

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Environment Scrutiny Commission held on Tuesday 9 March 2021 at 6.30 pm at Online/Virtual. Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting. Please contact FitzroyAntonio.williams@southwark.gov.uk for a link to the online meeting

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

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Catherine Rose, Cabinet member the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Environment & Roads
Councillor Radha Burgess, Deputy Cabinet Member for Low Traffic Southwark

OFFICER SUPPORT: Julie Timbrell, Scrutiny Project Manager.

1. APOLOGIES

There were none.

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

There was none.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATION

Jeremy Leach declared that he was a member of London Living Streets, and the chair of the Walworth Society, and had held

discussions and been in meetings with the cabinet members.

Cllr Graham Neale declared he was a member of a Motorcycle users group.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

5. LOW TRAFFIC SOUTHWARK

This was covered under the cabinet member interviews.

6. CABINET MEMBER INTERVIEW WITH CABINET MEMBER FOR LEISURE, ENVIRONMENT & ROADS AND DEPUTY CABINET MEMBER FOR LOW TRAFFIC SOUTHWARK

The commission interviewed the Cabinet member the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Environment & Roads, Cllr Catherine Rose, and Deputy Cabinet Member for Low Traffic Southwark, Cllr Radha Burgess.

The following issues were covered:

- Blue badge exemption
- The timetable for monitoring Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) and consultation with ward members
- Local engagement with residents and utilising local knowledge
- Data protocols used to measure car volume inside and outside LTNs, and variability of importance depending on vehicle volumes
- Making data open source and communication with the public
- Officer capacity to deal with the volume of work generated by LTNs , including resident enquiries, and the appointment of new officer
- Impact of LTNs on main roads
- Green screens

- Next generation of School Streets
- Transport For London (TFL) work on main roads
- Reducing the dominance of the car
- Selection process for choosing an LTN and origins in TFL , pandemic and community organising
- The importance of taking account of the Equity Framework , Climate Emergency, and Southwark Stands Together in delivering Low Traffic Southwark
- Potential for launching a Public Health campaign for air quality
- Differential charging for cycling and car parking on estates
- Public transport provision in the south of the borough, which is poorly served.
- Future plans for delivering Low Traffic Southwark
- Work with emergency services and highways, including fortnightly meetings and visiting various schemes
- Ensuring LTNs do reduce emissions

Darren Farmer, Assistant Director of Operations - South East Area London Ambulance Service (LAS)

The chair invited the Assistant Director of Operations to give evidence. He started by explaining that the combined impact on ambulances of traffic schemes and the pandemic had been very complex with massive peaks and troughs. Overall there has been more traffic on the road with an average increase of 2 minutes in response time overall. The cumulative impact of all schemes including LTNs, pop-cycle lanes, school streets, utility works and loss of major infrastructure impacts on the Trust times overall.

The volume of schemes pan London is placing pressure on teams to review plans and provide constructive feed back. Southwark Council has implemented a larger number of schemes than most, and in a short period of time, which speaks to a high level of ambition as some councils, such as Islington, have only one.

Crew staffs are asked to report any delay due to traffic congestion, road layout or schemes that impact on their ability to respond to patients or egress patients to hospital, for patient safety monitoring. The total number of reported incidences pan London is 171, and in Southwark this is 51. An incident does not necessarily mean something adverse has happened. Ambulance times remain good in Southwark.

The engagement in early stages was not what all partners would have wanted, and was impacted by first wave of Covid. Engagement has significantly improved, with fortnightly meetings now in place, which are very useful .He encouraged Southwark to continue to engage closely with LAS during the design phase. This has led to the use of cameras in certain schemes.

The chair then invited questions and the following points were made:

- Cameras are the London Ambulance service preference , as hard closures prevent unhindered emergency vehicle access
- It is not just blue light responders who are impacted by schemes, there are also community responders, and other health and social care services
- The London Ambulance service does recognise the benefits of low traffic and safe streets so it is about striking a balance.

RESOLVED

The expected briefing on car parking will be provided for next meeting.

7. GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY - TRANSPORT AND AIR QUALITY

Stephen Inch, ULEZ Programme Manager at the GLA and Andrew Galligan ULEZ Project Communications Specialist at TfL provided a presentation on how the GLA is addressing air quality issues from road transport in Inner London, covering

- ULEZ expansion and impact on air quality is likely to be, and
- What steps are being considered in relation to Road Pricing
- Air quality work impacting on Southwark, in particular Southwark School Streets

The chair then invited questions and the following points were

made:

- The GLA Schools streets report was published today [more information can be found here: <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/school-streets-improve-air-quality>]
- A member raised a concern that motorcycles that built in the US that meet the emission rules for California, are not currently provided with certification for the ULEZ, although EU motorcycles can have type approval. This means they have to seek exemption each time as individuals rather than by type. The GLA officers invited the member to follow this up outside of the meeting with them.
- The GLA report showed an 18% reduction in people driving to school. There is more work to be done to encourage a modal shift. The GLA are launching a new scheme addressing larger vehicles to increase safety.
- A member raised a concern that Southwark residents, who live in the congestion zone and own cars, have been hit by a 15% increase in charges, with little warning, as a result of a rise imposed temporarily in June. GLA officers assured members that any extension to this, or Road Pricing, would be subject to 8 - 10 weeks consultation and publicised.
- The GLA have provided a 200 word summary on the consultation on Heathrow, which has been translated into many local languages and made available to councils and community organisations, including Community Southwark, to allow greater understanding.
- The ULEZ will not have cameras on every street; however cameras will be able to capture 98% of journeys. The locations are not publicised and there is still a relatively large number even if the minimum, so it will be difficult for people to cheat.
- There is a Low Income Scrappage scheme, which covers people in low incomes and disabled people. £2000 is awarded to, and this can be used to buy a cheap petrol car which is still compliant e.g. Euro 4. The car does not need to be very new.
- A member cautioned against encouraging people to buy new electric cars as a solution, given the high embedded carbon of a new car and particulates released by brake and tyre

dust.

- The GLA have published reports on inequalities which found that deprived populations and BAME people are more likely to be exposed to higher pollution. The ULEZ is designed to drive down large scale pollution, particularly NO₂, and shrink the range. Independent research indicated that the ULEZ will reduce pollution by 71 and 81 for deprived and BAME populations, respectively. The ULEZ will not equalise but it will help with health inequalities.
- The ULEZ is a significant measure but no single intervention is going to work on its own. Big interventions like ULEZ need to be combined with increases in bike parking, work on junctions and LTNs, which all ought to be integrated.
- A 15% reduction in Pm₁₀ and Pm_{2.5} is anticipated from the ULEZ. Domestic fuel burning is an important contributor to particulates, as well as ammonia from farming, and particulates from type and brakes. The Mayor is looking at 2030 to reduce particulates to WHO levels, with assistance from central government. The ULEZ is more designed to reduce NO₂.
- The Climate Emergency target of net zero by 2030 means there will be a need to reduce car journeys by 60%. As part of this the GLA is looking at road pricing, however no decision has been made yet. The Mayor's aim is that by 2040 80% of journeys will be by a sustainable mode; currently it is 40%.
- This will take the whole heft of the transport improvements- so both pull and push factors. Pull factors are safety of active travel and provision of sustainable modes of transport. Push factors are schemes like the ULEZ.
- Local Zero Emission Zones, such as the one in Hackney could grow and play an increasingly important role. In some there is an opportunity to try out electric vehicles.
- The Mayor's Covid recovery plan focuses on a Green New Deal, which means High Streets for all, thinking differently and building on localism. These are 60s type visions for cities.
- The GLA are promoting sustainable freight with large companies such as UPS and DHL, who are working on

consolidating their electrical fleet. Some people in the gig economy, who work for delivery companies, have benefited from the scrappage scheme.

- The Mini Holland schemes in Waltham Forest were recommended by the GLA officers, with reports that after some initial concerns local people are enthused by these.

RESOLVED

The GLA officers will send more information:

- Data on particulate (PM10 and PM 2.5) decreases anticipated from the ULEZ
- More information on local low emission zones.

8. TRACKING ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

The tracking report was noted. Officers have been asked to provide reports for the following meeting.

9. WORK PROGRAMME

The chair invited headline recommendations for the two review reports on Planning and Air Quality.

The following recommendations, themes and further investigation was proposed:

- Targeted work with schools impacted by air pollution, particularly schools with low income and BAME children. This may be in conjunction with the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission.
- Increasing trees and greenery.
- Looking at how LTNs positively impact on the local economy.
- A proportion of Southwark's recycling is being burnt by Veolia, potentially impacting on air quality.
- Understanding and reducing the adverse impact on schools and main roads of traffic schemes.

- Further work on the School Streets programme.
- How the Low Traffic Southwark plans will positively integrate with TFL work on main roads.
- Rather than giving more car parking can the council concentrate on increasing the PTAL on Aylesbury estate. Likewise can the council work towards improving transport in the south of the borough.
- Sustainable freight
- Building Control certifying and tracking carbon commitments.
- The shift to homeworking with many workplaces only intending for staff to travel into the office for 2/3 days a week .How will this impact on the borough and how can Southwark plan for the future, in particular can the Commission invite Bankside and Team London Bridge to input.
- The theme of the local economy and the 15 Minutes City; specifically how can Southwark support the local economy and encourage local cycling and walking.
- The role of planning and regeneration in approving schemes that will deliver the 15 Minute City , with specific reference to the provision of a good mix of amenity, and the risk of an over preponderance of cafes and restaurants as these are higher profit for developers than hairdressers and vegetable shops. There was a proposal for the Commission to review a selection of planning applications, say three different schemes, to see how effective Southwark are at implementing schemes that will benefit the community and local economy.
- Promoting reuse and preservation of existing buildings.
- Encouraging active travel in communities with low cycling and walking rates.
- Catering for increases in online shopping, with specific reference to work of the BIDs in consolidated hubs and providing nests to aid collection and reduce emissions.

The chair thanked the commission members and said that these recommendations would be used to inform draft headline reports.

