



## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on Monday 16 April 2012 at 7.00 pm at 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Catherine Bowman (Chair)  
Councillor Andy Simmons (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Toby Eckersley  
Councillor Gavin Edwards  
Councillor Dan Garfield  
Councillor David Hubber  
Councillor Victoria Mills  
Councillor David Noakes  
Councillor the Right Revd Emmanuel Oyewole  
Councillor Geoffrey Thornton  
Councillor Mark Williams

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor Fiona Colley, Cabinet Member, Regeneration & Corporate Strategy

**OFFICER SUPPORT:** Graeme Gordon, Director of Corporate Strategy  
Eleanor Kelly, Acting Chief Executive  
David Lewis, Head of Maintenance & Compliance, Housing Services  
Stephen Platts, Director for Regeneration  
Peter Roberts, Scrutiny Project Manager

### 1. APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Victoria Mills and the Right Reverend Emmanuel Oyewole.

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

- 2.1 The Chair informed the committee that she had invited officers to provide a briefing on the Morrison housing repairs contract.

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

- 3.1 Councillor Andy Simmons declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in item 8, Establishment of a Joint Health Scrutiny with London Borough of Lambeth, and left the room during discussion of the item.

### **4. MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That, subject to the correction of typographical errors, the minutes of the meetings held on 6 February and 12 March 2012 be agreed as accurate records.

### **5. CABINET MEMBER INTERVIEW - COUNCILLOR FIONA COLLEY, REGENERATION & CORPORATE STRATEGY**

#### Elephant & Castle Regeneration

- 5.1 Councillor Fiona Colley, cabinet member for regeneration & corporate strategy, reported progress on agreeing the contribution from Transport for London (TfL). As a result of a feasibility study, the estimated cost of works related to transport had reduced to £105-150 million. TfL accepted that Lend Lease and the council would contribute to some options but not towards funding of an escalator. In Councillor Colley's view, there were positive indications that the main parties would be able to find a solution. Eleanor Kelly, acting chief executive, added that costs might reduce further if a private sector costing model was used. She explained that £10 million of the estimate related to safety works on the Northern roundabout and that TfL, Lend Lease and the council were working on a Growing Places Fund bid in respect of this.
- 5.2 Committee members were concerned about safety on the Northern roundabout and particularly the safety of cyclists. The acting chief executive commented that statistics showed that the roundabout was one of the least safe in London, for all users. The council was working with TfL to improve the situation but it was unlikely that the option of a cycling "super-highway" would be pursued as this did not meet other requirements. Councillor Colley added that TfL did not expect any reduction in traffic on the roundabout.
- 5.3 In response to questions, Councillor Colley explained that St Modwen, the owner of the shopping centre, was expecting to bring forward design plans later this year. Stephen Platts, the director of regeneration, commented that St Modwen was keen to engage with TfL, particularly on the Northern Line station, as this would influence the design of the shopping centre. Councillor Colley stated that the council hoped to achieve its aspirations for the centre but that, given the change in economic climate, this would be through refurbishment rather than demolition.
- 5.4 Councillor Colley circulated a schedule of milestones for regeneration of the Elephant & Castle. In response to further questions she indicated that Lend Lease had invested a lot of expenditure in developing the plan and would be investing

more once work began on site. The director of regeneration added that Rodney Road and the St Mary's plot would be built out concurrently and work would begin on site next year. Councillor Colley gave a breakdown of the council's expenditure which had dropped from £1.1 million in 2010/11 to £685,000 in 2011/12 and would drop again to £585,000 in 2012/13.

- 5.5 Members asked for clarification of the use of the Shell Petrol Station as a business/incubator space. Councillor Colley explained that this would include pop-up shops. The director of regeneration referred the committee to the Boxpark development in Shoreditch as an example of a similar development. Councillor Colley also clarified that permission for the Oakmayne development to impinge on the cycle lane had been given some years ago and that the developer maintained that this was necessary for health and safety reasons.
- 5.6 A member asked for an update on the future provision of squash courts and sports halls. Councillor Colley confirmed that squash courts could not be provided on the site of the new leisure centre but assured the committee that the intention was that there would be no loss of sports facilities across the borough. The director of regeneration reported that the leisure department was looking at alternative facilities in the area which could be made more available to the general public. He also advised that the leisure centre was due to close in June.

#### Aylesbury Estate

- 5.7 Councillor Colley updated the committee on regeneration of the Aylesbury Estate. Two hundred and sixty properties had been created in phase one and phase two was almost complete. The build would continue until 2014. Councillor Colley also reported that on the following day the cabinet would be taking a decision in respect of 1 – 59 Wolvenden (site 7). Good offers had been received from potential partners and it was likely that 50% – 60% affordable housing could be achieved. Subject to vacant possession, a start was expected next year. A further report would be submitted to cabinet in May in respect of finding a development partner for sites 1B and 1C. Councillor Colley stressed the importance of maintaining continued activity on the Aylesbury.
- 5.8 In response to questions, Councillor Colley confirmed that additional funding would be the subject of an ongoing dialogue with the GLA and the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA). She also explained that with such a long term project, of around twenty years, it was not possible to give accurate timelines for every part of the development. The director of regeneration added that sites 7, 1B and 1C were fully funded. Sites 1B and 1C would take five years to build out and achieve nearly a thousand new homes.
- 5.9 A member asked if there was a contingency built in to the Housing Investment Programme in respect of heating and other services. Councillor Colley responded that the Housing Investment Board was looking at this, particularly in view of the fact that some of the existing buildings would remain up for a considerable length of time and would need to be made warm, safe and dry. The council was also looking at replacing the mechanisms of lifts on the estate. In response to a final question, Councillor Colley confirmed the intention to link the developments to Burgess Park.

## Peckham Rye Station

- 5.10 Councillor Colley reported that a decision would be taken at the following day's cabinet meeting to sign a funding agreement that would secure £10.6 million for a four year project to redevelop the station. She emphasised that this was not the only project in Peckham but that, in the centre of Rye Lane, it would help to drive regeneration. As part of this, it was hoped to create a new retail space under the railway arches and to create an evening economy that would draw disposable income to Rye Lane.
- 5.11 In response to questions, Councillor Colley confirmed that the structure of leases and sub-leases relating to the buildings at the front of the station was complex. It was a positive step that National Rail, which possessed the top lease, had engaged with the project. The council would be seeking a compulsory purchase order but only as a fall-back position. Members were concerned about the possibility of letting some of the empty units on Rye Lane. The director of regeneration suggested that some of the businesses currently in premises at the front of the station could be re-located into the vacant units on Rye Lane but that there was a limited supply of modern retail space. Councillor Colley emphasised the importance of engaging with businesses and commented that there might be more interest from developers with the Overground coming to Peckham. Members stressed the need to retain the cinema in Peckham and Councillor Colley agreed that this remained a priority.

## London Local Enterprise Partnerships

- 5.12 Councillor Colley stated that the London Local Enterprise Partnership was run by the GLA, not Southwark. The council was making bids for regeneration funding. Councillor Colley offered to circulate a briefing note on this area.

## Section 106 Funding

- 5.13 In response to questions, Councillor Colley indicated that a process of refreshing project banks would start in June. She reported that the council had spent its total funding of £20,000 in respect of neighbourhood plans and underlined that the delivery of these plans was the responsibility of the community rather than the council. Two pilot projects had made limited progress. In Councillor Colley's view, the role of the council had been to help communities focus on what they wanted to achieve, for instance Bermondsey had focused on Long Lane.
- 5.14 Some members were concerned that the council retained a clear policy in respect of affordable housing. Councillor Coley commented that attaining mixed and balanced communities was sometimes a challenge, for instance on Bankside, and particularly with the new requirement to achieve 80% of market rents. However the council still had definite targets in respect of affordable housing. Any developer needed to provide evidence that it could not provide affordable housing on- or off-site. Paying a commuted sum, calculated on the basis of a specific amount per room, was the third option.

- 5.15 A member was disappointed that the Blackfriars Garage site on Pocock Street had been sold. Councillor Colley commented that a housing developer could have bid for the site. She also stated that a report would be considered by the cabinet in the Summer on the delivery of affordable housing. In response to further questions from members, she confirmed that it was now legal to use S106 money to refurbish existing housing stock. Her main concern was that the council deliver as many affordable homes as possible in relation to any particular site.
- 5.16 Some members of the committee challenged the ongoing process of disposing of family size homes. Councillor Colley replied that none of these disposals related to the Bankside area and that the majority were in Dulwich and South Camberwell. The cabinet continued to look at these with a view to whether value could best be achieved from refurbishment or building new homes.

#### Community Infrastructure Levy

- 5.17 Councillor Colley encouraged all members to attend the training on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). She commented that the council needed to look at the viability of CIL and whether a single rate was appropriate or whether varied rates should be applied to different parts of the borough. Officers explained that CIL related to square metres of a development and that one the CIL level set it was non-negotiable. There should not be any double counting across CIL and Section 106.

#### The Council Plan

- 5.18 Councillor Colley reported that details of performance against the plan in quarter three should be available in the near future. She explained that departmental senior management teams reviewed performance against the targets set out in the plan and that quarterly challenge meetings took place with the strategic director and relevant cabinet member. Council Assembly in July would receive an annual report and update of the plan.
- 5.19 In response to a question, Councillor Colley stated that contracts had been exchanged with a housing association in respect of the Wooddene site. The council had asked the housing association to make amendments to its plans, particularly looking at the provision of community space and facilities.

## **6. CUSTOMER SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING & BENCHMARKING**

- 6.1 This report was deferred to the May meeting in order for performance statistics to be requested.

## **7. FINAL REPORT FROM ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT, COMMUNITIES & CITIZENSHIP SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

- 7.1 Councillor Dan Garfield, chair of the Environment, Transport, Communities & Citizenship Scrutiny Sub-Committee, introduced the final report on highways maintenance. In response to questions he confirmed that, in the current budget

situation and in comparison with other neighbouring boroughs, he was satisfied with performance on highways maintenance. He also explained that the council website was the best place for publicising information, particularly as it was used as a resource by the customer services centre.

- 7.2 A member referred to a previous scrutiny report which had highlighted the length of time it could take for organisations such as utility companies to remove signage once work had been completed. The chair agreed to an additional recommendation to encourage organisations to remove road signage as soon as work is complete.
- 7.3 Members congratulated the chair and members of the sub-committee on their work.

**RESOLVED:**

That the scrutiny report be submitted to the Cabinet Member and Strategic Director for consideration.

**8. ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WITH LB LAMBETH**

- 8.1 Councillor Mark Williams, chair of the Health & Adult Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee, introduced the report. He explained that there were three areas which would benefit from joint consideration by Lambeth and Southwark; the reorganisation of SLaM's Psychological Therapies Service, the future plans of Kings Health Partners and the review of Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham HIV Care and Support. The proposal was for the Scrutiny Sub-Committee to meet jointly with Lambeth's health scrutiny committee. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee this evening was being asked to agree in principle to entering into a discretionary joint health scrutiny with Lambeth in the event that this be considered necessary following the initial meeting of the two scrutiny bodies.
- 8.2 The committee noted the proposal for an informal meeting and the possibility that establishment of a discretionary joint health scrutiny committee may be required at a later date.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That in principle agreement be given to Southwark entering into a discretionary joint health scrutiny committee with the London Borough of Lambeth.
2. That Southwark's members of the joint committee be drawn from the members of the Health & Adult Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee.
3. That the chair of the Health & Adult Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee be requested to report back to a future meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the meeting of the two scrutiny bodies and whether a discretionary joint health scrutiny committee is to be pursued.

## 9. MINUTES

### RESOLVED:

That, subject to the correction of typographical errors, the closed minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2012 be agreed as an accurate record.

## 10. HOUSING REPAIRS CONTRACT

- 10.1 This item was taken following the cabinet member interview.
- 10.2 David Lewis, head of maintenance and compliance, reported that the council had served notice on Morrison on 2 April and that the contract would expire on 2 October. The intention was to enter into an interim contract of twelve months, making use of the Watford Community Housing Trust's repairs procurement consortium which the council had joined last autumn. An interim repairs contractor would be selected by the end of July in order to start from 3 October. Simultaneously, the council would be looking for a long-term partner to begin in October 2013. Procurement for the long-term contract would commence in May/June this year.
- 10.3 Members were concerned that lessons learned from the Morrison contract be fed into the interim and long-term contracts and that tenants and residents be involved in decisions about the contracts. They were also concerned as to how the remainder of the contract with Morrison could be best managed and as to what changes could be achieved within the one year interim contract. Some members asked whether the council was considering an in-house or arms length service as an alternative to an external contractor. The head of maintenance and compliance provided more details about the implications of joining the repairs consortium, the likelihood of receiving bids in respect of the interim contract and outlined key areas for the contract.
- 10.4 The meeting returned to open session at 9.20pm and ended at 9.45pm.