



Overview & Scrutiny Committee 13th October 2009

Report from the Director of Policy & Regeneration

Ward Affected:
Kensal Green

Tubbs Road Councillor Call for Action Request

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has received a councillor call for action request from Councillor James Powney (appendix a) relating to the volume of traffic using Tubbs Road. Councillor Powney believes that the road is being used as a cut through by people seeking to avoid High Street Harlesden and Station Road to get to Old Oak Lane. As a result the street is congested, polluted and residents are concerned about road safety. Councillor Powney would like the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider this issue and recommend a solution to the problems at Tubbs Road.
- 1.2 The councillor call for action was introduced in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. It enables any member of the council to refer to an overview and scrutiny committee any local government matter which affects their ward. A local government matter is defined as one which:
- Relates to the discharge of any function of the authority
 - Affects all or part of the ward for which the referring member is elected or any person who lives or works in the ward
 - Is not an excluded matter
- 1.3 A protocol on how councillor call for action will operate in Brent has been discussed previously by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, scrutiny chairs and agreed by all group leaders. The protocol recommends that a councillor should try to resolve the issue / problem using the mechanisms and resources available to them including Neighbourhood Working and the council's complaints system, prior to asking an overview and scrutiny committee to take the matter further.

1.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will need to decide whether or not to take the Tubbs Road issue forward and could use the criteria set out in the protocol to help to make the decision.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to decide whether it wants to consider the councillor call for action relating to traffic congestion at Tubbs Road in Kensal Green ward. If the committee chooses to do this, it will be included on the agenda of a future meeting.

3.0 Detail

3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has received a councillor call for action request from Councillor James Powney (appendix a) relating to the volume of traffic using Tubbs Road. Councillor Powney believes that the road is being used as a cut through by people seeking to avoid High Street Harlesden and Station Road to get to Old Oak Lane. As a result the street is congested, polluted and residents are concerned about road safety. Councillor Powney would like the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider this issue and recommend a solution to the problems at Tubbs Road.

3.2 Councillor Powney has highlighted a number of problems that the traffic is causing.

- Traffic congestion, in what is quite a narrow, largely residential street
- Air pollution, associated with the large volume of traffic
- Concerns about road safety

3.3 Councillor Powney has discussed this issue with Phil Rankmore, Director of Transportation and also raised the matter with TfL, via Navin Shah, London Assembly member for Brent and Harrow. Councillor Powney would like Tubbs Road downgraded from an A road to a B road. He also wants drivers to be stopped from turning left into Old Oak Lane from Tubbs Road, which would take away one of the incentives to use it as a cut through.

3.4 Members of the committee may also be aware that a question on this issue was submitted by Councillor Joseph to Full Council on 13 July 2007. A copy of the question and the response is attached.

3.5 The councillor call for action introduced in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enables any member of the council to refer to and overview and scrutiny committee any local government matter which affects their ward. A local government matter is defined as one which:

- Relates to the discharge of any function of the authority
- Affects all or part of the ward for which the referring member is elected or any person who lives or works in the ward
- Is not an excluded matter

3.6 A protocol on how the councillor call for action will operate in Brent was discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, scrutiny chairs and agreed by all group leaders. The protocol recommends that a councillor should try to resolve the issue / problem using the mechanisms and resources available to them including:

- Raise the issue through the Neighbourhood Working process. The Neighbourhood Working Co-ordinators advice / assistance should be sought in finding way to resolve the matter.
- Ensure that the service area or partner agency has been informed of the issue and been given enough time to resolve it.
- Ensure that this is not an issue that is currently being or should be pursued via the council's complaints process.
- Ascertain whether or not any other form of local scrutiny is investigating the issue. The Local Involvement Network for instance.
- Assist local communities with petitions and deputations
- Ask questions at committee or Full Council
- Submit motions to Full Council
- Hold public meetings

3.7 Once on the agenda it is for the overview and scrutiny committee to decide whether or not to take the matter further. To aid their decision the committee could use the criteria set out in the protocol. The criteria are:

- Is the committee satisfied that appropriate attempts at resolving the issue/problem have been made by the ward councillor?
- Has the committee considered a similar issue recently – if yes have the circumstances or evidence changed?
- Has the relevant service or partner agency been informed and been given enough time to resolve the issue? What response has the councillor received?
- Is this a case that is being or should be pursued via the council's corporate or the statutory complaints system?
- Is this an issue currently being looked at by another form of local scrutiny e.g. Local Involvement Networks?

3.8 Assuming that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee does want to look at this subject in the future, officers from the Transportation Department, representatives from TfL and local people could be invited to a meeting so that the members have a good overview of the issues relating to Tubbs Road. It might also be possible to hold the meeting in Kensal Green ward, close to Tubbs Road, so that the committee can see for themselves the problems that Councillor Powney is concerned about.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 None

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 None

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

7.1 None

Background Papers

Contact Officers

Phil Newby, Director of Policy and Regeneration

Tel – 020 8937 1032

Email – phil.newby@brent.gov.uk

Andrew Davies, Policy and Performance Officer

Tel – 020 8937 1609

Email – andrew.davies@brent.gov.uk