

## ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on Wednesday, 8 February 2017 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Woolfall (Chair), Fry (Vice-Chair), V. Hill, Howard, Morley, Joe Roberts, Sinnott, J. Stockton, Wall and Zygadllo

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Nolan

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Noone, G. Ferguson, T. Gibbs, I. Jones, N. Martin, R. Wakefield and S. Rimmer

Also in attendance: 10 members of the public

### **ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

*Action*

#### EUR16 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2016 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.

#### EUR17 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that three public questions had been received and would be submitted and addressed as part of Minute No 20.

#### EUR18 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board relevant to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.

#### EUR19 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 2 OF 2016/17

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director,

Enterprise, Community and Resources, which detailed the second quarter performance management report for 2015/16 on progress against service objectives/milestones and performance targets and provided information related to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen in relation to:-

- Development and Investment Services;
- Highways and Transportation, Logistics and Development Services;
- Waste and Environmental Improvement and Open Space Services; and
- Housing Strategy.

As part of the discussion around the work of the Community Payback Team in the Borough, it was agreed that a further report be brought to the Board detailing work the Team had undertaken recently.

RESOLVED: That the second quarter management report be noted.

#### EUR20 PROPOSED WAITING RESTRICTIONS AROUND RUNCORN HILL

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which outlined the proposal to introduce waiting restrictions on parts of Park Road, Highlands Road, Campbell Avenue and Heath Grove in Runcorn near to Runcorn Hill Park, in order to address parking congestion.

Following the recent improvements to Runcorn Hill Park, several complaints had been received about problems caused by parked vehicles from residents living on adjacent roads. These complaints had been received either directly from residents, through Ward Councillors or from PCSO's and were in regard to:

- Congestion caused by vehicles double parking (i.e. parking on both sides of the road) which could block access for residents and for emergency vehicles;
- Dangers to children crossing from the café to the park (because of double parking); and
- Blocked accesses to residential properties.

Following advertisement of the proposed waiting restrictions in September 2015, 15 objections were received from residents of Highlands Road and members of Runcorn & District Scale Model Boats Group. Subsequently, Officers

met with some of the residents from Highlands Road to explain the proposals and discuss their objections. Details of the points raised by those residents who objected to the proposal and Officers' responses were detailed in the report.

In respect of the 8 objections received from the Boats Group, it was reported that these were mainly objecting to the reduction of available parking near the lake as some members had mobility issues and their access to the lake would be restricted. However, it was noted that additional parking was to be made available with access from Heath Road South that could be used by members of the Model Boat Group and if the members had a blue badge they could also stop on the double yellow lines for up to three hours.

It was noted that Plans were currently being drawn up for an improved and expanded car parking facility at the north end of Highlands Road close to the original Runcorn Hill Park car park. Subject to funding, the additional facilities could be in place by the Summer of 2018.

In accordance with Standing Order No.34 (9), the following public questions were submitted to the Board by email:

#### **QUESTION 1 - Mr Higginson**

Within the document the following statement is made "The Old Car Park has been closed and is only suitable for large events ..... due to poor visibility entering and leaving the car park".

This car park has been operational for many, many years going back to my childhood in Runcorn. Its layout has not been radically changed after its refurbishment. It can accommodate of the order of 25/30 vehicles. Its closure has resulted in these vehicles being forced to park elsewhere, thus worsening the situation.

The provision of the parking restrictions on Park Road will result in the side of the road where the entrance is being clear of vehicles, thus even improving the visibility from what is was previously.

Can the Council confirm what their rationale is in coming to the decision not to re-open this car park? In particular I am interested in knowing what sections of Statutory Legislation, Recommendations or other Legislation were considered upon which this decision was made.

## **RESPONSE:**

As part of the Heritage Lottery Funded restoration and development project at Runcorn Hill Park, the area bounded by Park Road and Highlands Road had been re-modelled in order to create a visual and physical linkage between the woodland and quarry area, new Café, play areas, model boating lake and Heath Playing Fields. The new Café has become the Park's central attraction. Retaining the original small car park on Park Road was not in keeping with the main aim of improving the Park landscape, and it would not have located the car parking close enough to the new Cafe.

The former car park area has been retained for occasional use at large events or for maintenance visits when access can be controlled, but designed in a way that retains a 'green' uninterrupted view across the park for most days of the year. This was necessary to balance the amount of building/hard surfaces constructed on the Park. Also the access to the car park would not provide adequate visibility for vehicles entering/leaving it due to the large trees in the area, which are of aesthetic value.

The new car park adjacent to the new Café also provided more parking spaces than were available in the former car park on Park Road, and was sign posted directing visitors when arriving at Runcorn Hill Park.

The following visitor parking is readily available at Runcorn Hill:

Café / Centre Car Park	35 spaces*	Open 9am - 6pm/7days
Highlands Road /LNR Car Park	25 spaces*	Open 9am- 6pm/7days
Highlands Road /old pub car park	20 spaces*	Open 24 hours
Heath Playing Fields Car Park	28 spaces*	Open 9am – 6pm / peak times**

\* spaces are estimated minimum numbers dependant on driver parking

\*\*school holiday periods

## **Supplementary Question**

Why was the original small car park to remain closed when

visibility on Park Road would be improved with the introduction of the proposed waiting restrictions?

