

# Subject: Environment Committee Work Programme

Report to: Environment Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 10 November 2016

This report will be considered in public

## 1. Summary

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

## 2. Recommendations

2.1 **That the Committee agrees its updated work programme for 2016/17, including the schedule of meeting topics set out at paragraph 4.3 of this report.**

2.2 **That the Committee delegates authority to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree the scope and terms of reference for the Committee's investigation into green spaces.**

## 3. Background

3.1 The Committee's work programme was originally agreed in June 2016 and has been updated at each meeting since then.

## 4. Issues for Consideration

### **Domestic energy and fuel poverty**

4.1 The Committee is investigating the role of the Mayor in reducing domestic carbon emissions and fuel poverty in London. Issues for consideration include energy efficiency improvements to London's housing, the need for affordable energy tariffs, the potential to generate more low-carbon energy at the domestic scale, and the role in all this of the Mayor's Energy for Londoners proposal and other policies such as a promised solar energy strategy.

4.2 Elsewhere on this agenda is a discussion item on this topic with external guests and experts. The investigation will also be informed by discussion at the Committee's meeting on 13 October 2016 about Mayoral energy policy. The Committee's findings may seek to influence the Mayor's

Environment and other strategies, and how the Mayor takes forward plans for Energy for Londoners and a solar energy strategy. A covering report on this topic, together with a list of invited guests, can be found at Agenda Item 6.

### **Heathrow Airport expansion**

- 4.3 On 25 October 2016, the Government announced its decision to support the construction of a third runway at Heathrow Airport.<sup>1</sup> As the Environment Committee has previously concluded, expansion at Heathrow Airport will have significant implications in terms of increased noise and air pollution. Following from this announcement, the Committee will discuss the environmental implications of the expansion of Heathrow elsewhere on this agenda. A covering report on this topic can be found at Agenda Item 7.

### **Forthcoming Meetings and Other Business**

- 4.4 The table below sets out the allocated dates for the Environment Committee in 2016/17 and lists the main business agreed 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 during the year.

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Proposed topic</b>
Thursday 8 December 2016	Committee meeting Green Space
Thursday 19 January 2017	Committee meeting Green Space Bottled Water
Wednesday 22 February 2017	Committee meeting Waste Management / Circular Economy
Thursday 16 March 2017	Committee meeting Waste Management / Circular Economy

### **London's Green Spaces**

- 4.5 London's green spaces provide great benefit but are under pressures from a growing population. The Committee proposes to examine how they are managed to improve environmental benefits. The investigation is to take into account the work of the Green Infrastructure Task Force and the National Park City campaign.
- 4.6 The findings of the investigation could seek to influence the Mayor's Environment Strategy and other strategies, and how the Mayor takes forward the recommendations of the Green Infrastructure Task Force and the manifesto commitment to support the National Park City.
- 4.7 A more detailed scoping paper has been prepared by the scrutiny team and is currently being discussed with the Chair and Members of the Committee. The Committee is recommended to delegate authority to the Chair to formally agree the scope and terms of reference of this investigation.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-decides-on-new-runway-at-heathrow>

## **Bottled Water**

- 4.8 Drinking water sold in individual disposable bottles has a disproportionate environmental impact, in material inputs, energy required, waste generated, and congestion and pollution from road deliveries. Alternatives may be more sustainable, such as refilling bottles, drinking fountains or water served in glasses or jugs. The Committee could examine the scope to achieve environmental benefits by switching to these alternatives, and how they could be promoted. The investigation might extend to other packaged drinks.
- 4.9 As bottled water is a private sector market, action on these findings would largely be for consumers and businesses. The Committee could seek to influence behavior change by drawing attention to the impacts and alternatives. There could also be points raised towards the Mayor's Environment Strategy and action by boroughs and other public sector bodies.

## **Waste Management and/or the Circular Economy**

- 4.10 London missed 2015 targets for recycling its municipal waste, and does not seem to be making progress to catch up, even as cities around the world press on to more ambitious levels of recycling. The destruction or disposal of valuable materials after one use can be economically wasteful and environmentally damaging.
- 4.11 Lead Members have identified two possible aspects of interest in this topic; further scoping work and consideration will be needed to decide which to investigate or whether to cover both over a longer time. The first aspect is the impact of waste collection on recycling rates – for example whether recycling is better promoted by separated or co-mingled collection. This Committee has recently recommended that the Mayor should produce a route map for boroughs to converge on a standardized set of waste collection arrangements across London, and this idea could be investigated in more depth. The investigation could look at how the Mayor and the London Waste and Recycling Board (LWARB) could support municipal waste management arrangements, and could perhaps look at questions of governance such as the degree and nature of inter-borough and London-wide waste management decision-making.
- 4.12 Recommendations on this aspect could seek to influence the waste elements of the Environment Strategy, the actions of LWARB, the actions of boroughs and waste authorities, and potentially waste management governance arrangements across London.
- 4.13 The second aspect is the circular economy. A circular economy involves steps to reduce material entering the waste system, as well as to ensure that waste is recycled efficiently. Waste reduction measures include: using less material; re-use, sharing and renting to get more value from goods; repair and remanufacture of broken and worn-out goods; and changes to how goods are designed and made to facilitate repair and recycling. An investigation could examine what the Mayor, and potentially other actors, can do to promote the transition to these more sustainable ways of doing business and managing materials.
- 4.14 Recommendations on this aspect could seek to influence the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy and other work on the economy and business, as well as the Environment Strategy and the Mayor's work on waste.

## 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.

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**List of appendices to this report:** None

<b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985</b>
List of Background Papers: None
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