

MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

Monday, 11 December 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Liam Curran (Chair), Mark Ingleby (Vice-Chair), Andre Bourne, Suzannah Clarke and Eva Stamirowski

APOLOGIES: Councillors Amanda De Ryk, Sophie McGeevor and James-J Walsh

ALSO PRESENT: Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager), Kplom Lotsu (SGM Capital Programmes), Freddie Murray (SGM Property, Asset Strategy and Estates) and David Syme (Strategic Planning Manager)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2017

- 1.1 **Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November be agreed as an accurate record.

2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 There were none.

3. Responses from Mayor and Cabinet

- 3.1 Freddie Murray (SGM Property, Asset Strategy and Estates) introduced the response from Mayor and Cabinet, the following key points were noted:
- The response addressed the three requests made in the Committee's referral, which included: a list of tall buildings in the borough; a list of Council responsibilities for building control activities in relation to approvals it had given; additional information about technical and expert advice for committee decision making.
 - A list had been provided, which was still being updated and improved. The list of buildings was split in to three: Council/Lewisham Homes residential buildings; those owned by registered providers' and; privately owned buildings. Work was also taking place to update the list of other public buildings and none residential buildings, such as the hospital as well as commercial buildings in the borough.
 - Key building control actions had been added to the list and where possible, key dates had been included. However, this work was ongoing.
 - Getting information on some buildings, particularly those which were privately owned was a challenge.
 - Information had been included about the Council's approach to building control approval and monitoring.
 - The approach to building control varied depending on the scale and type of the development. There was no single list of actions carried out by the Council's building control team.
 - The checks carried out by the Council's building control team were generally over and above those provided by the private sector.
 - Fire safety fell under the building regulations regime, rather than planning. However, it was likely that new measures would be brought in to make fire safety a greater consideration in planning.

3.2 Freddie Murray responded to questions from the Committee, the following key points were noted:

- The activities of registered housing providers were overseen by the Homes and Communities Agency. The Council had no powers of sanction against providers who would not provide information.
- The Council was working at a senior level to engage with registered providers in order to gather information.
- It was likely that major changes would be made to the building regulations as a result of the Grenfell Tower inquiry. Some powers had been lost as part of previous changes to the regulations.
- There might be a role for the Council to remind all registered providers and private owners about expectations in relation to fire safety.
- Current work with partners focused on information gathering and sharing.

3.3 In the Committee discussion, the following key points were also noted:

- It was important that the information had been made openly available. It would help to reassure the community that there was integrity in the Council's processes.
- There were concerns about the lack of engagement from some registered housing providers.

3.4 **Resolved:** that the Chair of the Committee would write to the Chair of the Housing Select Committee to share the Members' concerns about the involvement of registered housing providers in the Councils ongoing fire safety work.

4. Catford regeneration programme update

4.1 Kplom Lotsu (SGM Capital Programmes) introduced the update. He also circulated a letter (which has been attached to the agenda) from the Greater London Authority. The following key points were noted:

- The Greater London Authority (GLA) had recently issued updated guidance on housing zone funding.
- Any housing zone scheme that was not in a position to proceed to contract by the end of January 2018 would have its housing zone funding removed.
- The Catford scheme would not be ready to proceed at the end of January meaning that housing zone funding would no longer be accessible.
- Officers had been having constructive discussions with officers at the GLA about the potential for future schemes in Catford. The housing zone designation would not be removed.
- It was believed that there might also be other ways to fund development in Catford that would provide a great volume of affordable housing.

4.2 Kplom Lotsu responded to questions from the Committee, the following key points were noted:

- When the Council applied for the housing zone funding it was believed that there would be a ten year period for delivery.
- The masterplan would further refine plans for the redevelopment. This would provide greater certainty about what would be delivered when the Council applied for future funding opportunities.

- The masterplan brief would be presented to the Committee in January before agreement at Mayor and Cabinet. It would then take three or four months to carry out the procurement process, which would be followed by a period of about a year to develop the masterplan.
- The masterplanners would be a team of regeneration professionals who would develop a programme of delivery for the redevelopment.

4.3 In the Committee discussion the following key points were also noted:

- Members welcomed potential future opportunities to provide a greater amount of affordable housing in Catford.
- There had been some concern that the programme for Catford had been proceeding too quickly without due consideration to: the future of the theatre; the evolving masterplanning process and; the realignment of the south circular.
- The final masterplan should be accessible to ordinary people and written in plain English.

4.4 **Resolved:** that the report be noted.

5. Planning: section 106 and CIL

5.1 David Syme (Strategic Planning Manager) introduced the report, the following key points were noted:

- New ways of working and collaboration had been enabled by a restructure of teams in the planning department.
- A dedicated officer had been appointed to lead on section 106 and CIL.
- It was recognised that there was work to be done to reorganise the section 106 and CIL processes, including the process by which planning obligations were negotiated at the outset of new developments and how the review mechanisms worked.
- The intention would be to make the processes more open and transparent.
- One of the things that was being reviewed was the process for local allocation of funding. The intention was to make this transparent and open without it taking up lots of time and resources.
- A pilot study was taking place in Evelyn ward to determine how local assemblies could help to prioritise local schemes for funding.
- The report on the review mechanism for planning obligations (previously discussed at the Committee) would be finished in early 2018.
- There were some complications in acquiring and comparing data for the review report. There were different mechanisms in place for allocating and reviewing planning obligations during the period of time (since 2010) that officers were reviewing.
- Some of the information used to develop planning obligations was confidential, which complicated the review process.
- Officers had considered 13 previous schemes. In six of those schemes the trigger had been reached for the review process.
- One of the six schemes reached the necessary level for the Council to claw back additional funds from the developer.

5.2 David Syme responded to questions from the Committee, the following key points were noted:

- Current decisions about the allocation of Section 106 and CIL funds were made by officers in line with Council policy and the infrastructure development plan.

- Work had been taking place to map the level of section 106 and CIL spending across the borough, this would be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.
- Officers were considering a new process whereby ward assemblies would develop a list of priorities for their area – which would inform future officer negotiations with developers.

5.3 **Resolved:** that the report be noted.

6. Planning: key policies and procedures

6.1 David Syme introduced the report and a presentation (attached to the agenda), the following key points were noted:

- Work was taking place to develop the Lewisham Local Plan, including the evidence base for the new plan and the timetable for delivery.
- There would be a preferred options document for consultation (in accordance with regulation 18 of the legislation) in winter 2018, the next stage of the plan would be prepared for summer 2019 (in accordance with regulation 19). It was anticipated that adoption of the new plan would take place in 2020.
- Lewisham's Local Plan had to be in conformity with the London Plan unless reasons for exceptions could be robustly demonstrated.
- The Mayor of London had published a number of other strategies and draft plans which would help to inform the development of the new local plan. For example, in the draft transport strategy it was recognised that there had to be infrastructure in place to deliver growth.
- There was a commitment for Bakerloo line extension phase one, although the necessary funding was not yet in place. It was also recognised by the GLA that Lewisham was a key interchange.
- The upper limit of development density had been abolished in the new London Plan in favour of 'design led density', which gave greater consideration to the setting and available infrastructure for new developments.
- Lewisham had new targets for the delivery of homes, along with all other London boroughs.
- The annual increase in the target for new homes in Lewisham was 50% greater than at present.
- A balance would be sought in Lewisham between delivering new homes and development density.
- All Councils were required to publish a register of brownfield land. Lewisham's register had been agreed by Mayor and Cabinet and would be published on the Council's website at the end of the year.

6.2 David Syme responded to questions from the Committee, the following key points were noted:

- The Local Development Scheme was being developed alongside the Local Plan. This would inform the public about how they could become involved in the development of the new plan. A consultation plan was also being developed, which was currently at the early stages.
- It was not clear how the process for bypassing the affordable housing viability assessment would work in practice. Lewisham's policy was to aim for 50% affordable housing in new developments. However, in accordance with the new London Plan there would be no requirement on developers to provide a viability assessment if they committed to providing 35% of a new development as affordable housing.

- There was a process in place to ensure that developers provided as much affordable housing as possible. However, national guidance meant that the Council could not put 'undue pressure' on developers to provide affordable housing.
- The GLA had set targets for the delivery of housing on small sites. This included the potential for delivery of housing in back gardens as long as there was no net loss of green space. It was not clear at present how this would be achieved. The proposals was being challenged by the London boroughs.
- The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment process used a methodology that took account of the different sizes and land available in the different London boroughs.

6.3 **Resolved:** that the Chair of the Committee would write to the Mayor of London setting out the Committee's concerns about development in back gardens. It was also agreed that the Committee would give further future consideration to the update of the pubs evidence base study. And - the Committee resolved to share its views on planning policy with Mayor and Cabinet, as follows:

- The Committee believes that Mayor and Cabinet should formally resolve to actively lobby the Greater London Authority for the extension of the Bakerloo line to Catford (and beyond) in order to provide the infrastructure for the Mayor of London's ambitious new housing targets.

7. **Planning: annual monitoring report**

7.1 **Resolved:** that the report be noted.

8. **Flood risk management update**

8.1 **Resolved** that the information item be noted.

9. **Select Committee work programme**

9.1 The Committee discussed the work programme and agreed that the following items would be on the agenda for the meeting on 18 January 2018:

- Broadway theatre update
- Catford masterplan brief update
- Annual parking report
- Waste and recycling strategy implementation

9.2 It was also agreed that the Committee would request written updates on Beckenham Place Park and Convoys Wharf.

10. **Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet**

10.1 **Resolved:** that the Committee's comments under item six be referred to Mayor and Cabinet, as follows:

- The Committee believes that Mayor and Cabinet should formally resolve to actively lobby the Greater London Authority for the extension of the Bakerloo line to Catford (and beyond) in order to provide the infrastructure for the Mayor of London's ambitious new housing targets.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm

Chair:

Date:
