

Minutes

RESIDENTS, EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

15 October 2020



Meeting held at VIRTUAL - Live on the Council's YouTube channel: Hillingdon London

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Wayne Bridges (Chairman), John Morgan (Vice-Chairman), Allan Kauffman, Stuart Mathers, Paula Rodrigues, Jan Sweeting (Opposition Lead), Colleen Sullivan and Alan Chapman</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Neil Fraser (Democratic Services Officer), Dan Kennedy (Director, Housing, Environment, Education, Performance, Health & Wellbeing), Val Beale (Environmental Specialist), Roy Clark (Parking Services Manager), Daniel Ferrer (Licensing Team Manager), Sarah Phillips (School Place Planning Project Manager) and Stephanie Waterford (Services Manager, Licensing, Food and Safety)</p>
13.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Councillor Devi Radia sent her apologies.</p>
14.	<p>DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>Councillor Sweeting and Mr Little declared non-pecuniary interests in respect of Agenda Item 8, as they were governors of schools mentioned within the report.</p>
15.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT ALL ITEMS MARKED PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT ANY ITEMS MARKED PART 2 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items would be considered in public.</p>
16.	<p>TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>Regarding the Annual Complaints Report considered at the previous meeting, Members asked that the clerk chase an outstanding action relating to Member Enquires by Ward. In addition, it was requested that the further details of the ombudsman case, circulated to the Committee following the previous meeting, be forwarded to Cllr Sweeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the meeting on 03 September 2020 be approved as a correct record.</p>
17.	<p>STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY CONSULTATION (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>Daniel Ferrer (Licensing Team Manager) and Stephanie Waterford (Services Manager, Licensing, Food and Safety) introduced a report detailing proposed changes to the</p>

Statement of Licensing Policy.

The Committee was advised that the Council was required to update its policy every 5 years, and the current policy was due for updating in 2021. As part of this updating, the Licensing Team was now consulting on the draft policy before its consideration by Cabinet or adoption by full Council. The changes were designed to provide clarity and consistency, and including updates to partnership working, immigration, modern day slavery, mobile internet sales, promotion of equality, and more.

Members asked a number of questions, including:

In what did the Council encourage business improvements within areas of the Borough, and greater engagement through the purple flag initiative?

The Licensing Team worked closely with the High Street Improvement Team, to ensure businesses were being supported to uphold the licensing objectives and conditions of their licences, e.g. pavement licenses were regularly reviewed to ensure businesses were not cluttering pavements. The team maintained good relationships with business within the Borough, and officers were being ever more proactive. This would continue to be an area of focus moving forward.

The updates on modern slavery were welcomed. In practice, was there a training or review process to help prevent such abuses?

Officers were working proactively to build relationships and regularly visit different areas of the Borough, at different times, in order to identify issues and make referrals to the relevant authorities.

It was agreed that Councillor Morgan would submit additional questions following the meeting, for Licensing officers to respond to.

RESOLVED: That the Committee note the proposed updates to the Licensing Policy.

18. **ENFORCEMENT OF PARKING MANAGEMENT SCHEMES** (*Agenda Item 6*)

Roy Clark (Parking Services Manager) introduced a report detailing the enforcement of parking management schemes within Hillingdon.

The officer provided a summary of the information presented within the report, including detail on the decriminalisation of parking enforcement in London in 1994 and the powers granted to local authorities to enforce parking, granted by the Road Traffic Act 1991.

Mr Clark went on to describe the process by which offenders were ticketed, as well as the appeals process open to residents and motorists. It was confirmed that the Council had engaged a private contractor to carry out enforcement in the Borough since 2003, with the current contract under consideration for renewal in August 2021.

Members were advised that the contractor operated 24 distinct patrol areas, using approximately 50 staff, visiting permit controlled parking areas and stop and shop areas across the Borough, with the aim of managing congestion and keeping roads safe.

Parking outside schools was of particular concern, with automated cameras deployed

at all schools with school zig zags. Parking Civil Enforcement Officers would then visit schools on a rota basis, with patrols increased at certain schools where there were reported issues.

CCTV was also used to monitor parking offences, with 131 total cameras used to monitor areas such as bus lanes, bus stops, banned turns etc. It was confirmed that the use of CCTV to process offences was very highly regulated and linked to legislation, with councils issued guidance to which they had to adhere.

It was confirmed that, contrary to popular opinion, parking Civil Enforcement Officers were not permitted to be part of a bonus scheme whereby they received remuneration based on the number of tickets issued.

Members asked a number of questions, including:

If parking on pavements was an offense, why were Council vehicles often seen parking on pavements?

A national consultation was currently underway regarding how such pavement parking was to be managed moving forward, as the rules were different in London from the rest of the country. However, currently, parking on pavements in London was prohibited, unless Council permitted. Council vehicles should not be parking on pavements, and if Members wished to forward details of particular vehicles to the Parking Manager, this would be investigated.

Ward Councillors had been contacted regarding a number of schools experiencing issues with parking. Was this a result of Covid19, and the staggered intake implemented to manage social distancing? Was there any additional capacity available to better manage parking around schools?

The Parking Services team had received an increased number of complaints regarding parking around schools this year. The Council had extended operating and keep clear times to manage staggered intakes. Schools received visits from parking enforcement officer each day, though there was not capacity for every school to receive a visit every day. The Council, with its contractor, was reviewing the potential to recruit additional enforcement officers on a part time basis, though in the past this had proven difficult.

Did all school have CCTV cameras in place?

All schools with zig zags should have cameras, though some were out for repair. It was requested that Members share details of schools where cameras were required, for further investigation.

Could the officer provide an update on the installation of new parking machines? Several had been out of order for considerable time.

The contract to replace the Borough's machines was now in place, and officers were actively working with the contractor to install the machines by the end of November. Old machines would then be removed in December.

Stop and Shop schemes were being abused. How could the Council work to address this?

Officers were looking at ways to address this, and a further update could be brought to a future meeting.

Residents had complained of experiencing delays to the processing of their fines and appeals. Was this due to any change to resources during the pandemic?

The team had continued to work throughout the lockdown, and there was no backlog to the processing of fines or appeals. Members were requested to forward details of individual cases for investigation.

Was there a long-term plan to deal with idling vehicles, to help support the aim of improving air quality?

Parking civil enforcement officers often dealt with idling vehicles, in conjunction with the Antisocial Behaviour and Environment team. Air quality was to be addressed in agenda item 7.

Did patrols take into account the population density of areas? For example, West Drayton Ward had a large population which had resulted in more parking issues.

Patrols often targeted areas where there were known to be issues. The Parking Services team worked together with the transport team to identify such areas, and patrols were increased in those areas where necessary.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

19. **UPDATE ON AIR QUALITY IN HILLINGDON** (*Agenda Item 7*)

Val Beale (Environmental Specialist) introduced a report detailing the Council's actions to address Air Quality following the Committee's previous review. The report detailed how the Committee's recommendations had been built into the Council's Air Quality Action Plan, answers to questions submitted in advance, and the impact of the Covid19 pandemic.

Recent information received from the GLA had shown that before Covid19, air quality was improving, thanks to the instigation of ultra low emissions zones, though during the lockdown air quality had been seen to have improved dramatically. For example, of the 455 schools within London located within polluted areas in 2019, only 14 were now in such areas.

Members asked a number of questions, including:

Had schools been made aware of the available travel plans, and how was the Council incentivising uptake or engagement with the Council?

The school travel plan team work with all schools to ensure they were aware of the help that is available in regard to developing school travel plans, accessing pedestrian/bike training etc. In addition, the Council has been offering access to air quality education packages, to no idling assemblies and events, and for the planting of trees and pollution barriers. Schools with significant pollution issues have been targeted first. Post lockdown, no idling events and the air quality education packages will be offered either in virtual format or with attendance at schools, with social distancing in place if the schools prefer. In all instances, progress and uptake of these issues is dependent on having an air quality champion within the school to really drive the engagement forward. Officers will continue to find ways to work with the schools who do not currently engage.

Idling vehicles has been an offense, under the terms of the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), in place across the Borough. The use of the PSPO allows for a higher instant fine than other legislation.

Had the Council considered setting up routes for heavy polluting vehicles to reroute them from schools, etc?

The London Low Emission Zone sets emission standards for heavy vehicles such as lorries, buses and coaches when they enter the GLA. These standards are due to be tightened next year. In regards to routes there are various mechanisms for controlling routes such as the London Councils' Lorry Control Scheme. In addition, the Council can implement controls via traffic management orders on a case by case basis and recommendations can be made in regard to relevant planning application; in all cases the success will be dependent upon appropriate enforcement.

How was the Council ensuring that air quality monitors were being placed correctly?

Siting for monitors was, at times, difficult. It was recognised that roads were the source of most pollution but monitors had to be placed higher than ground level to be in accordance with relevant DEFRA guidance. It was understood that although the monitoring was carried out at elevated levels if the nearby road was a significant pollution source then the nearby users at ground level would be exposed to higher pollution levels. Actions to account for this were being used in neighbourhood schemes were applicable such as the use of road-side planting to increase the distance between the road source and any pedestrians/cyclists etc. GLA pollution modelling was also used to focus actions on certain areas within the borough to ensure measures were prioritised where the levels were the highest.

Did the Air Quality Action Plan include a strategy to upgrade the Council's vehicle fleet to low/zero emission vehicles, or put pressure on the supply chain to do likewise?

A new Climate Action officer had recently been employed to review and deliver strategies relating to pollution and air quality. It is likely that this will include looking at all aspects of Council activity such as the Council fleet in terms of climate change

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

20. **QUARTERLY SCHOOL PLACES PLANNING UPDATE** (*Agenda Item 8*)

Sarah Phillips (School Place Planning Project Manager) and Dan Kennedy (Director - Housing, Environment, Education, Performance, Health & Wellbeing) introduced the most recent quarterly update on school places planning.

It was highlighted that demand for places in secondary schools would continue to increase for the next 7 years, due to parental preferences and the pattern of movement in and out of the Borough. Primary places remained high but stable, with adjustments being made to reduce Planned Admission Numbers (PANs) at primary schools with excess capacity, where agreed by the Council. Cabinet had recently approved the reduction of the PAN at Ruislip Gardens, and this was now being consulted on.

The need for more permanent secondary places was being delivered by the Department for Education (DfE) funded new secondary free school and rebuilding of Harlington school and special free schools. The Council had already expanded a

number of existing secondary schools within the Borough. Work was also ongoing with the SEND team to develop more places for SEND pupils within mainstream schools.

Members asked a number of questions, including:

A number of schools had large PANs, with places unfilled. Did the Council feel that they had miscalculated the required places at these schools?

At the time, PANs were put in places based on forecasted need, which nearly all then happened. Some changes to parental preferences had been seen, together with the willingness of parents for pupils to travel further, to their chosen schools, which left a shortfall in others. Work was underway to review PANs, where required. The Council tried to direct pupils to schools to fill up places to have classes of over 26 pupils, and there were now only a small number of schools with uneven very large or small classes.

Could the officers share detail of SEND demand?

Such data would be shared once available. It was clear that demand was increasing, with higher numbers of parents applying for Education and Healthcare Plans for their children. With the overall growth in pupil population, it was expected that there would also be a higher number of SEND children within that population.

Did the forecast modelling take into account the distribution of pupils? For example, many pupils in the south of the Borough were being forced to travel large distances to attend school due to lack of available choice.

Forecasts looked at all patterns and trends. It was recognised that people were willing to travel further due to the Borough's transport links, parental preference, and the fact that older pupils were able to travel further. It was also recognised that Hillingdon was the second largest London borough by geography, but had comparatively fewer schools, which inevitably led to, at times, fewer choices for parents.

Apart from bulge classes and the new school to be built, how was the Council planning to manage demand?

It was important to recognise that the Council had always ensured that all children had been offered a place at a school, even during mid-year, with some degree of choice. It was agreed that there was a high demand for school places, but Hillingdon was better prepared than many other local authorities. Officers were attempting to help schools to improve their offer, which in turn would increase demand at schools which were currently less desirable.

The DfE recommended 5-10% of unfilled places as best practice. The forecasts showed that Hillingdon would be retaining substantially less than this. There was also a danger that demand would outstrip places. How was the Council aiming to resolve this?

The new free school was expected to be delivered in 2022 or 2023. Meanwhile, bulge places were considered appropriate as a way to resolve demand and work was underway with head teachers, many of whom desired more places at their schools. The Council aimed to be closer to the recommended 5% spare capacity.

It was noted that currently several special schools were overfull and the schools had agreed to take these pupils above their normal capacity on the basis that plans for

expansion and new special free schools would deliver 273 spaces between 2020-24.

How could more SEND pupils be suitably accommodated within mainstream schools?

Currently there were investigations to see if some unused primary spaces could be repurposed for special provision where schools were interested in this and had expertise. In line with the views of the DfE, this would require specific adaptations, and included the allocation of distinct groups of large, separate classroom spaces, modified bathrooms, etc.

Members requested that the outcomes of discussions on performance be included in a future report to the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

21. **CABINET FORWARD PLAN** (*Agenda Item 9*)

The Cabinet Forward Plan was noted.

22. **WORK PROGRAMME** (*Agenda Item 10*)

Consideration was given to the Work Programme.

The clerk advised Members that the suggested next review topics continued to be assessed, and it was hoped that a recommendation for the next topic could be brought to the November meeting. This included the new topic of Adult Learning, the subject of which was to be brought to the November meeting as an information update.

It was confirmed that many of the previously suggested topics had been added to the work programme as information items.

Members request that, if possible the item on Early Years Provision be brought to an earlier meeting, to allow for a more timely update on the impact of performance pre and post Covid19.

Members also requested that the item on minor changes to the school admission criteria include details of taking out surplus.

The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 9.18 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Neil Fraser on nfraser@hillingdon.gov.uk. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.