

## Minutes

### PROPERTY, HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SELECT COMMITTEE

9 April 2024



#### Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre

|     |   |
|-----|---|
|     | <p><b>Committee Members Present:</b><br/>Councillors Keith Burrows (Chair), Peter Smallwood (in place of Steve Tuckwell), Ekta Gohil (in place of Darran Davies), Elizabeth Garelick, Kamal Preet Kaur and Peter Money (Opposition Lead)</p> <p><b>LBH Officers Present:</b><br/>Anisha Teji – Senior Democratic Services Officer<br/>Stephen Gunter – Fleet Manager<br/>Matthew Kelly - Director of Procurement and Commissioning</p>  |
| 70. | <p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO REPORT THE PRESENCE OF ANY SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS</b> (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Steve Tuckwell with Councillor Peter Smallwood substituting. Apologies for absence were also received from Councillor Darran Davies with Councillor Ekta Gohil substituting.</p>   |
| 71. | <p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING</b> (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>  |
| 72. | <p><b>TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b> (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes from the meeting on 6 March 2024 be confirmed as an accurate record.</p>   |
| 73. | <p><b>TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED AS PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS MARKED PART 2 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items would be heard in Part I.</p>  |
| 74. | <p><b>REVIEW INTO THE COUNCIL'S ROAD SAFETY INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES AROUND THE BOROUGH'S SCHOOLS</b> (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>The Committee considered the draft recommendations for the review that were circulated to Members prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Members also discussed suggestions put forward by Councillor Kaur and these were incorporated into the draft recommendations.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That delegated authority be given to Democratic Services to finalise the recommendations with the Chair and Labour Lead and prepare a report</p> |

**concluding the Committee's review.**

**75. PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE FLEET** (*Agenda Item 6*)

The Director of Procurement & Commissioning and the Fleet Manager introduced the report on the Present and Future of the Fleet which provided details on the composition of the Council's fleet, the key challenges within fleet and future decision making around the fleet replacement programme.

It was reported that the main challenge for the fleet was driver behaviour and avoidable fleet damage. Avoidable fleet damage was costing the Council more than £800k per annum.

The Committee heard that the cost of fleet damage had been under review by management and the reasons for the increasing costs were wide and varied. It was reported that historically data had been unavailable to provide sufficient management oversight however this had improved in the last 12 months with the purchase and installation of new 'tracker' devices and improved reporting. Vehicles and associated budgets were managed by the fleet team which created a disconnect in ownership of vehicles and users, the culture of work within some teams and the nature of the fleet was different from an average road fleet undertaking the same function day in and day out. Hillingdon vehicles operated in challenging operational environments where damage was more likely to be incurred and external factors such as the costs of operating vehicles and costs relating to insurance, repair & maintenance continued to rise.

A regular fleet forum comprising operational and senior management took place to help address the issues and drive down the costs being incurred. One of the outputs of the forum was a combined insurance damage report which required the operational teams to record actions taken for incidents. The Fleet team also liaised with other councils to share good work practices and perform benchmarking exercises.

The Committee heard that driver behaviour played a crucial role in fleet costs and the inclusion of tracking devices offered information on how vehicles were used. The system processed the data to generate an Eco Efficient Driver Index (EDI). Each driver received an EDI score which served as an overall performance monitor. These scores were specifically used in regular discussions with drivers with poor performance.

Members were informed that vehicles consumed substantial amounts of fuel. A review was underway to assess green spaces' winter fleet, aiming to identify opportunities for reduction during winter months. Over the past 18 months, significant progress had been made in fleet utilisation and four vehicles had been from the fleet. The Council followed a cyclical vehicle replacement program to maintain cost-effectiveness and reliability.

There were 90 frontline service vehicles that had reached the end of their serviceable life and were no longer subject to daily fees. These vehicles were in their ninth year of operation, with reliability declining and maintenance costs rising. There was a recommendation to replace 32 vehicles with electric equivalents however factors such as charging facilities, speed of charging, grid capacity, payload, cost and maintenance first had to be considered.

During Member questions it was noted that 45% of the heavy duty drivers were agency

|     |   |
|-----|---|
|     | <p>drivers and there were numerous behaviour challenges including conflict between newer and more established drivers. Training had been provided to drivers and the introduction of the EDI was good as it alerted drivers to instances of speeding or harsh braking. The benchmark score for EDI was 80% a week however there was still room for improvement.</p> <p>In response to questions regarding trailing 26 tonne wagons, it was explained that charging the vehicles could only be done at the depot and this was difficult due to the amount of charge or battery required. The charging time would be approximately 7 hours to fully charge. When the vehicle came back after its daily use there was only 30% charge left so it couldn't be used for second day without charge which was problematic. Factors such as weight and weather conditions also needed to be considered when charging vehicles along with grid capacity.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the 800k per annum in avoidable fleet damage was a combined cost of damages and insurance. There were plans to include dash cams in vehicles in the future and the introduction of the ULEZ charge was around £20k a month. A close eye was kept on the market for both electric and hydrogen vehicles.</p> <p>In terms maintenance versus hiring, it was noted that the current arrangement involved purchasing vehicles and maintaining them through an on-site maintenance provider. Hiring vehicles was significantly more expensive than the present arrangements. When Council owned vehicles reached the end of their life, they still had asset value in contrast to hired vehicles which had no residual value. Damage costs were also incurred when returning hired vehicles. It was noted that hiring vehicles impacted the revenue budget and purchasing vehicles affected the capital budget, allowing for better financial planning.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that it was difficult to maintain the fleet for the size of Hillingdon and officers were thanked for their work and detailed presentation.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the report on the Future and Present of the Fleet was noted.</b></p> |
| 76. | <p><b>CABINET FORWARD PLAN</b> (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>It was noted that the report on the School Capital Programme had been deferred to May Cabinet due to project time-frames and to allow a more meaningful update on the Meadow School project and proposed SEN free school to be provided.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the update and the Forward Plan be noted.</b></p>  |
| 77. | <p><b>WORK PROGRAMME</b> (<i>Agenda Item 8</i>)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the work programme be noted.</b></p>   |
|     | <p>The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 7.55 pm.</p>  |

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Anisha Teji on Ateji@hillingdon.gov.uk 01895 277655. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the

---

Public.