

TOWN CENTRE PROJECT PANEL

22 JULY 2004

Chair: * Councillor Burchell

Councillors: * D Ashton * O'Dell
* Miss Lyne * N Shah
* C Mote

* Denotes Member present

[Note: Councillor Stephenson also attended this meeting to speak on the items indicated at Minutes 19, 21 and 22 below].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**13. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

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

14. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
7. Revised Town Centre Development Strategy)	Councillor Stephenson	Councillor Stephenson declared an interest arising from his appointment, by the Authority, on the Board of Governors of Harrow College.
9/10. Harrow Town Centre Public Realm Strategy)		
11. Harrow-on-the-Hill Station Masterplan)		

15. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present with the exception of the following items for the reason set out below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
7. Revised Town Centre Development Strategy)	The reports contain exempt information under Paragraphs 7 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) in that they contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property.
8. Consultation Arrangements)	
9/10. Harrow Town Centre Public Realm Strategy)	
11. Harrow-on-the-Hill Station Masterplan)	

16. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That it be agreed that the Chair be given authority to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2004, which had been circulated, as a correct record once they had been printed in the Council Bound Minute Volume.

17. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no petitions submitted to this meeting.

18. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no public questions to be received under the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 15.

19. **Revised Town Centre Development Strategy:**

Members received a confidential report in the name of the Chief Executive on this matter. The Chief Planning Officer introduced the report which had been updated since the 14 June 2004 meeting of the Panel. He sought approval:

- (1) for the Strategy to be the subject of a further period of consultations in order to allow it to be formally adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG);
- (2) to undertake a feasibility Study which would investigate and assess whether there was a case for a performance/exhibition space in the Town Centre, including estimates of both capital and revenue costs.

The Chief Planning Officer reported that the 'formal' consultation stage would be for a period of six weeks only and that appropriate publicity would be undertaken in order to ensure that the wider public had the opportunity to comment on the contents of the Town Centre Development Strategy. He explained that the six week consultation period was sufficient because extensive consultations with the Key Stakeholders, including an Internet Survey, had already been undertaken.

He pointed out that consultations on the Harrow-on-the-Hill Station Masterplan, which was also on the agenda for consideration that evening, would be conducted separately and extensively.

With reference to the Feasibility Study, the Chief Planning Officer stated that the 'brief' for the Study included examination of both indoor and outdoor space being used for public events.

In response to questions, the Chief Planning Officer assured Members that:

- the consultations would not be limited to the school vacation period and would continue through until late September;
- the Strategy would be amended to reinforce (i) the need for a replacement library, and (ii) cultural arts provision, which would help make the Town Centre more vibrant;
- community organisations would be consulted and the suggestion for a community hall and its financial viability would be examined.

RESOLVED: That subject to the comments made in the preamble above,

(1) the Harrow Town Centre Development Strategy be subject to a further period of public consultation and subsequent report back on adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Reason for Decision: To guide the future development of Harrow Town Centre with the aim of transforming it into the premier centre in north-west London.

(2) the feasibility study for performance/exhibition space be agreed in accordance with the brief attached at Appendix C.

Reason for Decision: To pursue the objective of the Town Centre Development Strategy.

(See also Minute 14).

20. **Consultation Arrangements:**

(See Minute 22).

21. **Harrow Town Centre Public Realm Strategy:**

The Panel received a presentation on a Public Realm Strategy for Harrow Town Centre in the private session of the meeting from Alsop Architects, consultants appointed by the Council to oversee its preparation in this process. The Panel also considered a confidential report of the Chief Executive in this matter.

The presentation set out ways in which areas within the Town Centre could be transformed by a combination of improvements to the public realm and the 'greening' of

key spaces and streets. The Panel noted that:

- the 'greening' of the Centre could be achieved by creating structures based on modular frames using various growing components which would include significant planting so as to help enrich the Town Centre;
- the costs of implementing the various options were provisional;
- the Consultants thought that a pilot scheme for Clarendon Road scheme could be in place by January 2005;
- all criteria of disability access requirements would be embodied in any improvements in the Town Centre;
- that the existing CCTV would not be compromised but improvements would be made in order to ensure that it was compatible with any new proposals that are implemented as part of the Public Realm Strategy;
- that a holistic approach was necessary for a cleaner and safer Town Centre.

