



REGENERATION AND LEISURE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Regeneration and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on Wednesday 8 February 2012 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G01A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Poddy Clark

OFFICER SUPPORT: Simon Bevan, Acting Director of Planning
Tim Cutts, Acting Head of Planning Policy
Graham Sutton, Economic Development Manager
Sally Masson, 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

RESOLVED:

That, with the addition of Councillor Mark Glover to the list of those present, the minutes of the meeting held on the 6 December 2011 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

5. ELEPHANT & CASTLE SPD

- 5.1 Jerry Flynn, from the Elephant and Castle, Amenity Network had the following comments to make on the Elephant and Castle Supplementary Planning Document (SPD):
- 5.2 The transport infrastructure should not be upgraded at the cost of other local needs, such as affordable housing and community facilities. S106 contributions should be used to benefit the local community, rather than assist with the budget pressures of other organisations, such as TfL. Mr. Flynn was concerned that TfL was able to secure this money because it was a powerful organisation, rather than because of the intrinsic merit of their current schemes.
- 5.3 The specific commitment made in the 2004 Elephant Regeneration SPD to continue to provide the 1,200 social rented homes lost from the Heygate estate should be detailed in the SPD as appropriate.
- 5.4 Southwark Officers, reported that only 527 of the Heygate replacement homes would be delivered by the early housing site programme. This might leave a considerable shortfall that would not be met by the redevelopment of the Heygate footprint, which will provide 300 social rented units and only if they were not to be 'affordable rent' status. The SPD should outline how the shortfall of between 400 and 700 social rented units would be met.
- 5.5 Jerry Flynn said that the SPD should distinguish between the various kinds of affordable housing and detail how many of each type of housing the regeneration would provide. This was particularly important given that the new category of 'affordable rent' has been introduced. The term 'affordable housing' is now applicable to a wide range of incomes, for instance £0 - £60k pa, and it is not clear, therefore whether the poorest families and communities would have homes provided for them. The SPD should distinguish between and give the criteria for the different categories of 'affordable housing.' Currently it was very difficult for the Amenity Network to find out just how many 'affordable housing' properties were being provided and to whom.
- 5.6 The ambition to achieve 35% affordable housing has been undermined by the master plan agreement with Lend Lease for 25%. Lend Lease would be building 2,400 of the 4,000 new homes and there was a planning application that would be for 25% affordable housing. The Amenity Network felt that it was unlikely that this would occur, both in light of the planning permissions granted at the Elephant over the past 10 years and Southwark's Council's own judgement that 65% of free-

market housing was needed to ensure any development's viability. The SPD should state how this problem was to be overcome, so that the 1,400 target would be reached.

- 5.7 The planned development for the Leisure Centre did not include any provision for affordable housing. Affordable housing will lose S106 funding to other competing priorities. The SPD should say what measures will be adopted to ensure that the ambition to achieve 35% of affordable housing, would not be undermined by other S106 demands.
- 5.8 The amount of student accommodation had already reached saturation point in the area and Jerry Flynn said that what has been built so far did not seem to provide affordable housing provision for other residents. The SPD should consider whether a complete moratorium on student housing should be sought.
- 5.9 Regarding SPD 9: The commitment to new community facilities did not contain any concrete proposals. The 2004 framework document promised 'a comprehensive range of social, education, health, and leisure facilities', including a library/lifelong learning centre, secondary school and an energy centre. Mr Flynn said that the SPD should explain why these are no longer proposed and that there must be some deliverables out of the available budgets.
- 5.10 The Rockingham estate is an area of 'character' which seems poorly served by the SPD. While the aspiration to improve the area has been expressed several times in the document, concrete proposals were lacking. The Amenity Network were concerned that without the stipulation of proper planning proposals, the area would lose out in the competition for S106 funding. The proposals seemed to focus on measures to move people through the estate, rather than improving the estate itself. He said that SPD 55 'Built form and public realm' was no doubt necessary, but it seemed of little relevance, given that there had only been one development site identified in the area. That site was the Hand in Hand pub.
- 5.11 The Amenity Network had wanted to see that the SPD consider whether there had been a case for the Rockingham gaining some priority for S106 funds and whether some of the S106 funding could have been directed from developments further north of the borough. The SPD should have amplified the value of the larger green spaces and it should have ensured that it was adequately protected by relevant policies. It should also have amplified the value of the community centre and the many groups who used it. The SPD should have made concrete proposals for improving the centre and support the user groups more than it had done to date.
- 5.12 Jerry Flynn said that the Amenity Network had concerns about the timetable and length of the consultation.
- 5.13 The group also had the following questions:
 - i. Was the SPD running simultaneously with the consultation for Lend Lease's master plan outline application?
 - ii. If there had been discussions taking place between Lend Lease and Southwark Council, what influence had this had on the SPD?

- iii. Would any Lend Lease representations to the SPD be made public?
 - iv. There was only now one month before the SPD was to be presented to the Cabinet for approval. Was this time enough for any significant changes?
- 5.14 Members commented that the allocation of 106 money had not been clearly defined. The SPD, lacked any concrete proposals regarding green spaces and there was a lack of detail on how 106 funds may be used to develop areas of parkland, trees and gardens. Members also wanted to see green spaces created on the Heygate and Gaywood Estates, along with the development of green routes across the area.
- 5.15 Consideration should be given to the creation of a conservation area covering Elliott's Row and the historic buildings on the Walworth Road.
- 5.16 Members felt that Lend Lease needed to spend more on socially rented housing. The Heygate, for instance, will not have any social housing included in its development.
- 5.17 The Chair recognised that significant changes to the document were limited because the SPD cannot contradict the Core Strategy. However, he felt that if, affordable housing was to be delivered, the Council needed to push for more than 35% of the total housing provision to be affordable homes and there should be a minimum of 25% guaranteed by Lend Lease.
- 5.18 Members commented that there was a shortage of 3 bedroomed properties and family homes being built. Having a percentage of dwellings which included those under the affordable homes banner, with increased capacity for family living should be at around 10% of all new homes built. This should be a priority over student accommodation, which was felt to be at saturation point in certain parts of the borough.
- 5.19 With a predicted increase in population, Members felt that Southwark needed to think about the pressure on services to support an increase in housing provision, such as those delivering health and the expected need for the provision of school places. There had been little detail in the SPD regarding the strategic plans for ensuring that there was an overall network of services to sustain any desired regeneration, the objective of which, was to attract more people to the borough.
- 5.20 Jerry Flynn stated that there simply wasn't enough affordable housing. That it was not cheap enough and there should be more clarity on the four categories of what constituted affordable housing.
- 5.21 The sub-committee felt that the development and regeneration of the Walworth Road and the Elephant and Castle shopping centre would benefit by creating a high street link, with shops and amenities, between the two sites.
- 5.22 It was noted by Members that there was little that could be done to limit the amount of betting shops, pawnbrokers and payday loan shops in the area. That whilst

limits can be placed on fast food take-aways which required 'change of use,' provision, no such orders or licences were required in these instances. However, Members wanted to draw attention to the possibility that the Council may, in the future, be in a position to re-design its policies in this regard.

5.23 James Upsher, representing the 'Southwark Cyclists' group then spoke about the inadequacies of cycling provision contained in the Elephant and Castle SPD. He believed that the existing cycling bypass was poor. It had an indirect route with a temporary crossing which had been in place for 5 years. This had caused an awkward combination of substandard off road paths joining with the major road without segregated cycle lanes. The Southwark Cyclists felt that an opportunity had been missed in the redevelopment plans of the Heygate, and could have had a vastly better bypass east of the roundabout. They asked Officers to include this idea in the Elephant and Castle Planning Document.

5.24 The Southwark Cyclists proposal states:

'While we maintain our desire to see a proper cycling solution at the roundabout, whatever happens, the Elephant and Castle Cycle Bypass routes remain an important alternative and quieter route, a key hub on the Cycle Superhighway Network (connecting CS7 and CS6) and an essential local network to allow connections between the separate communities around the junction.'

5.25 The Elephant and Castle roundabout is thought, by the group, to be one of the most dangerous junctions in London for cyclists. There were 86 accidents involving cyclists in 2009 – 2011, according to Transport for London figures and it was the view of the Southwark Cyclists group that the current proposals would not create the change in accident rates that was needed.

5.26 The proposal continues:

'It is desired that the rebuilding of the Heygate creates the opportunity to massively improve this provision:

- i. Shorter journey distances complete with roundabout*
- ii. Serving key desire lines*
- iii. Driving consumers into the Heygate's new retail area*
- iv. Connecting the Heygate to local amenities*
- v. Supporting the aspiration of a car free redevelopment*

Discussions between Southwark Cyclists and Lend Lease have been productive but Lend Lease are unwilling to clarify their position prior to making an application.

We request that the SPD clearly states that a shortest possible route bypass be provided on the route of the existing Duncan Row between Hampton Street and Meadow Row, and that it be traffic free, clear, direct, fast and safe.'

