

Subject: Environment Committee Work Programme

Report to: Environment Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 14 June 2018

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report notes and updates the committee's work programme for the 2018/19 London Assembly year. The programme was originally agreed at the May 2018 meeting, and is updated monthly.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the Committee delegates authority to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree the scope and terms of reference for its work on the environmental impact of food growing in London's Green Belt.**
- 2.2 **That the Committee notes its previously-agreed work programme for the 2018/19 Assembly year, as set out in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.13.**
- 2.3 **That the Committee delegates authority to the Chair, in consultation with Party Group Lead Members, to write to the Natural Environment Research Council in support of their bid to the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, as set out in paragraph 4.14.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The work programme for 2018/19 was originally agreed in May 2018, at the first meeting of the committee's year.
- 3.2 A similar report will be submitted to each subsequent Committee meeting to track the Committee's work and propose any changes, including confirming dates and adding topics as required.

4. Issues for Consideration

London Food Strategy

- 4.1 This meeting is being used to examine the Mayor's draft Food Strategy, published in May for consultation. A covering report on this topic can be found at **Agenda Item 6**.

Work programme for the rest of 2018/19

- 4.2 The table below sets out the allocated dates for the Environment Committee in the 2018/19 Assembly year. The table notes suggested business for the earlier dates.
- 4.3 The work programme is subject to change in future 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.

Meeting Date	Proposed topic
12 July 2018	Committee meeting (or other evidence-gathering) Green Belt Food Growing
20 September 2018	Committee meeting (or other evidence-gathering) Embodied Carbon in the Built Environment
11 October 2018	Committee meeting (or other evidence-gathering) Cold and Damp Homes (and/or November)
8 November 2018	Committee meeting (or other evidence-gathering) Cold and Damp Homes (and/or October)
6 December 2018	To be confirmed
16 January 2019	To be confirmed
28 February 2019	To be confirmed
27 March 2019	To be confirmed

Green belt food growing

- 4.4 Party Group Lead Members were interested in intersecting questions of food and of the outer London green environment. Food growing in, and around, London may benefit food sustainability and security, and the accessibility of healthy food. It may provide opportunities for Londoners to get in touch with where their food comes from. It is also an element of London's economy and employment, and of completing cycles of organic materials.
- 4.5 The outer London Green Belt is an important part of London's environment, helping to provide resilience against weather events like heavy rain or heatwave, providing access to nature for Londoners and habitat for wildlife, and helping to absorb air pollution. Food growing activities in this area can enhance these functions. It is being recommended that authority be delegated to the Chair of the Committee to agree the scope for investigation into the environmental impacts of food growing in the Green Belt.
- 4.6 The discussion at the current meeting on the draft London Food Strategy may generate material that can also be used towards the Green Belt food growing investigation.

Cold, damp and carbon emissions in homes

- 4.7 The Committee has previously investigated carbon emissions from London's domestic sector, and Mayoral programmes to reduce it. With progress being made on easy measures like loft and cavity wall insulation, there is a need to tackle homes that are hard to insulate, especially where this leaves residents in cold and/or damp conditions. The investigation will focus on social housing and examine delivery of the Mayor's Fuel Poverty Action Plan. The issues have greatest public resonance in winter, so it has been suggested to gather evidence in autumn/early winter 2018 and to publish a report later in the winter.
- 4.8 Putting up and altering buildings generates considerable carbon emissions, so there can be a tension between the carbon savings of a more efficient building fabric and the carbon costs of refurbishment or rebuilding works. Informal discussions with the Planning Committee indicate that, if the Environment Committee were to investigate these 'embodied carbon' questions before October 2018, it could inform the Examination in Public of the London Plan.

Particulate pollution

- 4.9 Air pollution from motor exhaust has received considerable attention over recent years, but some other sources have received less. With cleaner motors taking over the roads, other sources are emerging as having greater relative significance. These sources include secondary engines on vehicles, such as those powering refrigeration units, and solid fuel burning such as in wood fires and stoves, pizza ovens and barbecues. The Mayor is aiming for stringent health-based clean air targets, as recommended by this Committee, and so all sources of emissions need to be borne down on.
- 4.10 There is also ongoing work to assess particulate pollution on the underground network.
- 4.11 Whether within the cold homes investigation or the air pollution, Lead Members have expressed an interest in investigating domestic boilers, including replacing older boilers with more efficient ones, replacing boilers altogether with systems such as heat pumps, and whether householders can use their heating more efficiently.

Other work

- 4.12 Party Group Lead Members kept in mind other potential work of the Committee, including holding the Mayor to account for developing and delivering policies such as the T-charge and Ultra Low Emission Zone, a Mayoral energy supplier, the Solar Action Plan, the Environment Strategy and associated strategies, and action on Tube noise.
- 4.13 The Committee is also likely to respond to consultations and contribute to wider debates such as on London airports and the National Air Quality Strategy. Members anticipate holding a meeting on aviation issues during the year.

NERC

- 4.14 The Committee has been asked to support a bid by the Natural Environment Research Council to the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund for money to make grants to support innovation towards 'zero plastic waste'. As this aligns with the Committee's recent work on plastic bottles and on waste more generally, Members may wish to agree to give such support.

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:

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers: None
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