

Open Agenda



OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on Monday 10 November 2014
at 7.00 pm at 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Gavin Edwards (Chair)
Councillor Rosie Shimell (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Anood Al-Samerai
Councillor Jasmine Ali
Councillor Karl Eastham
Councillor Tom Flynn
Councillor Dan Garfield (Reserve)
Councillor Rebecca Lury
Councillor Claire Maugham
Councillor Adele Morris

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Mark Williams, Cabinet Member, Regeneration, Planning & Transport

ALSO PRESENT: Mr John Tizard

OFFICER SUPPORT: Simon Bevan, Director of Planning
Norman Coombe, Legal Services
Peter Roberts, Scrutiny Project Manager

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Dale and Johnson Situ. Councillor Dan Garfield attended as a reserve for Councillor Situ.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

2.1 There were no urgent items.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

3.1 There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

4. CORPORATE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

- 4.1 John Tizard gave a brief presentation to the committee. Councillor Claire Maugham asked Mr Tizard for his view on the potential role of scrutiny in procurement and monitoring of contracts. Mr Tizard suggested that in respect of major contracts the committee might expect the client officer, cabinet member and provider to appear before it and that this expectation could be built into contracts. Before being let, a clear statement was needed about what the contract sought to achieve and the cabinet member and officers could be held to account for performance of the contract in relation to this. If outsourcing was being considered in respect of a specific contract, the committee's role might be to question whether this was appropriate, whether it was the right approach and whether alternatives were being looked at. The committee could also hold the relevant cabinet member to account in terms of their political objectives.
- 4.2 Councillor Claire Maugham said that, in her view, social value was important rather than simply focusing on the lowest price contract. Mr Tizard commented that the Social Value Act was a good enabler and that the new European procurement regulations allowed for social factors to be taken into account. A business and political case could be made for the economic benefits of the living wage. Mr Tizard added that the GLA insisted on the living wage for their contracts.
- 4.3 Councillor Adele Morris wondered whether in other authorities there were separate committees to look at procurement and contract management. Mr Tizard was not aware of any authorities with separate contract review committees. He suggested that a relevant scrutiny committee could look at contracts relating to its service areas. At the same time there might be an argument to set up a group of specialists. He emphasised that the default position should be to hold such meetings in the public. He also emphasised that the person with operational responsibility for the service should be asked to attend meetings.
- 4.4 Councillor Dan Garfield asked Mr Tizard whether he had any advice on specific services, like IT, where there were probably only a small number of companies that could operate on the scale required. Mr Tizard commented that some major IT companies claimed to want to deliver social value. He also wondered whether this was an issue to share with other authorities, giving bigger buying power, or one where it was important at the least to be aware of what other London boroughs were doing. It was worth asking the question of whether a range of business processes could be put around IT as part of a contract.
- 4.5 Councillor Tom Flynn explained that the housing & community safety scrutiny sub-committee was looking at the housing repairs contract and that it was not easy to scrutinise a contract which included a great deal of subcontracting. In Mr Tizard's view, those companies that were serious about working in the public sector market

would adapt to its demands in terms of contract management. Requirements for ongoing scrutiny of performance needed to be set out in the original contract. Protocols and audit rights in respect of financial data should be agreed in advance.

- 4.6 Councillor Jasmine Ali asked what could be done with the council's existing contracts. She also asked Mr Tizard's view on the council's drive towards apprenticeships. Mr Tizard responded that apprenticeships could be made a condition in a contract but that the council would have to recognise the possible additional costs involved. In terms of existing contracts, he saw no reason why scrutiny could not ask questions of officers and cabinet members in respect of performance against SLAs and how often these were reviewed and changed. It should also be possible to directly question providers.
- 4.7 The chair, Councillor Gavin Edwards, asked Mr Tizard if he would be surprised that Southwark often had Gateway One reports, setting out procurement strategies, submitted to cabinet which were all ready fully formed reports and essentially the decision to procure already made. It was difficult to halt an already ongoing process. Mr Tizard felt that this was very common in local authorities. There needed to be consultation on the original decision, not necessarily with the aim of changing it, but it was likely that questions could be asked to achieve a better specification and procurement. Cabinet members and officers should be encouraged to be more open and transparent about the procurement process. The chair wondered if a possible way of addressing this was for large service level contracts to be subject to a "Gateway zero" report and for that report to come to a scrutiny committee before going to cabinet. Mr Tizard added that it was important to talk to service users, staff, unions and the voluntary sector, amongst others, so that this was not just an internal process.