5.27 James Upsher said that the vision of a thriving commercial centre for South

London that minimised its environmental impact should be a hub for cycling journeys for Southwark, Lambeth and beyond. Cyclists in South London from Greenwich to Tooting had been affected by having to traverse this junction and the Elephant and Castle was a mental and physical barrier which deterred cyclists. There were many cyclists who used the Elephant and Castle each day and many stopped to use the facilities there. The group wanted to see a safe and pleasant orbital bypass, traffic free with links to segregated cycle lanes and quiet connections to residential streets. The group felt that it was possible to make the Elephant and Castle into a world class cycling network.

- 5.28 Members were largely in favour of the Southwark Cyclists proposal. They also expressed concerns about TfL's aspirations for plans to create bus only streets. This plan was not in accord with the views or wishes of local residents and commuters. Members wanted to see the Elephant and Castle plans containing more cycle and pedestrian provision and more consultation with local residents on how they would envision the re-development.
- 5.29 The group said that creating a northern peninsular road to stop traffic dominating the area and by placing a cycle bypass linking the Walworth Road and New Kent road would be the solution to curb the current high traffic in the area, which increased the related risks to cyclists and pedestrians.
- 5.30 Members also felt that the current lift arrangements at the Elephant and Castle tube station had been found inadequate and that more TfL money should be used to install escalators which were more reliable and had greater capacity to transport people to and from the platforms.

6. EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN SOUTHWARK

- 6.1 Representatives from the Business Improvement District Group, spoke to the sub-committee about the new initiatives being developed to assist Southwark people into local jobs.
- 6.2 Peter Williams said that they were focusing on the economic regeneration across the borough as a way to seek out new employment possibilities. Although Southwark had been relatively good at creating jobs, it was thought that there was still some way to go before the numbers of local people being taken on to fill Southwark vacancies could increase. There were currently around 29,000 jobs in Southwark with 60,000 of those in Bankside. Given the growth, it was not yet understood why unemployment was so high in the borough.
- 6.3 95% of businesses had undertaken recruitment within their organisations, Other businesses in the area had tended to use employment agencies to source workers.
- 6.4 In the push to assist more Southwark jobseekers into work, Peter Williams said that after some research, he had found that 57% of businesses in the borough would be willing to recruit from the local population. These businesses had signed up to a 'pledge' to consider local people before recruiting outside the borough.

- 6.5 Peter Williams said that they had been working on a three step solution:
- To recruit employers through the employers 'accord' (ensuring their loyalty to the scheme)
 - To award employers with a charter mark which employers would sign up to, to ensure they use local job applicants first.
 - To advertise vacancies on the new website
- 6.6 Up to £25,000 year had gone into this initiative. The new website had been advertising many vacancies. with approximately 104 vacancies available in the SE1 area. The target was to increase the number of employers currently using the site from around 30 to 40 in the near future.
- 6.7 Business which seem to have the highest positions vacant, had tended to be in hospitality and catering. It was expected that the number of these positions would rise further in the run up to and during the time of the Olympics and it was expected that these positions would be advertised on the SE1 website.
- 6.8 Currently, there were 10 'live' companies who had vacancies advertised on the website and only a job seeker registered as a Southwark resident was able to access the SE1 website. The companies advertising the vacancy were obliged to see Southwark candidates before recruiting elsewhere. Awarding a charter mark to employers in the scheme, had added an incentive to ensure that Southwark candidates and companies were put together first.
- 6.9 Graham Sutton then presented on the employment situation in Southwark.
- 6.10 The Southwark business base had an increase of 35% which was creating 21,600 additional jobs – a 15% increase. However the rates of worklessness remained high and tend to be concentrated in demographic groups in specific geographical areas. This had shadowed the general pattern of deprivation in the borough.
- 6.11 The national policy of welfare reform had meant that there had been a shift from a passive to an active benefit claim pathways, helping to make work become a more attractive option. This involved increasing the conditions for the receipt of out of work benefits.
- 6.12 A new DWP delivery and commissioning model launch of the Work Programme was unveiled in June 2011. Graham Sutton said that there were three 'prime contractor' delivery networks, competing across London East (17 boroughs) over seven years. There was a mandatory referral process employed by Jobcentre Plus according to the claimant group. The claimant groups were:
- 25 yrs plus jobseekers after 12 months
 - earlier referrals for young people and disadvantaged groups such as NEETs and offenders/ex-offenders.
- 6.13 There were staged payments by results and the majority of the payment for each client depended on the completion of sustained employment over a 2 year period.

