

# Subject: Environment Committee Work Programme

**Report to: Environment Committee**

**Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat**

**Date: 9 July 2014**

**This report will be considered in public**

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 A report on the work programme appears on each Committee agenda, to note the Committee's work programme and agree any changes, including to confirm dates and add topics as required.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes its work programme for the earlier part of the 2014/15 Assembly year.**
- 2.2 **That the Committee agrees in principle to broaden the scope of the investigation on taxi emissions, so that it becomes an investigation on diesel emissions.**
- 2.3 **That the Committee delegate authority to the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, to agree any site visits the Committee may wish to undertake during the course of this Assembly year.**

## 3. Background

- 3.1 The Committee receives a report monitoring the progress of its work programme at each meeting.

## 4. Issues for Consideration

### 4.1 Forthcoming Meetings and Other Business

The table below sets out the allocated dates for the Environment Committee in 2014/15 and lists the main business proposed for each date at this stage. The business for future dates is subject to change as the Committee develops proposals for its work. Dates may be used for formal Committee meetings, informal meetings, site visits or other activities for the Committee. The work programme also provides for the Committee to respond to any matters that arise at short notice.

<b>Environment Committee date</b>	<b>Proposed topic(s)</b>
Wednesday 3 September 2014	Committee meeting – Severe Weather
Thursday 9 October 2014	<i>To be agreed</i>
Thursday 6 November 2014	<i>To be agreed</i>
Thursday 4 December 2014	<i>To be agreed</i>
Wednesday 7 January 2015	<i>To be agreed</i>
Wednesday 4 February 2015	<i>To be agreed</i>
Tuesday 3 March 2015	<i>To be agreed</i>

### **Food waste**

- 4.2 The Committee is today discussing the management of domestic food waste in London's refuse stream, including the problems caused by food in the waste stream, how it is separated out from other household waste, and the technologies used to process and dispose of it.
- 4.3 A paper on this investigation appears elsewhere on this agenda, providing background for the discussion at this meeting.
- 4.4 There could also be value in conducting a site visit related to this piece of work. As the selection of a site for such a visit would draw on the evidence at this meeting, but any visit may need to be conducted by around the time of the Committee's next date in early September, it has been recommended in the cover paper for the food waste discussion that the Committee delegate authority to the Chair in consultation with party Group Lead Members to determine the site and date for any such visit. Wednesday 3 September is the planned date for the Committee's next meeting and as such would be available in Members' diaries; if a site visit were arranged for this date, the Committee's meeting on severe weather adaptations could be held at a later date.

### **Severe weather prospects and preparations**

- 4.5 The Committee discussed at its June meeting the risks and potential impacts of severe weather events (such as floods, high winds, drought, heatwave or snow or ice).
- 4.6 It is also planned to discuss, on 3 September, London's adaptations to the risk of severe weather (including urban greening, sustainable building and design, and other environmental adaptations such as flood defences). Alternatively, the Committee may wish to use its September meeting slot to conduct a site visit as part of this investigation. One option may be a visit to the Thames Barrier, or other infrastructure deemed to be critical in London's defences against severe weather.

### **Taxi / Diesel emissions**

- 4.7 The Committee has previously agreed future work on taxi emissions. Taxi emissions comprise a significant percentage of the air pollution emitted in central London. An investigation would examine work to promote the take-up of very low emission (such as electric) cabs and the retirement of more polluting models such as those not meeting the Euro 6 standard. It could also look at other ways to minimise emissions.
- 4.8 Other high-mileage diesel vehicles such as buses also make large contributions to the overall pollutant emissions in London; the Mayor has significant programmes to reduce bus emissions, including the procurement of low-emission hybrid buses. There is also expected to be further

consultation by the GLA and/or TfL on strategies to reduce transport emissions, including the Ultra-Low Emission Zone, proposed for central London from 2020.

- 4.9 Diesel emissions in general are increasingly recognized to make the most significant contribution to toxic air pollution from traffic. As well as taxis and buses, most larger vehicles operate on diesel and the proportion of diesel vehicles in the car fleet has also risen dramatically in recent years. Diesel emissions are therefore a focus of Mayoral air quality work, including the Ultra-Low Emission Zone on which there is to be further development work in 2014.
- 4.10 Therefore it is recommended that the Committee agree to broaden the scope of the agreed investigation of taxi emissions, to cover diesel emissions. Further scoping work over the summer, in consultation with Lead members, will establish how the investigation will be undertaken and the exact coverage in terms of vehicle types and emissions reduction measures.

### **Topics for later scrutiny**

*Fuel poverty and home energy efficiency.*

- 4.11 The Committee has in the past examined fuel poverty and home energy efficiency, and anticipates returning to these subjects in winter 2014/15, as part of follow-up to previous work on the Mayor's carbon targets.

*Site visits*

- 4.12 In addition to any possible site visit related to the food waste investigation, the Committee could hold later in the autumn one or more visits to sites of relevance to ongoing themes in the Committee's work, such as the Thames Barrier, the London Array wind farm or the London Sustainable Industries Park. Lead Members had also expressed an interest in a site visit on the London Underground, to learn about sustainability and air quality measures. The Committee is recommended to delegate authority to the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, to agree any such site visit.

## **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in the report.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

---

### **List of appendices to this report:**

There are none.

<b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985</b>
List of Background Papers: None
Contact Officer: Ian Williamson, Scrutiny Manager
Telephone: 020 7983 4000
E-mail: <a href="mailto:scrutiny@london.gov.uk">scrutiny@london.gov.uk</a>