager made the following comments in response to the deputation:

- The deputees were thanked for their deputations informing the Committee that the proposals were at the public consultation stage, open until 22nd March, with no decision yet made.
- It was explained that both this scheme and the Southend Green scheme (planned for summer 2026) would be trial based, with extensive monitoring of traffic, resident feedback, air quality, and road safety to inform future decisions.
- The London Ambulance Service had been consulted and raised no concerns.
- It was clarified that the proposals were to trial "no entry" from Fleet Road into Park Hill Road and from Lawn Road onto Fleet Road, but the roads themselves would remain two-way except at these junctions which differed from the deputees' interpretation of a full one-way system.
- The measures aimed to make residential streets less attractive for non-local traffic and safer for walking and cycling. All elements would undergo a road safety audit, and monitoring data would be publicly available during any trial.

The following information was provided by the Safe and Healthy Streets Team Manager in response to questions from Committee Members:

- No traffic modelling had been done, as the scheme would proceed as a trial, which would provide real-life data.
- Officers were not as confident that all traffic would be forced past the school, noting alternative routes and wider changes in the area.

- The scheme would not launch immediately, allowing other recent changes (like Haverstock Hill crossovers) to bed in.
- If the scheme were to change significantly post-consultation, the need for a new consultation would be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- The scheme aimed to address long-standing resident complaints about traffic volumes and rat-running on Park Hill Road. Suggesting that traffic would likely disperse rather than solely increase past the school, but data would be carefully monitored during a trial.
- Consultation responses typically take three to four months, it was suggested that there would be a response in July.

The Committee thanked the deputees for their submissions and contribution.

The Chair suggested that the deputees work with officers during the scheme's development and trial phase.

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

There was none.

6. HOUSING CCTV UPGRADE PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Development.

Steve Harris, Head of Facilities Management, was in attendance and provided the following information in response to Committee members' questions.

- With regards to why the CCTV upgrade programme for the Bourne Estate had not been delivered, despite long-standing requests and previous delays attributed to external factors. It was explained that approximately 60% of the work on the Bourne Estate had been completed. Delays were due to the need to work around major housing works on the estate, with opportunities taken as they arose. Infrastructure works, such as new cable runs, were restricted by these major housing projects. Members were informed that 40% of the infrastructure had been delivered, with cameras to follow.
- In relation to providing reassurance and a timeline for the full delivery of the CCTV programme on the Bourne Estate and the accuracy of the report

regarding upgrades on Dobson Court and Equiano Court, as these had existing CCTV systems from a regeneration scheme approximately 10 years prior. Members also queried whether these existing cameras were functional and who monitored them. It was clarified that all CCTV was being integrated into a new network, meaning older cameras would also require upgrading. The Head of Facilities Management informed the Committee that he would provide a full timeline in writing of the Bourne Estate CCTV upgrades.

Action By: Head of Facilities Management

- The Head of Facilities Management advised that he could not confirm the operational status of the Dobson and Equiano Court cameras directly but noted that cameras across the borough were checked weekly by the control room.
- The Director of Recreation and Public Safety Another clarified that the control room fell under Community Safety, and he would take action to confirm the functionality of those specific cameras.

Action By: Director of Recreation and Public Safety

A Committee Member asked for clarification on the numbers in paragraph 3.1 of the report regarding the number of estates and completed upgrades. The member also asked for the anticipated completion date for the entire project.

The Head of Facilities Management stated that the remaining sites were projected to take six months to complete. Noting that the Alexander and Ainsworth project had faced delays due to tree removal, requiring work to be paused until a non-nesting and non-growth period. He explained that the project lead was currently off, necessitating a reset and rework. Most sites had been surveyed and scoped for quoting. The project aimed to increase the number of cameras in housing from 600 to 900, representing a significant change and new specification compared to the previous system.

The Committee Member further enquired how the CCTV upgrades would contribute to reducing antisocial behaviour (ASB) and if there was an opportunity for Community Safety and Housing to work more closely to improve delivery, reliability, and coverage, especially as ASB was shifting towards unauthorised access to blocks.

Officers confirmed close collaboration with the Community Safety and Engagement team. Explaining that phase two of the project involved setting up analytics. For areas with regular ASB, analytics could be configured to trigger instant alerts in the control room (e.g., if three people gathered in a specific zone). This new capability would also allow for targeted monitoring of fly-tipping areas.

Officers also added that recent investment in community safety included rapidly deployable cameras (RDCs) to address blind spots and respond to specific issues,

and that collaboration with housing colleagues had improved following the ASB task force.

A Committee Member asked about data storage and how often camera footage was overwritten.

Officers confirmed that data was cleared every 30 days unless a request was made to hold it for an investigation (e.g., police, insurance, or public request). Adding that the full policy was publicly available on the Camden website.

Officers invited Committee Members to visit the control room, highlighting its sophistication and the extensive network of over 2,000 cameras across various council properties.

It was suggested that a future visit to the CCTV control room could be arranged after the local elections.

RESOLVED –

THAT the report be noted.

7. IMPROVING FOOD WASTE RECYCLING IN CAMDEN

Consideration was given to the report of the Cabinet Adviser on Food Waste.

Councillor Joseph Ball (Cabinet Adviser on Food Waste), Tim Gray Borough Monitoring Manager and Richard Bradbury Director of Environment and Sustainability were in attendance and provided the following information in response to Committee members' questions.

Committee members discussed and asked questions about:

- Which recommendations should be prioritised.
- How to support private blocks, housing associations, and mansion blocks.
- Fox-proof food caddies.
- Whether behaviour dropped off after the trial.
- How to involve young people and schools.
- Whether chemicals (PFAS) in food waste had been considered.
- Composting in community spaces.
- Engaging landlords and letting agents.

The following information was provided in response:

- Data from the trial showed high initial engagement (70 kilogrammes per household in the first week) which then dropped off, though contamination

remained very low. This indicated effective communication and resident understanding.

- The key learning was the critical importance of ongoing communications to embed behaviour change, especially as the trial was conducted during winter. For prioritisation, communications would be number one or two, followed by lobbying for additional funding, as current funding for flats above shops left 12,000 households without the service. The need for national or regional communications campaigns was also stressed.
- The Director of Environment and Sustainability confirmed that they were exploring ways to work with housing associations and private blocks, acknowledging that engaging with Council housing stock was currently easier.
- The Cabinet Adviser agreed that using the Community Green Deal for communications was a good idea. Advising that PFAS (chemicals in food waste) had not been researched but was a good area to investigate. He also agreed that reusing and composting food waste was preferable to full recycling and should continue to be encouraged. The importance of "nailing the service" at inception was emphasised, as issues like food waste on streets deterred participation, and fox-proof caddies helped reduce such "pain points."

A Committee Member suggested that mansion blocks in the northwest of the borough, which often lacked food recycling, could be an "easy win" due to existing waste collection infrastructure. The Committee member also praised the report's ideas for engaging young people with "fun facts" in marketing materials.

The Cabinet Adviser agreed that mansion blocks, particularly in the west and north of the borough, presented an opportunity for engagement, potentially through community influencers within blocks. He stressed that communications should involve activating communities through various channels, not just leaflets. He highlighted that young people were easier to influence, environmentally engaged, and could be reached through schools and universities.

A Committee Member asked for a description of the fox-proof caddies and details on the cost and process for their rollout. The Director of Environment and Sustainability advised that costings for the roll out would be confirmed.

ACTION BY: Director of Environment and Sustainability

The Committee member also suggested that any communications strategy should include letting agents due to the high turnover of residents and highlighted the importance of businesses collaborating with residential collection changes, citing contrasting examples in Belsize Village and England's Lane.

The Director of Environment and Sustainability explained that fox-proof caddies had a locking mechanism and were already being rolled out, with residents requesting

new caddies receiving the fox-proof version. Exact costings could be provided. He agreed that engaging letting agents for their portfolios was an efficient way to drive change at scale and would be incorporated into recommendations. He acknowledged the unique success of business engagement in Belsize Village and stressed the importance of demonstrating "win-wins" to businesses, such as improved aesthetics from containerised food waste.

Committee Members were supportive of the work praising the proposal for fox-proof caddies and the ideas for engaging young people with "fun facts" in marketing materials. The Committee encouraged a future update on the recommendations in the next municipal year.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

8. BIODIVERSITY REPORT

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Recreation and Public Safety.

Greg Hitchcock, Nature Conservation Officer, Justin Hill, Head of Leisure; Gabi Howard, Parks and Services Manager and Oliver Jones– Director of Recreation and Public Safety were in attendance

Committee members asked about:

- Support for sparrow and other bird boxes as well as swift boxes.
- Policies on pesticides such as glyphosate.
- Support for pollinators like bees.
- Nature corridors and how they link habitats.
- What "10% biodiversity net gain" means in practice.
- Whether schools could green their playgrounds.
- Promoting micro-grants for front garden greening.-
- How species numbers were measured.

Officers provided the following information in response to Committee members' questions.

- Camden already installed sparrow boxes often through planning conditions. Swifts were highlighted in the report as a specific example due to ongoing work with repairs on a particular building, not as an exclusive focus.
- With regards to pollinators, particularly bees, the Council's glyphosate use policy and the likelihood of moving towards no pesticide use. It was explained that many interventions, such as highways greening and green space improvements, focused on selecting pollinator-friendly species. Regarding

glyphosate, the current policy remained unchanged; it was not used on vegetated areas but for specific issues like Japanese knotweed.

- A Committee member praised the nature corridor plan and asked for an explanation of the 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) statistic and how species decline or incline was measured.
- Officers confirmed that the nature corridor plan was progressing, with meetings underway for funding bids. Explaining that BNG, introduced by the Environment Act, applied to certain planning applications and was measured using a statutory metric based on habitat surveys. Developers had to achieve a 10% gain in biodiversity units, preferably on-site, or through off-site provision for a minimum of 30 years. Species decline was measured by comparing local records with national trends, undertaking specific surveys, and encouraging citizen science.
- A Committee Member praised the report and asked if developers or renovators could be incentivised to add swift boxes or bricks. Also suggesting greening school playgrounds and actively advertising the microgrant for paved-over front gardens. The Committee member also advocated for more hedges to support sparrows.
- Officers stated that influence could be exerted through planning regulations, advising on enhancements for new or replacement buildings based on local species. Adding that planning guidance was also available for work outside the planning system. Confirming that schools were considered through the planning system and through partnerships with organisations like Growing Green. The officer agreed that the microgrant for front gardens could be better publicised and that plans were in place to consolidate gardening information relevant to Camden, including for council tenants. It was reiterated that species decline was measured by comparing local records with national trends, specific surveys, and citizen science.

Committee members thanked officers for attending and an excellent report.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

9. CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director Investment Place and Opportunity.

Members discussed the work programme noting that:

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The July meetings were currently empty, and the new scrutiny committee formed in May would decide on future agenda items.

A Committee Member suggested adding Royal Mail delivery issues to the work programme, noting it was a national and local concern affecting residents.

A Committee Member suggested a report on developments and improvements to Camden's recycling provision and food waste collection for the next municipal year.

The Chair suggested that Transport for London (TfL) Buses should be invited back to provide an update on bus ventilation and the rollout of new electric fleets, as little progress had been noted since their last attendance.

The Chair also noted the upcoming call-in meeting on Fitzjohns Avenue (23 March 2026).

RESOLVED –

THAT the suggestions for the work programme were noted.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

Councillor Nina de Ayala Parker gave her apologies for the next meeting on 23rd March, also informing members that she would be standing down at the next election thanking the Committee and officers for their support.

Members thanked her for her contribution over four years.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm.

CHAIR

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MINUTES END