

# Minutes of the Sustainable Development Select Committee

Monday, 19 June 2023 at 8.00 pm

In attendance: Councillors James Royston, Sian Eiles and John Paschoud

Also joining the meeting virtually: Councillor Edison Huynh

Apologies: Councillors Tauseef Anwar, Liam Curran and Eva Stamirowski

Also present: Councillor Mark Ingleby, Councillor Aliya Sheikh, Councillor Brenda Dacres (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning), Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager), Angus Saunders (Team Leader, Development Management) and Emma Talbot (Director of Planning)

Also present virtually: Councillor Rudi Schmidt (Chair of Overview and Scrutiny), Councillor Louise Krupski (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate), Seamus Adams (Head of Commercial Operations and Development), Paul Boulton (Interim Director of Public Realm), Julia Robbins (Developer Contributions Manager) and David Syme (Head of Strategic Planning)

NB: Those Councillors listed as joining virtually were not in attendance for the purposes of the meeting being quorate, any decisions taken or to satisfy the requirements of s85 Local Government Act 1972

## 1. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2023

- 1.1 **Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2024 be agreed as an accurate record.

## 2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 There were none.

## 3. Responses from Mayor and Cabinet

- 3.1 There were none.

## 4. Local Democracy Review update

- 4.1 Angus Saunders (Team Leader, Development Management) introduced the report. Angus provided an overview of the process carried out to update and consult on the statement of community involvement. It was also noted that further engagement would take place with amenity societies to formalise their involvement in the process.

- 4.2 Angus Saunders (Team Leader, Development Management) and Emma Talbot (Director of Planning) responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- It was recognised that there were issues with the situation regarding amenity societies (and the distinction between the areas they represented) – which could not all be resolved through the statement of community involvement.

- It was still the intention to recognise amenity societies and to deal with issues where their boundaries of operation overlapped.
- Further work would take place to manage relationships with amenity societies – a timeline for this work would be developed.
- A considerable amount of time had been spent considering the role of amenity societies – but it was recognised that there were other groups of residents who wanted to share their views regarding planning issues (some of these were formally constituted and some were not)
- Informal discussions were regularly held with non-amenity society groups although, historically, only amenity societies had the power to call-in planning proposals.
- Consideration had to be given to the level of representation provided by each amenity society.
- There was a low response rate in the consultation to the question about the areas represented by each amenity society (they had previously been linked to conservation areas) Work would take place to determine how groups could formalise themselves.
- It was important to ensure that anyone who wanted to be engaged in planning had an opportunity to do so.

4.3 Councillor Brenda Dacres (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning) was invited to address the Committee – Cllr Dacres encouraged members to engage with community groups in their wards and to share their views with planning. Cllr Dacres also agreed that further work could be carried out to engage with community groups once the statement of community involvement had been agreed.

4.4 In the Committee discussions the following key points were noted:

- Members highlighted some of the issues with the disagreement between some amenity societies regarding the areas they represented.

4.5 **Resolved:** that the consultation feedback and associated amendments to the draft statement of community involvement be noted. The Committee also requested that a further report be brought back to the Committee within six months on the involvement of community groups, residents associations and amenity societies in the planning process.

## 5. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) governance

5.1 Emma Talbot (Director of Planning) introduced the report – outlining the system for the collection of the community infrastructure levy and setting out the process for developing governance arrangements to spend it.

5.2 Emma Talbot and David Syme (Head of Strategic Planning) responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- There were no plans to engage with residents regarding the new arrangements (unlike the process for neighbourhood CIL) – however – consultation was carried out on the infrastructure delivery plan – and consultation might be carried out on individual projects as they were approved.
- Officers could provide members and residents with further information about spending commitments and projects that were being funded.
- The neighbourhood CIL funding commitments were due to conclude in 2024 – and a new round of funding (£3m) would take place. This would involve further engagement with communities.

- Requests for funding would have to be submitted through a project prioritisation process. This would make best use of the mechanisms already in place for allocating funding through the boards and decision-making processes for strategic funding commitments.
- The process would be similar to the prioritisation and spending commitments made through the capital programme.
- Officers intended to regularly review the process.
- The intention was that the process should be outcome focused and the prioritisation process had been developed to be as dispassionate as possible. It was planned that this should limit the scope for lobbying for specific projects.
- Section 106 funds had to be spent on direct mitigation of the impact of a scheme.
- The report included the legal definition of CIL. This meant CIL could only be spent on infrastructure to support growth. Some authorities had tried to (unsuccessfully) challenge this in court.
- Infrastructure could be provided by partner organisations (such as the NHS) and not only the Council.
- Consideration had to be given to the revenue implications of delivering new infrastructure – this was tested as part of the development of the new process.
- Testing had been carried out on a range of real-life schemes to understand their viability and also to understand how easy it was to follow the new process.

5.3 In Committee discussions the following key points were also noted:

- There was a perception amongst some residents that section 106 and CIL funds were placed in a single pot – and that the process for committing spending from this pot was not transparent.
- Some authorities appeared to have broadened their definitions of infrastructure to include some things that would usually be considered as revenue expenditure.

5.4 The Committee placed on record its thanks to Emma Talbot – who was leaving Lewisham.

5.5 **Resolved:** that the proposed amendments to existing governance processes - to include strategic CIL- be noted.

## 6. Sustainable transport and parking improvements programme

6.1 This report was late. Officers provided the following reason: This report was not available for the original despatch because officers are undergoing final analysing of consultation results.

6.2 The Chair accepted that there were sufficient reasons for this to be included as an urgent item, the reasons given by officers were included in the report: The analysis of consultation responses and any recommendations for implementation of Sustainable Streets measures will be presented to Mayor and Cabinet on 19 July 2023 for decision. Officers would welcome feedback from the Sustainable Development Select Committee on the abridged report ahead of the decision making.

- 6.3 Paul Boulton (Interim Director of Public Realm) and Seamus Adams (Head of Commercial Operations and Development) introduced the report – providing an overview of the consultation and proposals for the next stage of the decision making process.
- 6.4 Paul Boulton and Seamus Adams responded to questions from the Committee (including members attending under standing orders) – the following key points were noted:
- Attempts were being made to find the right balance between positive measures and restrictions (a ‘carrot and stick’ approach) to reduce pollution, congestion, and commuter parking.
  - It was intended to include more car club bays as part of the delivery of the programme.
  - Decisions around the implementation of new measures was led by demand.
  - There were plans to install new cycle storage facilities in the coming months. This would include providing more information to people on the waiting list regarding their application.
  - The data that had been gathered from the consultation process would enable the further targeting of improvements.
  - Further work would take place to support those affected by any future changes.
  - Further information would be provided on the responses to the consultation in the Mayor and Cabinet report. It was important to pay attention to the concerns and issues raised by residents.
  - It was hoped that people would recognise the benefits of the programme as it was implemented. It was not only about parking – but there were many options for implementing quality improvements.
  - Further work needed to take place to engage with non-car drivers and those who were sceptical of the consultation process.
  - Lobbying was taking place with Transport for London to provide more options for public transport.
  - Zip car had a programme for the electrification of its fleet – which the Council was supporting.
- 6.5 In Committee discussions – the following key points were also noted:
- Members noted the perceived lack of transparency around the availability of cycle hangars, the coordination of the waiting list and the level of responsiveness from emails to officers regarding casework on these issues.
  - Better communication around active travel measures would be welcomed.
  - It was noted that Lewisham had low levels of controlled parking.
  - There was concern regarding the increased numbers of cyclists and pedestrians who were being killed or seriously injured on Lewisham’s roads.
  - There was concern about the levels of resistance and resident concerns about the programme.
  - Members welcomed the work that had taken place – and recognised that some parts of the consultation had been difficult and unpleasant.
  - The maps in the report should be updated with the new ward boundaries.
- 6.6 Councillor Louise Krupski (Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport) was invited to address the Committee – the following key points were noted:
- Zip cars might help reduce reliance on privately owned cars. Their levels of utilisation were higher which meant they required less street space.

- Future work would take place to develop green improvements and ‘parklets’ – but it was important to continue with implementing the programme without delay. Further work would take place to determine which improvements residents would most like to see on their streets.
- It was recognised that transparency around the provision of cycle storage was important. The Council had struggled to keep up with levels of demand.
- It was important to note that future work could take place with areas that had initially hesitant to consider improvements.
- The messaging from the Council to Transport for London about the importance of busses was having an impact.

**6.7 Resolved:**

- that further information (and timelines) be provided on the implementation of cycle hangars, parklets and the transparency of communication around waiting lists.
- that priority should be given to enforcing contraventions in areas with existing controls – particularly in the case of protected junctions, cycle lanes and anti-social pavement parking.
- that the Committee would welcome further improvements and enlargement of protected space for active travel.
- that further consultation should take place with the Committee regarding the future development of the programme and - that a further report should come to the Committee’s meeting on 12 September.
- that the maps being used in the consultation should be updated with the current ward boundaries.
- that the report and its recommendations be noted.

**7. Select Committee work programme**

7.1 The Committee discussed the work programme – noting that the recent visit to the Lewisham Gateway development had been well received.

7.2 **Resolved:** that the work programme be agreed for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – and that items for the September select committee agenda (Sustainable Streets, the Catford Programme and the implementation of the air quality action plan) be agreed.

The meeting ended at 22:05

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_