

Minutes

PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRANSPORT SELECT COMMITTEE

09 June 2021

Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge



	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Keith Burrows (Chairman) Teji Barnes (Vice-Chairman) Kuldeep Lakhmana Richard Lewis Colleen Sullivan Jan Sweeting (Opposition Lead) Steve Tuckwell</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Stephanie Waterford - Service Manager - Licensing, Food & Safety Regulation Steve Clarke – Democratic Services Officer</p>
3.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO REPORT THE PRESENCE OF ANY SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p>
4.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
5.	<p>TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>Members noted that the minutes of the meeting dated 20 May 2021 were purely a formality to record the election of the Select Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting dated 20 May 2021 be agreed as an accurate record.</p>
6.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED AS PART I WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS MARKED PART II WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items of business were marked as Part 1 and would be considered in public.</p>
7.	<p>UPDATE ON SCRUTINY CALL-IN PROCEDURE (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>Steve Clarke, Democratic Services Officer, provided an overview of the Council's new scrutiny call-in procedure which Members had been appraised of prior to the meeting.</p>

The Select Committee was advised that responsibility for scrutiny had been transferred to Members of the relevant Select Committees. Key things to note included:

- All Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions now clearly identified the relevant Select Committee – Members thereof could attempt to call-in a decision should they wish to do so;
- Decision notices clearly indicated the final date any call-in request could be made – 5 working days at 5pm after the date the decision notice was published;
- A Member of the Select Committee shown on the decision notice could initiate a call-in request. Members could not initiate a call-in on behalf of another select committee;
- All call-in requests would be submitted via the new Scrutiny call-in App details of which had been provided to all Councillors;
- Once submitted, the call-in request would be sent via an automated email to all Members of the relevant Select Committee;
- Councillors were not obliged to respond. However, should they wish to do so, they could approve or reject the request. The Councillor who initiated the call-in request would also need to respond;
- Should a majority of Members approve the request before the end of the scrutiny call-in period, it would become a valid call-in and Democratic Services would be notified;
- Only those requests that received a majority would be heard at a specially convened Select Committee meeting.

The Chairman emphasised that, should a call-in be requested by the Committee, that the call-in request relate specifically to the decision being made and not the details within the report.

RESOLVED: That the new Scrutiny Call-in Procedure be noted.

8. **SERVICE OVERVIEW: TRADING STANDARDS, ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & LICENSING** (*Agenda Item 6*)

Stephanie Waterford, Service Manager - Licensing, Food & Safety Regulation, delivered a presentation to the Committee and gave an overview of the work areas under her purview. The presentation was delivered in three parts: Environmental Health, Trading Standards Service and the Licensing Service.

Under Environmental Health, Members were initially informed of the Food Health Safety Team's broad range of public protection responsibilities. It was noted that the team's public health and disease control duties had been an integral part of the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic whilst continuing to conduct around 1,600 food hygiene inspections per annum amongst other responsibilities. A number of recent successes were highlighted including an ongoing gas safety compliance project whereby the team would be checking the safety of gas installations within approximately 1,000 commercial kitchens; this project was introduced following a

commercial kitchen gas explosion in the neighbouring borough of Ealing.

With regard to the Imported Food Service, which was based at Heathrow Airport and also came under the Council's Environmental Health service, the Committee were informed that the team manage the consignments of approximately 12,000 per annum to ensure that certain foods entering the UK food chain were safe. Roles within the Imported Food Service included Environmental Health Officers, Official Veterinarians and Food Safety Technical Specialists. It was highlighted that there had been a sizable increase in workload regarding imports that had travelled through the European Union since Brexit.

An overview of the Trading Standards Service was given highlighting their responsibilities for enforcing legislation to uphold product standards and safety, this included:

- Enforcing against rogue traders and scam operators;
- Dealing with counterfeit goods;
- Seizing illicit alcohol and tobacco;
- Enforcing weights and measures legislation;
- Product Safety checks of cargo coming through Heathrow; and
- Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) investigations

The Committee were informed of some recent successes relating to the Trading Standards team including the seizure of 60,000 counterfeit cigarettes and 20kg of counterfeit rolling tobacco hidden in boxes labelled as children's toys and other paraphernalia.

In relation to the Council's Licensing Service, an overview was given with regard to the service's responsibility for licensing a variety of activities across hospitality, entertainment, retail, close contact and animal businesses. A recent success was highlighted whereby a two and a half year legal battle to bring criminal charges to two individuals for the unlicensed breeding and sale of dogs and cats from a house in West Drayton had resulted in fines in excess of £340k, £280k of which came to the Council to cover expenses.

It was highlighted that the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted this work area significantly, the Licensing Service and the Food Health and Safety Team had been leading the enforcement and compliance operation to ensure that business were operating in accordance with all Coronavirus and lockdown restrictions. Further to this, since lockdown restriction had started to ease in April 2021, the Council had offered a range of support to businesses to reopen and was working on a programme of events in town centres in an effort to welcome residents back to the High Street.

The Committee were impressed with the way in which these services were able to refocus their work during the pandemic and thanked officers for their hard work. It was noted that Ward Councillors had heard about some of the successes mentioned in the presentation through local news outlets and queried whether local Councillors could be notified of operations before they had concluded; officers noted that the specific case mentioned, regarding the unlicensed sale of dogs and cats in West Drayton, was a

criminal case and therefore for legal reasons, the information could not be shared by the Council until the case had concluded. Further to this it was noted by the Committee that, often situations were leaked to the press by members of the public before the Council could legally disclose the information.

Officers confirmed that Health and Safety enforcement was split between local authorities and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Local authorities primarily enforced Health and Safety standards in business settings, it was also noted that the HSE would enforce standards in schools and Council owned buildings and settings.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the officer's verbal report.

9. **COMMITTEE REVIEW: TOPIC SELECTION PHASE** (*Agenda Item 7*)

The Chairman introduced the item noting that the Committee were tasked with selecting the topic for their first major review. It was noted that the Chairman's suggested topic pertaining to future policy direction around electric vehicles (EVs) and EV infrastructure within the Borough had been circulated to the Committee by email before the meeting and discussions had taken place with the Cabinet Member for Public Safety and Transport who was supportive of the prospective review.

The Opposition Lead noted that EVs was a topic already under development both nationally and locally and put forward reasons for the Committee to pursue a major review into Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), covering smaller issues such as overgrown gardens and hedges, to more serious matters such as the impact of HMOs, aggressive neighbours and noise disturbance. The suggested direction for a review into ASB would be the way in which residents interact with the Council when reporting ASB issues and addressing the confusion amongst residents as to whether certain ASB or crime matters should be reported to the police or to the Council.

The Committee commended the suggestion for a review into ASB however, Members were generally in agreement that, although a review into ASB could be beneficial to help distinguish the divide between police and Council responsibilities when it came to ASB, the pertinence of a review into EV policy direction and infrastructure needs outweighed the need for a review into ASB. The Committee highlighted the great work already undertaken by the Council's ASB Team and emphasised that, with the 2030 ban on the sale of petrol and diesel cars looming, the Council needed to start addressing the changes required to facilitate the transition to EVs for residents, specifically as Hillingdon was an outer London Borough with high car ownership levels.

The Committee were in agreement that the topic of Electric Vehicles would be chosen for the first major review.

RESOLVED: That the Public Safety and Transport Select Committee conduct a major review into future policy direction regarding electric vehicles and associated infrastructure needs within the Borough.

10. **FORWARD PLAN** (*Agenda Item 8*)

Members noted the 'Transport for London Local Implementation Plan – Annual Spending Submission' item listed as going to September's Cabinet meeting and requested some brief detail as to the report.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the Forward Plan.

11.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME (<i>Agenda Item 9</i>)</p> <p>Members discussed the Committee’s meeting dates for the 2021/22 municipal year, it was noted that two Committee Members were also Members of other Select Committees. It was confirmed that, potential meeting clashes had been checked and would be avoided going forward.</p> <p>Members also noted that the forthcoming ‘Service Overview’ items would be delivered in a presentation format to the Committee, Members requested sight of the presentation slides ahead of the meeting to aid them in conducting their scrutiny function.</p> <p>With regard to the forthcoming ‘Service Overview – Anti-Social Behaviour and Enforcement Team’ item, Members requested some information on what work was being done in relation to the use of electric scooters and enforcement, in addition to some information on the alley gating scheme.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the items listed on the work programme.</p>
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 8.19 pm.</p>

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Steve Clarke - Democratic Services on . Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.