

# **MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE**

**Monday, 11 May 2015 at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT: Councillors Liam Curran (Chair), James-J Walsh (Vice-Chair), Bill Brown, Amanda De Ryk, Carl Handley, Mark Ingleby, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa and Paul Upex and

APOLOGIES: Councillors Suzannah Clarke and Eva Stamirowski

ALSO PRESENT: Roger Raymond (Temporary Scrutiny Manager), Brian Regan (Planning Policy Manager) and Cathy Rooney (Performance Manager)

## **1. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2015**

### **1.1 RESOLVED: That:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2015 be signed as an accurate record of the meeting, after the following amendment.

Councillor Brown's apologies were noted.

## **2. Declarations of interest**

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

## **3. High Streets Review - Evidence Session**

3.1 The Chair informed the Committee that the expected witness - Jonathan Downey (Street Feast) - was unable to come to the meeting due to an emergency (personal matter).

3.2 The Committee would ask him to submit a written response, in respect of the key lines of enquiry.

3.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- a) Note the comments
- b) Consider the evidence already presented at its two previous meetings as part of the High Streets Review.

## **4. Flood and River Related Consultations - Preliminary Results**

4.1 Cathy Rooney, (Performance Manager, Policy and Partnerships Unit) and Brian Regan (Planning Policy Manager), gave a presentation to the Committee. The key points to note were:

- The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (the Act) stipulates that Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for an area as the unitary authority or the county council. This is to avoid any delay or confusion about who is responsible, but in no way prevents partnership arrangements to make full

use of all capabilities and experience locally. The Act enables lead local authorities to delegate flood or coastal erosion functions to another risk management authority by agreement.

- As an LLFA, it is Lewisham's role to forge effective partnerships with adjacent LLFAs and the Environment Agency as well as other key stakeholders – Thames Water, Network Rail and Transport for London.
- Both the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and River Corridors Improvement Plan Supplementary Planning Document have been developed to align with the Council's wider strategic priorities along with the Core Strategy objectives and recently updated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The role of the River Corridors Improvement Plan is to explain and elaborate on the policies in Lewisham's Core Strategy (part of the Local Development Framework) in relation to development near rivers.
- The London Borough of Lewisham is working as part of the South East London Flood Risk Management Group (SELFRMG) to manage local flood risk and fulfil our duties and responsibilities under the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 (FRRs) and the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The SELFRMG is made up of the four south east London boroughs:
  - London Borough of Bexley
  - London Borough of Bromley
  - Royal Borough of Greenwich
  - London Borough of Lewisham
- The SELFRMG was formed as part of the Greater London Authority Drain London Programme in 2010 to work together to produce Surface Water Management Plans (SWMP) and Preliminary Flood Risk Assessments (PFRA), the latter was a requirement of the Act. It was agreed that the Group be formalised and membership extended to other risk management authorities to form the South East London Partnership (SELP). The SELP meets every quarter and is made up of the following:
  - SELP representative of the Thames Regional Flood & Coastal Committee
  - SELP representative of the Southern Regional Flood & Coastal Committee
  - Lead councillors from each borough
  - Council officers from each borough
  - Environment Agency
  - Thames Water
- The local Flood Risk Management Strategy must be produced in consultation with risk management authorities that may be affected by the strategy (i.e. the Environment Agency, Transport for London and Thames Water) as well as the public. The LLFA will be responsible for ensuring the strategy is put in place but local partners can agree how to develop it in a way that best suits them.
- Lewisham will prepare a specific Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for the London Borough of Lewisham with a six year action plan to be reviewed annually
- The River Corridors Improvement Plan (Supplementary Planning Document) will provide detailed guidance to positively influence development near rivers, and to ensure that the development positively responds to the rivers and their setting. The River Corridors Improvement Plan (Supplementary Planning Document) will provide co-ordinated

guidance for development and seeks to ensure that development is of high quality and enhances the river setting.

- As the River Corridors Improvement Plan (Supplementary Planning Document) is a statutory requirement that the LLFA develop the local strategy in consultation with flood risk management authorities and the public and from a practical standpoint there are substantial benefits in ensuring local communities acquire a better understanding of local risk management, co-ordinated planning and sustainability. It will also emphasise the need to balance national and local activities and funding.

