

HOUSING, ECONOMY AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

23 June 2015 at 7.30 pm

MEMBERS: Councillor Jayne McCoy (Chair), Councillor Nick Emmerson (Vice Chair) and Councillors David Bartolucci, Jean Crossby, Trish Fivey, Neil Garratt, Amy Haldane, David Hicks*, Joyce Melican and Daniel Sangster.

Councillor Ruth Dombey (ex-officio)*

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, Councillor Jayne McCoy thanked all present for attending, particularly those speaking to the Outer London Fund Project Review Hackbridge item.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor David Hicks. Councillor Tony Shields attended as a substitute.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 MARCH 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2015 are agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. OUTER LONDON FUND PROJECT REVIEW HACKBRIDGE

The Chair of the Committee introduced this item, and explained that a range of speakers had been invited to speak on this matter, as detailed below. The Area Renewal Programme Manager, Sally Blomfield, delivered a presentation on the Heart of Hackbridge project. The presentation covered the objectives and outcomes of the scheme, the road safety audit process and findings and the results of post-implementation surveys with residents.

Conor Moloney, Chair of the Heart of Hackbridge delivery board and Head of Sustainable Places at BioRegional addressed the Committee. He noted the success of the project and thanked all involved, and reported that the GLA are pleased with the outcome of this locally led project. He presented some very recent photographs highlighting the positive changes to the area, including the very recent improvements to the pocket park at the gateway to the Wandle Valley Regional Park.

Helena Barrowclough, a resident of Hackbridge, member of the Heart of Hackbridge delivery board and Chair of the Hackbridge and Beddington Corner Neighbourhood Development Group also addressed the meeting. She noted her delight with the

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scheme and the positive impact it has had on the area, and highlighted the need to continue with new schemes such as the Farmers' Market, to ensure the area builds on the improvements and continues to thrive.

In response to questions, Sally Blomfield advised that a cycling forum was involved in the consultation and did not wish to have a segregated cycle lane. She advised that evidence showed that there was a direct correlation between reduced road width and traffic speed. The Cycling Forum representatives acknowledged that it would be difficult to achieve all the scheme's objectives within the space and therefore, on balance, if traffic speed could be reduced cyclists would be happy to cycle with the traffic. However, they requested that a contra flow scheme be implemented along Elm Road which was subsequently agreed to as part of the Project.

Conor Moloney advised that BioRegional had worked closely with local businesses advising on a range of energy saving measures.

Sally Blomfield added that local traders were involved in the consultation, and had asked for free stop and shop parking to increase passing trade.

Tracey Collins addressed the meeting. She formally presented the petition, the prayer for which had been circulated within the agenda. She reiterated the points made that whilst the area has been much improved, all people, including the vulnerable, must feel safe to go about their daily lives, which they do not feel at the moment.

Michael Parsons, a local resident and Vice-Chair of Sutton Vision addressed the meeting. He agreed that the area is much improved and footfall has increased, but unfortunately it is not accessible for people with disabilities. He advised that the Access Group, of which Sutton Vision was part, closed before the consultation on this scheme commenced, and asked Councillors to support its reinstatement. Michael Parsons explained that he met the designers of the scheme at the outset who quoted from the "Manual for Streets" which is designed to meet national standards but which, in his view, fails to meet the needs of people with disabilities, particularly those with visual impairments. Michael Parsons stated that people with visual impairments have been excluded from the Hackbridge area due to safety concerns. He also described the difficulties he had faced in accessing consultation documents and information relating to the scheme in an appropriate format.

Councillor Jean Crossby asked Michael Parsons for his view on how the scheme could have better taken into account people with disabilities and he urged that a range of voluntary and community groups representing people with disabilities should be consulted at an early stage in order to have a reference from people with disabilities from the outset.

With regard to comments made about the design of the scheme not meeting the needs of people with disabilities, Councillor Jayne McCoy asked if the project board were aware that accessibility requirements were not being met. Helen Barrowclough responded that the project board relied on the architects in this regard and the Accessibility Audit which had been prepared by the consultants to review this issue. Councillor Jean Crossby expressed disappointment that the GLA had not sent a

representative to this meeting to answer questions about the scheme, in particular the installation of courtesy crossings.

Councillor Neil Garratt pointed out that it was not only the GLA that supported courtesy crossings, but also officers and Councillors in Sutton. He also questioned why the final safety audit was not shared with lead members until 2 months after it was submitted. Sally Blomfield explained the safety audit process, that the Safety Audit was a technical report and that the auditing procedures were not completed until May, in time for circulation to the Delivery Board prior to their meeting at the end of May.

Councillor Hanna Zuchowska addressed the Committee. She welcomed the improvements made as well as the decision to reinstate pedestrian crossings, as it was clear they were a cause of concern for residents. She highlighted that the scheme was community led which was very positive but that vulnerable residents felt excluded from the area, which was not. She described her aim for Sutton to be at the forefront of ensuring accessibility for all.

Councillor Jill Whitehead explained her involvement in the scheme had been around the Highways aspect. She noted the scheme was experimental and one that the GLA was keen to promote. Those involved had followed best practice but it was clear that future projects must involve representatives from disability groups at the earliest stage. She noted, however, that the scheme had followed all due process and adhered to legal requirements, but that those legal requirements did not go far enough in meeting the needs of people with disabilities. She confirmed that changes recommended in the Road Safety Audit will be implemented.

Councillor Jayne McCoy asked if the GLA supports the recommendations arising from the Road Safety Audit and Eleanor Purser confirmed that they are cautious about the reinstatement of crossings as they are advocates of innovative approaches to achieving slower and safer streets and are supportive of the scheme. They have asked to be consulted on any proposed amendments as a key funder. She outlined the funding for the scheme and noted there is a contingency in place which should cover the additional works.

