

# MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 10 March 2020 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Liam Curran (Chair), Patrick Codd (Vice-Chair), Obajimi Adefiranye, Suzannah Clarke, Mark Ingleby, Louise Krupski, Alan Smith and James-J Walsh

APOLOGIES: Councillors Pauline Morrison

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Sophie McGeevor (Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport), Vince Buchanan (Green Spaces Contracts Manager), Viv Evans (Head of Programmes - Complex Projects), Paul Moore (Interim Director for Regeneration and Place), Martin O'Brien (Climate Resilience Manager), Sandra Plummer (Senior Project Manager), Nick Pond (Parks and Open Space Contracts and Service Development Manager) and Sarah Walsh (Regeneration and Urban Realm Programme Manager)

## 1. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2020

- 1.1 Members discussed the minutes and agreed that a minor amendment would be made under 5.3 to clarify that the 'unknown' impacts of the implementation of the 'ultra-low emission zone' related specifically to parking.
- 1.2 It was also noted that the 'green corridor' described in Lee Green and Grove Park was the Railway Children Urban National Park initiative.
- 1.3 **Resolved:** that subject to the minor amendments noted – the minutes be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting held on 21 January 2020.

## 2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 Councillor Curran declared a non-prejudicial interest as a Director of the Baring Trust.
- 2.2 Councillor Ingleby declared non-prejudicial interests as a Director of Lewisham Homes and as the Chair of the Friends of Grove Park nature reserve.
- 2.3 Councillor Walsh declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to item five as a member of the Co-operative Party.
- 2.4 Councillor Smith declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to item six – as the Chair of Trustees of the Groundwork Trust (which is administering the 'Good Growth Fund' on behalf of the Greater London Authority).

## 3. Responses from Mayor and Cabinet

- 3.1 There were none.

## 4. Flood risk

- 4.1 Martin O'Brien (Climate Resilience Manager) introduced the report. He summarised Lewisham's duties and powers as a lead local flood authority as well as outlining current opportunities and challenges. This included commentary about key locations susceptible to flooding (and flood alleviation projects) in the borough.
- 4.2 Martin O'Brien responded to questions from the Committee - the following key points were noted:
- Every London Authority is a lead local flood authority.
  - Officers are building the evidence base in order to enable future funding decisions to be made (principally by the Environment Agency).
  - Planning rules require that new developments be designed to minimise surface water runoff and the associated risk of flooding.
  - Responsibilities are with landowners to maintain water ways on their land (additional information would be provided about the enforcement).
  - The Environment Agency has responsibility for flooding around the Quaggy river – and it designs the flood alleviation measures along its course.
  - Assessments have been carried out on the Quaggy following flooding of Chinbrook meadows. Further information is due from the Agency.
  - Prioritisation of flood alleviation measures is based on risk.
  - Work is being carried out to develop a remedy to the broken pipework which runs underneath Hither Green Cemetery. The Council is funding the investigation with the intention that Network Rail and Thames Water fund the remedial work.
- 4.3 **Resolved:** The Committee noted that there was frequent flooding in the vicinity of Verdant Lane and Hither Green Cemetery. In particular – it recognised local residents concerns about the flooding of the former Willow Tree riding stables site (adjacent to Northbrook Park) because of its ecological significance. As such - the Committee agreed it would refer its views to Mayor and Cabinet as follows –
- The Committee recommends that the Council should carry out further investigations into the former Willow Tree riding stables site –as an important location for managing flood water runoff and of nature conservation.
  - The Committee believes that additional consideration has to be given to the capacity of the Thames Barrier to protect London from flooding. The Climate Emergency – and the impending melting of the Greenland ice shelf may result in rises in sea levels which are far beyond the Environment Agency's current projections. The Committee intends to carry out further scrutiny of the Environment Agency regarding this issue and it would welcome the support of Mayor and Cabinet in this regard.

## 5. Parks and open spaces strategy

- 5.1 Nick Pond (Parks and Open Space Contracts and Service Development Manager) introduced the report. He provided a summary of: the actions taken

to develop the strategy; an overview of the timetable for its development; the rationale for the new vision and the purpose of the action plan.

5.2 Nick Pond and Vince Buchanan responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- The information about play space in the strategy was based on the research carried out for the open spaces assessment (considered previously by the Committee). One of the limitations of the research was that it only considered play spaces in Lewisham's parks and open spaces – so some play spaces outside of the borough (accessible to Lewisham residents) did not feature.
- The new strategy is more focused than the old strategy on the areas in which the Council can make a difference.
- The targets in the new strategy are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound).
- It is important to ensure there is a balance between providing art in parks and maintaining natural features and spaces.
- Officers work with parks user groups to try to ensure that parks can accommodate a range of uses.

