

## Minutes

### RESIDENTS, EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

16 April 2019

Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre,  
High Street, Uxbridge



	<p><b>Committee Members Present:</b> Councillors Wayne Bridges (Chairman), Michael Markham (Vice-Chairman), Allan Kauffman, Heena Makwana, Stuart Mathers, Paula Rodrigues, Jan Sweeting, Steve Tuckwell and Brian Stead (In place of Vanessa Hurhangee)</p> <p><b>LBH Officers Present:</b> Dalton Cenac (Highways &amp; Traffic Manager), Dan Kennedy (Director, Housing, Environment, Education, Performance, Health &amp; Wellbeing), Gurmeet Matharu (Senior Highways Engineer), Sarah Phillips (School Place Planning Project Manager) and Neil Fraser (Democratic Services Officer)</p>
73.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillor Hurhangee. Councillor Stead was present as her substitute.</p>
74.	<p><b>DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING</b> (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
75.	<p><b>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</b> (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items were marked as Part I and would therefore be considered in public.</p>
76.	<p><b>TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b> (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2019 be approved as a correct record.</p>
77.	<p><b>QUARTERLY SCHOOL PLACES PLANNING UPDATE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>Dan Kennedy - Director, Housing, Environment, Education, Performance, Health &amp; Wellbeing, and Sarah Phillips – School Place Planning Project Manager, updated the Committee on the Council’s School Places Planning.</p> <p>The Committee was advised that officers had completed two admission rounds for primary and secondary places in September 2019. In Hillingdon, all pupils who had submitted timely applications had been offered a place on offer day, with 94.3% of residents receiving an offer for one of their preferred schools.</p>

Figures received showed that Hillingdon was again best in west London for meeting parental first preferences, first-third, and first-sixth, for primary places. Hillingdon was better than the average of all 32 London boroughs.

Further forecasts for September suggested that demand for secondary places would increase, in line with increased demand seen across London. Regarding primary places, the number of places offered had reduced slightly, though approximately 100 applications had been received after the closing date, so figures would be more accurate once these applications had been processed.

Members asked a number of questions, including:

**Regarding secondary places for Year 7, the figures showed that the majority of schools had very few places available. The government recommended that approximately 5% of places should be kept open. How were officers addressing this?**

Officers recognised that places for Year 7 were tight. However, the government's comments regarding 5% was guidance only, and officers did not expect further large numbers of applications to add to the remaining places. However, officers had agreed contingency plans with schools to provide extra places if necessary in September or the next year, if required. In addition, the construction of a proposed new free school, hopefully to open in 2021/22 would further help with capacity issues. Harlington School in particular was recognised as being very full, and there was an agreement in place in principle to expand the school, subject to the ongoing procurement process.

**In light of comments made by the Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services, could the officers provide an update on the proposed new free schools?**

Two new secondary schools for north of the A40 had been approved in principle by the DfE, with one school currently being considered, based on need. A suitable site for this school was being considered in line with planning requirements, and officers were reviewing options to bring the process forward, in conjunction with Members.

**The report referenced planning for secondary places in September 2020. Could the officers comment on this planning?**

The current Year 5 was larger than the current Year 6, and it was accepted that the current Year 6 was tight. Forecasts suggested that an additional 100 places or so would be required for 2020, though this could vary as families moved in and out of the Borough. Talks were ongoing with the schools in order to address this need.

**Some extra classes were located in different schools than previously. Why was this?**

Some schools had since expanded, but until their big intakes worked through, had some empty classrooms which could accommodate additional pupils. Some secondary schools had smaller 6th Forms than previously, which again provided additional class space for the next year or so.

**The 'other offers' figures had doubled since 2015. Why was this?**

Some secondary schools were more popular than others, and received very high

parental 'first preference' applications. Conversely, several schools were not popular (for a variety of reasons including perception, location etc.) therefore some parents inevitably received offers for schools they had not chosen. Until all schools were popular this would continue, but many of our schools have successfully turned around their popularity. Officers were discussing ways to further address this with schools and governing bodies, included regular dialogue with Ofsted and the Regional Schools Director.

**Could the officers elaborate on the number of vacant spaces required within Hillingdon Schools moving forward?**

Numbers were difficult to provide, but it was likely that by 2021 there would be a need for to find places for around an additional 200 secondary pupils each year into Hillingdon schools.

**The Schools Forum recently looked at the School Information Management System (SIMS System), which showed that children were leaving Hillingdon Schools. Why was this?**

The reasons were varied, and included the comparatively high cost of renting. Head reported many families were choosing to leave London for cheaper homes or rents elsewhere in the UK, or to return to their home countries. Bigger population drops had been seen in other parts of London.

**Could the officers comment on the impact of varying class sizes in primary years?**

Infant classes were limited to 30 pupils or less, and if they recruited under their PAN some schools had a range of class sizes, (e.g. 3 classes of 22 pupils) which was financially punishing. Ultimately a few reductions in PAN were likely until numbers rise again. Meanwhile schools were working to address this by adjusting class organisation and timetabling, etc.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**78. HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE AND FLOODING (Agenda Item 6)**

Dalton Cenac, Highways & Traffic Manager, Gurmeet Matharu, Principal Engineer, and Vicky Boorman, Flood and Water Management Specialist, introduced a report detailing Highways Maintenance and Flooding.

The contents of the report was summarised, key points of which included:

**Highways Maintenance**

- Roads that were in need of repair were split into two categories:
  - Roads that were structurally unsound, and needed major resurfacing or reconstruction; and
  - Roads where the surface was aging and could be given a preventive treatment using a thin surface overlay.
- Roads and pavements included in annual resurfacing programmes were prioritised primarily based on condition. In 2017, independent consultants undertook condition surveys of the ensure high network within Hillingdon, in accordance with the UKPMS national standard (United Kingdom Pavement Management System). The next survey was scheduled for later in 2019.

- Other factors taken into consideration when deciding inclusion include potholes, trip hazards and wear/loss of surface material, service requests or reports from Councillors or residents, petitions, road hierarchy and insurance claims. Visual inspections are also carried out by engineers, to determine the most appropriate treatment.

### **Safety Inspections and Potholes**

- Safety inspections on all roads and pavements in the Borough were in accordance with the Council's new Highway Safety Inspection Policy, which introduced a more risk-based approach to inspections and assessing and prioritising defects.
- The new Policy set out consistent practices with neighbouring authorities and adjoining highways networks, and allowed the highway service to respond to defects within a proportionate timescale.
- The frequency of inspections had increased on many roads, and two new inspectors had been appointed.

### **Flooding**

- The Council was a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) under the Flood and Water Management Act, and as such had the lead on 'local' flood risk from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses.
- The Environmental Agency has the lead on main rivers, reservoir flooding and strategic overview. Thames Water had responsibility for surface and foul water sewers, while Riparian Owners have responsibility for the stretch of river, stream or ditch next to their land or property.
- The Borough contains over 32,000 gullies. Gullies in residential roads were cleaned annually, A-roads twice per year, B & C-roads once per year. 400 'critical gullies' that required more regular cleansing were cleansed 4 times per year.
- New roads are designed to remove or disperse water as quickly and efficiently as possible, which is opposite to flood alleviation objectives to delay the time of entry into the drainage system. Older roads may have less sophisticated drainage, but all roads will typically have one gully for every 200sqm of highway.

### **Actions during a Major Flood Event**

- During a major flooding event, the MET office will issue a water warning indicating heavy rain, and/or the Environment Agency will issue a Flood Alert. This information is distributed via an Adverse Water email to all those within the Council who may be required to take action.
- Each Council service area has its own flood action plan, which details the resources they have available to respond, and the types of action they can take to prepare and ensure a suitable response. This can include sandbags, gully machines, etc.
- During a major flood event, the Council has a duty to investigate. Reports of flooding are collated and recorded, and significant flooding triggers a Section 19 investigation, which is published as a report. The Council has published flood investigation reports following significant flood events in December 2013, July 2014 and June 2016.
- Finalised investigations from reported flooding sites are then incorporated into an updated Surface Water management Plan to identify ways to reduce flooding risk.

Members asked a number of questions, including:

**What legal powers does the Council have to ensure that Thames Water are carrying out their own duties?**

The Council has no powers to compel Thames Water to carry out its duties. The Council's Section 19 reports have highlighted past lack of action by Thames Water.

**Has the Council carried out any cost analysis research into the procurement of new pothole patching vehicles?**

The Council's two existing Rhino machines work very well, and use existing material within their repairs.

**Had the officers considered standardising the type of dropped kerb installed, and using leafletting to inform residents of the Councils services as opposed to 3<sup>rd</sup> parties?**

The Council aims to provide more uniformity to the street scene. Where possible, similar crossover and footway surfacing will be used in a local area. Leaflets are used to highlight services to residents, but could be amended to warn of potentially unscrupulous 3<sup>rd</sup> parties. Discounts for installing dropped kerbs during general road maintenance work was available for residents, with all monies put back into the service budget.