Councillor Tony Shields expressed frustration that the residents' views were not taken into account at an early stage, and courtesy crossings were installed despite concerns raised.

Councillor Jayne McCoy thanked everyone for attending and for sharing their views. In summary she advised that all involved in the project followed due process, and there was nothing to be gained in blaming any partner involved in the project. She detailed the key lessons learned from the project and advised that the council would be seeking to raise the issue of the failure of national standards to meet the needs of people with disabilities at a regional and national level. She asked that Michael Parsons and Tracey Collins be involved in the implementation discussions on the works arising from the Road Safety Audit recommendations.

(a) Petition from Hackbridge Safety First

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The minute for this item is contained within the minute for item 5.

(b) Presentation from the Area Renewal Programme Manager

The minute for this item is contained within the minute for item 5.

6. HOUSING STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2015-16

Simon Latham, the Executive Head of Housing and Regeneration, introduced this report and invited comments and questions. In responding to questions raised about improving energy efficiency in the borough's housing stock, Simon Latham undertook to bring a report to the next meeting of this Committee on the Fuel Poverty Strategy, to include an update on possible bids for funding in this area.

RESOLVED: That the Housing, Economy and Business Committee:

1. Approves the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan 2015/16.
2. Delegates authority to the Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to make further and final amendments to the Delivery Plan.
3. Agrees that a progress report be provided to the Committee's December meeting.

Councillor Neil Garratt abstained from voting.

7. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

Julie Turner, the Head of Revenues, Benefits, Insurance and Pensions, introduced this report and invited questions and comments.

Councillor Joyce Melican noted the good work being carried out by the welfare reform outreach officer.

RESOLVED: That the Housing, Economy and Business Committee agrees that the Council Tax Reduction Scheme remains unchanged for the 2016/17 financial year and recommends it to Full Council in July.

Councillor Neil Garratt abstained from voting.

8. TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

Lorraine Thomas, the Housing Needs, Homelessness and Support Brokerage Service Manager, delivered a presentation to the Committee outlining the need for the strategy, the homelessness profile in Sutton, prevention of homelessness, future projections of homelessness, the impact of the increase, current provision of temporary accommodation, future need and Sutton's approach to temporary accommodation procurement. She welcomed comments and questions from the Committee.

The Committee expressed their support for a Y Cube development, although it was noted that these properties should not be viewed as a permanent home for the homeless.

RESOLVED: That the Housing, Economy and Business Committee

1. Approves the Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2015-18
2. Agrees to receive a further report in six months on progress made in delivery the strategy, and to receive annual reports thereafter.

9. REVISIONS TO THE COUNCIL'S TENANCY CONDITIONS

Sue Holbrook, Head of Neighbourhoods, Sutton Housing Partnership, introduced this report. She outlined a number of amendments to the tenancy conditions that had been made following comments received after agenda publication, as follows:

Ending the Tenancy, has been amended to read: *“we can only make you leave your home or take away your rights as a secure tenant by getting a court order, and we may obtain an order for certain reasons (“grounds”) which are set out in the Housing Act 1985 as amended, updated, extended or replaced.”*

Your Responsibilities has been amended to read: *“you are expected to cooperate with the management of your home and neighbourhood by, for example, complying with reasonable requests, not to obstruct staff carrying out their duties and by keeping appointments made with your landlord, their agents and contractors”.*

Demoted Tenancies, has been amended to read: *“we may make an application to the court to demote your tenancy under Section 82A of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended by the Anti-Social Behaviour Act) and any legislation which amends or succeeds it...”*

Pets: the four breeds of dangerous dogs will be listed after *“permission will not be given for Dogs specified under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 and any legislation that succeeds it”.*

Sue Holbrook confirmed that she had sought legal advice to confirm that the changes did not necessitate further consultation.

With regard to the impact of the proposed changes on users of mobility scooters, Simon Latham advised that only a small number of people are affected. He advised that if the issue of safe storage cannot be resolved, consideration must be given to re-housing the tenants.

Councillor Joyce Melican suggested that tenants' rights be set out in the handbook, and also encouraged the use of plain English.

RESOLVED: That the Housing, Economy and Business Committee approves the proposed changes to the current Conditions of Tenancy, to be implemented from 1 October 2015.

10. SUTTON HOUSING PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY PLAN 2015/16

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Brendan Crossan, Executive Director of Resources, Sutton Housing Partnership introduced this report.

The Executive Head of Housing and Regeneration, Simon Latham confirmed that the membership of the Task and Finish Group had not been impacted by changes to the Committee's membership made in May.

RESOLVED: That the Housing, Economy and Business Committee approves the Sutton Housing Partnership Delivery Plan 2015/16.

11. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL SCOPING REPORT (SUTTON LOCAL PLAN)

The Executive Head of Economic Development, Planning and Sustainability, Eleanor Purser introduced this report, and confirmed it had been overseen by the Task and Finish Group.

Councillor Jayne McCoy suggested that the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust should be a formal consultee on the Local Plan.

RESOLVED: That the Housing, Economy and Business Committee

1. Agrees to publish the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping report for consultation for a period of five weeks.
2. Agrees to publish the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping report on the Council website
3. Delegates authority to the Executive Head of Economic Development, Planning and Sustainability in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to make any minor alterations to the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping report prior to consultation.

12. ECONOMY WATCH

Noted.

13. ANY URGENT BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIR

No urgent items were brought forward.

The meeting ended at 10.30 pm

Chair:

Date: