

WEALDSTONE REGENERATION ADVISORY PANEL

5 JULY 2004

- Chair: * Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan
- Councillors: * Marilyn Ashton * Lavingia
* Harrison * Vina Mithani
* Harriss
- Co-opted Member: * Councillor Miss Lyne
- Advisers: † Mr S Addy – Harrow Association of Disabled People
* Dr O Amele – Wealdstone Traders' Association
* Mr T Arens – Heriot Catering
* Mr M Garratt – Kodak
* Mrs S Hall – Wealdstone Traders' Association
* Mrs B Harvey – Wealdstone Active Community
* Mr R Page – North West London Chamber of Commerce
* Mrs J Skidmore – Wealdstone Active Community
* Mr A Wood – Harrow Public Transport Users' Association

* Denotes Member present

† Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**140. **Appointment of Chair:**

RESOLVED: That the appointment of Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan as the Chair of the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel for the 2004/2005 Municipal Year, as agreed at the Cabinet Meeting of 20 May 2004, be noted.

141. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting.

142. **Appointment of Vice-Chair:**

Councillors Lavingia and Marilyn Ashton were both nominated and duly seconded for the position of Vice-Chair, and following a vote it was

RESOLVED: That Councillor Lavingia be appointed Vice-Chair of the Panel for the 2004/2005 Municipal Year.

[Note: In agreeing the action set out above, the Chair exercised her second and casting vote].

143. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interests made by Members present arising from the business to be transacted at this meeting.

144. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following agenda item be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of special circumstances and grounds for urgency detailed below:-

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Special Circumstances/Grounds for Urgency</u>
15. Short Term Parking in Wealdstone) These reports were not available at the time the agenda was printed and circulated. They
16. Feedback Regarding Key Worker Accommodation (tabled at meeting)) are now admitted to the agenda in accordance with the Panel's request that reports/updates on these matters be received.

- 17. The Leisure Centre)
- 18. Feedback Regarding)
Grant Road After School)
Club (tabled at meeting))
- 19. Information regarding)
Diversionary Youth)
Activities In Wealdstone)
(tabled at meeting))

(2) all items be considered with the press and public present.

145. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2004, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

146. **Public Questions:**

Mrs Jenny Wilson submitted the following question, under the provisions of Advisory Panel Procedure and Consultative Forum Rule 15:

“Will the Panel submit comments on the Planning Application for 14-20 High Street Wealdstone in advance of the Development Control Committee meeting on 28th July, and in particular on whether they believe the application is an improvement on the previous application for this site, which was refused, and whether they consider the 5 storey element to be appropriate. Could officers also clarify the meaning of ‘live/work units’”.

The Chair pointed out that one Member of the Panel was also a Member of the Development Control Committee and was therefore constrained in discussing this matter prior to that Committee’s consideration of the application. The Member in question offered to leave the room to allow the Panel to discuss this matter. However, the Chair indicated that, as no advance notice of the text of the question had been given, the Panel were not entirely familiar with the details of the application and it was therefore difficult for any of the Members to comment.

The Chief Officer Planning Officer clarified the meaning of the term ‘live/work units’ for the questioner.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

147. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no deputations to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

148. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no petitions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of the Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 13 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

149. **References from Council and Other Committees/Panels:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no references from Council or other Committees or Panels to be received at this meeting.

150. **Appointment of Advisers to the Panel for the 2004/2005 Municipal Year:**

The Panel received a report of the Borough Solicitor which advised that all advisers to the Panel had been contacted and asked to confirm whether they wished to continue as advisers for the 2004/2005 Municipal Year.

It advised that five of the advisers had confirmed that they wished to continue and it was reported verbally that, since the dispatch of the agenda, confirmation from a further two advisers had also been received. A formal response had not yet been received from the remaining two representatives, Dr Amele and Mrs Susan Hall who both represented Wealdstone Traders’ Association. Mrs Hall, who was present at the meeting, confirmed their intention to continue as the organisation’s representatives on the Panel.

RESOLVED: That the following be appointed as non-voting advisers to the Panel for

the 2004/2005 Municipal Year:

Mr Stephen Addy – Harrow Association of Disabled People
 Dr O Amele – Vice Chair, Wealdstone Traders' Association
 Mr Tony Arens - Heriot Catering
 Mr Mick Garratt - Kodak
 Mrs Susan Hall – Chair – Wealdstone Traders' Association
 Mrs Brenda Harvey – Wealdstone Active Community
 Mr Rudi Page – North West London Chamber of Commerce
 Mrs June Skidmore - Wealdstone Active Community
 Mr Anthony Wood - Harrow Public Transport Users' Association

151. **Feedback regarding Grant Road After School Club:**

The Assistant Youth Service Manager tabled a document which provided an update on the efforts to relocate the Grant Road After School Club.

It was explained that the new premises at Premier House were not suitable to host the club or the play scheme which ran in the school holidays due to the lack of an outside space for the children to play in, and it was proving difficult to identify suitable alternative premises, particularly as the club was self-funding and there was therefore no budget attached to it to cover the cost of renting a venue.

Members from all Groups joined in stressing their concern that a new venue be found for this important community resource, and it was noted that the matter was becoming urgent as the club would be required to vacate the Grant Road premises by October. The Assistant Youth Service Manager explained that a number of avenues were being pursued, including relocating the club to a nearby school.

A Member pointed out that a number of nearby schools had mobile classrooms which were now surplus to requirements, and suggested that officers investigate whether these could be used for the After School Club. The Panel agreed that this idea merited investigation.

RESOLVED: That (1) the update be noted; and

(2) officers be requested to investigate the possibility of utilising mobile classrooms as a venue for the After School Club.

152. **Information regarding Diversionary Youth Activities in Wealdstone:**

Further to the Panel's request at its previous meeting, the Assistant Youth Service Manager tabled a document which provided some information on diversionary youth activities in Wealdstone. It was noted that a detailed report setting out current provision and identifying gaps in provision would be submitted to the Panel's next meeting. The Chair emphasised that she felt that a number of green sites in Wealdstone and Marlborough wards were particularly under used and could be utilised for youth activities.

The Assistant Youth Service Manager informed the Panel that, following a growth bid, the Council now employed an Arts Development Youth Worker and a Sports Development Youth Worker, and this would allow the Authority to undertake more work on building and developing youth provision in the Borough.

RESOLVED: That (1) the update be noted; and

(2) it be noted that a detailed report on this matter will be submitted to the Panel's next meeting.

153. **Wealdstone Community Centre at Premier House:**

The Panel received an oral update on the new Community Centre which was to be located within Premier House in Wealdstone.

In introducing this item, the Projects Officer explained that the overall aim of the Community Centre was to help build a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable community, promoting opportunity and a better quality of life for all. She advised that the Council was responsible for co-ordinating the project, in cooperation with the Centre partners, who were responsible for the day-to-day running of different aspects of the Centre. The partners were Wealdstone Library, Harrow Primary Care Trust, Harrow's Youth and Connections and the Harrow Healthy Living Centre. Representatives of each of these partners then addressed the Panel in turn.

The representative of Wealdstone Library outlined the plans for the new library facility

which was to be located within the Community Centre. She explained that the current library premises had a number of shortcomings in terms of ease of access, but the new premises would be situated all on one level and had been designed with accessibility in mind.

She informed the meeting that all of the current book stock, index collection, large print and talking book collection, as well as the Gujarati, Bengali and Urdu language materials would be transferred to the new premises, and the new library would also additionally offer videos and DVDs for loan. As well as this, it was noted that the computer facilities for public use were to be extended from seven terminals to fourteen, in response to the increased demand. The representative further informed the Panel that the new premises would be equipped with a meeting room, which the library would use to host events, including new events such as a Looked After Children's Club. It was noted that the meeting room would also be available for use by members of the public.

The representative from Harrow Primary Care Trust (PCT) addressed the Panel regarding the medical centre which was to be housed within the Community Centre and which, it was explained, would complement the work of the healthy living centre also located there. She advised that the medical centre would analyse data and undertake consultation to identify local health needs and concerns, and would then be responsive to those needs, focusing on providing information and guidance on those issues. The centre would also be tasked with helping members of the public navigate their way around the health care structure. The representative added that the centre would have a crèche facility which would enable parents with small children to attend support group meetings.

The Chief Executive of Choices 4 All addressed the Panel with regard to the healthy living centre which would be established within the Community Centre. It was explained that Choices 4 All was the lead partner in this element of the Centre but would work in partnership with a number of other organisations, including Carramea, Age Concern Harrow, and Harrow Association of Voluntary Service, to provide health information and guidance to local residents. The café would be the hub of the centre and would be staffed by local residents with learning disabilities, helping them to build their confidence and move into paid employment.

A representative of the Youth and Connexions Service addressed the Panel regarding the youth facilities to be housed at the youth centre. The representative emphasised that all elements of youth activities currently provided at Grant Road would be transferred to the new facility, with the exception of the After School Club. It was noted that the youth club was currently under-used but officers were confident that the move to newer, better-equipped premises would reinvigorate it and put it on a par with the Duke Of Edinburgh Award Scheme which was also being transferred to the new Community Centre and which, it was noted, was extremely successful.

