

MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 26 November 2015 at 7.00 pm

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

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Rachel Onikosi (Cabinet Member Public Realm), Councillor Jim Mallory, David Aylward (Build the Lenox), Anthony Benson (Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners), Michael Bryan (Group Service Manager, Strategic Waste Management), Rob Holmans (Director of Regeneration and Asset Management), Katherine Kazantzis (Principal Lawyer), Julian Kingston (Build the Lenox), Sam Kirk (Strategic Waste & Environment Manager), Sue Lawes (Build the Lenox), John Miller (Head of Planning), Gavin Plaskitt (Programme Manager), Helena Russell (Build the Lenox), Janet Senior (Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration), Kevin Sheehan (Executive Director for Customer Services), Nigel Tyrell (Head of Environment) and Roger Raymond (Temporary Scrutiny Manager)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2015

- 1.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2015 be signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 Councillor Curran: a supporter of The Lenox Project Community Interest Company/Build the Lenox Project
Councillor Walsh: a resident of Catford.

The Chair requested that the 'Catford Regeneration Programme Review' item be taken before the 'Build The Lenox' item.

3. Build The Lenox - Update

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- 3.1 Julian Kingston, Director of The Lenox Project gave a presentation to the Committee. The key points to note were:
 - Julian Kingston introduced his colleagues in The Lenox Project to the Committee: Helena Russell (Secretary) Sue Lawes (Graphics and admin support,) and David Aylward (Artistic Advisor and Events Manager).

- The campaign to get the Lenox built on Convoys Wharf has reached a crucial stage, with the GLA-appointed consultant's report on the feasibility of the placing of the Lenox recently published.
- The Lenox Project Team went to City Hall to convince the Mayor of London and the London Assembly of the importance in supporting this project. This culminated in the Mayor of London giving his backing to the project.
- The Mayor of London asked for feasibility study on where the Lenox should be placed. The report has concluded that the Lenox, if built should be placed on the 'protected Wharf' part of the development.
- The Lenox Project would like to re-create the 'double-dock' of the original dock.
- The Lenox Project has a number of supporters, such as Vicky Foxcroft MP, Dame Joan Ruddock, Dan Snow, Boris Johnson, Lewisham Council, the Council for British Archaeology, the World Monuments Fund, Lewisham Southwark College, the Ahoy Centre and the Deptford Society.
- The Lenox Project needs support in putting the Business Case together, and would need to get specialist consultants and architects to push the project forward.
- The project is still working to get funding from the Heritage Fund to support the project and help take it forward.
- There is a similar successful project in Rochefort, France, where the reconstructed 'Hermione' ship was launched in 2012. There is also a successful reconstruction ship called the 'Gótheborg' in Sweden.

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

- The Lenox Project is hoping to obtain the wood from displaced wood for the HS2 project, from rural councils when they manage the trees in their areas, or raise money to purchase wood.
- The option of seeking 'Crowdfunding' financial support is being considered, but the Project would prefer Lottery funding. They are working with the National Maritime Museum to improve their chances of receiving funding. They are also looking to get European Union funding.
- The Project is looking at some funding for premises in Deptford High Street to stabilise their operations.
- The Lenox Project is estimated to cost in the region of £24-27m.
- The Lenox Project hopes to begin raising the funding for the project as soon as they are given the go-ahead, and hope that the whole project will be self-sufficient over the mid-to-long-term as it would become a tourist attraction like its sister-projects in France and Sweden.

3.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee support the project and support the Council to look at the options to support the project within its financial and legal constraints.

4. Catford Regeneration Programme Review - Exclusion of Press and Public

4.1 The Chair noted that item Number 5 was restricted from press and public reporting that:

- 'It is recommended that under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of this item because it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as set out below and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.
- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)'.

5. Catford Regeneration Programme Review - Evidence Session 1

5.1 These minutes are restricted from press and public for the reasons listed in paragraph 4.1 above.

6. Waste & Recycling Service: 'Let's Talk Rubbish' Consultation & Waste Regulations Results

6.1 Sam Kirk, Strategic Waste & Environment Manager, gave a presentation to the Committee. The key points to note were:

- The 'Let's Talk Rubbish' was a programme of public engagement activities that ran for 8 weeks between August and October 2015.
- The outreach work to promote the consultation included:
 - Lewisham Life (to all households)
 - Lewisham Life e-zine to 24,000 recipients,(plus a further 8,000)
 - Ward Assembly Door to Door Leaflets (16 out of 18 ward assemblies)
 - Press release
 - Website (including front page)
- This has been the borough's most popular online consultation, with 5,884 responses and 3,519 additional comments.
- The demographic of those that responded to the consultation were:
 - . The vast majority were Lewisham residents (99%, 5,668)
 - Two-thirds (66%, 3,857) lived in a house with a wheelie bin
 - Over four-fifths (83%, 4,835) had a garden
 - Over three-quarters (78%, 4,424) were of White ethnicity
 - Six out of ten (60%, 3,413) were female
 - Over half (51%, 2,971) were aged between 30-49 years
 - 415 (7%) considered themselves to be disabled
 - Over four-fifths (85%, 4,939) lived in a house, or converted house, with a wheelie bin
- Some of the results to the consultation included:

- 94% (5,515) felt that it was important/very important that we try to recycle more
- 46% (2,715) think that making it easier for residents to recycle is the most important consideration when making changes to the Council's waste and recycling service
- 40% (2,329) think that reducing our impact on the environment is the second most important consideration when making changes to the Council's waste and recycling service
- 67% (3,913) are either satisfied/very satisfied with the current waste and recycling collection services in Lewisham, which is lower than in the resident satisfaction survey
- Dissatisfaction levels are highest amongst converted shops with no frontage 71% (5) and houses with no frontage 38% (17), though sample sizes for both are very small
- 70% (4,097) agree/strongly agree that the Council should introduce a garden waste collection service
- 42% (2,478) disagree/strongly disagree that the Council should make a charge for the garden waste service
- Of total survey respondents, 42% (2,471) would be prepared to pay £80 for an annual subscription to a garden waste service
- Over half ,52%, (3,049) of total survey respondents chose to provide no response to this particular question.
- Some of the key findings of the consultation were:
 - Priorities - The two top priorities were making it easier for residents to recycle and reducing our impact on the environment. The bottom priorities were meeting recycling targets to avoid fines, although 94% felt that we should try to recycle more, and saving money.
 - Separate Collection of Paper – Nearly three quarters agreed that paper should be separately collected for an income, and eight out of ten respondents said that they would be prepared to separate out the paper into a separate box.
 - Food Waste Collections - Over two thirds agreed with the introduction of a weekly food waste service.
 - Frequency of Collections - When asked about fortnightly refuse with weekly food waste collections the results were mixed across the board with 46% in agreement and 41% in disagreement.
 - Garden Waste Collections - Majority agree with introducing a garden waste service (70%), with just over two fifths not agreeing with a charge. Only half answered the question about the level of charge but of those that answered and had a garden, nearly two thirds would pay £80
 - Exemptions - Nearly half agree properties should be exempt from additional containers, but over four fifths would still like to be offered a food waste service and three quarters would be willing to share bins.
- The recommendations and the way forward after the consultation are as follows:
 - Note the results of the 'Let's Talk Rubbish' consultation and Waste Regulations (TEEP) Assessment
 - Introduce a subscription garden waste service from April 2016

- Introduce a weekly food collection service and reduce refuse collections to fortnightly
- Significant service change
- Come back with a proposed timetable, (earliest start Autumn 2016)
- Reduce recycling frequency to fortnightly and keep comingled whilst options to share services and contracts with neighbouring boroughs are explored
- Currently speaking to Bromley, Bexley, Greenwich & Southwark about way to improve recycling cross-boroughs.

