

Minutes of the Sustainable Development Select Committee

Tuesday, 23 November 2021 at 7.00 pm

In attendance: Councillors James-J Walsh (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), Obajimi Adefiranye, Leo Gibbons and Mark Ingleby and Councillor Paul Maslin (Chair of Overview and Scrutiny)

Also joining the meeting virtually: Councillor Suzannah Clarke

Apologies: Councillor Louise Krupski

Also present: Councillor Liam Curran (online), Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager), Erik Nilsen (Principal Planning Officer) (online), David Syme (Head of Strategic Planning) (online) and Emma Talbot (Director of Planning) (online)

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 15 September 2021

1.1 **Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September be agreed as an accurate record.

2. Declarations of interest

2.1 Councillor Mark Ingleby declared an interest in relation to item four as Chair of the Friends of Grove Park Nature Reserve.

2.2 Councillor Liam Curran (attending under standing orders) declared an interest in relation to item four as a Director of the Baring Trust.

2.3 Councillor Suzannah Clarke declared an interest in relation to item four as a member of the Grove Park neighbourhood forum.

3. Responses from Mayor and Cabinet

3.1 **Resolved:** That the response from Mayor and Cabinet be noted.

4. Lewisham Local Plan - regulation 19 stage 'proposed submission'

4.1. David Syme introduced the report – noting the previous briefings, updates and information provided to members on the development, scope and purpose of the new local plan. He also outlined the current programme of engagement and updates to the local plan evidence base – including a summary of the 'regulation 18' consultation as well as the additional work carried out as a result of the consultation and the revised programme being proposed. Midway through the meeting David also spoke to a PowerPoint presentation, which is published with the minutes. In the presentation he provided an overview of the key projects, locations and site allocations in the

borough for the five sub areas (southern, central, western eastern, northern) - as well as feedback and key issues from the consultation

4.2 David Syme, Emma Talbot and Erik Nilsen responded to questions from the Committee – the following key points were noted:

- The consultation carried out on the local plan was one of the largest in London (with only the London Borough of Southwark receiving more responses to its regulation 18 consultation of those boroughs which were benchmarked by officers).
- That the 'urban national park' is recognised in the plan (within the vision for the East Area, in Part 3) – but that this did not have a formally recognised designation in planning terms so reference had been made to the network of linear spaces in the east of the borough.
- It was important not to create new terminology outside of the hierarchy of planning terms that may not be recognised in planning discussions and appeals.
- The absence of detailed drafting in the third part of the plan was deliberate in order to enable the Committee to consider public consultation feedback on the Part 3 proposals and for members' comments to be reflected in the final draft.
- The challenges related to ensuring different sizes of property and different tenures were available for different sizes of household were recognised.
- The work on the workspace strategy being developed by the Economy and Partnerships team was being aligned with the local plan process.
- The Article 4 Direction provides for the removal of permitted development rights in the selected southern wards of the borough to develop houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) – but that this did not stop proposals from HMOs being submitted and approved (just that they now required planning permission to show that they were compliant with policy).
- That further consideration would be given to the guidance on the right locations and quality of HMOs, as well as potential scope for the extension of the Article 4 Direction area.
- It was recognised there was a requirement for affordable workspace, based on local evidence and consultation feedback.
- The recent changes to the planning use classes order by the Government to enable businesses and landowners to more easily change the use of their premises – and whilst recognising this can support the economic recovery the challenge that this entailed for the Council to manage the mix of uses in the borough, particularly in town centres.
- Welcoming of the '15 minute neighbourhood' concept – and the alignment of this idea with generally sound town planning principles.
- Recognition of Lewisham as the commercial centre of the borough and Catford as its cultural and civic heart.
- The ambition for a thriving evening and night time economy as well as cultural and entertainment locations in the borough.

- The work taking place on a small sites supplementary planning document to make a more optimal use of land and enable development of new homes.
- The hierarchy of town centre uses had been reviewed during the preparation of the draft Local Plan and feedback on changes to the hierarchy considered through the regulation 18 consultation. The evidence indicated that Hither Green lane (rather than Staplehurst Road) was one of the principal centres in the central sub area but in light of member comments, officers would consider the evidence again.
- There was a specific standalone policy on trees and urban greening (for the first time) in the local plan – but mention could also be made of the importance of street trees as part of the initiative for healthy streets.
- An amendment would be made to the regulation 19 document on a mapping error relating to metropolitan open land.
- Further information would be provided to members about the strategy and proposals for sensitive intensification along Baring Road in Grove Park.
- Work took place with partners to develop the borough's Infrastructure Delivery Plan – the existing plan reflected the regulation 18 consultation. In terms of green infrastructure – this reflected the agreed parks and open spaces strategy. However, this did not mean that it could not be updated.
- It was recognised that further work would be required on the plans for Downham – and in particular the links into Beckenham Place Park.
- Officers were engaging with Transport for London about the progress with the outcome definition study for the A21.
- There was extensive feedback from the community regarding the SELCHP (South East London Combined Heat and Power) facility.
- Legislation required that London must manage its own waste (achieve net waste self-sufficiency) and that the London Plan apportions an amount of waste for each London borough to manage.
- Work was taking place between five south east London boroughs to consider the future of SELCHP. It was a requirement of the London Plan that any site being used for waste management could not be developed for alternative uses without re-provision of facilities for managing equivalent amount of waste capacity within London.
- Work was also taking place to maximise the potential future benefits of the heat recovery/district heating potential from SELCHP.
- It was recognised that a balance had to be struck between residential and industrial uses in the north of the borough. The Council was supportive of innovative, lighter, cleaner industries and industrial uses.
- There were a number of schemes to improve public realm and transport infrastructure in the north of the borough.
- It was expected that there would be a decrease in out of centre retail space. This was encouraged by the London Plan in order to make better use of land.
- Comments from the community about the potential for development in Rushey Green had been noted (particularly in relation to the current site of the Aldi supermarket).

- Further consideration would be given to the strategic objectives in the plan and the goal to reduce inequality.

4.3 In the Committee's discussion – the following key points were also noted:

- Recognition and welcome of the additional targeted consultation with members of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups in order to reflect a plurality of opinions about the future of the borough. As well as the importance of engaging with different communities about the requirements for cultural and entertainment locations.
- The interest and willingness to support the creation of an urban district park in Grove Park – and the motion that had been passed by Council supporting the designation of this new district park.
- The proposal that the district park be included in the infrastructure delivery plan – and included on the borough's list of green infrastructure.
- Members support for the protection and retention of trees.
- The importance of mixed tenure types and mixed communities.
- Concern about infill and back garden development on small sites.
- Ensuring that the balance (and location) of homes in multiple occupation in the borough met housing need – without over concentration of poor adaptations and damage to the amenity of residential streets.
- Alignment of the local plan terminology with the new waste strategy as it relates to the location of markets.
- That the Committee would welcome sight of the updated infrastructure delivery plan in advance of Mayor and Cabinet.

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

- The Committee welcomes the updates to the Local Plan and it congratulates the planning team for its efforts in engaging with residents – particularly in the context of the difficulties posed by the global pandemic. The Committee believes that the benefits of the online engagement carried out should be captured, the valuable lessons learned and that the good practice identified should be disseminated across the Council. Members also note and welcome the work to ensure seldom heard voices are given further opportunity to feed into this key place making document.
- The Committee notes the motion of full Council supporting the creation of an integrated district park in Grove Park as an essential part of the borough's green infrastructure¹.

¹ At its meeting on 21 July 2021 the full Council [resolved](#) to: **Work** with the local community and support community-led projects which seek to enhance and improve this land; **Engage** key partners, landowners and stakeholders in the area, such as Network Rail, Thames Water, the Environment Agency, the GLA and Transport for London, and seek to secure their support for the creation of an integrated District Park, as well as working together to ensure responsible land management and the protection of this important green corridor; **Maintain** the current protections in this area and seek to prevent inappropriate development; **Hold** private landowners accountable for breaches of planning law, taking enforcement action where appropriate; **Explore** all feasible options for acquisition when land in private ownership in this area becomes available.

- The Committee recommends that the Grove Park District Park should be specifically named and included in the Lewisham Local Plan as well as the updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan (which supports the Local Plan).
- The Committee also recommends that the Grove Park District Park should be included in Lewisham’s strategic infrastructure list of green infrastructure.
- Furthermore, the Committee believes that all of the borough’s sites of importance for nature conservation (SINCs) should be individually named.

5. Select Committee work programme

5.1 **Resolved:** that the agenda for the meeting on 18 January be agreed.

The meeting ended at 21:40

Chair:

Date:
