

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUSINESS PANEL

Tuesday, 22 November 2016 at 7.20 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Hall (Chair), Liam Curran, Brenda Dacres, Carl Handley, David Michael, Jamie Milne, Hilary Moore and John Muldoon

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor James-J Walsh

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gareth Siddorn and Councillor Jim Mallory

The meeting was adjourned at 7.21pm and reconvened at 7.30pm

35. Minutes

Minutes 25 - new Bermondsey (Formerly Surrey Canal Triangle) Compulsory Purchase Order

The Chair welcomed the Chief Executive to the meeting.

The Chief Executive said there wasn't any additional information he could give Panel Members apart from what was circulated to them earlier from his office. He said he received correspondence from Lambeth Smith Hampton (LSH) asking for all pertinent key information. The Chief Executive said this information would be made available to all Councillors in due course.

Councillor Dacres said she was aware there was new information which the Cabinet had based its decision to postpone decision on the Business Panel call-in. The Chief Executive said there was a document which was the basis of an article in the Guardian but he could not say this was new information. Councillor Dacres said if the Cabinet can make a decision based on this information then it would seem right for Business Panel to see this information. Councillor Handley said Cabinet had made a decision as to whether this information was relevant or not, and Business Panel might have a different view. The Chief Executive said he could not give any more details about the veracity of the document, which would be sent to Business Panel members as appropriate. The Chair said he was concerned that although they would see the document they might not have an opportunity to put their comments forward prior to the Cabinet decision.

Councillor Curran said that Business Panel wanted to find out about their call-in because of concerns raised about Renewal, the secrecy of its directors and other issues. He said this document should not get in the way of Panel Members' concerns. Councillor Curran said he thought this document was being used as a smoke screen. Councillor Curran added that LSH's document was not in the public domain, even though it was apparently similar to an estate agent leaflet. He said he could not understand why the call-in process was being held up because of this document. Councillor Curran stated that the Cabinet should not just be dealing with the veracity of the document, but should also deal with the issues raised in the call-in. The Chief Executive said the Cabinet would deal with that too.

Councillor Curran asked what was being done about the call-in and was told by the Chief Executive that Cabinet had adjourned consideration of the call-in until the investigation had been completed. The Chair asked the Chief Executive if this document could possibly impact on the call-in and was told that it could. The Chair asked the Chief Executive how this could impact on the call-in, and was advised that it would not be wise to speculate on its impact.

The Chair told the Chief Executive that he thought the decision on the document and that of the call-in would be made at the same time and Business Panel would not have an opportunity to make any comment on the contents of the document. The Chief Executive said this could happen. The Chair said Business Panel should be able to see a report on this document whether Cabinet thought it was relevant or irrelevant, as part of the democratic process. The Chair added that Members have a right to officers' advise, especially given the length of time of the call-in adjournment.

The Chair requested that officers produce a report on the document that led to the suspension of the Business Panel call-in. The Chief Executive said the Council has a judgement to make about the best way forward. Councillor Handley said the uncertainty surrounding this document and call-in seemed very suspicious, and it also highlighted lack of transparency about Renewal and its local backers.

The Chair claimed Business Panel Members had been misled the past, and this concern could be raised again. The Chair said he was very pleased the Chief Executive was able to attend the meeting at short notice, and requested a report following the investigation for consideration by the Business Panel prior to the Cabinet making any determination.

Action >>>>> CEX, ED Resources and Regen. Head of Law

RESOLVED that:

- I. officers provide a briefing for Business Panel about the CPO process.
- II. officers provide a report for Business Panel about the document that led to the suspension of their call-in.
- III. officers arrange a meeting for Business Panel to receive legal advise about the CPO process.
- IV. the minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2016, which was open to the press and public, be confirmed as a true record of the proceedings.

36. Declarations of Interests

None received.

37. Outstanding Scrutiny Matters

Report noted.

38. Notification of Late and Urgent Items

Report noted.

39. Decisions Made at Mayor and Cabinet on 9 November 2016

Catford Regeneration Programme Update

The Capital Programme Delivery Services Manager introduced the report and confirmed as requested that there were two Directors in this company.

The Chair said he did not think this was an adequate set up having two officers as Directors in this company. The Capital Programme Delivery Services Manager said that decisions would only be made in accordance with the Council's Standing Order, which would be ratified by Mayor and Cabinet. The Chair said he was concerned that having only 2 Directors, 1 person could make a decision. The Chair said he had raised concerns with the Head of Law about this in the past and was told this arrangement was fine. The Capital Programme Delivery Services Manager said although there were 2 Directors decisions would also have Executive oversight.

Councillor Walsh said section 6 of the report highlighted Community Engagement and Communications. He said officers should be mindful that Catford residents were also engaged with the Housing Action Zone and he was concerned that the March deadline would not provide sufficient opportunity for residents' input, especially with Christmas imminent. He said if officers were not careful there would be a lot of resident dissatisfaction. Councillor Walsh said it was necessary to have a clear timeline which outlined places of activities for public engagement. He emphasised that he was worried the Council might not deliver the programme on time.

The Capital Programme Delivery Services Manager said the processes had been looked through and the masterplan does work. He said this would be delivered in accordance with the statutory process wherein parameters would be set out, specifications set and adhered to. He said officers were mindful about having a tower block close to the station and they would ensure they engage constructively with the local residents.

The Chair said it was coming to the end of November, and officers were expecting to roll out the programme in March. He asked how this could be achieved. The Capital Programme Delivery Services Manager said officers would set up a programme to engage with members, residents and other stakeholders, including reviews. He said a different method of engagement would be used. The Senior Programme Manager said apart from the planned workshops other activities would be organised online, and the emphasis would be on communication.

Following a detailed discussion, members raised concerns about Catford becoming a high rise building centre similar to Lewisham. The Chair said that a timeline would be useful to Business Panel members for reference. Business Panel agreed to request that officers should ensure there is full public engagement with the Catford Regeneration plan, and the theatre should form a central part of any Regeneration plan for Catford. Business Panel also requested that the Sustainable Community Strategy be updated as the current one was now considerably dated. The Chair reminded officers that there was an outstanding referral from the Sustainable Development Select Committee that had not been addressed, and that the Mayor should ask officers to provide the response.

RESOLVED that:

- i. the decision of the Mayor be noted.
- ii. the Mayor be requested to ask officers to construct a timeline which would include programmed events and venues for community engagement with the Catford Regeneration Programme.
- iii. the Mayor be requested to ask officers to ensure that the Broadway Theatre form a central part of any regeneration plan for the Catford Centre.
- iv. the Mayor be requested to ask officers to update the Sustainable Community Strategy because the current one is considerably dated.
- v. the Mayor be requested to ask officers to respond to an outstanding referral from the Sustainable Development Select Committee to Mayor and Cabinet on the Catford Regeneration.

Lewisham Homes Business and Delivery Plan 2016 -19

The Housing Needs Manager introduced the report.

Councillor Handley, Chair of Housing Select Committee informed Panel members that the Select Committee had requested an update from the Housing Needs Manager which was being produced and would be reported to the Select Committee as soon as possible.

The Housing Needs Manager said they have another 15 months to get on target and in the mean time officers were looking at a range of other things to support the Housing demand. The Chair asked for an update on the Council's approach now that the Housing Act was being regulated. The Chair said as the Council was working with other Housing associations, the Council could try to get them to improve their housing provision.

Councillor Walsh said constant public engagement about new developments would be useful to ensure the community was aware of events as they take place. Councillor Handley said this information would also be very useful for members as they were constantly approached for information on available properties. The Chair thanked officers for the report.

RESOLVED that the decision of the Mayor be noted.

40. Overview and Scrutiny Select Committees Work Programmes verbal update

None to report.

41. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act, as amended by the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to

information) (Amendments) (England) Regulations 2006 and the public interest in disclosing the information:-

The following is a summary of items discussed in the closed part of the meeting.

42. Decision Made By Mayor and Cabinet on 9 November 2016

No item was requested for further discussion.

43. Decision Made by Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) on 9 November 2016

No item was requested for further discussion.

44. Decision Made by an Executive Director Under Delegated Authority - Approval of Award of Contract for Deptford High Street North

Having considered a confidential report, and a presentation by the Senior Programme Manager, Capital Delivery Team:

RESOLVED that:

- i. the decision of the Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration be noted.
- ii. the Mayor be requested to ask officers to return the Deptford Anchor to a suitable location in Deptford High Street, as requested by residents.

Meeting ended 8:45pm

Chair