

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUSINESS PANEL

Tuesday 20 July 2021 at 7pm

Present: Councillor Maslin, Councillor Krupski, Councillor Muldoon.

Present remotely: Councillor Sorba, Councillor Holland, Councillor Campbell, Councillor Bernards.

Apologies: Councillor Wise, Councillor Millbank, Councillor Codd.

1. Minutes

Councillor Krupski had asked a question on the item regarding the allocation of section 106 funds for new affordable homes about the mortgage payments being secure against the rental value of the property and whether the client being put in the rental property would be able to afford the amount of money that needed to be made. She asked that the question and answer be detailed in the last minutes.

The minutes of the last meeting were otherwise agreed.

2. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

3. Key Decision Plan

The Head of Business and Committee presented this item. The report outlined the upcoming key decisions over the next few months.

There were no questions from Members.

RESOLVED that the report was noted.

4. District Heating Report

The Chair stated that the report was at the meeting for noting and information. The Asset Management Planning Manager for Regeneration and Place and the Sustainability Manager presented this item.

It was discussed that when a carbon baseline was done for the borough, it was noted that the biggest challenge in decarbonising the borough was the issue of gas use. The two main solutions that were being put forward were a) connection to a low

carbon district network or b) utilising electric heat pumps. After studying the scope of district networks, it was identified that the three main clusters were around the Deptford and New Cross area which would be predominantly served by SELCHP; the Lewisham Town Centre area; and an emerging cluster in the Catford area.

There is an opportunity for the Council where there are existing legacy systems that are owned by predominantly private sectors that are powered by combined energy and there are a lot of these in developing areas. There is an opportunity to enable the decarbonising of the existing legacy systems through running a low-carbon district network.

RESOLVED that the report was noted.

5. Decisions by the Mayor and Cabinet

The Chair received a request for the Panel to consider the decision taken by the Mayor on the 9th June regarding Besson Street.

Councillor Sorba spoke on this matter stating that he spoke in favour of the plan at a Planning Committee meeting. 114 homes will be available at London Living Rent costs. At the time of the planning application, there was an intent that the homes would release some of the pressures that key workers and those in private accommodation paying high rent were under. He asked what was legally viable in order to arrange that the prospective tenants are those that are identified by Council policies as those most in need of the affordable accommodation.

Councillor Bell responded that a new register would have to be created and would need to define what a key worker is. He stated that the scheme is moving slower than hoped due to a number of challenges but is now moving forward. Officers highlighted in addition that the rent is determined based on the income of that ward.

Councillor Krupski asked when completion is expected. Officers responded that late 2022 is when work will begin and completion in 2025.

RESOLVED that the report was noted.

6. Decisions by Executive Director

No requests were made for the Panel to consider any decisions.

The item was closed.

7. Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee Work Programmes

The Head of Scrutiny presented this item.

It was discussed that the 6 select committees have had their first cycle of meetings and have agreed work programmes ahead of the municipal year which focus on key policy issues and change.

The key areas of work for the Committees were as follows: Sustainable Development will be looking at the Local Plan; Public Accounts and Healthier Communities will be looking at adult social care; Housing will be looking at the Empty Homes Strategy; Children and Young People will be looking at Elective Home Education; Safer will be looking into the use of the term BAME.

Councillor Muldoon announced that the report on the Birmingham and Lewisham African and Caribbean Health Inequalities review is going to be taken in November which as advised by the Director of Public Health is more timely.

Councillor Campbell highlighted an amendment to the Safer and Stronger agenda- that the June meeting had a report on the Violence against Women and Girls strategy and will be added also to the September agenda.

RESOLVED that the Panel agreed the work programme.

8. Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no request to consider the closed items on the agenda. Therefore the Chair concluded the meeting.