

## **THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN**

At a meeting of the **CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on **MONDAY, 13TH NOVEMBER, 2023** at 6.30 pm in Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE

### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE PRESENT**

Councillors Awale Olad (Chair), Camron Aref-Adib, Nina De Ayala Parker, Sharon Hardwick, Matthew Kirk, Izzy Lenga, Liam Martin- Lane and Stephen Stark

### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ABSENT**

Councillors Rishi Madlani

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Councillors Adam Harrison (Cabinet Member for a Sustainable Camden), Linda Chung (Remote attendance), Julian Fulbrook and Kemi Atolagbe (Remote attendance).

**The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.**

## **MINUTES**

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence was received from Councillor Rishi Madlani who was substituted by Councillor Liam Martin-Lane.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Nina De Ayala Parker and Izzy Lenga.

### **2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF STATUTORY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS, COMPULSORY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND VOLUNTARY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN MATTERS ON THIS AGENDA**

There were none.

### **3. DEPUTATIONS (IF ANY)**

There were none.

**4. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)**

The Chair announced that the meeting was broadcast live by the Council to the Internet and could be viewed on the website for six months after the meeting. After that time, webcasts were archived and could be made available on DVD upon request. Those who were seated in the room or participated via Teams were deemed to have consented to their contributions being recorded and broadcast and to the use of those sound recordings and images for webcasting and/or training purposes.

**5. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT**

There was none.

**6. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023 be signed as an accurate record.

**7. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES**

The Chair informed the Committee that the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities was not available to answer questions on her Annual Report this evening due to her being unwell.

A member requested that a report on the incident and what took place in Huntley Street outside the University College London Hospital (UCLH) involving a group of homeless people and some of the Council's contracted service providers and partners be circulated to the Committee.

**Action By: Cabinet Member for Safer Communities**

The Committee sent the Cabinet Member best wishes for a speedy recovery and **RESOLVED:**

That

- the report be noted without any further discussion; and

- if members had any questions to write direct to the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities for a response.

## **8. IMPACT OF POLICING ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN CAMDEN AND THE POLICE RESPONSE TO THE CONCERNS RAISED.**

Consideration was given to the report of the Superintendent of Police.

In response to questions, Superintendent Jack Rowland (Metropolitan Police), made the following points:

- It was incorrect to say that Camden and Islington Police Borough Command Unit was mistreating Black and ethnic minorities. In relation to a number of incidents raised and as indicated in the written response provided to the Chair of the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee the Police were required to act on sensitive intelligence information which was developed through a number of channels. The Police were duty bound to process the information and sign off any prospective warrants at the Magistrates Court which was what had been done in the case of the incident mentioned.
- The warrant and raid were conducted based on the information developed although no firearm was found, it was important to recognise that this did not mean that the intelligence was wrong and a realisation of the impact this had on local communities.
- Since the issue was raised by the Committee, the Police had offered to meet with the family concerned though this had not yet occurred. The resident had their complaint recorded which was investigated and overseen by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). The resident had received a report on the outcome of the investigation.
- The findings from the investigation were that there were no issues of poor performance around the development of intelligence, how the intelligence was dealt with and the execution of the warrant on the part of the Police BCU. However, as previously indicated the specialist Police unit did not inform the local Police and some learning had come out of this in relation to the impact and mitigation on local communities.
- The Police understood the traumatic effect raids had on people, it was however necessary and what the Police needed to do to keep Camden safe and take firearms off the street.
- With regards to the second incident reported in the Camden New Journal (CNJ) this was reviewed and investigated, it was found that the complainant made no racial elements to the allegation around what occurred. The Police made every attempt to identify and arrest the suspects but unfortunately this was not successful and the Police felt sorry that the victim was let down and had to go to the CNJ to express that.
- With regards to the third incident of a family being subject to invasive Police visits looking for people that did not live in the property, the Police owned up to the error of misinterpreting information. The person concerned had been

given the opportunity to make a complaint which would be investigated. Lessons would be learnt from this.

- Police BCU was making sure it listened, responded and learnt from feedback provided by the local community as well as working with the Council and local community groups that it came into contact with and were affected by police action and activity.
- The Police did not want to convey the impression of fear or being unapproachable to any law-abiding citizen in London. The direction to police officers was that while there was the need to fight and prevent crime, there was also the need to build relationships in the community which were key.
- A statistical breakdown of the police force in terms diversity was not available to hand and the Police would look to provide this information to the Committee at a future date.

**Action By: Superintendent of Police**

- In relation to the question about the number of complaints concerning allegations of racism, sexism and homophobia from members of the public received by Camden and Islington BCU, and allegations of mistreatment from the Police when the individual was a victim of a crime in the last 3 years, this information was not available to hand, however information relating to the first part of the question could be provided, however the second part relating to victims of crime was more difficult to differentiate, the information provided would relate to total complaints.
- The 'thin blue line' was a phrase and as a badge had a long history. The thin blue line badge was set up in order to remember police officers that had died on the streets of the UK while protecting the lives of the public. This had however recently been appropriated and misinterpreted by some right-wing groups which had caused problems which was why the Police Commissioner had taken a number of steps including asking for the removal of blue badges which the Police had followed.
- With regards to the outcome of the Inspection report, the concerns raised about 70,000 crimes under reported across the MET and 25% of stop and search not having a purpose recorded, the Police were asked to provide information to the Committee on how many of these 70,000 under reported crimes related to Camden and Islington and whether the 25% of stop and searches, purpose not recorded applied to Camden and Islington BCU

**Action By: Superintendent of Police**

- Camden and Islington BCU had its uplifting model agreed. This was good news as it allowed the Police to have an Inspector in the north and south of the borough, 15 sergeants which meant that most wards would get a dedicated sergeant, the Police were also looking to recruit more PCSO's for neighbourhood policing which would assist with building community relations at the same time as dealing with antisocial behaviour and crime.

- The Police key performance indicators were focused on the reduction of crime in certain types of crime areas, positive outcome rates and public attitude survey which was overseen by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). There was also a professionalism Board which over saw data around Police misconduct cases.
- In terms of recruitment of more ethnic minorities and people from diverse backgrounds, many people from diverse backgrounds worked for the Police, the aspirations were for the number of people from diverse backgrounds to be as high as possible.
- In terms of ensuring Police training and changing the culture of the police, there had been a massive shift in the Met both culturally through the awareness training provided and the establishment of a local professional standards unit. There was also a big campaign launched around challenging misogynistic and racial behaviour.
- The number of hate crimes reported to the Police over the last 4 weeks was 138 which was an 84% increase on the previous 4 weeks. The year-to-date figures for hate crimes was 728 offences compared to 609 offences for the same period last year. The positive outcome rate was between 4% to 12%.
- The Police had officers visiting every faith venue, business and school in the borough as much as they could to provide reassurance to communities to make sure people were feeling safe.
- The Police had received positive feedback from faith venues and businesses in the borough about the police visits.

A member commented that the Police were doing all right at the moment coping with the widely publicised public order challenges.

- The Police were not aware that there was under reporting, any allegation received by the police would be recorded and investigated. If there were communities that did not feel confident to report issues to the Police then the engagement work was the key to building on that.
- The BCU had an Organisational Learning Board in cases of gaps in awareness and knowledge it went to the Board to put in better processes to effectively mitigate and prevent something from occurring again.
- The Superintendent of Police had not read the American research relating to facial recognition and that it disproportionately affected Black people, noting, however that it was technology that the Police needed to invest in, which was delivered .in a sensitive way by a team with the legal framework and measures in place to develop it.
- The facial recognition service used by the Police was based on already stored images of people that were wanted and not based on artificial intelligence.
- There was no intention at the moment of the Police pausing the deployment of facial recognition across the streets of Camden as there was every confidence that it was being run within the legal framework and in an ethical way.

- The Superintendent of Police agreed to introduce the Police team that ran facial recognition to the Committee to respond to any questions or concerns it might have.

**Action By: Superintendent of Police**

The Committee thanked the Superintendent of Police for attending the meeting and responding to its questions and

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted.

**9. THE APPLICATION OF THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN THE WORK OF CAMDEN COUNCIL AND SUPPORT FOR THE PRINCIPLES OF CIRCULARITY IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS IN THE BOROUGH.**

Consideration was given to the report of the Circular Economy Scrutiny Panel.

Councillor Fulbrook (Chair of the Panel) introduced the report which investigated the applicability of concepts related to the Circular Economy in the work of the Council, considered any appropriate recommendations for circularity within the Council and more broadly in support for circularity in the public and private sectors within the borough.

He likened the report to the proverbial school report where there were some positive aspects that Camden was in the forefront of and doing well in terms of environmental concerns and sustainability, there were some areas where the Council could do better and there were some new challenges, new opportunities with potentially new solutions to further the work and achieve the ambitious targets the Council had. He noted that from the findings and conclusions, the Panel had made 43 recommendations and requested that the Committee asked the Cabinet Member for a Sustainable Camden to prepare a response to the report and recommendations and come back to the Committee with the response.

Members made the following comments:

- The Chair praised the very comprehensive report noting that it covered so many areas and thanked the Panel members for a deep dive into the topic.
- A lot of the information contained in the report resonated and sat with how I tried to live my life, particularly in relation to fixing and repairing clothes rather than buying new things, the section on how to alleviate child hunger and the education of children and young people could help children and young people to influence their parents.
- Retrofits in libraries such as West Hampstead Library could provide access to tools such as drills and carpet cleaners for transient people in the area.

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- Cycle safety, one of the local primary schools in the borough was providing weekly cycling lessons, it would be good if this could be extended throughout the borough for all primary school children.
- Proud to be associated with the work of the Panel and tributes to the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel for the efficient way he steered the Panel and the large amount of work he did in producing the report.

In response to Committee members question the following information was provided:

- Libraries were useful for all sorts of things not only as a focal point for education but with some imaginative thinking in conjunction with schools a lot more could be done in terms of recycling of things such as school uniforms. - There was some cycling training happening in Camden although not at the level of some other local government institutions. However, the more cycling infrastructure available in schools and across the borough the better. There were more possibilities for this to happen as more parents were cycling and this in turn could encourage younger primary school children to cycle.
- There was also the possibility of looking into waste services being run with E-Cargo bikes which could reduce the level of road traffic and particulates in the atmosphere.
- Anything that would reduce the large amount of daily traffic in the borough was commendable particularly as Camden had some of the best public transport network in the Country, with lots of opportunity for walking and cycling.
- The Panel did look quite carefully at the use of space. It would be helpful to have more pop-up locations or permanent small units within easy walking distance all over the borough where items could be deposited or recycled.
- The use of communication via the social media website was a useful and important means of informing the local community which could facilitate proper collection and disposal rather than fly-tipping.
- A good point raised was to have a directory of local initiatives in the borough and make this accessible to the wider public by publicising their work. This could also assist with community cohesion for example a lonely person joining a sewing club, making friends and also doing something useful for the local community.
- Members were asked to let officers know of any spaces where residents could take their clothes for recycling as particularly, depending on the textile market there was a high return.
- It was also noted that the Council did not collect food waste from certain locations within the borough such as flats above shops, one of the recommendations of the Panel was to see how collection of food waste could be assisted at these locations.
- A big suggestion of the circular economy was sharing knowledge, encouraging and providing incentives for people to fix things rather than just buying new. Camden did already have fixing stations and it would be good to see if this could incorporate fixing of clothes.

- In terms of the financial implications, the Panel tried as much as possible to make neutral observations as far as possible and those that would make savings. There was already a climate emergency, the financial cost would be even more extreme if steps were not taken to address these issues.
- The report also recommended that the Committee requested a response from the Cabinet Member to the Panel recommendations and report back to the Committee.
- The report also referred to some of the things that already existed in Camden such as the library of things in Kilburn where items such as garden tools and drills could be borrowed.
- The Panel also considered practical levers that the Council had to effect change and issues looked at included the school meals contract and byelaws such as banning of smoking in parks in the borough.

The Cabinet Member for a Sustainable Camden commented that it was a really dynamic area touching on lots of different aspects of the Council's work and what was happening in the Community. The report was wide ranging with lots of recommendations there were really interesting themes emerging from the discussion. For example, the decentralised nature of the circular economy, how this could be provided locally with such things as the fixing factory, community skips as well as continuing to provide the borough wide service for recycling waste and collection and balancing this with having that easy to access centralised approach. The recommendations would be considered and brought back to the Committee for a fuller discussion.

The Committee thanked Councillor Fulbrook and the Circular Economy Panel for all its hard work and

#### **RESOLVED -**

1. To endorse the contents of the report; and
2. agree to request the Cabinet Member for a Sustainable Camden to prepare a response to the recommendations, and to report back to the Committee.

#### **10. ENVIRONMENT SERVICES - WASTE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANSING**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Environment and Sustainability.

In response to questions, Councillor Adam Harrison (Cabinet Member for a Sustainable Camden) Richard Bradbury (Director of Environment and Sustainability) and Rachel Bailey (Head of Environment Services) made the following points:



- In terms of incentivising people towards behavioural change such as recycling, repairing and sharing, the Council had updated things such as the Camden Echo points scheme formerly known as the cycle awards scheme which encouraged residents to recycle more and were awarded points the more, they recycled. This was also extended to encompass healthy travel.
- The Council was also trialling new initiatives such as the raised bag scheme, peer-to-peer learning in communities which encouraged behaviour change as well as making things easier for people from an educational and service design perspective.
- Providing clear guidance on how to use recycling services and communicating this to local communities was another way of encouraging behaviour change.
- There was a regular email sent out to over 60,000 people providing information on the echo rewards points system this was a way of incentivising people to do different things.
- The echo points system rewarded those with the largest number of points gained each month due to either recycling more things or taking up healthier modes of travel such as cycling, with cash payments or vouchers. People also got to vote for their preferred charity for the money to be sent to.
- The deposit return scheme was a government led incentive encouraging people to return plastic items back into the system in exchange for a small reward.
- The old water fountains required regular cleaning to ensure that they were suitable for use. There were about 8 water fountains scattered around the borough funded and maintained by Thames Water and the Mayor of London's scheme.
- It was recognised that access to a regular supply of water was good, fortunately there were schemes where cafes and others provide water. The mayor had a map of where these fountains were located.
- The Council looked after the older water fountain such as the one in Swiss Cottage which was challenging to maintain operationally as it was regularly vandalised and flooded quite regularly.
- In terms of the level of engagement with residents, there was an on-line survey based on the Good Life Framework which asked open ended questions of residents, 813 responses were received. There were also some in-depth responses from residents which were still being analysed. In addition, a public engagement exercise was conducted where residents were invited to workshops.
- Some of the feedback related to Veolia not being responsive, frequency of street cleansing, jet washing, the number of litter bins around the borough, missed collections and waste getting ripped open as well as fly tipping. Some people praised their local street sweeper indicating that they did a good job as well as positive feedback about the Camden Clean Streets App.
- It appeared not enough people knew about the Camden Clean Streets App, so the more this was advertised and promoted the more it would benefit everybody this linked into Veolia's Echo system which would alert Veolia immediately.

- The Council had worked with Veolia on the app, which had also been worked into other aspects of Council business, but further work would be required in integrating with other Council systems. 'Fix My Street' was an app used with the Highways Team used to deal with highways infrastructure but was not a specific Camden app. The Council was as an organisation looking at how it could develop wider reporting via apps.

A member asked if the public litter bins in the Hampstead area could be made a little bit bigger.

- In respect of working with fast food outlets in the borough to reduce waste in the local area, the Council could work with the fast-food restaurants to provide more litter bins. If there was a particular problem area the Council could also use available legislation to serve notices on businesses and also issue fines and penalty notices.
- With regards to wet leaves causing a hazard, the Council's crews as well as the weekly rounds carried out additional rounds to collect leaves at this time of the year. It was however an ongoing battle that occurred at this time of the year as depending on the weather it could be very difficult as a lot of leaves could suddenly fall overnight particularly on wet and windy days.
- If members had any areas of particular concerns, this could be looked into.
- With regards to monitoring and enforcement of rubbish in the evenings this was not routinely done by the Council, although going forward this was looking at being changed.
- There were planned dates and times for rubbish collection which Veolia should be adhering to, their vehicle could be tracked to determine whether it had gone to an area.
- There were other private waste carriers that collected waste, the Council does not have any control over ensuring they collected the waste. However, the Council had an enforcement officer in the area who could serve a notice or issue a fixed penalty notice/fine for waste being outside.
- Officers would look into providing a breakdown of feedback on the views of residents on rubbish collection in the West Hampstead and Fortune Green ward areas.

**Action By: Head of Environment Services**

- In response to a member's suggestion about putting QR codes on bins and linking this to the Clean Street app, so that residents could alert the Council to any areas where there was an issue with rubbish collection, officers commented that any suggestions or new ideas were welcomed.

**RESOLVED –**

THAT the report be noted.

## **11. WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director Supporting Communities.

Members discussed the work programme and suggested that items on the Committee's Work Programme should be moved around.

For the December 2023 meeting the following items were expected

- Annual report of the Cabinet Member for Voluntary Sector, Equalities and Cohesion
- Dockless Bike Hire Update – Lime and Human Forest to be invited.
- NLWA Joint Waste Strategy – (The Director of Environment and Sustainability to confirm with NLWA if this was possible in December)

For the January 2024 meeting the following items were expected

- Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for New Homes, Jobs and Community Investment
- Thames Water
- The Use of Pesticides should be moved from February 2024 to January 2024
- Response of the Cabinet Member for a Sustainable Camden to the Circular Economy Panel Recommendations.

For the February 2024 meeting the following items were expected

- Report from the Cabinet Adviser on Safety for Women and Girls -Cllr Djemai
- Violence against Women and Girls Update moved from January 2024 - February 2024
- Climate Action Plan Annual Review including Climate Resilience Plan
- Transport Strategy Delivery update

Items moved to the Spring.

The Met Police Turnaround Plan

Facial Recognition - Police.

Night-time Economy Strategy

### **RESOLVED –**

THAT the above changes to the Work Programme be agreed.

**ACTION BY: Senior Policy and Strategy Officer / Principal Committee Officer**

## **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

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There was none.

The meeting ended at 9.17 pm.

**CHAIR**

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**MINUTES END**