



REGENERATION AND LEISURE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Regeneration and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on Monday 18 July 2011 at 7.00 pm at Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

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

OFFICER SUPPORT: Stephen Platt, Acting Head of Regeneration
Adrian Whittle, Head of Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure
Karen O'Keefe, Head of Economic Development
Paul Cowell, Events, Film and 2012 Manager
Karen Harris, Scrutiny Project Manager

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 There were none.

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

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 13 May were agreed as a true and

accurate record.

5. OVERVIEW OF MAJOR REGENERATION PROJECTS IN THE BOROUGH

- 5.1 Stephen Platt, acting Head of Regeneration gave a brief overview of the 4 major regeneration projects in the borough; Elephant and Castle; Aylesbury; Canada Water; and Bermondsey Spa.
- 5.2 Members of the sub-committee asked for further clarity on the transport situation at Elephant and Castle as the transport element of the plan is vital to its overall success. It was explained that the creation of a peninsular at the northern roundabout is not acceptable to TfL because of its impact on traffic flows. Discussions are underway with TfL to find a solution and this is expected by the autumn.
- 5.3 The importance of considering all other aspects of transport was also discussed, in particular the safety of cyclists whilst the developments are underway.
- 5.4 A discussion took place on the redevelopment of the Elephant and Castle shopping centre, whether it will be closed down whilst the work take place, and the impact this will have on local businesses. Stephen Platt told the sub-committee that a final solution has not yet been agreed, but it would be technically possible to do the work in two phases which would mean part of the shopping centre could always remain open. In addition, as part of the planning applications for Heygate, other sites for affordable retailing have been identified.
- 5.5 Members of the sub-committee asked about the likelihood of squash courts being designed in to the new leisure facilities at Elephant and Castle. Stephen Platt explained that if there are squash courts this would have to be at the expense of something else because of the limited space available.
- 5.6 The issue of supporting local businesses to benefit from the construction and development work was discussed, and the possibility of splitting the contracts available so that smaller businesses can bid for them.
- 5.7 A question was asked about what arrangements there are to try to maximise the number of jobs for local people from the development. Karen O'Keefe, Head of Economic Development, explained that there are already training projects underway with Southwark College, and following on from this other support mechanisms will be put in place when it is timely to do so, including a Lend Lease subsidy to get people into jobs.
- 5.8 Members asked about the timetable for the SPD for the wider area. The acting Head of Regeneration explained that it is expected that the SPD will be adopted in the spring, and the consultation phase will take place at the end of the year.
- 5.9 The sub-committee queried the balance, distribution and size of new housing on the Aylesbury estate. It was confirmed that the need for larger housing units has been taken into account across the borough and that the new housing will be in mixed public/private developments with larger room sizes.

- 5.10 The chair asked about funding for the Aylesbury estate. It was explained that there will be some HCA grant but not at the previous level and the funding situation is difficult to resolve.
- 5.11 Members discussed transport issues in the context of the Canada Water development. Discussions are underway with TfL about Lower Road issues. Their support is needed because of traffic flow considerations. Pre-application discussions are also underway around the shopping centre. All applications will have more cars. It was agreed that there is a need to look into transport issues again in an holistic way at Canada Water.
- 5.12 The timetable and overspend for Canada Water library was discussed. The overspend is £5 million and the library and plaza works are due to be completed in September.
- 5.13 The sub-committee was keen to ensure that Canada Water and indeed all major projects use local contractors and employ local people. It was suggested that there should be a target number of businesses and employees. The Acting Head of Regeneration agreed that this should be the case, but this is somewhat dependent on the type of schemes the development will comprise of, and at Canada Water it is not yet clear what the schemes are.
- 5.14 In discussion about the Berrymsey Spa development members queried whether there is a risk of some of the retail units lying empty because of the current market conditions. It was explained that some of the existing shops in the area will be demolished which will reduce this risk but that there may still be some vacant units in the area.
- 5.15 The issue of CO2 emissions was discussed and how projects are contributing to the challenging targets. It was explained that there is a Code for sustainable homes and also that there are a whole series of measures required as part of the planning process.
- 5.16 The Acting Head of Regeneration confirmed that Peckham Town centre is part of his remit and that the Area Action Plan is out for consultation at the moment with final adoption expected in 2013. It was agreed that a briefing note on the Area Action Plan would be provided for the next meeting.

6. OVERVIEW OF THE LEISURE PORTFOLIO IN THE BOROUGH

- 6.1 Adrian Whittle, Head of Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure, gave an overview of the work taking place in the leisure portfolio in the borough, including the review of libraries, the leisure investment programme, events programme and the Olympics.
- 6.2 The Head of Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure explained that the review of libraries is driven by the need to undertake a cost cutting exercise. There is a need to find savings of £397,000 in the library service in addition to the cuts already made with the removal of the mobile library and home library services.

- 6.3 The review is currently underway and is taking place through questionnaires, 11-12 public meetings and slots at Community Council meetings.
- 6.4 The consultation document is available online.
- 6.5 Following the consultation phase, analysis will be completed in the middle of August and a report will be going to the Cabinet in November.
- 6.6 It was agreed that the sub-committee would consider the results of the consultation phase at the next meeting and provide input before the report goes to Cabinet.
- 6.7 It was suggested that when private sector organisations are using the public libraries as a resource for their students they could be charged for this service.
- 6.8 The Head of Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure summarised the recent and ongoing investment in leisure centres in the borough.
- 6.9 The sub-committee discussed the popularity of leisure facilities and the need to make a strong case for continued investment, including increased take-up figures at refurbished centres, at a time when the capital budget of the Council is under immense pressure
- 6.10 Councillors requested a breakdown of leisure centre users by age group for the next meeting.
- 6.11 The timescale and for the investment at the new Elephant and Castle leisure centre was discussed. It is expected that the development will take place in 2014, with around £8 million spent on the new centre, which is the same order of expenditure as Camberwell and Dulwich.
- 6.12 The 7 Islands leisure centre was discussed and councillors suggested exploring the opportunity of bringing the development forward using section 106 resources.
- 6.13 Members of the sub-committee discussed the issue of displacement between leisure centres as newly refurbished ones are opened. It was reported that the newly refurbished centres have attracted lots of new members.
- 6.14 The issue of making leisure facilities in schools open to the public was discussed, but there are difficulties with this because of child safeguarding issues.
- 6.15 The sub-committee discussed the Olympics Capital legacy fund. Applications with a total value of £8 million have been received for the £2 million fund available.
- 6.16 17 applicants have been selected to develop their bids to the second stage, and the final package selected for support will go to the Cabinet on 18 October.
- 6.17 Paul Cowell, Events, Film and 2012 Manager explained the role of the Public Services Operations Group to the sub-committee. The group is planning to ensure that the Council's services can continue to operate during the Olympics. A written briefing has been provided to all Councillors.

7. OVERVIEW OF ECONOMIC REGENERATION IN THE BOROUGH

- 7.1 Karen O'Keefe, Head of Economic Development, gave an overview of economic development activities in the borough, which is undertaken in the context of the partnership based Economic Strategy.
- 7.2 She explained that the Council is a small player in terms of economic development delivery, especially in employment activities. The main organisation working in this area is Jobcentre Plus which is implementing the new Single Work Programme.
- 7.3 Single Work Programme is operating through a much smaller number of providers than previous "into work" schemes. In Southwark there are only three: Action 4 Employment, SeeTec and Careers Development Group (CDG).
- 7.4 It is not yet fully clear how the new financial model will operate, but payment will be triggered to providers when individuals go into and stay in a job.
- 7.5 Issues around young people and youth unemployment were discussed. It is hoped that the new Youth Fund will help facilitate the transition from school into work.
- 7.6 In addition, Southwark Works provides people with valuable work experience and employment support.
- 7.7 The unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds is 20%. It was agreed that a breakdown of unemployment figures would be provided for the sub-committee.

8. DISCUSSION ABOUT SUB-COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

8.1 The sub-committee discussed which topics should be on the work plan for the year.

8.2 Topics selected were

- Elephant & Castle regeneration, in particular local employment opportunities and transport
- Libraries review
- Olympic legacy
- Youth Unemployment and the Single Work Programme
- Peckham and Nunhead Area Action Plan and Town Centre Management