

## ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Environment Scrutiny Commission held on Monday 20 January 2020 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Leanne Werner (Chair)  
Councillor Graham Neale (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Radha Burgess  
Councillor Tom Flynn  
Councillor Richard Leeming  
Councillor Damian O'Brien  
Councillor Michael Situ  
Jeremy Leach

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor Johnson Situ, Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning

**OFFICER SUPPORT:** Juliet Seymour, Planning Policy Manager  
Tim Cutts, Senior Regeneration Manager  
Julie Timbrell, Scrutiny Project Manager

### 1. APOLOGIES

Councillor Tom Flynn gave apologies for lateness.

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

There were none.

### 3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATION

There were none.

#### 4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the open section of the meeting on 4 December 2019 will be submitted to the following meeting.

#### 5. NEW SOUTHWARK PLAN

Councillor Johnson Situ gave an overview on the New Southwark Plan (NSP), with support from Juliet Seymour, Planning Policy Manager, and Tim Cutts, Senior Regeneration Manager.

The New Southwark Plan (NSP) will be the new borough-wide planning and regeneration strategy up to 2033. Once finalised and adopted, it will replace the current local plan. The council submitted the NSP to the Secretary of State on 16 January 2020. It means the 'Examination in Public' process has now started, which is the last stage of the plan-making process.

They explained that New Southwark Plan is a living document, which they will continue to amend. Its development has coincided with the declaration of Climate Emergency.

One of the most impactful changes on carbon outlined in the New Southwark Plan is that we will now require a minimum of 40% on-site reduction on 2013 Buildings Regulations Part L, which are a measure relating to the conservation of fuel and power. Currently, the London Plan recommends that development must achieve a 35% reduction on the same 2013 regulations. This is the target that most boroughs in London have now adopted, and the Inspector's Report for the draft London Plan acknowledges that this target is realistic. This will require major developments in Southwark to exceed the Mayor's target by 5%. Officers said that currently buildings achieve 34 % on average and on occasions as high as 70%, so they know the 40% target is achievable

Juliet Seymour, Planning Policy Manager, drew members attention to a subsidiary plans, such as those on biodiversity, which can be amended in light of the Climate Emergency. These subsidiary plans require provision of walking and cycling routes, and a reduction in parking provision.

The chair invited members' questions and the following points were made:

- i. Will Southwark consider signing up to the delivery of [New Zero Carbon Buildings](#)? Officers said they are looking at this.
- ii. How are Carbon offsets payments in lieu used? Officers said that a plan on how they could be used is due February. Examples are improved lighting on estates.
- iii. Will you review this as better to do this 'on site' that than via Carbon Off-setting? Officers agreed it is better to meet energy targets 'on site' and they will be reviewing practices. They are also considering doubling the amount of carbon charged, i.e. increasing

the amount developers have to pay.

- iv. What about retaining existing buildings and the embedded carbon? Officers agreed this is an issue, and that conservation and could be looked as part of revised the policy. Currently carbon targets relate to the energy emissions of the final building, rather than the carbon generated by the erection of new building structures.
- v. How will the council tackle Town Centre developments that still allow cars, for example Canada Water, particularly when there is not the best public transport in place? Officers and the cabinet lead said this does need to pushed further to reduce parking , but also highlights the challenges and balancing act required in areas with poor public transport. Most new developments do not allow car parking. Officers said the Old Kent Road housing schemes do not have car parking, other than disabled parking, and they are working with planning to improve cycling and bus lanes. There is also virtually no residential parking in Canada Water. Tesco's have halved the car parking at Canada Water in response to negotiations with the council. The supermarket chain's demands for parking place the council in a conundrum as a Tesco is desired, but Tesco's have not moved the dial sufficiently in terms of carbon emergency.
- vi. Will sustainable freight opportunities in developments be adopted? The cabinet lead indicated that that the council will be looking at this, and linking this with other responsibilities such as economic growth.
- vii. Have you thought about ambitions for traffic reduction? That is an aim for no trip generation and more walking and cycling, but no overall target for car reduction has been set. This is something that could be looked at.
- viii. Will there be electric charge points provided? Possibly, and looking at providing on lampposts.
- ix. Are we pushing for passive house; ground heating; Community Energy? Officers said they have just updated the plan that increases energy efficiency. The London Plan forbids gas, so looking at other energy sources e.g. SELCHP. This is also better for air quality.
- x. What are you doing to improve air quality on the SELCHP chimney? There is a lot of heat lost, so looking at better efficiency, and reducing pollutants. More information can be provided.
- xi. What about Community Energy and solar in particular? The cabinet lead said that this does have a part to play and there is work on this that will be bringing forward. Officers said that air source pumps are being looked at in Council homes, which are low carbons rather than zero carbon.

- xii. How will the huge gaps in public transport be tackled? The cabinet lead said the aim is for a public transport network that is fit for 21st Century .This includes an extension of the Bakerloo Line, but also improved buses and cycling provision, and generally improving permeability. The plan for Old Kent Road is aimed at that.
- xiii. What about improved Green Space. The aim is to double the amount and improve quality and user satisfaction. The area action plan has specific ambitions. Officers said that land acquisitions are prioritising land to provide parks.
- xiv. Can you explain the reduction of some of the sustainable features of the Elephant Park? Officers said the Elephant Park pan had very high target, this scheme folded but Lend Lease are continuing to aim to be zero carbon.
- xv. Are wind turbines on tall structures a symptom of building failure? Yes, some are gimmicks that have not turned for 10 years as they are too noisy. Now there is more flexibility to meet zero carbon.
- xvi. What steps are being taken to examine current air quality and take steps if over the legal limit .Officers said that the council has required Old Kent Road developments to improve air quality. Regeneration does give the council an opportunity to dive improvements.
- xvii. The large scheme around Vauxhall does not seem beneficial to local people. How will benefits be delivered on the Old Kent Road, and will they go beyond the focus on the Bakerloo's line tube extension? The cabinet lead that there will be an increase in youth provision, as well as an increase in cycling provision and bus lanes.
- xviii. The document looks divorced from Climate Emergency, even though there are measures outlined above. What are the smart measures that can be included to meet the scale of the Climate Emergency? There is a planned Annual Report which will address progress and opportunities to go further.
- xix. Will you be able to provide more information on carbon offsets reduction? Officers offered to provide this.

## **RESOLVED**

Officers will provide information on:

- The percentage of schemes utilising carbon offsets to meet targets, and how carbon offsets are used
- SELCHP air quality impact and improvement plan

## **6. REGENERATION AND IMPLEMENTING PLANNING POLICY**

Tim Cutts, Senior Regeneration Manager gave a presentation.

The chair then invited comments and questions:

- i. Will there be increased tree cover to make walking more pleasurable in a hotter future? Yes, we are looking at the kerbside, and reassigning loading bays to walking paths and planting.
- ii. How do we best prepare the future with changing technology? District hearting is the most resilient and adaptable to change. One of the problems is individual gas combination boilers. The future is so changeable that we do need to keep moving and updating. The council is also working with outside researchers in partnership with other London clients. An agile and matrix management approaches are being adopted.
- iii. Are Town Centre plans providing wildlife habitats and specifically can you explain the initiative in Canada Water? Yes there are and the wildlife habitat is in the Canada Water basin. Officers offered to provide more details.

The chair invited two people in the audience from Extinction Rebellion to ask questions:

- i. Have lessons been learnt form Elephant Park where Lend Lease dropped the original low carbon plans and will now only deliver 3% on site? Officers and the cabinet member assured the audience participant that in future there will be far less flexibility about the use of carbon offset payments, which are being reviewed, and the new plan is much stronger on delivering on site. Officers agreed there must be a much stronger focus on this to meet the Climate Emergency.
- ii. Will green space be prioritised ; too often this is relegated to the shadow side of big buildings. The cabinet lead said one of the key aims of a development is it has deliver for people. This means balancing achievements across many areas: carbon reduction, provision of green and community space, housing, jobs and the economy.

The chair invited Extinction Rebellion to submit any further comments in writing for the Commission to consider.

## **7. ROAD USER CHARGING**

Jeremy Leach , co-opted Commission member, commented that he requested inclusion of this report and advised that three boroughs are looking at Road User Charging.

Members queried if a council had sufficient legal powers to introduce this.

There was a discussion on the possibility of the Mayor of London adopting this and commented that a scheme like this would work best if it was done over a number of boroughs, either via the Mayor, or through a partnership approach.

A member commented that tackling larger higher emitting cars ought to be a priority, as well as driving down total car use. This ought to be done in tandem with providing alternatives such as more public transport, cycling and cargo bikes. All the measures that penalise driving cars ought to be investigated.

A member said the Commission ought to understand the present provision of parking places on Southwark roads.

## **RESOLVED**

- Officers will be asked to provide information on the number of car parking spaces in the borough
- Legal advice will be requested on introducing Road User Charging.

## **8. WORK PROGRAMME**

Members discussed coming climate change events that members will be attending.

The good work that Cllr Adele Morris has been doing on Planning Committee to press for schemes to deliver more carbon reduction on site was noted – her input will be sought.

Polly Billington, Director of UK100 was suggested as a speaker.