

# MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUSINESS PANEL

Tuesday, 10 July 2018 at 7.05 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Bill Brown (Chair), Liam Curran, Alex Feis-Bryce, Jim Mallory, Joan Millbank, Pauline Morrison, John Muldoon, Luke Sorba and Susan Wise

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Juliet Campbell

## **114. Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## **115. Declarations of Interests**

None were made.

## **116. Outstanding Scrutiny Matters**

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **117. Late and Urgent Notification**

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **118. Decisions made by the Joint Committee of the London Boroughs of Brent, Lewisham & Southwark on 4 July 2018 - report to follow**

This item was withdrawn.

## **119. Decisions made by Mayor and Cabinet on 27 June 2018**

### Deptford Southern Housing – Tidemill Update

The Housing Strategy and Partnerships Manager, Strategic Housing introduced the report. Councillor Mallory asked for clarification on Mayor and Cabinet's decision following suggestion from the GLA to carry out a ballot of residents on the decision. The Housing Strategy and Partnerships Manager, Strategic Housing explained that by following the existing contract there would be no ballot, and to carry out a ballot at this stage in the process would entail starting the whole process again, and Mayor and Cabinet decided to go ahead with officers' recommendations.

Councillor Mallory stated that he had been a Councillor in the Deptford area for 16 years and during that time had fought to preserve the green areas. He said that putting more people in an already densely populated area with less green spaces would be intolerable.

Councillor Curran said he was aware that the original plan had been amended a few times, and therefore it could be amended again if necessary. The Housing Strategy and Partnerships Manager, Strategic Housing said this would cause some problems and would cost a lot of money because of the amount of stages in the process that would be affected. He said it could run into millions of pounds.

Councillor Muldoon stated that he was at the Mayor and Cabinet meeting the previous week and heard the Cabinet Member for Housing explained quite articulately the reasons and advantages for the decision. Councillor Muldoon also said that he was aware that this report had been discussed at the Strategic Planning Committee at length in 2016 and 2017 thoroughly. He concluded that sufficient discussion had been done on the report.

Councillor Millbank asked for clarification around the GLA's recommendation for a ballot, and asked whether this was current policy. The Housing Strategy and Partnerships Manager, Strategic Housing explained the reason for the GLA'S recommendation, adding that it was a policy that was to be introduced, and does not have to be implemented retrospectively.

Councillor Sorba asked for an explanation on paragraph's 5.5 and 5.6 of the report, and was told 80% of the green space would be provided as open public spaces and 74% affordable housing, and there was a very good offer on the table for existing residents, they would not have to move away, and there was shared equity for existing leaseholders. Panel Members were told that residents would get compensatory payments, support with moving and expenses paid.

Following a question from Councillor Mallory it was noted that concerns over green space was one of the four reasons the Strategic Planning Committee had asked for a review of the report. Councillor Mallory also asked whether tenants would be offered like for like, with existing rent levels guaranteed.

The Housing Strategy and Partnerships Manager, Strategic Housing told Panel Members that Tenants would be given accommodation according to their needs and the rent for transferring tenants would be protected, but would be increased with inflation. It was noted that new tenants rates would be set by the GLA.

The Chair invited representatives from the Deptford Neighbourhood Action (DNA) to make their presentation to the Panel. Ms Andrea Hughes, Chair DNA and Ms Andrea Carey Fuller, DNA Co-ordinator highlighted the following:

- Disposing Council green space and housing would put Lewisham at risk, Peabody should rethink their proposal.
- Green space had been defended by planning officers for years, residents should be balloted for their position on the proposal.
- The Council has a lot of money in reserves this should be used to uphold the wishes of voters.
- Residents question the intellect of some of their elected Members who seem to play the homeless card to get their way, instead of housing homeless people.
- Money should be used to bring empty buildings into use and regulate rents.
- There is a lack of quality green space in this area.

- Deptford Church Street is highly polluted, and residents have been left with a glorified park.
- Lewisham's air pollution would be unbearable by 2035.
- 30% of Lewisham residents live in Deptford alone, and residents desperately need open green space in that area.
- The DNA promotes and extend green space in Deptford and in this time of austerity residents need somewhere to relax and breathe.
- There is no guarantee that residents would have like for like, Mayor and Cabinet had said they would be assessed according to their needs.
- These people have lived in this area for decades and now they are to be assessed on need, when children and grandchildren could be living in the same home.
- Contracts could be altered and extended.

Councillor Curran asked the DNA representatives if there had been any consideration given to residents within the plan and was told there had not been any as the Council refused to discuss an alternative plan.

Councillor Wise said during her previous role as Cabinet Members for Housing she was aware that a lot of money had been spent towards green space in the area and discussions had been had with residents and action taken to improve their way of life.

Councillor Curran informed the Panel that there were several factors that needed to be considered, and although they have been told that it could be costly to go to ballot this would be the better option, and Members should trust the residents and heed the recommendation from the GLA. He added that he propose to Call in the Mayor and Cabinet's decision. Councillor Curran sought and received advice from the Legal representative on the call in process.

Councillor Wise argued that it was unnecessary to Call in the decision, as Panel Members should focus on the housing need of the Council's residents, she argued that the decision should stand in order to address homelessness and Peabody's proposal would be very good for residents. She added that part of the Council's Manifesto was to provide 1,000 new homes and this proposal was an excellent opportunity to provide affordable homes, and 80% of the green space will be available for public use.

Following a lengthy discussion Councillor Curran reiterated his proposal to Call in the decision based on the following:

- i. the loss of green space which would be contrary to the Council's Policy, paragraph 3.2 of the report, second bullet point.
- ii. there is an alternative plan to retain green space and achieve the required housing provision.
- iii. the emerging policy to give ballot to tenants, recommended by the Mayor of London and the London assembly.
- iv. The Delegated Authority is vague, there will not be any come back to Mayor and Cabinet for ratification.

This was put to the vote:

For – 3

Against – 6

RESOLVED that:

- i. the proposal for a call in did not carry.
- ii. the decision of Mayor and Cabinet be noted.

## **120. Overview & Scrutiny Select Committees Work Programmes - 2018 - 2019 update**

Panel Members noted that the first round of Select Committee meetings started on 27 June and would end on 19 July. It was noted that the Select Committees were agreeing their annual meetings and they would be formally submitted to the Business Panel meeting on 24 July 2018.

The Scrutiny Manager said the Children and Young People Select Committee have decided to do an in-depth review into school exclusions and alternative provision, and the Public Accounts Select Committee would be looking at income generating activities. It was noted that the Housing Select Committee had not agreed an in-depth review at this stage, but would be looking at some issues in an in-depth way, such as the housing element of the Local Plan. The Healthier Communities Select Committee also had not agreed an in-depth review but was likely to hold a mini-review of blue badge provision.

Councillor Mallory, Chair of Public Accounts Select Committee said much of the Select Committee work would be around the current budget and the 4 year plan. He said the Select Committee were not planning to do a separate in-depth review, but would be looking at ongoing business. Councillor Mallory said they were interested in Adult Social Care and Children Social Care, and would like to team up with the Children and Young People Select Committee to look at this. Councillor Sorba, Chair of Children and Young People Select Committee agreed the request.

Councillor Wise, Chair of the Housing Select Committee commented that the majority of the Housing Select Committee members were new and they were going through the introductory stages and their ideas were being sought.

Councillor Muldoon Chair of Healthier Communities Select Committee said they have not yet agreed their in-depth review, but would be reviewing Sexual and Reproductive health and Draft Sexual Health Strategy.

Councillor Morrison, Chair of Safer, Stronger Select Committee said the Select Committee had not yet met, they were doing consultation, and discussing ideas.

RESOLEVD that the report be noted.

## **121. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The resolution was not considered as no confidential discussions took place.

**122. Decisions made by Mayor and Cabinet on 27 June 2018**

This item was not requested for discussion.

**123. Decision made by an Executive Director Under Delegated Authority - Support Contract for Core Revenues & Benefits Systems**

This item was not requested for discussion.

Meeting ended: 8:07

Chair.....