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

- The final draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and River Corridors Improvement Plan Supplementary Planning Document would be updated in light of the responses to the consultation which has just concluded. It is intended that the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy go to Mayor and Cabinet for sign-off in early June and the River Corridors Improvement Plan in July 2015.
- Ladywell Fields and Cornmill Gardens are 'flood storage areas' that would mitigate the impact of severe flooding along the River Ravensbourne Corridor including Lewisham Town Centre.
- The Lewisham and Catford Flood Alleviation Scheme is looking to build a larger flood storage area as part of the Beckenham Place Park development, and is looking at what further work needs to be done downstream in the Catford, Ladywell and Deptford areas.
- The understanding is that the work being carried out by Allies and Morrison in respect of the Catford Regeneration Scheme does not include flood risk provision.
- There are organisations such as Thames 21 and the Environment Agency who could be interested in obtaining some external funding to undertake river restoration work in Southend Park, which would include which could include opening up the culvert and landscaping the River bank. This could also aid flood alleviation in the immediate area and downstream.
- Thames Water have investigated the matter of 'ground water' in the Forest Hill area, and have found that is not being caused by their work or piping in the area.
- The Government have brought in new regulations which remove the necessity to apply for planning permission to pave over a front garden as long as the surface is permeable. The intention is therefore to encourage permeable driveway surfaces, not prohibit off road parking completely.
- The Committee were told that it was most likely that the Environment Agency was responsible for the small section of the River Quaggy which runs close to Lewisham Police Station as it is classified as 'main river'. However Members queried whether this was actually the case.
- The consultation for the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy received four responses (plus responses from statutory consulted bodies) and River Corridors Improvement Plan Supplementary Planning Document received eight responses (plus responses from statutory consulted bodies).
- In respect of extensions to existing properties, and the policy around adequate and appropriate surface water run-off, these are matters for the

Building Control team. They would base their decisions on the Council's Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) planning document.

- The Council does have an emergency contingency of sandbags, but the Council's policy does not include supplying sandbags to residents, who are expected to make the necessary arrangements to protect their own property.
- All risk management authorities and institutions would have an emergency contingency plan which would include matters such as flood risk.
- The Committee were concerned that some of the key bodies listed as Risk Management Authorities have not responded to the consultation, and they would be interested in seeing their Flood Risk Management Strategies.
- The Committee were concerned that the possible extension of the Bakerloo Line to Lewisham, and the relocation of Lower Sydenham Station might be compromised if the land alongside the Pool River is not secured.

#### 4.3 RESOLVED:

That the Committee recommend to Mayor and Cabinet the following:

- a) Support the opening of the culvert at Southend Park and naturalising the river to aid flood mitigation in the borough.
- b) Ensure that as part of the Council's planning policy guidance on home extensions and renovations, applicants are asked to consider permeable paving for their driveways and gardens. There should also be a borough-wide communications campaign that encourages the construction of permeable paving for driveways.
- c) Investigate who has responsibility for the section of the River Quaggy that runs close to Lewisham Police Station; and whether any development is possible to keep the bus stops in that location.
- d) Publicise to the borough's residents the Council's policy on mitigating flood risk, or any other assistance/help the Council may provide.
- e) The Mayor and Cabinet should assure themselves and the Council that the Local Authority and key partners, such as University Hospital Lewisham and commuter networks alongside utilities, have robust action plans in place for dealing with disasters; and for higher likelihood events such as flooding the Council should actively pursue their feedback and engagement with its policies, and the Mayor should allocate resource to seek a response from all of these key stakeholders, for this strategy and others as they arise.
- f) Investigate who is responsible for the 'ground water' issues that are affecting properties in some parts of the borough, and what the responsible authority is doing to tackle this on-going problem.
- g) Safeguard the land either side of Southend Lane around the railway bridge to ensure that there will be scope for development close to the Pool River, which could include the development and/or relocation of Lower Sydenham Rail Station.

**5. Select Committee work programme**

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

- The items scheduled for the June meeting were as follows:
  - High Streets Review – Report
  - Modern Roads Review – Report
  - Community Budget - work with Lambeth and Southwark to support our vulnerable residents into work
  - Street lighting contract: update
  - Asset Register - SharePoint Demonstration

5.2 In response to questions the Committee were advised:

- The High Streets Review Report would now be moved to the September meeting.
- The Committee were keen to see the Asset Register - SharePoint Demonstration, even if it was not complete.
- The Committee would like some information on who had responsibility for, who maintains, and the cost of maintenance, of the borough’s festive lights to be included in the street lighting contract item.
- The item called ‘Enforcement Review’ would be conducted by a Business Panel working group. The Committee asked to be notified when this particular review would take place, so they could attend if they so wished.

**6. Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet**

6.1 The Committee made a referral to Mayor and Cabinet at 4.3.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

Chair:

-----

Date:

-----