Standing Orders were suspended at 9.28pm

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

- The consultation received over 100 comments on garden waste, but the presentation just gave a flavour of the responses.
- The Citizen Forum featured people in street-level properties. Those in flats, and flats above shops, for example, were featured in focus groups.
- The same methodology that the Council uses for its Citizen Juries and similar work was used, but with smaller sample sizes.
- There are some variables such as how many people would take up the subscriptions for garden waste collection and the revenue for recycling, but officers are confident in making the targets expected.
- The start-up costs are not included in the estimates, but all other costs are.
- The Committee would like information on what other London Boroughs are charging for garden waste collection, if they are charging.
- Even if residents do not want to pay the charge for garden waste collection, there is still the option of taking waste to the Reuse and Recycling Centre on Landmann Way.
- There is a legal requirement for 50% of produced waste being recycled; there is a fine for local authorities if this target is not met.

6.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee note the report and presentation.

7. Planning Service Annual Monitoring Report

7.1 John Miller, Head of Planning, introduced the report to the Committee. The key points to note were:

- Local Planning Authorities are required to produce a monitoring report, having collected information during the monitoring year, and to make it available to the public via the Council's website.
- Overall a good supply of housing and affordable housing was completed and approved during 2014-15, progress was made on the strategic sites and there is a resilient supply of housing in the next 15 years but more housing sites will need to be found.
- The 418 net new affordable homes completed during 2014-15 is considerably higher than the previous year. 525 affordable housing units

have been approved at Convoys Wharf and 343 net affordable housing units were also approved by the Council during 2014-15, of which 76 are Local Authority affordable housing units. 24 temporary affordable housing units have also been approved at Ladywell. 52% of the affordable housing completions and 82% of the affordable housing approvals will be located within the Regeneration and Growth Areas, helping to regenerate the borough.

- In the future, it is likely that the target will need to be increased further to 1,650 per annum, in line with the South East London Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), to meet future housing needs. The SHMA was jointly commissioned by the South East London Planning Authorities (boroughs of Lewisham, Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich and Southwark) and completed by consultants in June 2014. To help reduce the longer term shortfall in housing supply and meet the increased target the Council will prepare a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which will identify potential additional housing sites to be included in the 15 year supply.

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

- The Council will be working to increase its attractiveness to business as it continues to oversee the many developments across the borough, such as the Lewisham Gateway.
- The Council's aim of facilitating the re-use of vacant office floorspace is not being met. Instead the stock of purpose built, modern office floorspace, the majority of which is still in use, is being lost.
- The Council is exploring the possibility of using Article 4 Direction powers for Houses of Multi-Occupation (HMO) in the borough in the future.

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

8. High Streets Review: Draft Report and Recommendations

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

- The Committee had to consider and agree the draft review report
- The Committee had to consider the draft recommendations in the report and any other presented by Committee Members.
- The Committee should note that the final report, including the recommendations agreed at this meeting, will be presented to Mayor and Cabinet at the next available opportunity

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

8.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee agree the report and the following recommendations:

- Recommendation 1: Shopping habits, retail centres and high streets are changing, and as a Council we need to make sure that we are keeping

pace. As a Planning Authority, the Council needs to make sure its planning policy is fast, flexible and open minded, so as to readily adapt to multi-configurations and future reconfiguration options that an evolving future high street will need. Lewisham Council should consider how it would deal with non-traditional pop up activity within our Borough, whether that's the top floor of a car park being turned into a garden market restaurant and farm, or a unit that has a rolling programme of pop ups with an activity programme that cuts across several planning class uses.