5.3 **Resolved:** the Committee agreed to refer its views to Mayor and Cabinet as follows.

- The Committee welcomes the new parks and open space strategy and asks in particular that consideration be given to the recommendations in its 'parks management and maintenance' review.
- Furthermore, the Committee supports the development of linkages between green areas and it reiterates its support for the 'Railway Children Urban National Park' initiative - as outlined in the Grove Park neighbourhood plan. It recommends this should be referenced in the parks and open space strategy and - that the Council should undertake to update the assessments of the sites of nature conservation in the area covered by the proposal.
- The Committee welcomes and encourages the plan to develop a corporate natural capital account for Lewisham.
- The Committee recommends that careful attention should be given to the best ways of engaging with disabled young people - as well as their parents and carers - regarding the development of the accessible play strategy.
- The Committee recommends that the parks and open space strategy should reference the Lewisham cycling strategy and -in particular- the opportunities that parks and open spaces provide to enable active travel.
- The Committee recommends that Mayor and Cabinet should task officers with considering whether there are elements of the parks and open space strategy that can be delivered using neighbourhood community infrastructure levy funding.
- The Committee believes that parks and open spaces can provide opportunities for younger and older people to meet and interact. It recommends that Mayor and Cabinet should ensure that the design for all new public spaces in the borough builds on best practice in terms of intergenerational design.

## 6. Catford regeneration update

6.1 Paul Moore (Interim Director for Regeneration and Place), Viv Evans (Head of Programmes) and Sarah Walsh (Regeneration and Urban Realm Programme Manager) introduced the report. They provided an overview of the work that had taken place since the last update to the Committee. This included information about: the award of grant of funding from the 'Good Growth Fund'; progress with the development of the town centre master plan and an overview of recent public consultation.

6.2 Paul Moore, Viv Evans, Sarah Walsh and Sandra Plummer (Senior Project Manager) responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- The intention of the team is that the draft master plan for Catford town centre be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in early June (with pre-decision scrutiny by the Select Committee).
- The 'greening' of the town centre will be an important part of the new master plan.
- As the plan develops – there will be more detail about the pedestrian linkages and cycle infrastructure in the town centre.
- The team recognises the importance of ensuring good communication with stakeholders and the local community.
- It is important to emphasise Catford's difference and uniqueness (particularly to distinguish it from the larger retail centre in Lewisham).
- Additional funding had been secured by Transport for London to develop the programme for the relocation of the A205. The Council is working in partnership with TfL and the Greater London Authority to progress early improvements to the existing road network (in the next two or three years).

6.3 **Resolved:** the Committee agreed that it would refer its views to Mayor and Cabinet as follows –

- The Committee recommends that there should be clear communication with local people about plans for different phases of the development of the town centre – in order to manage people's expectations about the scheme and to offer reassurance that the whole centre will not be under construction at the same time.
- The Committee supports the early implementation of plans for improving the safety of pedestrians and cyclists through the town centre – specifically in relation to the in the bottle neck on the A205 on the bridge over the Hayes line.
- The Committee recommends that there should be a strategy for the regeneration of the Broadway theatre.
- The Committee recommends that targeted consultation should continue with a specific focus on: business people; residents who do not have access to the internet and 'seldom heard voices' (specifically across different socio-economic groups).
- The Committee recommends that there should be a 'civic strategy' for the town centre – which recognises the importance of the Council as a key

institution and develops linkages between the delivery of its services to residents and those delivered by other public and third sector organisations.

- The Committee recommends that public spaces in the town centre are designed in line with best practice in order to enable intergenerational connections.
- The Committee recommends that the master plan for the town centre highlights Lewisham’s digital and creative opportunities.

## 7. Select Committee work programme

7.1 The Committee discussed the work programme for its (provisional) meeting in May 2020. It was agreed that the pre-decision scrutiny of the Catford town centre master plan should be the principal item on the agenda. It was also agreed that Rushey Green and Catford councillors should be invited to attend that meeting.

7.2 The Committee also discussed the planned changes to the structure of Overview and Scrutiny.

7.3 **Resolved:** that the following items would be proposed as potential topics for ‘task and finish’ groups in 2020-21 –

- The retrofitting of sustainable drainage for housing developments
- Lessons learnt from development in the north of the borough
- Waste management and recycling
- Securing the enduring legacy of the borough of culture award

The meeting ended at 10.15 pm

Chair:

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Date:

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