5. CABINET MEMBER INTERVIEW - COUNCILLOR MARK WILLIAMS, REGENERATION, PLANNING & TRANSPORT

- 5.1 Councillor Mark Williams, cabinet member for regeneration and transport, outlined key priorities in his portfolio. These included increasing the number of affordable homes, getting as many people as possible into work, making Southwark a good place to live in and the council's public health duties which he saw as being at the heart of regeneration schemes, planning and transport policy.
- 5.2 In response to a question from the chair, Councillor Gavin Edwards, Councillor Williams updated the committee on the Elephant & Castle shopping centre. He explained that Delancey were currently out to consultation on the plans for the site and expected this to conclude in the spring of next year. Councillor Williams emphasised that the council wanted a development that fitted with the wider regeneration at the Elephant & Castle and was waiting for Delancey's plans to come forward. He added that TfL was providing £153 million towards transport

improvements at the Elephant & Castle, including the Northern Line station which was a key part of the Delancey site. The chair asked what the level of engagement was with existing retailers in the shopping centre. Councillor Williams responded that anxiety was understandable and that a number of shopkeepers had written to him. He stressed that the council's role in the shopping centre was as a planning authority. It had been made clear to Delancey that they had to engage with current businesses to help them through the transition and to find a new home. He was sure that Delancey would be happy to comment on any particular issues.

- 5.3 Councillor Jasmine Ali highlighted that Southwark was a very exciting place to live and that the borough was experiencing lots of regeneration. She asked how the council could maintain the diversity of Southwark. Councillor Williams agreed that this was a priority and gave the co-design process on the Gateway Peckham Station project as an example of the council's attempt to consult with as many people as possible living close by or coming through the area. There would also be a need to consult on regeneration of the Aylesbury in order to ensure that what was built now would continue to work in the long term.
- 5.4 Councillor Tom Flynn drew attention to the two potential routes for the Bakerloo Line extension and asked the cabinet member whether he would be joining the march on 29 November coming through Camberwell. He also suggested that other measures could be taken to ease the pressure of traffic in the local area for instance re-opening Camberwell Station. Councillor Williams stated that he supported both the Camberwell and Peckham routes and that he would be on the march. He agreed that it was key to re-open Camberwell Station and also to extend the 136 bus route from Peckham to the Elephant & Castle.
- 5.5 Councillor Claire Maugham asked the cabinet member what was being done to improve pedestrian and road safety especially around the Elephant & Castle. Councillor Williams replied that the 20 mph zone was being rolled out and would be completed by Christmas. Funding had been set aside to look at areas where physical interventions would slow down traffic. The council was working with the metropolitan police to enforce this. Councillor Rosie Shimmel was concerned whether self enforcement of 20 mph zones would be effective. She asked what monitoring would exist and what could be done to enforce the zones. Councillor Williams replied that there would be post implementation monitoring. Where the average speed was above 20 mph the council was looking at physical changes to the roads. In terms of enforcement, the council wanted the police to enforce where there were infringement hotspots. Councillor Williams explained that pedestrian crossing times could not be changed without TfL permission but that the council was continuing to push TfL on this issue and asked for information as to any particular sites to be lobbied on. Councillor Williams added that the council hoped to improve the look and feel of the Elephant & Castle, including the new peninsular and the northern roundabout. Councillor Karl Eastham pointed out that, before the

election, two extra pedestrian crossings had been promised for Borough High Street and the New Kent Road. He also raised the accessibility of Elephant Park to residents on the Rockingham estate. Councillor Williams explained that one of the two crossings would be done by the summer of next year and that he would get back to Councillor Eastham with details. Crossings on the New Kent Road depended to an extent on the final design of the Delancey scheme. The council was pushing for as many cycle routes crossings and pedestrian crossings as possible.

- 5.6 Councillor Adele Morris stressed that the borough desperately needed both new homes and new jobs. In terms of consultation on the Southwark plan, she asked how much could be changed and how much weight would be given to the concerns of residents. Councillor Williams assured the committee that the council would continue to listen to residents and would be looking at all consultation responses.
- 5.7 Councillor Rebecca Lury asked the cabinet member for his vision for the Old Kent Road and asked how businesses could be supported. Councillor Williams stated that the council wanted to clean and improve street furniture and was looking at greening the area. He would write to ward members with details. The council was working with the GLA on consultation on a draft area action plan. In terms of businesses, the council was creating a business atlas of who was operating and trading in the area. The council's aim was to increase jobs on the Old Kent Road. Councillor Williams stated that his vision was for a town centre with more homes, including council homes and affordable properties, and underground stops. The council was liaising with Lewisham Council to ensure that the area fitted together across the borders.
- 5.8 Councillor Anood Al-Samerai asked the timescales for the London Bridge public realm planning. Councillor Williams clarified that the decision had to be made for the southern entrance to the station to be opened by 2016. Additional changes were being looked at to take account of changes to Saint Thomas' Street. In the longer term the council was looking at links to Bermondsey Street. Councillor Williams explained that traffic along Tooley Street would be westbound only from 2016 for 2 to 3 years to facilitate works at the station. The public realm would be improved after these were completed. The council was looking to do a study on how best to pull economic activity into Bermondsey.
- 5.9 Councillor Anood Al-Samerai emphasised that borough-wide there was a desperate need for affordable housing and stated that her biggest concern was that the area did not need luxury apartments. She felt that problems originated with relations with developers and highlighted an ongoing viability battle at the Heygate. Councillor Al-Samerai asked the cabinet member whether he was aware that Simon Hughes MP had put in a freedom of information request (FoI) relating to correspondence between Southwark and ICO and whether he would make a

commitment to looking into this. Councillor Williams reminded the committee that the council had a strong record of delivering new affordable homes, and had delivered more than any other London Borough in the last three years. The council had secured a very good deal on the Heygate site. The legal process was ongoing with another hearing on the 11th or 13th of December. The council was working very closely with local residents. In respect of the FoI request, Councillor Williams would look at this and reply direct to Councillor Al-Samerai.

- 5.10 Councillor Dan Garfield commented that Walworth Road station had been closed for the same period as Camberwell Station. The effect of regeneration would be to double housing density on the Aylesbury and increase the number of potential travellers. He wondered how seriously network rail and TfL were taking the re-opening of the two stations. Councillor Williams agreed that there would be a lot more homes. Once agreement had been reached over the extension of the Bakerloo Line then the Walworth Station option and the sites of any potential underground stations could be looked at.

6. APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL'S CYCLING STRATEGY 2014 - CONSULTATION DRAFT

- 6.1 Councillor Mark Williams, the cabinet member for regeneration, planning and transport, introduced the report. The chair, Councillor Gavin Edwards, commented that the cycling strategy brought together best practice from across the country and internationally. He sought clarification of the status of the document. Councillor Williams explained that the strategy included concrete plans, schemes that were already underway and future proposals. The final strategy would be adopted in March of next year and the new Southwark plan would make reference to the strategy.
- 6.2 The vice-chair, Councillor Rosie Shimell, queried the funding that backed the strategy. She highlighted the £2 million ring-fenced for cycling (page 60 of the report) and asked what this was intended to deliver. Councillor Williams explained that this was a discretionary fund set aside prior to May 2014. It was intended to fund projects identified in the strategy, especially changes to the road network which would make up the Southwark Spine cycle route. In Councillor Shimell's view, the Spine was the priority. She asked how much the Spine might cost and what would be left over to deliver the rest of the strategy. Councillor Williams replied that the final route of the Spine was not set in stone but it was being costed at the moment. Other funding would be available through planning gain for instance at the Elephant & Castle.
- 6.3 Councillor Tom Flynn commented that he was particularly impressed by the Exchanging Places and cycle loan schemes. At the same time he pointed out that the Spine route skirted around Camberwell and asked what measures would

encourage people from Camberwell onto this route. The current route was very much north to south and he asked what was intended for the routes from east to west. Councillor Williams replied that there were existing plans for one of the mayor's quietways to run through Camberwell. There was also a quietway running east to west, from Greenwich to Waterloo. He added that he wanted to make the proposed cycle super highway as safe as possible. He hoped that TFL would bring forward a scheme.

