



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE Tuesday 10 December 2013 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor J Moher (Chair), Councillor Mashari (Vice-Chair) and Councillors A Choudry, Denselow and McLennan

Also present: Councillors Brown and Chohan

1. Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

None declared.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting - 10 October 2013

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 October 2013 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising

None.

4. Deputations

None.

5. Petitions

(i) Ealing Road CPZ Zone E Review

Mrs Linda Parmar, representative of Ealing Road Traders Association addressed the Committee. Mrs Parmar raised concerns about the level of pay & display charges in the Borough along with parking restrictions imposed by the Council in and around the Ealing Road area. She continued that the parking charges and the hours of operation were having a detrimental impact on the businesses in the Ealing Road area. Mrs Parmar therefore requested the Committee to reduce the restriction times to ensure free parking on Saturdays and Sundays and reduced parking charges which in her view would assist with employment generation and business growth in the Ealing Road area.

In response to members' questions, Linda Parmar stated that she had observed a positive correlation between higher parking charges and contraction in business activity, particularly in the Ealing Road area where the amount and volume of

spaces given to residents were impacting on businesses. She noted the changes in the parking tariff but added that this would take some time to make a significant impact on business activities.

Mrs Parmar was thanked for her address.

(ii) Ealing Road Speed Camera

Alina Lopatis, a local resident spoke to a petition on behalf of the Cromwell and Burns Residents Association (CABRA). In her address, Alina Lopatis referred to accidents statistics at the junction of Ealing Road and Burns Road to highlight the safety concerns in the area. She added that that stretch of road was being used by irresponsible motorists as if it was a racetrack without any adherence to the 30mph speed limit. The traffic calming measures including slow down signs, worn out box junction and the pedestrian traffic lights were largely being ignored by motorists in an area which would soon have an additional 400 new dwellings at 243 Ealing Road. Alina Lopatis urged the Committee to liaise with LB Ealing to review accident data along Ealing Road up to the boundary with Brent, determine a joint safety scheme including the installation of a speed camera.

Alina Lopatis was thanked for her address.

6. Ealing Road - CPZ Zone E review

Members had before them a report that advised of the outcomes of a review of the Zone E Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), covering Ealing Road, Wembley following consideration of a petition that was presented to the Committee on 17 July 2012. The petition raised concerns about the level of pay & display charges in the Borough along with parking restrictions imposed by the Council in and around the Ealing Road area and requested the following: more free parking; reduced parking charges; parking restriction times to be reduced and; parking fees to be reduced

Mrs Linda Parmar, representative of Ealing Road Traders Association addressed the Committee. Mrs Parmar raised concerns about the level of pay & display charges in the Borough along with parking restrictions imposed by the Council in and around the Ealing Road area. She continued that the parking charges and the hours of operation were having a detrimental impact on the businesses in the Ealing Road area. Mrs Parmar therefore requested the Committee to reduce the restriction times to ensure free parking on Saturdays and Sundays and reduced parking charges which in her view would assist with employment generation and business growth in the Ealing Road area.

In response to members' questions, Linda Parmar stated that she had observed a positive correlation between higher parking charges and contraction in business activity, particularly in the Ealing Road area where the amount and volume of spaces given to residents were impacting on businesses. She noted the changes in the parking tariff but added that this would take some time to make a significant impact on business activities.

Mrs Parmar was thanked for her address.

Paul Chandler, Head of Transportation informed the Committee that further to the petition, 1,628 consultation packages were delivered to residents, Ward members, businesses and all local interest groups, including schools, and that a total of 607 questionnaires were returned. In reference to the report, he stated that respondent's requirements varied throughout the zone and no single preferred option was favoured in all areas; therefore the results did not demonstrate a significant majority in favour of one specific option.

It was noted that members approved a two year funding package through the LIP programme to develop a safety scheme to address a poor accident record along Ealing Road (35 personal injury accidents over a three year period). £250k was allocated during 2013/14 to develop and implement this safety scheme and construction was due to start in December 2013. He also drew members' attention to the Council's implementation of a radical change to its parking tariffs and methods of charging which he added had resulted in positive changes to making parking more affordable. For the above reasons, the Head of Transportation proposed no changes to existing hours or days of operation in the CPZ zone E area at the present time.

In welcoming the report, Councillor Mashari expressed a view that Ealing Road area was well connected in terms of parking and public transport accessibility. Other members felt that the impact on Ealing Road traders could also be attributed to on-line retail and trading competition from other local areas such as Kingsbury. On the basis of experience with their own ward town centres, all Members expressed the view that parking charges were just one of many factors affecting trade, the biggest being the recession since 2008. It was also felt that the substantial (25-33%) reduction in charges implemented in Brent since October should assist. Councillor Chohan requested the Committee to consider making available residents parking bays on the side roads which were mostly empty. Members heard from the Head of Transportation that further changes to the loading bays would be made so that restrictions would only apply for part of the day, thereby providing free parking at all other times.

In bringing the discussion to an end, the Chair informed the Committee that the Wembley Protected Parking Scheme restrictions would be reviewed generally to ensure that they continue to meet the Council's transport strategy objectives through a clear, consistent and fair strategy.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that it be noted that the Council had listened to trader's concerns and approved a new tariff structure introduced on 14 October 2013 and now fully operational, to support traders and their customers. As a result, the first 15 minutes parking had been reduced to 20p; pay and display tariffs had been reduced by up to 50% and; customers were now able to pay for parking in smaller time blocks;
- (ii) that it be noted that the outcomes of the consultation carried out in Zone E were not conclusive and, given the recent introduction of the new tariff structure for pay and display parking to support trader's and their customers, that no changes be made to the days or hours of operation of Zone E CPZ;

- (iii) that it be noted that a £250,000 traffic safety scheme has been developed for Ealing Road as part of this year's Local Implementation Plan programme, and that this scheme has been consulted over and would be implemented during the current financial year;
- (iv) that the Wembley Protected Parking Scheme be reviewed generally to ensure that it continues to meet the Council's transport strategy objectives through a clear, consistent and fair strategy.

7. Ealing Road - Speed Camera Petition

Members gave consideration to a report which informed of a petition requesting the installation of speed cameras on Ealing Road between Hanger Lane and Carlyon Road, Alperton. The report also outlined measures that would be taken to improve safety and investigate accidents along this section of Ealing Road in partnership with the London Borough of Ealing.

Alina Lopatis, a local resident spoke to a petition on behalf of the Cromwell and Burns Residents Association (CABRA). In her address, Elena referred to accidents that had occurred at the junction of Ealing Road and Burns Road to highlight their safety concerns in the area. She added that this stretch of road was being used by irresponsible motorists as if it was a racetrack without any adherence to the 30mph speed limit. She went on to note that slow down signs are largely being ignored by motorists and that other traffic measures and signals were not effective in reducing speeds. She went on to note that the area would soon have an additional 400 new dwellings at 243 Ealing Road. Alina Lopatis urged the Committee to liaise with LB Ealing to review accident data along Ealing Road up to the boundary with Brent and consider introducing a joint safety scheme, including the installation of a speed camera.

Paul Chandler Head of Transportation informed the Committee that Transport for London (TfL) rather than Borough Councils were responsible for London's safety camera programme. Their Surface Planning Team liaises with representatives from boroughs on improvements to existing sites, identification of new locations and decommissioning of low priority sites. In determining which sites would have speed cameras, TFL apply stringent prioritisation criteria which include a minimum of 4 killed or seriously injured (KSI) collisions in a three year period, and at least 2 of these must have been identified in accident reports as being a result of speeding.

Members heard that although there had been 15 personal injury accidents recorded along this section of the Ealing Road between September 2010 and June 2013, resulting in 21 casualties (19 slight and 2 serious injuries) and 21 casualties in the last 3 years, none of the related incidents were reported by attending Police officers as being speed related. As the accident data within Brent would not meet the TFL criteria for a speed camera to be installed, the Head of Transportation was of the view that there was no clear justification to apply for a speed camera within Brent. He however noted the safety concerns expressed by the resident group and proposed to take the following actions;

- a) Liaise with LB Ealing to review accident data along Ealing Road up to the boundary with Brent to see if there might be justification for a speed camera within LB Ealing;

- b) Consider whether alternative road safety measures could help to reduce the number of personal injury accidents along this section of Ealing Road within Brent; and
- c) Determine whether a joint safety scheme could be developed in conjunction with LB Ealing.

The Head of Transportation continued that if there was sufficient justification and potential remedial benefits to be gained from delivering a safety scheme, they would be assessed and prioritised during 2014-15 as part of the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) development process. Data on speed and traffic volumes would also be collected to assist in determining whether a viable and effective safety scheme could be delivered.

During questions, Councillor Brown enquired as to whether the Council had made approaches to LB Ealing regarding the joint scheme and with what response. The Head of Transportation confirmed that LB Ealing had already been approached about the scheme and that he was awaiting their response. Members generally welcomed the report's recommendations but suggested that consideration be given to the use of police speed guns and mobile speed cameras until such time as speed cameras could be installed. In this regard it was further suggested that CRBRA should work with Safer Neighbourhood Team and Ward Working Team with a view to getting prioritisation for schemes in their area.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the contents of the petition and the issues that were raised be noted;
- (ii) that the outcomes of preliminary investigations, which indicate that, on review of TfL's criteria for provision of safety cameras, there would be insufficient justification for a speed camera to be considered within Brent be noted;
- (iii) that discussions be held with Ealing Council to consider whether there could be justification for a speed camera within Ealing, and to investigate whether a local or joint road safety scheme could be prioritised for a possible funding bid during 2014-15.
- (iv) that the main petitioner be informed of the outcome of the Highways Committee decision in regard to this matter.

8. **Crossover Policy - Ombudsman's Report outcomes and policy change**

The report informed the Committee of the findings of a Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) investigation into a complaint about an application for a vehicle crossover. It also outlined the complaint, detailed the findings by the Ombudsman and how the Council had responded to those findings, including the recommendation to adopt a revised vehicle crossover policy.

Paul Chandler, Head of Transportation set out the background to the complaint and the findings of the LGO. He continued that the recommendations made by the LGO, for a review of Domestic Vehicle Footway Crossover Policy; to set aside the decision for refusal and; to provide compensation of £300 to the complainant to recognise the injustice, had been implemented. He went on to note that the

crossover policy had been amended based on the LGO report to clearly state that discretion can and would be used in exceptional circumstances. The specific application would also be reconsidered when it was re-issued.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the recommendations by the Local Government Ombudsman as a result of an investigation into a complaint against The London Borough of Brent in respect of a vehicle crossover application be noted;
- (ii) that the revised Vehicle Crossover Policy presented in Appendix A, along with the revised Guidance Notes for Footway Crossovers in Appendix B to the report from the Head of Transportation be adopted.

9. **Brent Cycle Vision - Ways to Wembley**

The Committee received a report about Brent's "Ways to Wembley" cycle funding bid, which was submitted to the GLA and TfL at the beginning of July 2013. This was in response to an invitation by the Cycle Commissioner for London boroughs to submit expressions of interest to become "cycle mini-Hollands" and receive funding. The purpose of the "cycle mini-Hollands" was to make cycle improvements that would make a step change in infrastructure development and encourage cycling in the borough.

The Head of Transportation informed members that Brent put forward a sound submission for "cycle mini-Hollands" to justify cycle investment within the borough, setting out some key barriers to cycling formed by numerous underground and overground rail lines, waterways and the North Circular route. He continued that following a review of all funding bids received from Boroughs, Brent's bid was not successful in being shortlisted for mini-Hollands funding. However, GLA had written to Brent to state that they were minded to award substantial amounts of funding anyway to take forward the objectives within Brent's bid.

Whilst welcoming the GLA's promise for funding and reiterating Brent's strong commitment to increasing cycling and making cycling safer, the Head of Transportation outlined officers' concerns on the cycle funding process, which are; its focus on strategic routes into central London rather than more local cycle routes; that selection of routes and local priorities were not collaborative, with priorities being defined by the Mayor's office rather than being discussed and agreed in partnership with Brent and; the imposed use of TfL employed consultants outside of the London Highways Alliance Contract (LoHAC) framework. Members heard that no boroughs had received the published funding and had borne all development costs to date. Furthermore, there is no indication of how and when any funding will be made available, or what the role of Boroughs will be in utilising and receiving this funding.

Member's shared officers' concerns and requested the Head of Transportation to prepare a draft letter setting out the concerns in full and; that a deputation including the Leader of the Council and the Chair be set up to meet the Mayor of London to discuss these issues.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that it be noted that Brent has been very successful in reducing numbers of serious and fatal collisions but was keen to improve cycle safety further by securing investment in infrastructure and training;
- (ii) that the Committee supports the proposed TfL investment in cycle infrastructure and approves Brent's approach and priorities for enhancing cycling infrastructure through our "Ways to Wembley" document;
- (iii) that the initial reservations set out in Section 6.2 (of the report) regarding the method by which cycle infrastructure funding would be allocated, and by which priority routes and infrastructure would be identified and delivered, be noted;
- (iv) that further limited investigative study work into cycle routes and bridge locations, focussing on both strategic and local cycle routes be approved.

10. **Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

11. **Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting would take place on Thursday, 13 February 2014.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm

J MOHER
Chair