**Could the officers comment on the issue of vehicles extending from their given parking space onto pavements?**

It was an offense for vehicles to overhang onto footways. Instances of such should be referred to the Council's enforcement team for further action. However, while it remained an offense irrespective of the parking space, it was recognised that shorter parking spaces were approved under older policies. The current policy provides a minimum depth of 4.8m by 2.4m. Highways will soon be seeking formal approval of a new crossover policy with stricter enforcement.

**Could the officers comment on why some roads and pavements in the south of the Borough appeared to be overlooked for repair work in comparison to areas in the northern wards?**

All repairs were assessed based on the factors referenced earlier, with condition and risk as prime considerations. However, it was recognised that there are a large number of roads and pavements across the Borough that required repair work.

**Could the Council claim for damages to roads/pavements following construction work?**

Damage caused by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties, street works or utility companies was referred to the appropriate enforcement team, who issued fines for poor or damaging work. However, when dealing with 3<sup>rd</sup> parties it was often difficult to identify the culprit in order to issue the notice/fine.

**Could roadwork permits be reviewed to lessen resident frustration due to slow or inactive work?**

The Council worked with utility companies to avoid multiple simultaneous works. However, new services or emergency work could not be delayed in this fashion. All works on main roads, or 'traffic sensitive routes' were subject to traffic management proposals and timetables. Any works that overrun were fined, and the fines could be prohibitive.

**What actions was the Council taking to reduce the impact of oils in the Borough's waterways?**

This was incumbent on Thames Water, who were responsible for the management of foul water. The Council provided guidance for residents on how to dispose of oils via a link on the website. The link could be provided to Members following the meeting.

**What targets was the Council adhering to in terms of highways/pavement repairs timescales?**

The Council had corporate KPIs to ensure timely repairs. Timescales were from when the team was notified of or identified the defect.

**Did risk assessments take into account the potential age ranges of residents? For example, the risk of a cracked pavement may be higher to an elderly resident.**

The Council's Inspectors were themselves a variety of ages, and under new guidance were fully trained and competent to conduct risk assessments based on all potential highways users. Thresholds for risk assessments were broadly consistent with other authorities, though in some cases those other authorities had much higher thresholds for repair work.

It was agreed that officers would provide the following information following the meeting:

- detail of the unit costs of road/pavement repairs,
- the figures of highways and pavement repairs timescales,
- confirmation of whether the team required a name when residents were reporting an enforcement issue, outside of the meeting,
- how many miles of road and of pavements the Council is responsible for,
- what the total annual budget is for road repairs and for pavements,
- a link to the Council's new Highway Safety Inspection Policy;
- A link to the Council's guidance on disposal of oils.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the report be noted, and
2. That the information set out above be provided to the Committee via the clerk.

79. **CABINET FORWARD PLAN** (*Agenda Item 7*)

**RESOLVED:** That the Cabinet Forward Plan be noted.

80. **MULTI-YEAR WORK PROGRAMME** (*Agenda Item 8*)

Consideration was given to the Work Programme for 2019-20.

Regarding the Committees' suggested review into Youth Services, members were advised that this was not an appropriate topic for review at this time as officers were currently reviewing the topic as part of an ongoing BID process. It was suggested that the topic could be included as an information item at a future meeting. Members requested that the Committee be given view of any report on this matter prior to its consideration at Cabinet.

It was suggested that a new review topic could recycling, fly tipping and charity waste.

Members suggested that the following information items be considered on the work programme:

- Air Quality – review follow-up;
- Home Schooling following new Government legislation;
- The Council's emergency response procedure;
- Sport and leisure services, particularly what was available, who was affected, what was planned, and what the Council reviewed in return;
- Road Safety;
- Music Provision and the Arts;
- School Transport;
- Adult Learning;
- Parking Management Schemes;
- Provision of services to children with Special Educational Needs at mainstream and specialist schools, including the number of pupils and the capacity available within the schools, and what is available for these pupils through the school Capital programme;
- The Borough's works to highlight and promotion of culture and heritage, similar to Black History Month.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the Work Programme be noted; and**
- 2. That delegated authority be given to the clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, to consider and agree the information items to be added to the work programme.**

The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 8.47 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Neil Fraser on 01895 250692. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.