In concluding the presentation, the Projects Officer emphasised that the Council welcomed input and suggestions from the community in relation to the new Centre and would shortly embark on a consultation process. She provided attendees with information detailing how they could feed into the consultation process. She reported that the Centre launch would take place on 12 January 2005.

Following the presentation, several Members of the Panel expressed their support for the project and the positive impact it would have on Wealdstone. One Member expressed regret at the loss of the 'village hall atmosphere' of the Grant Road premises and advised that she would have liked to have seen the option of renovating the Grant Road premises explored further.

Queries on a number of issues were raised. In response to a query regarding provision for those with disabilities, it was explained that the Community Centre premises had been audited by Harrow Association of Disabled People and their suggestions and feedback had informed the design process. The building would be fitted with a loop for those with hearing aids, staff would have access to interpreters and signers and the computers for public use situated in the library would be equipped with access software for the partially sighted. An adviser to the Panel suggested that consideration be given to installing a soundproof booth for one of the computers, in which the partially sighted could use this software. It was noted that, as an alternative, many libraries supplied headphones for use with computers.

In response to a query from an adviser to the Panel regarding the funding for the Community Centre, it was explained that the project was being funded in part from the sale of the Grant Road site. The ongoing costs of the Health Centre would then be

funded by the PCT, the Healthy Living Centre by a grant, and the library and youth centre by the Council. It was emphasised that the project had a rigorous financial structure.

In response to a query regarding which age groups the youth centre would cater for, an officer advised that, in line with government direction, the centre would be aimed mainly at younger teenagers. She explained that only 20% of the relevant budget could be used for under 8s and the 19-25 age bracket. Several Members expressed concern at the gap in provision for 3-10 year olds and the officer agreed to feed this concern back to the Early Years Team. Concern was also voiced that an appropriate outside area near to the Centre be urgently identified for use as an adjunct to the youth facility.

An adviser to the Panel indicated that local traders and residents would welcome the establishment of a café outside the library area as a real asset to the town centre.

In concluding the discussion, the Chair thanked the representatives of each of the partners for the presentation and for attending to the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the above update and the Panel's comments be noted.

154. **Queens Arms Public House - Information Update:**

Further to the request made at the Panel's previous meeting, the Panel received an update on measures implemented to improve the appearance of the Queen's Arms/Sam Maguire Public House site and to combat anti-social behaviour in the area.

The Panel agreed that the appearance of the site was much improved but an adviser expressed concern that anti-social behaviour associated with the site had not been entirely eradicated. The Chair suggested that the adviser raise the matter with the Police at the Safer Neighbourhoods meeting for Marlborough Ward scheduled to take place on 14th July.

A Member suggested that the Authority might look to acquire the site, in the public interest. It was agreed that this option would be investigated.

RESOLVED: That (1) the above update be noted; and

(2) officers be requested to investigate the possibility of acquiring the above site.

155. **Short Term Parking in Wealdstone:**

Further to the request made and the discussion on this matter at the Panel's previous meeting, the Panel received a document setting out proposals from the Wealdstone Traders Association and a report of the Interim Head of Environment and Transport regarding general traffic arrangements for, access to, and short term parking in Wealdstone High Street.

At the meeting, an officer indicated that money had already been set aside to look at the Headstone Drive junction near Cecil Road and an investigation into traffic problems there was already in hand.

It was noted that the officer report concluded that no change should be made to the current arrangements. However, several Members and advisers to the Panel expressed support or partial support for the proposals set out by the Wealdstone Traders' Association. Equally, several Members expressed reservations regarding the proposals.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Chair suggested that, in order to try to take the matter forward, a workshop be arranged at which officers, the relevant Portfolio Holder, the Chair of the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel, Ward Councillors and Members of and advisers to the Panel could discuss the proposals further.

An adviser to the Panel suggested that the concerns which had been expressed about speeding buses be referred to the Council's Bus Liaison Committee, of which he was Chair.

RESOLVED: That (1) the officer report be noted;

(2) officers arrange a workshop with officers, the relevant Portfolio Holder, the Chair of the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel, Ward Councillors and Members of and advisers to the Panel to discuss the proposals from the Wealdstone Traders' Association regarding general traffic arrangements for, access to, and short term parking in Wealdstone High Street; and

(3) concerns regarding speeding buses be referred to the Council's Bus Liaison Committee via Mr Anthony Wood, the Chair of that Committee.

156. **Feedback regarding Key Worker Accommodation:**
Further to the request made at the Panel's previous meeting, information regarding key worker housing was tabled.

Members and advisers sought clarification on a number of related issues. In response to a question regarding the mix of shared ownership and rented units in affordable housing developments, the Chief Planning Officer explained that the proportion of each was set by the Council at the planning application stage via a Section 106 legal agreement and could therefore not be altered without permission of the Council. He also explained that the Authority had nomination rights to 100% of initial lets of the rented units and 75% thereafter, and 100% of the shared ownership units.

