



## **REGENERATION AND LEISURE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the Regeneration and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 11 October 2011 at 7.00 pm at John Harvard Library, 211 Borough High Street, London SE1 1JA

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**PRESENT:** Councillor David Noakes (Chair)  
Councillor Renata Hamvas  
Councillor Columba Blango  
Councillor Claire Hickson  
Councillor Darren Merrill  
Councillor Lisa Rajan  
Councillor Martin Seaton

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor Veronica Ward

**OFFICER SUPPORT:** Shelley Burke, Head of Overview & Scrutiny  
Fitzroy Williams, Scrutiny Project Assistant  
Jon Abbott, Project Director  
Rob Deck, LendLease  
Gill Davies, Director of Environment and Leisure  
Adrian Whittle, Head of Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure  
Ben Finden, Project Manager, Environment & Leisure

### **1. APOLOGIES**

1.1 Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Lisa Rajan.

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

2.1 There were none.

### **3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

3.1 There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

#### 4. MINUTES

##### RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2011 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

#### 5. ELEPHANT AND CASTLE UPDATE

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- 5.1 Representatives from Lendlease reported that they were working on the consultation process and holding monthly meetings via the forum. They were appointed in June 2010 and have held exhibitions. They informed the sub-committee that the website was now set up and the address was [www.elephantandcastle.org.uk](http://www.elephantandcastle.org.uk).
- 5.2 Members were informed that there was a master-plan exhibition in the summer which had included :-
- 3 pop up events
  - 3 walk and talk events (which proved to be very useful)
  - 6 liaison meetings
  - 6 outreach events
  - Regular drop-in sessions
- 5.3 It was reported that 600 people had attended and 200 feedback slips were received along with 100 comments from local residents. This information had given officers a sense of what was required from local people, such as the need for streets, squares and open spaces in a safe and secure environment.
- 5.4 Officers reported that there were 3 liaison groups which would provide further details of local needs, the groups consisted of business and retail, security and residents. It was also reported that should anyone require further information they should use the website stated in paragraph 5.1 of this minute.
- 5.5 Officers reported there was a walkabout held at Rodney Road with residents and contractors, which had been creative and informative. Feedback forms were to be incorporated into a database, this information would be distributed to all local homes in the area via a news letter.
- 5.6 Members were informed that a lot of hard work would be undertaken during the autumn and winter, the objective of this was to making a better place for people to live and enjoy, ensuring the environment of inclusiveness. Officers have built up a good dialogue with stakeholders and workshops are proving to be interesting but there remains a need to reach out to as many groups as possible.
- 5.7 In response to a question regarding involvement of different groups the officer

reported that members of the forums would be making direct contact with members of the public, all voices would be heard and ideas would be taken onboard. Special events for groups who do not wish to attend meetings would be organised.

- 5.8 Officers informed the sub-committee that a newsletter containing the latest information would be despatched to residents every 2 months.
- 5.9 In response to a question regarding transport and access to the northern line, officers stated that creative thinking was required to make the right impact and highlighted the following points:-
- Retention of the shopping centre
  - Lifts solution – is deliverable
  - Funds are quite restrictive
  - The need for private and public sector working together and providing funds for improvement and environmental safety
  - 400 buses an hour are presently going through the transport hub, with a interchange between buses, underground and trains. A tariff for all transport providers will be affordable and variable including TFL and the GLA.
- 5.10 Officers agreed with members that Southwark College could be a good gateway for young people to be able to get jobs in the building trade and to become stakeholders in this area.
- 5.11 The sub-committee were informed that the Rodney Road site would take 6 to 9 months to get up moving and begin building. Other areas had been identified such as community gardens site which was vacant and overgrown, this area would need clearing before any work could be started. People were being encouraged to use the surrounding roads.
- 5.12 Security fences would be up and secure before demolishing the Heygate and the contractor will be providing a new walkway and this should be completed by March 2012.

**RESOLVED:** The Chair with the agreement of the sub-committee noted the points raised in the presentation and informed officers that they would be invited to another meeting before the end of this financial year.