Members asked questions and, arising out of the presentation, made the following suggestions:

- that the Station Road area near Sheepcote Road, which was seen as one of the gateways into Harrow, ought to be included;
- that St Ann's Centre should be consulted on the possible integration of the concept into the Centre;
- that the life expectancy of the various items was crucial, including the maintenance costs over their useful lives;
- that the use of natural materials should be considered in order to ensure that it remained in harmony with the character and 'greenery' of the Hill;
- that a design guide for shop fronts which would include policies restricting grilles/shutters ought to be developed.

RESOLVED: (1) That the design and cost options for the Harrow Town Centre Public Realm Strategy, as outlined in the consultant's presentation, be noted;

(2) to agree, in principle, to Clarendon Road being used as a pilot for the approach to be adopted in the Public Realm, subject to a detailed report to the Panel meeting in September 2004;

(3) that it be recognised that the adoption and implementation of a Public Realm Strategy will lead to additional calls on funding (both capital and revenue), in particular from the Council's Capital Programme.

Reason for Decision: To determine the scope of the Harrow Town Centre Public Realm Strategy and the design standards to be pursued.

(See also Minute 14).

22. **Harrow-on-the-Hill Station Masterplan/Consultation Strategy:**

The Chief Planning Officer introduced the confidential report on this matter and tabled the Harrow-on-the-Hill Station Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance which would be the subject of public consultations once the approval of the Panel had been received. He added that extensive and exhaustive consultations would be carried out over a period of three months and that it was intended to engage with local residents and businesses, potential investors and stakeholders.

The Consultation Strategy was also tabled at the meeting and its aim identified. Members were informed that it was essential that the 'Vision for Harrow' set out in the SPG, including the images, were released generally in order to gauge interest from potential developers and to test the market.

Members noted the consultation arrangements and made the following observations:

- that the ethnic press also be targeted and that 'articles' be made available to the ethnic press;

- that the consultation be extended to cover the whole Borough;
- that displays be placed at prominent sites during the weekends;
- that a display be set up in the Civic Centre and other locations in the Town Centre should be explored including St John's Church, Greenhill;
- that consultation with the young people of Harrow was important and that the High Schools in Harrow also be consulted.

The Chief Planning Officer responded by saying that as many suggestions as possible made by Members would be taken on board.

He assured Members that a display would be set up in the Civic Centre, and that posters and leaflets would be circulated widely. He added that a mobile display was also being considered. He added that a 'model' of the proposals was not necessary at the present time and added that the questionnaire would be prepared in conjunction with the Council's Communication Unit. Members agreed that the Press Conference to launch the Masterplan be held on 29 July at 3.00 pm with a briefing for Members at 2.30 pm.

It was noted that the Press Conference would be attended by Lead Members of all the political groups and that Councillors Navin Shah, Burchell, Mote and Lyne would be present at the launch.

Members requested that the opinion of Counsel be sought in order to ensure compliance with the new planning legislation.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Harrow-on-the-Hill Station draft Supplementary Planning Guidance be approved for consultation in accordance with the programme set out in the report;

(2) that the submissions from stakeholders be noted and that it be noted that these will be taken into account in reviewing the draft SPG during the consultation period;

(3) that the programme for consultation and implementation, as set out in the paper tabled at the meeting, be noted.

Reason for Decision: To progress the adoption of the Supplementary Planning Guidance and to secure the implementation of the Masterplan.

(See also Minute 14).

23. **Future Meetings:**

Members agreed that the Panel ought to meet again in September and then in November. They noted that a report on the Public Realm Strategy would be submitted to the September meeting of the Panel together with a progress report on the key sites in the Town Centre. In noting that the report on the outcome of the consultation on the Revised Town Centre Development Strategy together with the feasibility study on the inclusion of a performance/exhibition space in the Town Centre would be submitted to the November meeting, the Panel

RESOLVED: That the next two meetings of the Panel be held on 23 September and 18 November 2004 at 6.30 pm.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 8.40 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR KEITH BURCHELL
Chair