The Chief Planning Officer further confirmed that the affordable housing developments in Harrow had been publicised to the main employers of key workers in Harrow, including the Northwick Park and St Mark's NHS Trust.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chair requested that an update on this matter be submitted to the next meeting giving more detailed information on the publicity amongst employers of key workers in Harrow and the response received from employees to date. She also raised the issue of appointing a representative of Acton Housing, who were a registered social landlord, as an adviser to the Panel to answer the questions and concerns relating to affordable housing which frequently arose at the meetings. Following debate, it was agreed that the Panel instead invite a representative to meetings as and when the need arose. It was agreed that an invitation would be extended to a representative of Acton Housing for the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That (1) the tabled information be noted;

(2) an update on this matter be submitted to the Panel's next meeting; and

(3) a representative of Acton Housing be invited to the Panel's next meeting.

157. **The Leisure Centre:**
The Panel received a copy of a report regarding the Leisure Centre which had been submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 1 July 2004. The report set out details of the content of the agreement with Leisure Connection Plc for the management of the Council's leisure facilities at Harrow Leisure Centre, Bannister Sports Centre and Hatch End Swimming Pool, and was provided to the Panel for information only.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

158. **Use of Peel House Multi - Storey Car Park as an Adjunct to the New Youth Facility at Premier House.:**

The Panel received a report of the Interim Head of Environment and Transport regarding the suggestion put forward by the Panel to utilise the top deck of the Peel House multi-storey car park situated off Gladstone Way, Wealdstone as an outside area for the new youth facility at Premier House.

The Panel noted the significant costs which the conversion of the top deck would involve and further commented that, although current usage of the car park was low, demand might well increase when the new Community Centre was opened and the Grant Road car park ceased to be available, and as a result of the construction of various new residential developments. It was therefore agreed that officers would be requested to investigate alternative suitable sites which might be utilised as an adjunct to the youth facility. It was noted that a report regarding the usage of the land adjacent to the Leisure Centre was to be put before Cabinet in the near future and it was requested that this also be submitted to the Panel for information.

Arising out of the discussion on this item, it was suggested that the Council produce a suitable poster to place in libraries and nearby shops to promote the usage of the Peel House car park, emphasising particularly that it was protected by CCTV and had an extremely good safety record.

RESOLVED: That (1) officers be requested to look for an alternative venue as an adjunct to the new youth facility at Premier House;

(2) the report to be submitted to Cabinet in the near future regarding the usage of the land adjacent to the Leisure Centre also be submitted to the Panel for information; and

(3) officers be requested to produce a suitable poster to place in libraries and nearby shops to promote the usage of the Peel House car park, emphasising particularly that it was protected by CCTV and had an extremely good safety record.

159. **Update from Wealdstone Active Community:**

The representatives of Wealdstone Active Community (WAC) updated the Panel on recent activities organised by WAC.

It was noted that the Blooming Wealdstone event held on 3 July, which had included the display of flower arrangements which represented local businesses, a plant sale, a community art project, a dance and music display, and activities for children such as face painting and decorating pots, had been very successful. As part of the event, three local businesses had been presented with a certificate in recognition of their hanging baskets, and two schools had been presented with certificates for their gardens. It was advised that £33.50 had been raised for Children in Need during the course of the event.

The representatives also informed the Panel that the painting of the mural on the metal fence adjacent to the train station would begin on 12 July 2004. Details of the theme of the mural were reiterated and it was noted that the mural would include a tribute to those who had lost their lives in the Wealdstone train crash and those who had helped to save lives. It was explained that 14 schools would be taking part in the project and it was hoped that it would attract some television coverage. It was confirmed that each section of the mural would be treated with an anti-graffiti coating as it was completed.

Information regarding the new arrangements designed to control the pigeon population in Wealdstone were also outlined. It was reported that pigeon lofts would be installed and notices in several languages would be placed on local notice boards discouraging people from feeding the pigeons and explaining that the food often attracted other vermin.

Finally, the WAC representatives advised that they would be applying for a grant from the Council to fund their work the following year.

Members commended WAC for their hard work in organising recent events.

RESOLVED: That the above update be noted.

160. **Date of Next Meeting:**

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Panel be held at 6.30pm on Monday 20 September 2004.

161. **Any Other Business:**

Enforcement against retailers obstructing the highway

The Panel requested that an update on progress on the enforcement action being taken against the greengrocer in High Street, Wealdstone who had been repeatedly obstructing the highway be submitted to the Panel's next meeting.

RESOLVED: That an update on the above matter be submitted to the meeting of the Panel.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 9.55 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MARIE-LOUISE NOLAN
Chair