6.14 There had been a removal of local funding for commissioning employment and enterprise schemes. However, Graham Sutton said that the highlights of the year 2011 – 12 had been:

- 75 new business start-ups in 2010/11
- 15 in 2011-12
- 462 people into jobs for 6 months + in 2010/2011
- 127 in 2011-12

6.15 The Southwark Local Economy Group's strategic priorities had been to enhance the partnership of the main providers of employment support, adult vocational training, business/employer representatives - Jobcentre Plus, 3 DWP Work Programme providers, Southwark College, Skills Funding Agency, BIDs, LSBU and local business support agencies.

The aim has been to:

- Remove the barriers to work faced by priority groups
- Increase business and employer engagement
- Raise skills for sustained employment

6.16 In recent years employment rates have been steadily decreasing. Southwark has been the second most deprived population in London in 2007 and became the fourth in 2010. The employment rate increased in 2007 from 64% to 67.2% in 2011. The unemployment rate has been at 10.5% (London 9.1%; National 7.7%). Of 29,980 working age residents, 14.2% claim an out of work benefit. However the gap has narrowed and Southwark have been maintaining a good performance despite the recession.

6.17 Out of work benefit claims had risen since 2008 - 2011 with an increase of a 60 % rise in unemployment rates. The long term unemployed, measured by the rate of Jobseekers Allowance claims over 12 months, rose by 100% in the same period.

6.18 The characteristics of the unemployed were measured by Ethnicity:

- Ethnic minority employment rate is 64.5%
- Compared to White grouping at 73.1%
- Black or Black British Group is 60.2%

- Economic inactivity rate is 22.7% for ethnic minority group
- Compared to 21.2% for White grouping
- Black or Black British – 20.2%

6.19 With regard to health and disability, it was found that Southwark had the highest claim rate. 48% of those claimants had mental health issues. There were 13,440 claiming either Incapacity Benefit or Employment Support Allowance of the working age population.

6.20 There were 6,000 people currently claiming Incapacity Benefit who were about to be re-assessed and transferred to 'active' benefits including Employment Support Allowance and Jobseekers Allowance, over the next eighteen months.

- 6.21 Female employment rates had been at 61.0% with male employment rates at 72.9%. Female unemployment rates were at 10.5% and male unemployment rates at 13.1%. The rates for the economically inactive were: 32% for women and 18% for men.
- 6.22 There were 11,168 lone parent families in Southwark with 4,870 residents 2.3% of the working age population, claiming Lone Parent Income Support. In October 2011, the system of allowances changed so that lone parents were transferred from Income Support to Jobseekers Allowance once their youngest child reached the age 5, and they were expected to follow an active job-seeking pathway as a condition of receiving benefit. The 2001 Census recorded that 41% of children were living in one parent households and that 33 % of dependent children under 19 years were living in poverty. 19,610 children were living in families that were in receipt of out of work benefits and/or tax credits or that were living in households where the income was less than 60% of the median income.
- 6.23 Age cohorts and unemployment studies showed the comparative ages and the rate of claims for Jobseekers Allowance. The Jobseeker's Allowance claim rates for the 18 – 24 age group had risen significantly from January 2008 to January 2012, with long term youth unemployment also significantly rising.
- 6.24 Southwark was found to have 45% of its residents qualified to degree level. The London average was at 39%. However, 13% of the population of Southwark had no qualifications at all. The London average was 12%. The proportion of residents with no qualifications were highest amongst those age 50 to retirement age (33.3%) and 18.8% aged 16 to 19 had no formal qualifications, which contributed to the London average which was at 18%.
- 6.25 One third of London's jobs are in central London, with two thirds of employees making the commute from outside central London. Unemployment in London was around 9% overall. There was employment growth in construction, business, hospitality, education, professional services, health and education but there had been employment loss in public administration and defence, the manufacturing and financial services, transport and communications, wholesale and retail industries.
- 6.26 In Southwark, the current stock of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses were at 11,745 with 10,250 micro businesses who had fewer than ten employees and 8,775 who had fewer than five. There were 1,420 small or medium sized enterprises with 10-249 employees and 75 large businesses with 250-plus employees. Southwark was the 20th largest local economy in the UK and the 6th largest local economy in London.
- 6.27 Members wanted more information about how many people were going through the college system and they wanted to know if there could be some work commissioned which focused on the numbers in training and education, with the possibility of a new strategy as an objective.

The meeting ended at 10.00pm.