

## ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Environment Scrutiny Commission held on Thursday 29 April 2021 at 6.30 pm at

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Jason Ochere (Chair)  
Councillor Tom Flynn  
Councillor Renata Hamvas  
Councillor Adele Morris  
Councillor Margy Newens  
Councillor Leanne Werner  
Jeremy Leach

**OTHER MEMBERS  
PRESENT:**

**OFFICER  
SUPPORT:** Chris Page, Climate Emergency Director  
David Suen, Service Development Manager (Great Estates), Housing and Modernisation  
Julie Timbrell, Scrutiny Project Manager

**1. APOLOGIES**

Cllr Graham Neale sent apologies.

**2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR  
DEEMS URGENT**

There were none.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATION**

There were none, however Cllr Margy Newens said she had previously invested in SE24 Community Energy schemes .

#### 4. MINUTES

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record, apart from a couple of spelling errors which will be corrected.

#### 5. TRACKING ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORTS

The chair drew members' attention to the reports provided by officers updating the commission on progress in delivering on the recommendations made in previous years scrutiny reviews, and invited comments.

The update report on Community Energy was noted, with reference to the work done in the administration year 2019/2020.

Chris Page, Climate Change Director, was asked if comparisons have been done with other boroughs on parking and measures to reduce car use, such as increasing CPZ coverage. A commission member provided a link where this is compared: <https://www.healthystreetsscorecard.london/>

There was a discussion on progress with developing a carbon score card. The Climate Change Director explained that Southwark is developing this with a number of other London boroughs who are collaborating on the Climate Emergency. He reported that there is a task and finish group working on this. The council receive reports back on their work rather than directly participating. A member asked why not given Southwark is in the top 15 boroughs per head on carbon emissions. The Climate Change Director explained that there are 6 or 7 boroughs in this working group, on behalf of all the London boroughs, and Southwark can give evidence, contribute, and keep the commission updated on progress. Southwark is leading the Green and Resilient group.

The commission then asked about engagement with the youth council and Citizens Juries. A member suggested it would be good to have at least one young person from the Youth Council and schools' eco councils participating in the Citizens Jury. The Climate Change Director agreed on the imperative of involving young people. He said that the council is out to tender on delivery of the Citizen Jury, with the intention for this to be an accurate representation of the borough in terms of demography and views. Currently the proposal is to draw participants from 18 years old and above, which is in line with other boroughs. Participants are usually adults; having younger teenagers could change the dynamic. Members pointed out the impact of Greta Thunberg. The Climate Change Director said that the experts in delivering Citizens' Juries

will give a view and said that this will be discussed at the tender stage. The Climate Change Director assured members that Citizens Juries will this will not be the only way of engaging. Officer have engaged with Southwark's Young Advisors and had very useful conversations .Officers are also looking at other existing ways of engaging young people and networks.

## **RESOLVED**

A Parking comparison with other boroughs will be provided.

### **6. AIR QUALITY SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT - PART TWO**

The chair invited comments on the draft scrutiny review report and the following points were discussed and agreed:

- There was support for an expanded recommendation on Schools Streets; integrating these with the wider network of neighbourhood streets and linking in with the Movement Plan, to increase journeys taken by foot and cycle.
- A longitudinal study with a health partner on the impacts of LTNs, to compliment the existing work with Guys and St Thomas Charity, would be useful.
- More evidence is needed on the importance of increasing cycling among underrepresented cohorts, particularly women. Only 9% of women cycle regularly compared to 21% of men. Sustran's research emphasises the importance of making cycling infrastructure improvements to safety and convenience to increase participation. Women are more likely to use separate lanes and make more linked up journeys. Women from ethnic minorities are particularly unlikely to cycle. Children are another group who need support and information, and the current provision of cycle proficiency courses will be added to the report.
- There was a discussion on car usage and parking and if the council is doing enough to monitor this, including monitoring demand for parking permits and making use of publically available information from the DVLC on car ownership, in order to monitor trends.
- The recommendation on an Emissions based parking policy, arising from the first scrutiny report on Air Quality, was discussed .Members considered if this ought to include diesel, size (given for every electric car sold, 17 SUVs are purchased) and multiple vehicles in the same household

.Members were concerned about differential impacts on low income people, families and people living in low PTAL areas, and balancing this with the desire to reduce car use.

- Members discussed the continued need to lobby central government for more public transport and more funding.
- The reference to a borough-wide greening programme ought to include more ecologically friendly maintenance of housing estates, including less mowing of grassy banks and verges, and more composting.

## **RESOLVED**

The report text will be updated to reflect the discussion and the following changes made to the recommendations:

- Recommendation 2: add that longer term the council ought to conduct a longitudinal study with a health partner such as King's College Hospital or Guys and St Thomas Hospital Foundation Trusts NHS Foundation Trust looking at the long term impact of LTNs on the health of residents.
- Recommendation 3: More generally and in the longer term strategies are required to build on School Streets and to ensure that walking and cycling are increasingly built into the whole journey to school as part of the Movement Plan and that the number of and proportion of driven journeys are continually being reduced.
- Recommendation 5: on cycling will include recommending more work on understand the barriers to participation and the actions that will increase cycling rates, including ensuring the wider cycling infrastructure is inclusive.
- Recommendation 8.5 on Emissions based parking policy will include a recommendation that the policy looks at the parameters of vehicle size, fuel, and multiple vehicles per house.
- Recommendation 8.6 on Greening will include the addition that the commission would like to see a focus on more ecologically friendly maintenance of housing estates, including less mowing of grassy banks and verges. Green waste also ought to be converted to compost, see Earth Cycle.

## **7. ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT**

The chair invited comment on the draft report . Comments from officers were tabled. The following amendments were discussed and agreed:

- The officer commentary advised the commission that NSP policy 'P69 Energy' requires all significant developments to contribute to the development of Decentralised Energy networks, including by connecting to them where there is one in proximity to the development. The commission discussed both updating the text with this information and expanding the recommendation so that all developments are encouraged to contribute to the development of Decentralised Energy (DE) networks.

### **RESOLVED**

- Recommendation Three will be amended to encourage all developments to contribute to the development of Decentralised Energy (DE) networks, including by connecting to them where there is one in proximity to the development, alongside mandatory requirements for significant developments.
- The reference to 60's types cities will be removed.
- 'Passivhaus standard' is the appropriate technical term and the report will be corrected. \*

## **8. WORK PROGRAMME**

The commission noted this is the final meeting.