## 6. LIBRARIES REVIEW

- 6.1 The chair welcomed Jayden and Louise to the meeting. As young users of the library services the sub-committee would appreciate their views of the services available for them to use.
- 6.2 Louise addressed the sub-committee and informed then that she used libraries in the borough and found the staff to be very friendly and helpful compared with libraries outside the borough. She continued by informing members that she used the library and computers on a weekly basis to do research for homework and reading. Louise rated the libraries 7 out of 10.

- 6.3 Jayden informed members that he mainly used Dulwich library but had used many of the libraries in the borough at one time or another. He attends them at least twice a week to read new books and to study. Jayden rated the libraries 8 out of 10. Jayden responded to a question from a member by stating that as far as he was concerned Dulwich was the best library.
- 6.4 Jayden stated that most of their friends used libraries regularly for study and homework and felt the libraries were open at good time for young people studying, but felt they could open at 8 a.m. which would be useful before school.
- 6.5 Both young people stated that John Harvard library had more facilities:-
- more books both new and old
  - better chairs
  - a lot more computers and dvds
  - separate areas for adults and children
- 6.6 In response to members' questions the students reported that they do go to the library directly after school and weekends to do homework and to reserve new books.
- 6.7 The students informed the sub-committee that the libraries were welcoming and a secure place to study and use the computers.
- 6.8 The chair with the agreement of the sub-committee thanked Jayden, Louise, Elaine, councillor Veronica Ward, Adrian Whittle and Pam Usher.
- 6.9 The chair thanked officers for the obvious hard work and consideration had been put into this report and felt it was a well thought out paper.
- 6.11 The Cabinet member for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Olympics addressed the sub-committee and reported that a huge amount of work had be undertaken and confirmed that the council were starting on the basis that we did not want to close any libraries in the borough.
- 6.12 Members were informed that there was a need to make savings of £397,000 which had to be achieved by 2014 and residents were consulted on the basis of making savings. The choices were to close libraries or provide shorter opening times.
- 6.13 The cabinet member highlighted the following important role that the libraries provide for the community:-
- 79% borrowed books
  - 55% came to read
  - 42% borrowed cds or dvds
  - 41% information research
  - 21% job hunting
  - 16% to attend and take part in activities
  - 31% to e-mail
  - 31% to study

- 6.14 Members were informed that the report was completed in two parts, the first based on savings and the second was based on work in progress and will continue to explore other avenues.
- 6.15 It was reported that consultation had taken place at all community councils which highlighted how much people loved their local library. The survey indicated that nearly 80% of users still go to the library to borrow books. Significantly in many libraries, between 20% and 30% of users visit the library to find job information.
- 6.16 The availability of IT provides affordable access to expensive information sources and a quiet space to study both of which are very important in Southwark. Children and young people and their families use the libraries extensively after school and at the weekend.
- 6.17 The sub-committee discussed the use of volunteers to support the work of the library service. Officers reported that they were looking into this area and informed members that CRB checks would be a requirement and training would need to be included in any package proposed and this would come at a cost.
- 6.18 Members also discussed the following points:-
- Sharing resources with other boroughs
  - Using council buildings for as many purposes as possible
  - Home library services
  - Fees and charges
  - Working hours (pilot scheme – community management)
  - Packages for older people
  - Statutory uses.
- 6.19 A member stated it was great news not to close any libraries, the only issue of concern was the early closing time of the Nunhead library. Officers reported that they would consult with schools before any shortened hours.
- 6.20 In response to a question the officer reported that local businesses have been contacted and officers were still awaiting a response with regards to sponsorship of libraries.
- 6.21 In response to a members' question, officers responded that opening hours for smaller libraries will be looked at again next year along with the review of all areas of the library service. Officers will always look at operational costs.
- 6.22 Officers undertook to look at the volunteering option and understand that Bexley council works with a volunteers scheme. Merton also have a scheme where volunteers run their libraries one day of the week.
- 6.23 The sub-committee were informed of the following regarding staff employed in the library service :-
- 123 full time staff

- 2 compulsory redundancies
- 1 senior staff
- 4 have retired.