- 6.4 Councillor Adele Morris asked what the council was expecting people to do with the consultation document. She commented that Cathedrals and Chaucer ward was very lucky in that it had two cycle routes including a quietway and the Spine route. She asked the cabinet member for his views on the super highway and the Elephant & Castle including residents' concerns. Councillor Williams explained that the purpose of the consultation document was to invite views about the strategy including any ideas and anything that had been missed. In terms of a cycle super highway, £2 million funding was being put into Blackfriars Road towards improvements for cyclists and pedestrians and towards public realm benefits. There had been lots of views contributing to the Elephant & Castle, including from Southwark cyclists, and he wanted to make this area as safe as possible and to have by-pass routes. Councillor Morris asked the cabinet member how he had dealt with issues raised by, for instance, Southwark cyclists. Councillor Williams reported that the council had worked closely with Southwark cyclists and agreed with them on a lot of points. There was some disagreement about the best solution.
- 6.5 Councillor Karl Eastham asked what evidence existed in terms of what worked best to encourage cycling. Councillor Williams explained that a lot of work had been done in other countries including Holland and Denmark. Successful solutions included direct safe routes, bike storage and the normalisation of cycling. Safe and secure routes were based on a mix of segregation, filtered permeability, and home zones where cyclists and pedestrians had priority. Normalising cycling was seen as the key thing.
- 6.6 Councillor Jasmine Ali congratulated the cabinet member and officers on the strategy. She was concerned that as many in the community as possible take advantage of the consultation and asked how it had been communicated to the widest audience. She commented that councillors should lead by example and asked what percentage of the council workforce cycled and whether there could be more incentives to do so. Councillor Williams replied that the council held up to date details of many people interested in cycling and worked with schools, tenants associations, faith groups and other groups including the Dulwich Safe Routes to School programme. The director of planning, Simon Bevan, stated that there had been no recent survey of staff. Councillor Williams said that he wanted as many staff and councillors as possible to cycle.

- 6.7 Councillor Anood Al-Samerai commented that there was not much in the strategy that could be disagreed with. Her main concern was that there were no segregated cycle lanes. Another concern was that Crystal Palace Parade and East Dulwich Grove were existing schemes. There was not much that was new other than the Spine. She asked if there would be segregated lanes on the Aylesbury. Councillor Williams welcomed the broad buy-in from all political parties. He reported that he was looking at whether the bike to work scheme could be brought back. In terms of segregation he stated that this was not the only answer to pushing up cycling rates. Segregation could be considered on roads where there were fast moving or high volumes of traffic for instance on Blackfriars Road and some roads around the Elephant & Castle. Slowing down of traffic could also be achieved through design, for instance by home zones which were seen as places for people rather than for cars. Hackney had achieved huge success with filtered permeability schemes. The council was reviewing all the roads in the borough and it was possible that there would be segregation on some roads. Albany Road would be significantly transformed from the road it was now to look more like a park road. Councillor Williams stated that he would welcome any suggestions as to specific roads where members would like to see segregation. In terms of timescale, the strategy would be adopted in March of next year and it was hoped to deliver the Spine in two years' time.
- 6.8 Councillor Dan Garfield was concerned that any decisions relating to the Aylesbury would involve residents. The Aylesbury was going to be one of the biggest regeneration projects in the borough and needed individual consideration rather than being seen as part of a borough wide push for segregation. Councillor Garfield also reported that there had been complaints in his individual ward about quietways and the use of the most direct routes. Councillor Williams responded that it was essential to ensure that the infrastructure worked for residents. Proposals for quietways needed to reflect residents' views but maintain the directness of routes. Councillor Adele Morris stressed that the important point about the regeneration of the Aylesbury was to afford residents with consultation on and around the TFL super highway. Councillor Williams confirmed that officers were already meeting with residents. He welcomed any suggestions as to who else to consult with.
- 6.9 Councillor Claire Maugham highlighted objective 3.3, secure cycle parking, and was concerned that this was an issue on estates. Councillor Williams responded that in terms of new build the new Southwark Plan required a higher provision of cycle parking. It also required parking provision where people were visiting for instance shops, leisure centres and work. In terms of existing estates, the council was looking at solutions such as bicycle hangers and central stores.

- 6.10 The chair stated that cycling provision around Peckham Rye Park and common was non-existent. He believed that space was available for a cycle path on both sides and asked whether there was a commitment to look at this. Councillor Williams indicated that he would investigate. He also identified a need to look at the route from Nunhead Lane to East Dulwich.
- 6.11 The chair summarised the committee's comments in response to the cycle strategy:
- the council to look again at its bike to work scheme for staff
 - the strategy to consider the use of segregated cycle schemes
 - any decisions about the level of segregation around the Aylesbury to take account of the views of local residents
 - consideration to be given to bike security at home
 - the strategy to consider retail and business gain as a result of increased cycling
 - the strategy to look at cycling provision around Peckham Rye

The meeting ended at 9.15 pm