

ITEM

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 29th March 2004

REPORT FROM DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

For Action

**Wards Affected
Various**

SUBJECT: Update on items Selected by Non-Executive Members at Council during 2003/04

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report follows on from the report to the Executive on 12th November 2003 and details the progress of those items raised at Full Council by non-executive members since September 2003.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Executive is asked to note the decisions taken at Council in response to the non-executive member items since September 2003 and to inform Council of the actions since taken as a result.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

4. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5. DETAIL

- 5.1 In accordance with Standing Order 40, non-executive members selected from an order determined by way of a random ballot conducted in May 2002 are entitled to raise an issue of their choice at a meeting of Full Council at which non-executive member items are to be debated. The item must relate to the functions of the Council or affect the inhabitants of the borough. Non-executive members who become executive members lose their right to raise an item under this standing order. The member selected by way of random ballot (or the member nominated by such member to stand in his/her place) has to submit to the Democratic Services Manager at least ten days prior to the meeting at which the item is to be raised a note of the item he or she will be

raising in no more than 100 words. The note will be included with the summons for the meeting.

- 5.2 At every meeting at which non-executive member items are on the agenda a period of up to 45 minutes is allowed to raise not more than three such items and to respond to and comment thereon in accordance with the following procedure.
- 5.3 The selected (or nominated) members are allowed up to three minutes to raise their issues and following a short debate the Leader or, if the Leader so indicates, another member of the Executive, is allowed up to three minutes to respond to the issues raised. Full Council then moves to the vote on whether to request the Executive to consider further the issues raised unless the Leader or other member of the Executive indicates that the Executive will in any event consider further the issues raised in which case no vote is necessary.
- 5.4 In a report to the Executive on 15th September 2003 progress was reported on those items raised between June 2002 and April 2003. The next meeting at which non-executive member items were raised was on 15th September and then on 17th November. Listed below are the items raised, the Executive's response and progress on that response where appropriate.

Council – 15th September 2003

The Wembley Developments – Councillor Arnold

- 5.5 Councillor Arnold referred to the dissatisfaction felt by Wembley residents over levels of street cleansing and asked what resources were available to support a safe, clean environment in Wembley. She also asked what initiatives were being developed to ensure there was local access to new opportunities.
- 5.6 The Executive responded with reference to the Wembley Development Framework. This envisaged greater access by public transport with improvements to stations, sustainable developments and street planting along principal roads. The standard of street cleansing was considered to be of an average standard but with pockets of poor performance. However there were already plans to address this. The Executive expressed its willingness to further consider the issues raised.

Update/response to the item (Executive Lead Member for Environment and Planning)

There are two main strands of activity being put in place relating to the Wembley area are: (1) a strengthening of the monitoring of street cleansing in the area which includes "walkabouts" from time to time

with the Wembley Hill Residents Association, and (2) using some of the Council's budget growth for 2004-05 to increase the street cleansing work in town centres (including Wembley) and carry out footway washing in two town centres (Wembley and Kilburn).

Air Pollution in Neasden – Councillor Harrod

- 5.7 Councillor Harrod referred to the lack of fresh air in the Neasden area caused by dust from the local recycling and car breaking works. In addition drains were blocked and the heavy use of the North Circular Road caused further nuisance. He called for improvements in washing vehicles leaving the works sites and in enforcing planning controls.
- 5.8 The Executive responded by pointing out that much of the activity referred to was regulated by the Environment Agency. The powers of the Council to deal with the situation were kept under review. The Executive gave an undertaking to look into the possibility of monitoring the air quality to see if a particular operator could be identified as being primarily responsible for the pollution and agreed to further consider the issues raised.

Update/response to the item (Executive Lead Member for Environment and Planning)

- 5.9 Environmental Health applied to Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for Supplementary Credit Approval funding to purchase a continuous monitoring site which would carry out dust monitoring continuously 24 hours a day with a metrological mast monitoring wind speed, direction, temperature and a rain gauge. Additionally, specific dust monitoring around the site i.e. within residential gardens and Neasden station is being undertaken to determine the fall out rate of dust away from the site, to determine the full extent of the area being affected by the dust generating activities within the Neasden Goods Yard. The aim of the monitoring is to determine the following:
- Determine that the level of dust being generated is prejudicial to health.
 - The extent of the area affected by the activities undertaken at the Neasden Goods Yard as well as the main contributor(s) of dust.
 - Examine the dust under the electron microscope to identify the origin, make up and toxicity of the dust.
 - Monitor the number of lorry movements accessing Neasden Goods Yard.
- 5.10 The monitoring station was ordered from the USA in November after, funding approval from DEFRA. The equipment was than housed in a vandal proof cabin. Approval was sought with a local business to allow us to locate the monitoring station at their site. The equipment was

delivered to the site on 24 February 2004. Remote communication was installed to allow us to download the data remotely. Monitoring on site started on 24 February 2004.

- 5.11 The dust monitoring around the site and resident's garden will be undertaken over the next 12 weeks including examining the composition of the dust. Suitable sites are currently being identified. In addition to the above, Environmental Health has held 2 meetings with all the businesses at Neasden Goods Yard as well as the freeholder of the site. They have undertaken to:

- Clean both sides of Neasden Lane in between both the roundabouts (Neasden and Church Road).
- Repair all the internal road surfaces by Easter to minimise mud and debris from site
- Investigate the possibility of implementing a wheel wash facility

The next meeting will take place in 12 weeks time once the monitoring results are validated.

Meetings of residents and the enforcement agencies also take place regularly. The next meeting will be arranged for April. Two Members' briefings have been held. Further briefings will be held should Members request them.

Education Standards in Brent – Councillor Gladbaum

- 5.12 Councillor Gladbaum stated that the importance of giving young people opportunities and life chances could not be over-estimated. She felt this extended beyond exam results and required a culture shift. It was important that the schools worked together on this.
- 5.13 The Executive informed the Council that there was a lot of activity going into maintaining and improving education standards in the borough and the Executive was asked to note the views expressed under this item.

Update/response to the item

None required.

Council – 17th November 2003

Review of Bus Lanes in Brent – Councillor Steel

- 5.14 Councillor Steel expressed his concern over the implementation of some bus lanes in the borough, notably in Wembley High Road, the Harrow Road and proposals for Willesden High Road. He asked that the Executive conduct a review of all bus lanes and put pressure on Transport for London to withdraw inappropriate ones.

- 5.15 The Executive responded by pointing out that bus lanes took up only a small area of London's roads and were only introduced after consultation with the frontagers. If issues arose site visits were arranged to look at the implications of proceeding with the proposal. The Executive expressed the view that no useful purpose would be served by conducting a review.

The Council did not support this matter being referred to the Executive.

Update/response to the item

None required.

Town Hall Security – Councillor R Colwill

- 5.16 Councillor Colwill called on the Executive to conduct a review of security at the Town Hall and expressed the view that the current open door policy did not afford staff or members sufficient security
- 5.17 The Executive stated that the issue was being treated out of proportion to the risk. It stood by the Town Hall being a public building and favourable comments had been received about its openness and accessibility. Security had recently been reviewed and everyone would be reminded of their responsibilities. The Executive expressed the view that there was no purpose in further considering the matter.

The Council did not support this matter being referred to the Executive.

Update/response to the item

None required.

Anti-Social Behaviour – Councillor Singh

- 5.18 Councillor Singh raised the issue of anti-social behaviour in the Welsh Harp Ward with particular reference to the 'Press Road Gang'. He called for an assessment of the impact of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and how other actions could tackle the increasing menace of anti-social behaviour.
- 5.19 The Executive pointed out the high cost of prosecuting the seven youths involved. The Council had called on its partner agencies to identify resources to make it possible to pursue further ASBOs where it was felt they were needed. Other cases were in hand but it was accepted that an assessment of the action taken so far was appropriate. The Council called on the Executive to consider the impact of the ASBOs taken out against the 'Press Road Gang' with a view to looking at ways and means by which the Council and its partner agencies could further tackle anti-social behaviour.

**Update/response to the item
(Executive Lead Members for Housing and Community Consultation &
Public Safety)**

- 5.20 The current position is that there have been some breaches of the ASBO's. One of the youths is currently in custody and other prosecutions for breaches are pending.
- 5.21 6 of the 7 youths have appealed against the order and a hearing is due to take place on 22nd April at Harrow Crown Court, the appeal is likely to last at least 1 month. A council representative will be attending this hearing and giving evidence.
- 5.22 There is also a separate judicial review against the decision by BHP/Council/Police to publish the leaflets. Action is being taken by Liberty, however, we are confident of our legal position.
- 5.23 The problems at Brill House have now been solved and there are no longer gangs of youths loitering in the communal parts.

6. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Minutes of the Council meeting on 15th September 2003

Minutes of the Council meeting on 17th November 2003

Anyone requiring further information on this report should contact Peter Goss (Democratic Services Manager) tel 020 8937 1353.
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