- Recommendation 2: Lewisham is establishing a positive name as a Local Authority for being open to innovation in our town centres and high streets. Projects such as the Mary Portas SEE3 pilots, Street Feast Model Market project or the Catford Canteen have all added to that reputation – and serious consideration should be given on how we can embed that opinion and increase the number of these opportunities setting up in our borough.
- Recommendation 3: The Council should look to help with the reimagining of our public space through 'place making' and creating town centres with 'experiential' entertainment activity. The Council should look at directly funding, or working with other funding partners (Regional National & European), to facilitate the animation of our high streets, through pop-up shops, arts and community activity. It was also noted that "quirk" and "experience" were key 'pull' drivers for visitors to commercial/entertainment centres, and any such activity should look to capitalise on those elements.
- Recommendation 4: The Council should look at further developing night time economies across the Borough to offer a rich mix of restaurants, bars, recreational activities, and cinemas. During the committee's deliberations it became apparent that for large high streets and town centres to thrive, there needs to be a mix of retail, commercial, and entertainment and have both day and night time usage. There are some sections of our communities like young professionals and students that can significantly add to making a night time economy viable. It would therefore be desirable for the Council to enter talks with local post compulsory education providers to discuss ways in which we could create the conditions for more students to live in the locality of Lewisham and Catford Town centres.
- Recommendation 5: the Council needs to develop a clear, proactive 'Meanwhile Use' policy, for commercial properties where it is a landlord either directly or at arm's length. This policy needs to realise that an empty property has a significant impact upon local amenity and the perception of the success of a high streets. It is this committees position that it is more desirable for a 'meanwhile tenant' to be brought in so as to animate a section of a high street or town centre, at a peppercorn rent, then having an empty decaying shell that is bringing in no rent or business rates. The Council should also look at developing partnership with meanwhile use charities/organisations, for both meanwhile usage of council voids, but also as a service that we promote to external commercial property freeholders across the Borough. The Council should also take learnings from the collaboration between Brent Council and Locality, in their establishment of

www.meanwhile.org.uk and any other similar meanwhile use charity, so as to fully understand the scope and potential we can unlock.

- Recommendation 6: For the Council to do more about poor quality frontages on our high streets. Our high streets can be blighted by run down frontages from both active and inactive commercial properties, much like the 'broken window' theory an ill-kept property on a high street can cause further deterioration in the locality. It is therefore recommended that the Council give much greater consideration to the use of 'section 215 notices' on high street properties that give powers to the Local Authority to be able require property owners to improve their land/property to stop negatively affecting local amenity.
- Recommendation 7: It is recommended that the Council give consideration to extending its 'free for 30 minutes' parking policy that operates in places like Sydenham, to other high streets and shopping areas around Lewisham.
- Recommendation 8: The role of markets, such as that in Lewisham Town Centre, as a key asset of the borough, that animates the town centre and meets the needs of a broader spectrum of shoppers than supermarkets alone, must be protected. However it is recommended that the Council invest in the aesthetic of the Market so as to improve the visual impact of the locality.
- Recommendation 9: Committee noted that the commercial/retail offer in mixed use planning developments, seemed to create vacant units that could often remain as such for a significant periods of time. It is therefore recommended that we review the combination of mixes and configurations that we are offering, to include planning use classes of A3, D1, D2, and in so doing improve the amenity of an area.

9. Select Committee Work Programme

9.1 Roger Raymond, Scrutiny Manager, introduced the report. The key points to note were:

- The items scheduled for the January 2016 meeting were as follows:
 - Catford Regeneration Programme Review – Evidence Session 2
 - Asset Register (asset management system)
- The Committee should also discuss which external witnesses it would like for Evidence Session 2.

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

- A witness from TfL should be considered for Evidence Session 2 for the Catford Regeneration Programme Review.
- The Scrutiny Manager will write to Members about other suggestions for witnesses for the Catford Regeneration Programme Review.

- The Scrutiny Manager will discuss with the Chair if any items needed to be added before the meeting on 14 January 2016

10. Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet

10.1 No items were referred to Mayor and Cabinet.

The meeting ended at 10.10 pm

Chair:

Date:
