

MINUTES OF THE FORWARD PLAN SELECT COMMITTEE
Tuesday 28th November 2006 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Leaman (Vice-Chair in the Chair) and Councillors Jackson, Jones, Kansagra, J Long, Matthews, Powney.

Also present was Councillor Dunwell.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Coughlin, Malik and Sneddon.

1. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

There were none.

2. Deputations

There were none.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting – 25th October 2006

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the meeting held on 25th October 2006 be received and approved as an accurate record subject to the following amendments.

Item 1 be amended to state that ‘Councillor J Long expressed an personal interest in Brent Housing Partnership’.

Item 6 be amended from ‘Councillor Powney also resolved to write to the borough Solicitor..’ to state ‘The Committee also resolved that Councillor Powney write to the Borough Solicitor..’

4. Matters Arising

There were none.

5. Call in of Executive Decisions from the meeting of the Executive on Monday 13th November 2006

Review of Residents’ Parking Permits

Following a request from the Committee at the previous meeting, Councillor Daniel Brown, Irfan Malik (Assistant Director of Environment and Culture) and Richard Pearson (Director of Transportation) attended to update and answer any queries Members had on the report.

The report outlined the proposal to give free first residents’ permits for all electric vehicles and all vehicles with engines under 1101cc and increasing visitors’ annual permits from £75 to £100 as soon as the necessary orders and administrative changes could be made.

Appendix A presented a summary of key policies that appeared in the 2002 Parking Plan and highlighted proposed policies as presented in the Draft Parking and Enforcement Plan that was approved by the Council and submitted to TfL for approval earlier this year.

The Committee asked officers and Councillor Brown to explain what the three major problems were to the Council and what concerns these problems posed.

Irfan Malik referred Members to paragraphs 3.5 – 3.7 of the report stating that car ownership, noxious gases and traffic congestion were the three major concerns. Richard Pearson went on to explain that previous reports outlined several potential problems; however the views of the Administration had changed since then. He informed the Committee that this report outlined the Executive's intention to move towards a model where by a permit for vehicles with a larger engine size cost more.

Councillor Brown explained to Committee Members that in the Administration's view it was unfair that people with off street parking did not pay for permits, but people who lived in smaller properties which do not accommodate for off street parking had to pay for permits. To combat this, permits would be made free for vehicles with smaller engines or for electric cars. He went on to say that this would not increase car ownership but it may change it, which may have an impact on congestion in a positive way.

Members enquired if the Borough of Richmond charged for smaller cars. Richard Pearson stated that permits were free for cars with smaller engines and the charges were based on carbon emissions. The Committee questioned officers on whether electric vehicles were as environmentally friendly as assumed and whether motorbikes would be included in the policy.

Richard Pearson explained that electric vehicles could be environmentally damaging but as they did not emit noxious gases, they would not contribute to already high levels of noxious gases in parts of the borough. Councillor Brown informed Members that motorbikes were not included in the policy.

In response the Committee questioned why other boroughs did not charge for the second or third permits, whether first permits would still be free for residents who owned more than one vehicle, and whether the Administration would penalise residents for owning a 'gas guzzler' as well as an environmentally friendly car. The Committee also asked officers for the total number of vehicles in the borough.

Councillor Brown confirmed that the Council would issue a free permit for residents with vehicles with small engines, however if a resident also owned a gas guzzler they would not be penalised.

Richard Pearson and Irfan Malik both confirmed that the total number of vehicles within the borough was unknown, however 13 000 permits including

visitors' permits existed within the borough and that 600 vehicles would come under the first free permit scheme, which was illustrated in table 4.2, page 15 of the report.

The Committee raised the question of whether having a free permit made a difference and whether it would really affect residents' car buying habits. Councillor Brown reiterated that this policy would start signposting the green way forward. Councillor Brown agreed to note the Committee's view that second or third cars be penalised.

The Committee expressed concerns regarding the intention of the Executive and the direction of its long term parking policies. The Committee queried whether it would be a long term policy of the Council to issue free first permits to all vehicles.

Councillor Brown informed members that the Executive was only providing free first permits for all electric vehicles and vehicles with engines smaller than 1101cc and that in the future the Executive may extend the scope of free residential permits, although the scope would not extend to 'gas-guzzlers'.

Members went onto to enquire whether it was fair that although one third of residents in the borough do not own cars all residents were forced to pay CPZ charges. The Committee questioned whether all CPZ reviews had been completed and how the reviews and road re-surfacing would be funded once the free first permits commenced. Members also asked whether the Executive would look at increasing other charges.

Councillor Brown advised members that a report on charges would be presented to the Executive early 2007 for implementation in 2008, allowing residents time to adapt. He explained that the CPZs made a surplus of £4.2 million this year, which was paid back into the system. This provided funding for areas such as traffic calming measures, which in turn benefited all residents. He then referred to paragraph 4.7 of the report confirming that there would be a net increase of £32,000.

Officers confirmed that CPZ reviews were on track and that they would be completed by the next financial year; however it was impossible to state how many reviews there would be in the future. Officers aimed at completing three reviews per year.

Members enquired whether administration charges would be increased if more permits were given and banding introduced.

Richard Pearson explained that there would be small administration costs involved but they would be negligible. Irfan Malik commented that any extra costs would be taken into consideration and presented in the report. Councillor Brown stated that road re-surfacing was being considered in the re-growth; however the budget for this year was tight.

Councillor Jackson expressed his support of the scheme and stated that the scheme would encourage people to drive less and purchase environmentally friendlier vehicles. He concluded that in today's society people felt they needed to own a car and that the scheme would encourage single car households.

Members enquired on the process that would be used to consult residents.

Officers confirmed that the Parking Enforcement Policy would be consulted on, other boroughs' schemes would be considered, proposals would be taken to the Area Consultative Forums and the Brent Magazine and members would be provided with information to pass onto constituents.

Councillor Dunwell raised objections to the proposed consultation process, specifically commenting on the way in which it would be carried out. He recommended that consultation documents be scrutinised and approved by Councillors. Committee Members stated that this was not in the parameters of the call in. Councillor Dunwell's comments were noted, however the Committee expressed the view that Members were confident with officers work on consultation.

6. The Executive List of Decisions for the meeting that took place on Monday 13th November 2006

RESOLVED:

that the committee agreed that the Executive List of Decisions for the meeting that took place on 13th November 2006 be noted.

7. Briefing notes/information updates requested by the Select Committee following consideration of Version 6 (2006/07) of the Forward Plan

(i) *Wembley from Vision- Reality*

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted, and that the Lead Member and Lead Officer be requested to attend the Forward Plan Select Committee on 19th December 2006 for further questioning.

Small Homes Project

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted.

(ii) Wembley Toilet Enhancemen

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted.

(iii) Award of Waste Management Contract

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted.

(iv) Tackling Idling Engines

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted.

(v) Review of Carlyon and Worksteps/RLSB

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted.

8. The Forward Plan (*Issue 6 2006/2007*)

Issue 7 of the Forward Plan (04/12/2006 to 05/04/2006) was now before members of the Select Committee. Following consideration of Issue 7 of the Forward Plan, the Select Committee made the following requests:-

Regeneration Action Plan

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 19th December 2006. Members asked that the lead member and lead officer be requested to attend the meeting to respond to members' questioning.

Wembley from Vision to Reality

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 19th December 2006. Members asked that the lead member and lead officer be requested to attend the meeting to respond to members' questioning.

London Olympics and Paralympics 2012 – Fulfilling Brent's Potential

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 19th December 2006. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

IT Strategy

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 19th December 2006. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

Amendment of the Air Quality Management Area

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 19th December 2006. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

BACES Fee and Charges: Impact on Age Discrimination Legislation

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 19th December 2006. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

Draft Parking and Enforcement Plan (PEP)

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 19th December 2006. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

Tree Policy

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 19th December 2006. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

Brent tPCT update on financial position and possible effect on Brent Council and residents of Brent

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 19th December 2006. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

Day Service Options for Older People

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 19th December 2006. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

9. Items considered by the Executive that were not included in the Forward Plan

There were none.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Forward Plan Select Committee is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 19th December 2006

11. Any Other Urgent Business

There were none.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm.

C Leaman
Vice Chair in the Chair