

MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 11 July 2013 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Liam Curran (Chair), Suzannah Clarke (Vice-Chair), Obajimi Adefiranye, Julia Fletcher, Ami Ibitson, Mark Ingleby, Sam Owolabi-Oluyole and Eva Stamirowski and

APOLOGIES: Councillors John Bowen and Marion Nisbet

ALSO PRESENT: Paul Aladenika (Head of Policy and Partnership), Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager), Brian Regan (Planning Policy Manager), Peter Stunell (Policy Officer, Transport Division), Ralph Wilkinson (Head of Public Services), David Aylward (Build the Lenox), Sue Lawes (Build the Lenox), Julian Kingston (Build the Lenox) and Helena Russell (Build the Lenox)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2013

Resolved: to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2013 as an accurate record of the meeting.

2. Declarations of interest

Councillor Curran declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to item 7 due to his high level of interest in the scheme.

3. Response from Mayor and Cabinet to matters referred by the Committee: neighbourhood planning

Brian Regan (Planning Policy Manager) introduced the report, the key points to note were:

- Mayor and Cabinet had agreed the response to the Select Committee's views on neighbourhood planning.
- Neighbourhood planning was intended to be a fundamentally grassroots approach to planning.
- The Council had a responsibility to:
 - verify applications to define a neighbourhood planning area;
 - ensure that groups bringing forward neighbourhood plans had adequate constitutions;
 - enable a consultation on a neighbourhood plan to take place;
 - arrange a referendum on a neighbourhood plan
 - to consult any approved neighbourhood plan as a statutory planning document.
- Officers recommended that a further report be produced to clarify elements of the neighbourhood planning process. Officers in planning and legal would work jointly to develop their approach and bring a report to the Committee.

In response to questions from the Committee, Brian Regan advised that:

- The eight week timescale for assessing applications to the register of assets of community value was a formal part of the process.
- There were no formal timescales for neighbourhood planning.
- Planning officers had been in discussion with a number of community groups about the feasibility of bringing forward a neighbourhood plan. As of yet, none had come forward with a formal application.
- Grove Park community group was the closest to submitting a formal application to define a neighbourhood area. The group had received a grant from the Department for Community and Local Government and an application for a neighbourhood plan was anticipated within a year.
- Planning officers had met with representatives of the Department for Community and Local Government to update them about progress on neighbourhood planning in the borough.

Resolved: to receive the response from Mayor and Cabinet.

4. Financial inclusion review: update

Paul Aladenika (Head of Policy and Partnerships) introduced the report. The key points to note were:

- The first meeting of the financial inclusion forum was held in June. The next meeting would be held in September.
- The group discussed the data they would track and the outcomes they would measure as well as their terms of reference.
- Meetings would be held quarterly

Resolved: to note the update.

5. Emergency services review

Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager) introduced the report, the key points to note were:

- The Committee had resolved to assess the impact of changes to the delivery of local emergency services, on public sector assets in Lewisham.
- The Committee had also agreed to assess the impact on the accessibility of hospital services in South East London by public transport, if the proposals to cease some services at Lewisham hospital were to go ahead.
- At the meeting in May, members had requested further information about the value of the public sector buildings that had been proposed for disposal, as well as their planning designations.
- Members had also requested information about the public transport access to the hospital sites in the region, in relation to the proposals to cut services at Lewisham Hospital.
- Officers from planning and transport were in attendance to answer questions on the information requested.

Peter Stunell (Policy Officer, Transport Division) provided an update on the public transport accessibility issues. The key points to note were:

- Transport for London's (TfL) typical measure of public transport accessibility was the Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) metric. However, this measure only indicated the level of public transport accessibility at a single location. Therefore, he had created a measure of public transport accessibility, which analysed the level of accessibility between two locations.
- This new measure demonstrated the level of accessibility between locations by contrasting the relationship between the number of options available to travel between two places with the number of times a person would have to change mode of transport on each of those routes.
- The measure indicated a significant average worsening of public transport accessibility for local residents in relation to hospital sites outside of the borough.
- This was in spite of the fact that the measure was, by its design, weighted against Lewisham hospital so the results for other locations were better than might be expected using local knowledge.
- The issues identified with accessibility might be exacerbated by TfL's proposal to remove cash payments from busses. This was due to happen without increasing the number of locations it would be possible to top up oyster cards. This might have an additional negative impact on Lewisham's most vulnerable citizens.
- TfL had claimed that the Trust Special Administrator's office was not clear about the numbers of people that might be displaced by the proposed changes at Lewisham hospital, which would slow any reaction to develop improvements to public transport in the area.

