

# MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 29 September 2014 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Hall (Chair), Gareth Siddorn (Vice-Chair), Abdeslam Amrani, Chris Barnham, Paul Bell, Peter Bernards, Bill Brown, Suzannah Clarke, John Coughlin, Liam Curran, Brenda Dacres, Amanda De Ryk, Colin Elliott, Carl Handley, Maja Hilton, Simon Hooks, Ami Ibitson, Mark Ingleby, Stella Jeffrey, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Alicia Kennedy, Roy Kennedy, Jim Mallory, Jamie Milne, Pauline Morrison, John Muldoon, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa, Crada Onuegbu, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Pat Raven, Jonathan Slater, Eva Stamirowski, Paul Upex, James-J Walsh and Susan Wise

APOLOGIES: Councillors Obajimi Adefiranye, Andre Bourne, David Britton, Helen Klier, Hilary Moore, Joan Reid, Luke Sorba and Alan Till

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Kevin Bonavia (Cabinet Member Resources), David Austin (Head of Corporate Resources), Duncan Dewhurst (Head of Service Change and Technology), Sam Kirk (Strategic Waste & Environment Manager), Simon Moss (Policy and Development Manager, Transport), Salena Mulhere (Overview and Scrutiny Manager), Barrie Neal (Head of Corporate Policy and Governance), Martin O'Brien (Sustainable Resources Group Manager) and Brian Regan (Planning Policy Manager)

## 1. Minutes of the meetings held on 26 February and 11 June 2014

1.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

## 2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 The following non-prejudicial declarations of interest were declared:

Councillor Muldoon - Lead Governor of the SLAM NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor Wise – Lewisham Homes Board Member

Councillor R Kennedy - Trustee of the Ackroyd Community Centre

## 3. Lewisham Future Programme

3.1 The Chair advised the committee that the timetable outlined at paragraph 4.1 of the report was the proposed timetable for scrutiny of the budget and that the suggested approach was outlined at section 5.3, which would provide flexibility. The Chair advised that all members were welcome to attend all select committee meetings and the appropriate cabinet members would be invited to the meetings. Because of potential overlap and the need for a strategic approach, the Chair advised that task and finish groups might be necessary to consider some areas in more detail.

3.2 The Chair invited David Austin to introduce the substantive report. In response to questions from the Committee David Austin advised that:

- The appropriate lead officers would be present at each select committee meeting.
- A response would be provided to Councillor Bell regarding an outstanding question relating to consultants and agency staff: a full report had been considered by the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee in July 2014 and was available on the website.

3.3 **RESOLVED:** that the proposed timescale and approach to reviewing the Lewisham Future Programme proposals, to support the effective overall scrutiny of the budget process, be agreed.

#### 4. London Infrastructure Plan 2050

4.1 The Chair advised the Committee that Brian Regan had led on pulling together the draft response and that the views of the Committee would be incorporated within the final response before it was considered by Mayor and Cabinet.

4.2 In response to questions from the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure, Simon Moss and Brian Regan advised:

- The Bakerloo Line extension was a priority for Lewisham and was something that had been lobbied for, for some time. Officers couldn't speak for other boroughs, but understood that Bromley Council were concerned about the loss of the Hayes line. There would be a public consultation which would reveal what Bromley Residents thought about the proposals.
- The future of the Catford Loop was uncertain and the case had been made to TFL when the route was refranchised that it needed to be improved.
- Bus provision across the borough was variable and officers had been working with TFL to raise the issue of bus access in parts of the south of the borough and felt that the Bakerloo line consultation should trigger a review of bus services across the borough.
- The Quietways model was favoured over the cycleway method as it enabled less confident riders to cycle.
- More about walking would be added to the final submission.
- Detail regarding the previous air track project would be sought and provided to the Chair of the Sustainable Development Select Committee.
- The Mayor had written to TFL to support the overground extension and the Bakerloo line extension.
- The business case to extend the DLR to Bromley was not strong but extending the overground to Bromley would be a better value option and would have synergies with the Bakerloo line extension.
- The Council responded to the silvertown tunnel consultation last year.

- The social and cultural infrastructure had not been considered within the plan and the information on governance and finance was not particularly detailed.
- 4.3 In response to questions from the Committee regarding Digital Connectivity, Energy, Water and Waste, Duncan Dewhurst, Sam Kirk and Martin O'Brien advised:
- There was no longer a central fund to pay for the use of solar panels but the feed in tariffs still existed but were much smaller than they used to be.
  - The findings of the Housing Select Committee review into communal heating would be carefully considered.
  - Alternative energy sources were being used on a small scale in the borough already including used cooking oil. Dog waste could also be incinerated to generate energy.
  - Waste prevention was key part of waste management hence campaigns like "love food hate waste."
- 4.4 Members discussed the information provided at length and agreed a number of points they felt should be highlighted within the response.
- 4.5 **RESOLVED:** the following points should be included within the final Lewisham response to the consultation and the submission provided by Phoenix Housing should be appended to the Lewisham Submission:
1. The Committee recognised the importance of a key strategic document for the future London-wide infrastructure by holding a meeting solely to discuss this.
  2. However, the Committee was concerned about the omission of any detailed mention of social infrastructure such as health, schools, and cultural facilities within the plan. The Committee believes that this is a serious omission which should be corrected if a strategic overview in relation to London's infrastructure and the successful development of London is to be taken forward.
  3. Likewise, there is a lack of detail on housing provision. There should be a much clearer link made between this plan and the Mayor of London's, London Plan and London Housing strategy.
  4. Effective housing delivery that is truly affordable for and accessible to London's workforce will be critical to London's long term success.
  5. Finance and Governance are not adequately considered within this plan.
  6. If we accept a 'London Infrastructure Delivery Board' (LIDB), clear public accountability is required.

7. For effective delivery the Board needs to include Local authority involvement at every level.
8. Whilst the constitution of the Board is under consideration it will be important to ensure mechanisms are in place to link the LIDB with delivery partnerships such as the Homes for London Board, the London Enterprise Panel, the London Waste and Recycling Board the Green Infrastructure Task Force and Connectivity Advisory Group. Furthermore, it will also be important that the LIDB is able to take account of sub-regional issues and to influence action within sub regions. The LIDB should put in place mechanisms to ensure that its work can be informed by sub-regional borough partnerships.
9. Meaningful, detailed consultation with local people should take place at an early stage in the development of all infrastructure improvement projects outlined within the plan to ensure local engagement and understanding.

### **Transport**

10. Effective transport links across London are essential. As London's population grows the strain on an already struggling transport infrastructure will be immense and it is important that all possible options to address the problem are properly considered for implementation.
11. The proposed Bakerloo Line Extension to Lewisham and on to Hayes in Bromley is very welcome as it will provide a much improved service and connectivity for people in Lewisham and is strongly supported by all members. The Committee feels it important that all neighbouring local authorities work closely together to support the proposal and to lobby for its delivery at the earliest opportunity: 2040 is not soon enough for this important improvement to be delivered.
12. The synergies between the various potential transport infrastructure projects impacting on Lewisham (the Bakerloo line extension, the overground and DLR extensions) should be emphasised and considered collectively: it should not be a decision of one or the other as it is important that transport infrastructure is improved across the region as comprehensively as possible.
13. A review of projects such as the Heathrow Airtrack, which would make use of former Eurostar infrastructure and provide connections from Lewisham to Heathrow within the hour, should be undertaken.
14. The Catford Loop line does not have sufficient frequency of trains, sufficient carriage length of trains and the rolling stock is poor even since the recent re-franchise of the route. The service should also run to Euston and St Pancras over the weekends, not just in the week as is currently the case. Plans to improve this well-used and key service should also be prioritised and this should happen in addition to the Bakerloo line extension, not instead of. The increased service and more carriages per train are necessary both now and to "future proof" the service as the population and demand increases.

15. Step free access to all stations needs to be a priority and brought forward in the plan period – waiting until 2050 for step free access is not acceptable.
16. The south of the borough is poorly served by bus routes in comparison to the rest of London. Downham and Whitefoot wards are particularly poorly served by bus routes and transport links to the rest of the borough and beyond is particularly poor. This problem needs to be addressed in the effective planning of bus routes and transport infrastructure to ensure residents are not further disadvantaged. We have received a representation from Phoenix Community Housing which is attached as an appendix.
17. Hybrid buses have an important role to play in tackling the causes of poor air quality across London. Relative to the rest of London, Lewisham is poorly served by Hybrid buses and the numbers of hybrid buses travelling on routes through the borough need to be increased.
18. Further detail about the “Dutch model” of cycle ways is necessary to enable an informed view to be taken as to the most appropriate approach to improve both cycle ways and cycling rates across the borough. The “Quietways” model is currently favoured in Lewisham – a clear position on the Council’s approach to improving opportunity and safety for cyclists needs to be developed, and for this to happen more detailed information about the potential options needs to be provided.

### **Digital Connectivity**

19. A world class city needs world class connectivity across the entire city for all residents, workers and visitors.
20. The Mayor of London should lobby for this as a priority and he should also provide financial support if necessary to ensure high speed access for Londoners. Free internet access should be provided on all railway services across London – this is technically possible and should be built into all franchise agreements in future.
21. Digital exclusion is a real for many Londoners and it is essential that everyone has ready access to digital services and information. Tackling exclusion specifically should be a priority and should be a core consideration as part of planning all new developments across London.
22. To support inclusion, access and choice; digital service providers and other core infrastructure providers need to work more closely together. Regulations should be changed to make it easier for people to challenge poor service or change provider.
23. If digital connectivity is to be truly considered as essential in modern life and treated by service providers and developers as “the 4th utility”, then VAT could be charged as it is with other utilities to increase revenue for improved provision.

### **Water, Energy and Waste**

24. The fact that demand for water in London is set to outstrip supply in less than 2 years is extremely concerning. The Mayor of London must do more to address this as an urgent priority, including ensuring that Thames Water are much more effective in dealing with leaks, through enforcement action if necessary. Currently, enough water to fill 27 Olympic sized pools is lost through leaks in London every day. Given the supply issues this is completely unacceptable.
25. Water metres in homes are being heavily promoted by companies such as Thames Water as a way to both increase awareness of, and encourage a reduction in, usage, but water metres also provide water companies with an opportunity to increase the revenue raised from customers. For customers to accept this approach as fair and recognise the benefits of careful water usage, Thames Water and other water providers need to be much more responsible and responsive to issues such as leaks, as well as actively prioritise investing in dealing with aged water and sewage infrastructure.
26. Fuel poverty needs to be addressed within plans to deal with London's energy infrastructure needs. This can be done in part by the provision of more grants and support made available to people on low incomes for measures such as home insulation, usage of solar power etc.
27. More should be done to encourage and support local energy production such as the locally successful scheme that has been developed which converts used cooking oil to diesel fuel. The development of more waste-to-energy plants such as SELCHP should be encouraged and supported.
28. The effective use of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and district heating systems need further investigation to ensure that such schemes are properly designed and implemented to realise the desired benefits. There is evidence that these methods may not always be as successful in meeting their aims as would appear in the first instance. It is particularly concerning that the costs may be disproportionately passed on to people in social housing who may receive much higher bills than anticipated and not be able to pay. Our Housing Select Committee is undertaking a review of this area and will report their findings in due course, to inform the Lewisham Council's approach to this form of heating and energy distribution and we would be anxious to share this.

## 5. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

5.1 None.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

Chair:

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Date:

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