

# MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 15 September 2015 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Liam Curran (Chair), James-J Walsh (Vice-Chair), Suzannah Clarke, Amanda De Ryk, Carl Handley, Mark Ingleby, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa, Eva Stamirowski and Paul Upex.

Apologies: None

Also present: David Austin (Head of Corporate Services), Nigel Tyrell (Head of Environment), Duncan Dewhurst (Head of Service, Change and Technology), Brian Regan (Planning Policy Manager), Cheryl Maughan (Planning Policy Officer) and Roger Raymond (Scrutiny Manager).

## 1. Minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2015

- 1.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2015 be signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

## 2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

## 3. Flood and River Related Consultations – Preliminary Results: Response from Mayor and Cabinet

- 3.1 The Chair informed the Committee that a Mayoral Response to their comments had been received.

- 3.2 In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- There is no longer the necessity to apply for planning permission to pave over a front garden as long as the surface is permeable.
- Information on permeable driveways would be provided on the Council website and residents would be referred to that information if they were applying for, or enquiring about, work on their property.

- 3.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee ask the Mayor to:

- a) ask officers to conduct a communications campaign promoting permeable paving for driveways that includes:
- i. providing information on the Council website; and
  - ii. a public information campaign to promote permeable paving for driveways to residents

- b) ask officers to write to local companies who provide permeable paving for driveways to be involved in the public information campaign
- c) write to TfL and other agencies (as Lewisham is the Lead Local Flood Authority) to consider any potential relocation of Lower Sydenham station to the intersection with Southend Lane, taking into account both the development opportunities this would raise and any flood-risk related issues as a result.

#### 4. Lewisham Future Programme - Savings Report

4.1 David Austin, Head of Corporate Resources, presented the report to the Committee. The key points to note were:

- Given that austerity in non-protected areas of public spending is to continue and the uncertainty in potential impacts for local government to 2019/20, the officer report updated the Committee on the savings proposals prepared against the current target of £45m for 2016/17 and 2017/18.
- The report puts forward savings of £12m for 2016/17, and also presents £13m of new proposals for 2017/18 and a summary of the work ongoing to prepare these savings and, where necessary, close the remaining gap to achieve the £45m target. The estimated saving requirement for 2016/17 is between £25m and £35m.
- In July 2015 Lewisham's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2019/20 was presented to Mayor & Cabinet. After allowing for the £11m of savings previously agreed for 2016/17 and 2017/18, the MTFS savings estimates to 2019/20 ranges from £57m to £105m.
- Pending the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) in November and the provisional Local Government Financial Settlement (LGFS) in December, there is considerable uncertainty around the funding that Local Authorities will receive over the duration of this Government to 2019/20. The Council has considered the Local Government Association (LGA) and London Councils modelling along with its own best assumptions.
- The proposals under 'N' and 'P' are mainly specific to this Committee.
- Referrals would in the first instance go to Public Accounts Select Committee (PAC) on 29 September, before it sends a final referral to Mayor and Cabinet on 30 September. The final budget will go to Mayor and Cabinet on 25 February 2016.

4.2 In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

##### **N3: Review of Lewisham's Waste Services (Doorstep collection & disposal)**

##### **Transfer of estates Bulky Waste disposal costs to Lewisham Homes**

- A review of the borough's waste services is currently underway; it is not proposed that services will change for residential homes, but charges on some services like garden waste service might be introduced.
- It is also proposed to re-charge bulky waste disposal costs to Lewisham Homes. It was noted in the efficiency review of waste and recycling services that high levels of bulky-lumber waste were being produced from Lewisham

Homes managed estates. Although the majority of collection costs are re-charged to Lewisham Homes, disposal costs are currently paid for by the Council. The current position does not incentivise housing managers to reduce the amount of waste being generated.

- Some caretakers manage their bulky waste items more efficiently than others; this will however encourage all Lewisham Homes managed estates to improve efficiencies in this area.
- It would be more effective to change behaviour in respect of managing bulky waste items by re-charging than reducing the service to collect bulky waste.
- The service will be monitored to ensure that the re-charging policy does not encourage fly-tipping.
- Even though some residents are closer to the London Borough of Bromley's bulky waste collection site, it was not free for Lewisham residents to use it.

**N4: Provide a mobile, 'as required', response service for residential roads instead of traditional 'beat based' sweeper.**

- There has been a 26% reduction in street cleaning services staff since 2010. With the savings earmarked for this area, something radical needed to be developed to be able to make the saving and still provide an adequate street cleaning service. Therefore a complete re-organisation and re-assessment of the service was required.
- Street cleaning services have already done 'blitzes' in parts of the borough that needed to be improved quickly.
- To deliver the savings and make the service work, there would need to be a shift in emphasis from static street sweeping operatives towards an increase in vehicles, mobile teams, machinery and mobile technology.
- The savings proposal would require the loss of between 40-50 Sweeper posts. The precise number to be determined upon reorganisation of the beat based service to mobile response units. Full details of the proposed reorganisation are not yet published, but it will lead to a significant change in the way the service is delivered.
- Officers are aware of the need for herbicide application on pavement areas for some streets.
- In respect of LoveLewisham, apps like these first started in this borough, but with the budget pressures and how cleaning services are now changing, a new in-house, Peer2Peer version of the LoveLewisham app is being developed to facilitate the proposed reorganisation.
- Officers are in discussions with commercial developers and businesses to ensure that they clean the streets in front of their buildings
- It would be difficult and challenging for the Council to organise a programme to involve residents to partake in street cleaning blitzes on their roads at this time.
- Some resources will be directed in to buying mobile units to facilitate the change in service.

**N5: Review of Lewisham's Passenger Transport Service; to develop our Trade Waste customer base, improve efficiency and increase income. To negotiate an increased share of income from Parks Events.**

- The Review of Lewisham's Passenger Transport Service had already been discussed at the Children and Young People Select Committee.

**N6: To develop our Trade Waste customer base, improve efficiency and increase income. To negotiate an increased share of income from Parks Events.**

- The proposal is to develop the borough's trade waste customer base, to improve its efficiency and increase income. The proposal also includes the ambition to negotiate an increased share of income from Parks events.
- Officers will be looking to minimise back office charges to make services as automated as possible.
- Officers will look at Council contracts to see whether there is additional trade waste revenue available from commercial properties.
- Glendales already have contract arrangements in place for managing parks such as Blackheath, but there will be opportunities to get revenue from Glendales, concert promoters etc. for trade waste.
- In terms of the areas around the parks, waste is usually collected by the Council, unless there is a trade waste enforcement notice already in place.

**P: Planning and Economic Development**

- There will be a reorganisation of the team to ensure that it uses changes in technology as effectively as possible.
- There will also be a Council wide review to include the role and function of the Economic Development service in delivering place making, business development and employment objectives. This will look at seeing if European Union (EU) Social Fund and Greater London Authority (GLA) could be accessed to help with delivering services.
- In terms of Section 106 and fee income, Section 106 money is a defined pot of money and related to the activities to support that particular programme. The £45,000 income from this would be spread across the whole service.
- The Council are unable to increase the charges on developers who do not build much social/affordable housing as the rules stipulated by Government make this very difficult. Developers produce Viability Assessments, which are assessed independently and then analysed by the Planning Service to assess the deliverability of the development and how much affordable housing can reasonably be requested.
- The Council is looking, in one of its workstreams called 'Customer Transformation', at building an infrastructure that makes it possible to produce one 'resident profile' to contact residents over a variety of services.

**G2: Income Generation**

- The guiding principle of the income generation strand is to ensure that income can be a means by which to ensure a service is sustainable in the longer term.
- Officers will look at fees and charges on an annual basis to ensure that they are reviewed and altered where necessary.

- Officers are looking at whether a specific officer post can be developed to concentrate on income generation, and is being discussed as part of the PAC's Income Generation Review.
- The proposal for a Sustainability Consultancy as discussed at the Committee in June has come across some legal obstacles, plus the Government has reduced funding for some sustainability projects which has made the current plans more difficult. The proposals are now currently being reviewed.

4.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee refer the following to the Public Accounts Select Committee:

**N4: Provide a mobile, 'as required', response service for residential roads instead of traditional 'beat cased' sweeper.**

- The Committee was unanimous in their view that accepting this saving proposal would seriously damage the corporate reputation of the Council and the image of the borough in the eyes of its residents and stakeholders.
- The Committee was concerned that the public could lose faith in the Council's ability to run services if the Council was to accept this proposal.
- Residents may come to the view that the Council was not able to carry out other basic functions if it was not able to keep the streets clean as well as in the past.
- It is important to retain the lessons of the "broken window" philosophy – a situation where minor environmental degradation can escalate if left unaddressed and this would apply on a borough-wide scale should the council stop regular weekly street-sweeping.
- The introduction of a responsive 'as and when' service would further damage the perception of the council because residents would always end up phoning to report litter in their street as soon as it appeared.
- Littering and fly-tipping is bad enough at present and any untidiness would give offenders greater license for their bad habits.
- Residents may start to take less pride in keeping the borough clean themselves.

**N6: To develop our Trade Waste customer base, improve efficiency and increase income. To negotiate an increased share of income from Parks Events.**

- The Council should be looking at contracts where it is the commercial landlord to increase opportunities to increase income on Trade Waste.
- The Council should investigate whether it can enforce a requirement to undertake cleansing in an agreed zone of dispersal for park events.
- A 'catch-them-young' comprehensive borough-wide anti-litter campaign needs to be introduced to all schools in order to help residents adopt life-long anti-litter habits.

**P2d: Review of Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) on the way in which the service consults on planning applications. Efficiency savings based on paper, printing and postage costs.**

- If the Council is going to cease delivering planning notices to properties that neighbour planning application sites, improved alternatives should be in place before the change. These should be:
  - Large, bright notices in the place of the current, small, old-fashioned 'municipal' style A4 notices that are currently used.

The Council should develop its use of technology to be able to contact residents with a singular 'resident profile' that could be used by services across the Council

**G2: Income Generation**

- The Committee supported the appointment of a designated commercially experienced officer or officers to develop the Council's income generation strands.

Therefore, the Select Committee recommends that Public Accounts advise the Mayor of its view that:

- He should note the comments on N6, P2d and G2
- He should accept saving proposals: N3, N5, and N6
- He should reject the savings proposal N4
- He should accept saving proposals: P2a, P2b, P2c, and P2d.
- He should accept the savings proposal G2

**5. Progress of Neighbourhood Forums and Neighbourhood Planning**

5.1 Brian Regan, Planning Policy Manager and Cheryl Maughan, Planning Policy Officer, presented the report to the Committee. The key points to note were:

- The 2011 Localism Act sets out permissive powers which allow local communities to influence the planning of their area by preparing neighbourhood plans.
- Neighbourhood plans are prepared by local people, not by local authorities. Local people must group together to form a neighbourhood forum in order to prepare a neighbourhood plan.
- A report to this Committee on 9 September 2014 informed Members that, as of 28 August 2014, the Council had designated one neighbourhood forum and area; Crofton Park and Honor Oak Park with the application from Grove Park yet to be determined. At that time, there had also been discussions with other area representatives who had expressed an interest in neighbourhood planning, but had yet to make a formal submission. These were New Cross and the Corbett Estate.

- Since September 2014, the Mayor has designated the Grove Park Neighbourhood Area and Forum and the Corbett Estate Neighbourhood Area and Forum. An application to designate a neighbourhood area that would cover 5 boroughs at Crystal Palace has been submitted, but requires more information to be validated. The proposed neighbourhood area boundary includes pockets of land within the London Borough of Bromley, the London Borough of Croydon, the London Borough of Lambeth, the London Borough of Southwark and the London Borough of Lewisham. LB Lambeth are acting as the lead authority for these applications.
- Officers have also been in discussion with two separate groups (the Lee Group and Deptford Neighbourhood Action Group) who have now submitted cross boundary applications with the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The Lee Group submitted their application on 7 August 2015 and the Deptford Group submitted their application on 12 August 2015. Lewisham will act as the lead authority for these applications.

5.2 In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- The Communities and Local Government Department (CLG) sets the remit for funding for the designation of Neighbourhood Forums and Areas for Local Authorities. The Council did apply for funding but fell outside the time period, but will look to apply again when another funding window opens. Individual Neighbourhood Forums can apply for funding separately via the Locality website at <http://mycommunityrights.org.uk>. The money or the direct support is given directly to the Forum, and does not go via the Council.
- Officer assistance will be provided to Neighbourhood Forums in terms of strategic planning, and grant applications, but there are resources issues for the Planning Service as a consequence.
- The Council can apply for a grant from the Government to cover costs in respect of neighbourhood forums. However, the grant will not cover all the expenses the Council will incur, especially the local referenda which will be about £20,000 to administer.

5.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee note the report.

## 6. Modern Roads Review - Report and Recommendations

6.1 Roger Raymond (Scrutiny Manager) introduced the report to the Committee. The key points to note were:

- The Committee must agree the draft review report, subject to any agreed amendments and consider any recommendations the report should make.
- Draft recommendations are included in the draft report.
- The final report, including the recommendations agreed at this meeting, will be presented to Mayor and Cabinet at the next available opportunity.

6.2 In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- The Committee amended 3 draft recommendations and added an additional recommendation.

### 6.3 **RESOLVED:** That

- a) The report should be presented to Mayor and Cabinet.
- b) The recommendations for the review are as follows:
  - i. That the implementation of the borough-wide 20mph zone be monitored with an emphasis on Council and borough police plans for enforcement and supported with a multi-platform publicity and education programme for residents and drivers.
  - ii. That the Council considers the full range of different cycle-friendly road designs that radically improve the safety and environment for cyclists including, among other sources, the Sustrans 'Cycle Friendly Design Manual: Handbook for cycle-friendly design' and existing working schemes in other London boroughs.
  - iii. That the Council engages with Living Streets to conduct a Community Street Audit in a specific area to improve the environment for cyclists and pedestrians.
  - iv. That officers investigate some of the proposals outlined by Lewisham Cyclists in relation to improving cycling conditions in the borough (6.11-15).
  - v. That the Council facilitates a scheme that offers recycled bikes at a reasonable price to children in the borough.
  - vi. That the Council investigates the possibility of having a similar 'cycle hub and bike hire scheme like LB Croydon's cycle hub and/or Brompton Bike Hire dock.
  - vii. That any future re-design of the A205/Catford Gyratory incorporates the needs of cyclists and pedestrians from the beginning of the process and that that the Mayor pushes TfL and the Council to make a decision on the relocation of the A205 within the next few months.
  - viii. (That the Council) take forward an expansion of the ultra low emissions zone, and look at how air quality issues are viewed in major developments in the borough (e.g. where schools are built in the borough, ensuring they are away from main roads).
  - ix. That the Council reviews policy to increase the planting of street trees with a view to obtaining external funding wherever possible.
  - x. That the Mayor lobbies Transport for London to extend the Cycle Hire Scheme into Lewisham.



## **7. Bakerloo Line consultation - update (Information Item)**

7.1 The Chair noted that this report was an information item, and any questions should be referred to the report author.

## **8. Select Committee work programme**

8.1 Roger Raymond (Scrutiny Manager) introduced the report. The key points to note were:

- The items scheduled for the October meeting were as follows:
  - Planning obligations/regulations – Update
  - High Streets Review – Report
  - Catford Regeneration Programme Review – Scoping Paper
  - Progress on Pubs and register of assets of community value
  - Working Skills Strategy - work with Lambeth and Southwark to support our vulnerable residents into work
  - Annual Parking Report
  - Borough-wide 20mph zone implementation

8.2 In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- The Committee agreed to add 'Publishing Viability Assessments' to the work programme.
- The Committee agreed to split the Working Skills Strategy item for the October meeting into two topics a) Working Skills Strategy and b) Community Budget – Joint Committee.

8.3 The Committee agreed to have the following items at the October meeting:

- Planning obligations/regulations – Update
- High Streets Review – Report and Recommendations
- Catford Regeneration Programme Review – Scoping Paper
- Working Skills Strategy
- Community Budget: Establishment of a joint committee between Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark
- Publishing Viability Assessments
- Annual Parking Report
- Progress on Pubs and register of assets of community value (this is now an Information Item)
- Borough-wide 20mph zone implementation (this is now an Information Item)

## **9. Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet**

9.1 The Committee made a referral to Mayor and Cabinet at 3.3 for the Flood and River Related Consultations – Preliminary Results: Response from

Mayor and Cabinet. The Committee also made a referral to PAC at 4.3 for the Lewisham Future Programme - Savings Report.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm

Chair:

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Date:

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