In response to questions from the Committee, Peter Stunell advised that:

- The analysis indicated that accessibility by public transport would be diminished by the proposed closure of services at Lewisham hospital.
- There are some anomalies but on the whole things would be significantly worse for Lewisham residents.
- A further explanatory note would be provided to the Committee.

Brian Regan (Planning Policy Manager) answered questions on the section of the report which detailed the planning designations of public sector sites, the key points to note were:

- It was a requirement of planning policy that facilities had to be declared surplus to requirements before they could be considered for disposal.
- There were parts of the public sector estate in Lewisham that were heritage assets, others were in conservation areas.
- The role of planning was not to make things difficult, nor to hinder development, nonetheless there may be a case for opposing development if it entailed significant changes of use.
- A key principle in planning policy was that there should be no net loss of facilities.
- Co-location of services was not a use class in itself but rather a proposal for closer working.

Resolved: to note the report and to request that officers provide a summary of the information provided at the meeting in an accessible format.

6. Parking policy: monitoring and update

Ralph Wilkinson (Head of Public Services) introduced the report. The key points to note were:

- The Committee had requested an update on the implementation of the new parking policy, including the review of the borough's controlled parking zones (CPZs).
- A report and action plan had been provided setting out the actions being carried out.
- There were costs involved with resourcing the review of CPZs but these had been agreed in principle. There were no existing staff working on CPZ reviews so further resource needed to be found to enable this work to take place. A number of options were being explored.
- The Council had committed to using local intelligence to support the review process.
- Work was being carried out on the design of consultation materials.
- The original timetable for the review was three years, with additional resources this timescale could be reduced – but it was not possible at this stage to put an exact figure on the time it would take.
- Tasks which were straightforward to implement had already been completed.
- Some of the actions had to wait until the new parking contract was in place.
- The review process would need to balance the implementation of new zones with the review of existing zones. New income would help cover the loss of income in other places.
- The Council had committed to being open around finance. In October officers would publish an annual report which would include a financial update of income and expenditure and progress with the review action plan.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ralph Wilkinson advised that:

- There was an intention to allocate additional resources to the parking review process. However, unless and until these resources were allocated, it would not be possible to give a timescale for the CPZ review.
- It was anticipated that the first reviews would begin in the Autumn, in Lee Green.
- The highway code was clear that parking on pavements was prohibited. Creating signage on all pavements in the borough advising drivers not to park on them would flood the borough's streets with unnecessary signage. Furthermore, it would not be appropriate for the parking controls to enforce areas of the highway code to which drivers should already adhere. There were a number of areas in which the Council could implement the policy, but all drivers need to adhere to the laws governing the road.

Resolved: to note the report.

7. Build the Lenox

Councillor Curran declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to this item due to his high level of interest in the scheme.

Julian Kingston (Build the Lenox) introduced a presentation. The key points to note were:

The history of the Lenox

- The Lenox was the first of a fleet of 30 ships built in the 17th century.
- It was one of a new class of ships, the construction of which turned Deptford in to a maritime 'power house'.
- The ship took 60 men a year to build.
- It had a 125 foot keel, weighed 1100 tons and took 2300 oak trees to build.
- The Lenox project team proposed to build a replica of the ship at the eastern edge of Convoys Wharf in the double dry docks.
- A ship called the Hermione had been build in the town of Rochefort in Western France. The area had suffered from a decades of decline and disrepair. However, the construction of the Hermione turned around the fortunes of the town.
- Approximately 800,000 people were in Rocheford for the launch of the Hermione.
- Similar projects had been created in Gothenburg and in Spain.
- The UK had been good a preserving old ships but not good at building replicas, such as the Lenox.
- The Lenox project created significant potential for a major heritage construction project. There would also be the potential to launch the ship.
- The project could be managed to create a network of ships so that the ships from Sweden, France and Spain could visit Deptford and the Lenox could visit other ports in the world.
- The building of the Lenox had the potential to make Deptford a major tourist destination.

Current plans

- Convoys Wharf had been bought by a major developer called Hutchison Whampoa, who intended to build several thousand flats.
- Hutchison Whampoa had used the Lenox project as part of their planning application, however, they had not engaged with the Lenox project team in any meaningful way.
- The western wharf had been proposed by the developer as the location for the building project.
- However, the best location would be on the eastern side of the site.
- Processes could be put in place to ensure that visitors would not be endangered on the construction site.
- If the proposal to build the Lenox went ahead on the Western edge of the site, it would be difficult for the project to become self sufficient because it would be harder to attract footfall from Greenwich.
- The project would create training and employment opportunities, as well as the potential for workers to develop highly skilled roles.
- The Lenox would require 2300 trees to build. The project team would look to source these in the most sustainable way. The group had been in

discussion in with the High Speed2 project – which had agreed, in principle, to provide the trees.