In response the Board was advised that although landscape works had been carried out to improve visibility, retaining the original small car park on Park Road was not in keeping with the main aim of improving the Park landscape and the redevelopment of Runcorn Hill.

### **QUESTION 2 – Mr Hayman**

Within the document it is stated “Alterations to the changing room car park will add 20 spaces and will be open at peak times (School holidays and weekends).” At present, when the football pitches are in use the existing car park is full and vehicles overflow onto Heath Road, the access road to the changing rooms, Park Road and it has even been noted that cars have been parked on the field itself. Therefore the provision of these additional spaces will have minimal improvement on the existing parking situation.

Why is this car park only going to open at certain times and not on weekdays, when it can be used by visitors to the Park? There has been the suggestion put forward by the Model Boat Group that this car park can be further extended to accommodate its own Subscribers, with the additional suggestion that our Group would be willing to help with labour and some small financial donation towards the work involved.

### **RESPONSE:**

It was noted that the proposed new changing room car park would only be open at peak times due to concerns regarding potential unauthorised vehicle access to the park. As part of the Heritage Lottery Funded restoration and development project at Runcorn Hill Park, retaining the original small car park on Park Road was not considered as it would not be in keeping with the main aim of improving the Park landscape.

### **Supplementary Question**

Why the original car park could not be extended and controlled by Boat Group members?

In response the Board was advised that it would be detrimental to the improvements carried out at the park area to extend and reopen the original car park.

### **QUESTION 3 – Mr Gardner**

In Section 3.10 of the above Item it is stated “.....are not grounds for objections and cannot be considered” It is also stated that it is thought that the impact of the restrictions on the Model Boat Group will be minimal.

Can the Council explain how they have arrived at these two conclusions when it has been clearly stated within our correspondence/objections that any such restrictions could have serious implications to the continuing viability of our Group.

Addendum:- only 4/5 of our Group are Blue Badge holders.

### **RESPONSE**

Whilst we appreciate the difficulties highlighted in the question, these are not valid objections to a Traffic Regulation Order. However, additional parking spaces are being made available near the boating lake.

Members were advised that in addition to the three written questions submitted in advance of the meeting, a letter from a local resident was also received in support of the proposed waiting restrictions.

Arising from the discussion, it was agreed that in light of the comments regarding the potential impact on the Boating Group of the waiting restrictions, Officers would investigate proposals to provide the Group with a key to access to either the original car park or Heath Road South car park. In addition, the Board would be provided with an update on the outcome of the Officers’ investigation and recommendations.

RESOLVED: That the proposal to make an Order to introduce “At Any Time” waiting restrictions on parts of Park Road, Highlands Road, Campbell Avenue and Heath Park Grove in Runcorn as shown in Appendix ‘B’ and defined in Appendix ‘C’ be supported and that the report be submitted to the Executive Board for its consideration.

Strategic Director  
Enterprise,  
Community and  
Resources

### **EUR21 JOINT WASTE LOCAL PLAN - MONITORING REPORT 2015/16**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which advised that the Joint Waste Local Plan (WLP) Monitoring report, which covered the 12 month period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 21<sup>st</sup>

March 2016, had been prepared, a copy of which had been previously circulated to Members. The WLP for Merseyside and Halton was adopted by Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, St. Helens, Sefton and Wirral Councils with effect from 18<sup>th</sup> July 2013 and this was the third annual Monitoring Report. The report highlighted key developments over the 2015/16 period for both the Liverpool City Region and Halton.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

#### EUR22 HIGHWAYS ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought approval for the Part 2 of the Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP). The Board had previously endorsed Part 1, Chapters 1-4, of the HAMP on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and it was subsequently approved by the Executive Board on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2016. Approval of the HAMP would serve as a foundation for other detailed plans and strategies based on the principles and objectives of the HAMP.

RESOLVED: That the Board endorse the Highway Asset Management Plan and its forwarding to the Executive Board for approval.

Strategic Director  
Enterprise,  
Community and  
Resources

#### EUR23 FIXED PENALTY NOTICES FOR FLY TIPPING OFFENCES

The Board considered a report which provided Members with details of the new powers which enable Councils to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for fly-tipping offences and requested approval to endorse proposals in respect of the suggested approach to the use of these new powers in Halton. It was reported that both nationally and locally statistics indicated that fly tipping was on the increase.

At a previous meeting of the Board held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2016, Members of the Board were advised of efforts to reduce incidents of fly tipping and the Waste Working Party was asked to consider the Council's approach to the use of Fixed Penalty Notices for fly tipping offences. The report set out details of the Council's new powers and following the work undertaken by the Waste Working Party, the proposals in respect of the suggested Fixed Penalty Notice levels to be set by the Council.

Having considered the options available it was recommended that the Council introduced Fixed Penalty

Notices for fly-tipping offences set at the maximum level of £400 with a discounted amount of £300 if paid within 10 days.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Members receive the report;
- 2) the Council's approach to dealing with fly-tipping as set out in the report be endorsed; and
- 3) a report be presented to the Executive Board recommending that the Council's Fixed Penalty Notice levels for fly-tipping offences be set at the amounts detailed within in this report.

Strategic Director  
Enterprise,  
Community and  
Resources

*Meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.*