- 6.24 In response to a question from a member of the sub-committee it was reported that the longest distance between libraries in Southwark was 2 miles.
- 6.25 It was reported to members that the approved budget for 2011/14 includes savings of £397k from review of libraries budget. This is profiled as £274k in 2012/13 and £123k in 2013/2014. The report recommends the following package of measures to achieve the budget savings:-
- a) Use of volunteers £40,000
  - b) Reshaping of opening hours at smaller libraries to offer more days open but with less hours overall. This to be combined with an invitation for community management for the period of reduced hours £80,000
  - c) A staff reorganisation of £120,000
  - d) Sharing resources with other boroughs £50,000
  - e) Sharing space with Housing at Peckham Library and thereby reducing library costs by £57,000
  - f) New rental saving of £50,000 from the creation of the new Camberwell Library
- 6.26 The chair stated that the library buildings were valued and also required substantial costs in maintenance works, we all need to find new opportunities to address means of acquiring funding, this item of business needs to be kept under review.

**RESOLVED:** That the members of Regeneration and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee submit their comments and recommendations to the chair by Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2011 by 12 noon, so that a report can be submitted to the cabinet for their next meeting on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

## **7. OLYMPIC LEGACY FUND UPDATE**

- 7.1 Officers introduced the report to members, stating 'Southwark 2012' was the name given to the project for delivering the Council's objectives for the upcoming London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics games.
- 7.2 The capital legacy funding process was split over two stages. The first invited project proposals based on criteria agreed by the capital legacy group, which would look to increase activity in sports throughout the borough. The second stage centered on gaining more detailed information from applicants in order to make assessments for feasibility and risk. The second stage 2 applications had been received in July 2011 and the capital legacy group had met at the end of August to shortlist and make final recommendations for the £2M package of capital projects.
- 7.3 Forty unique submissions were received by the Council for stage one the funding process. Seventeen of those projects, with a combined value of £4.51M were recommended by the capital legacy group to be successful at stage one.

- 7.4 The seventeen successful bids were invited to participate in stage two of the funding process. All were asked to complete a stage two application form and standardised risk log.
- 7.5 The deadline for completing stage two applications was 5 p.m. on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2011. Fourteen stage two applications were received with a combined value of £3.61M. Three of the seventeen bids successful at stage one did not submit applications at stage two. This report recommends a package of ten capital projects with a combined value of £2,000,600.
- 7.6 Officers pointed out to members that the project objective was to promote broader participation by young people. The project would create a number of packages and this was just one element of the overall scheme.
- 7.7 It was reported that 10 schools had already bought into the scheme and its initiatives, this would help more ordinary children and preserve our buildings. Members questioned the ten projects recommended for full and part award are evenly distributed across the borough, officers stressed that they could only process applications received by the deadline.
- 7.8 Officers reported that some bids submitted were very poor, but officers had arranged to visit these groups in an attempt to apply a stronger bid.
- 7.9 In response to members questions, officers described Peckham Rye where there were problems with too many teams and not enough pitches. The problem was that the pitches get damaged and worn, this project would enhance the condition of the pitches. Historically Peckham Rye suffers from poor drainage which limits useage.
- 7.10 The director undertook to provide members with details on the legacy fund applications for their information.

This report was noted.

## **8. UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES**

- 8.1 The Chair with the agreement of the sub-committee noted the the report and requested that officers be prepared to be invited to another meeting of this sub-committee before the end of this financial year.

The meeting ended at 10.05 p.m.

**CHAIR:**

**DATED:**

**[EXEC ONLY]**

**DEADLINE FOR NOTIFICATION OF CALL-IN UNDER SECTION 18 OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES IS MIDNIGHT, [DATE].**

**THE ABOVE DECISIONS WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTABLE UNTIL AFTER THAT DATE. SHOULD A DECISION OF THE EXECUTIVE BE CALLED-IN FOR SCRUTINY, THEN THE RELEVANT DECISION WILL BE HELD IN ABEYANCE PENDING THE OUTCOME OF SCRUTINY CONSIDERATION.**