- The group had also had discussions about the use of managed woodlands to provide the timber needed for the project.
- The group would like the Council to make the support for the Lenox project conditional to the planning permission for the Convoys Wharf scheme.

In response to questions from the Committee, the representatives of Build the Lenox advised:

- The Lenox project had been registered as a community interest company. A core group of people were managing the project but more than 300 people were involved, including a number of local historians and heritage specialists.
- Discussions about funding had taken place with the Crossrail team. Further discussions needed to happen with the banks, and big businesses in the region.
- The team would take on a professional fundraiser once the project reached a 'point of credibility'.
- When the construction started, finances would be raised by charging people for entrance to the build site. This would allow the project to become self sufficient in a short space of time.
- It was anticipated that the Lenox would become part of a local tourism strategy, linking the project with the Cutty Sark and the national maritime museum.
- The team hoped that the project would have a similar income to the Cutty Sark.
- The management group would tender out the work to be done to other companies. Part of the tendering process would be ensuring that local labour and training opportunities would be made available.
- The planning requirements the project needed to fulfil, to become conditional to granting the project's planning consent, were vague.
- The developers had been reluctant to meet with the Lenox team.
- The team would welcome support from the committee to enable the project to overcome the limitations of the planning system and require that the developer take forward the Lenox project.
- Kevin Reed, the Mayor of London's planner had indicated that it was difficult to engage with Hutchison Whampoa. The developer also claimed that it could not make sufficient profit from the development if the planning conditions were too strict.
- The reason for wanting to keep the Lenox on the east of the site was that the most expensive flats were due to be built there. It was felt that the developer did not want the building of the Lenox to spoil the view.
- The Sayes Court Garden was a separate, but linked part of the heritage at the site.

In response to questions from the Committee, Brian Regan (Planning Policy Manager) advised members that:

- The application from the developers of Convoys Wharf was currently with the Council, it did not include proposals that would facilitate the building of the Lenox as it was envisioned by the Lenox project team.

- There was government guidance on what could be considered a legal planning condition, including requirement that the decision is reasonable, related to development and able to be implemented.
- The date for the decision to be made at planning committee had not been agreed.

Whilst supportive of the scheme, the Committee agreed that they would ensure that they kept 'an open mind' about the development.

Members urged the Lenox team to ensure that it made all Councillors aware of the project.

Resolved: to note the report and presentation given at the meeting and refer the following Committee views to Mayor and Cabinet:

- On 11 July 2013, the Sustainable Development Select Committee considered a report entitled *Build the Lenox* and received a presentation from members of the *Build the Lenox* group.
- The Committee recommends that the Mayor write to Li Ka-Shing, Chairman of the Board of Hutchison Whampoa to urge a meeting between the developer and the *Build the Lenox* group.
- The Committee recommends that a review be carried out by planning officers to determine what support can be given to the *Build the Lenox* group to assist in achieving the Lenox vision.
- The Committee acknowledges the potential lasting benefits the *Build the Lenox* project might bring to the borough, including the employment, heritage, tourism, training and education initiatives it would help to create. The Committee also acknowledges that the project could help to create an iconic destination for tourists from around the world.
- The Committee acknowledges the success of similar projects in regenerating towns and cities across Europe.
- The Committee urges the Mayor to work jointly with the office of the Mayor of London and the London Assembly to support the project.
- The Committee welcomes efforts by the Build the Lenox team to encourage the builders of the L'Hermione in Rochefort, France to visit the borough and share their experiences of building a replica warship.
- The Committee notes the relevance of sections of the Council's core strategy, specifically section 4B of the spatial strategy for regeneration areas, which relate to community well being.

8. Select Committee work programme

Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny manager) introduced the work programme. The key points to note were:

- The overview and scrutiny business panel had resolved that the Committee should add an item to its work programme on the future development of the Ladywell leisure centre site.

- Councillor Clarke had suggested that the Committee should consider looking at the number and location of complaints raised by the street lighting contract.
- In conclusion to the emergency services review the Committee may want to review all of the information it has taken and use this as the basis of its recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- The Committee had discussed the Lenox project at length. Members had raised the possibility of inviting a representative from Hutchison Whampoa. Members were reminded that there was an open planning application for the site.

Resolved: to amend the Committee’s work programme as follows-

- to receive an update on complaints about street lighting at the Committee’s meeting in September.
- to schedule an update on the Future of the Ladywell Leisure Centre site for the meeting in September, as instructed by Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel.
- to look at all of the evidence gathered for the emergency services review at the meeting in September – and agree recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- To invite a representative of Hutchison Whampoa to a future Committee meeting.

9. Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet

Resolved: to refer the Committee’s views under item 7 to Mayor and Cabinet.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm

Chair:

Date:
