

**WEALDSTONE REGENERATION ADVISORY  
PANEL****19 JANUARY 2006**

Chair:	* Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan	
Councillors:	* Marilyn Ashton * Blann (2) * Kara (1)	* Lavingia * John Nickolay (2)
Co-opted Member:	† Councillor Paddy Lyne	
Advisers:	Mr S Addy	– Harrow Association of Disabled People
	* Mr T Arens	– Heriot Catering
	* Mr E Diamond	– North West London Chamber of Commerce
	* Mrs S Hall	– Wealdstone Traders' Association
	* Mrs B Harvey	– Wealdstone Active Community
	† Sergeant A Jackson	– Metropolitan Police
	* Mr M Rughani	– Wealdstone Traders' Association
	* Mrs J Skidmore	– Wealdstone Active Community
	† Sergeant C Walker	– Metropolitan Police
	Mr A Wood	– Harrow Public Transport Users' Association

\* Denotes Member present  
 (1) and (2) Denote category of Reserve Member  
 † Denotes apologies received

[Note: Councillor D Ashton also attended this meeting to speak on the item indicated at Minute 282 below].

**PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL****PART II - MINUTES**273. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

**RESOLVED:** To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Harriss	Councillor John Nickolay
Councillor Vina Mithani	Councillor Kara
Councillor Harrison	Councillor Blann

274. **Declarations of Interest:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that the following interest was declared:

- (i) Councillor Marilyn Ashton declared a personal interest arising from that fact that she was Vice-Chair of the Development Control Committee.

275. **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 the special circumstances and grounds for urgency detailed below:-

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Special Circumstances/Grounds for Urgency</u>
10.(b) Wealdstone Vitality Study and Regeneration Brief	The report had not been available at the time the agenda had been printed and circulated. Members were asked to consider the item as a matter of urgency, in order that the Panel's priorities for consideration by the Neighbourhood Renewal Forum could be identified.

16. Role of Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel
- The meeting of Cabinet which considered the role of the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel (WRAP) was held on 12 January 2006, after the main agenda was printed and circulated. Members were asked to consider the report as a matter of urgency, as it contained crucial information regarding the future of WRAP.

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

276. **Minutes:**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2005, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- (i) Attendees  
That it be noted that Councillor Paddy Lyne had sent her apologies.
- (ii) Minute 261 – Declarations of Interest  
Councillor Marilyn Ashton had declared an interest arising from that fact she was Vice-Chair of the Development Control Committee.

277. **Public Questions:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no public questions were put at the meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

278. **Deputations:**

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

279. **Petitions:**

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

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

**RESOLVED:** To note that no references had been received from Council or other Committees or Panels.

281. **Matters Arising:**

Key Worker Housing in Wealdstone

Officers advised that, in response to the Recommendation made by the Panel at its last meeting, the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Housing had requested that officers investigate how housing could be made more affordable. This would include an analysis of the subsidy that would be needed to reduce the cost of housing. Officers reported that initial analysis indicated that the average subsidy would need to be increased from £30,000 to £45,000 per one bed unit and from £40,000 to £80,000 for a 2 bed unit to ensure they were affordable for purchase by applicants on incomes of £17 –20,000 per annum. Further work was required to see how this additional subsidy might become available. Officers stated that, as this was the last meeting of the Panel, a report on this matter would be sent to Members of and Advisors to the Panel, for information, following the meeting. A progress report would also be presented to the Neighbourhood Renewal Forum when it became operational.

In response to questions from an Advisor regarding the involvement of financial organisations in the officers' investigations, officers advised that purchasers were required to organise their own mortgage with subsidy from the Housing Authority, and so it would not be necessary for the Council to consult with financial organisations.

A number of Members expressed the view that the shared ownership properties tended to be small without much amenity space. Officers responded that the properties had to meet minimum standards, but, as public subsidy was involved, it would not be prudent to make the properties larger if this made them unaffordable. The Panel was advised

that often the standard of the properties compared favorably with private sector properties.

In response to a question from an Advisor regarding how many units had been sold in Headstone Drive, officers advised that twelve units had been sold, five had been reserved, and four were to be allocated. Officers were requested to provide the Panel with information on the total number of units devoted to social housing in the area

**RESOLVED:** That officers be requested to send a written report to Members of and Advisers to the Panel providing an update on Key Worker Housing in Wealdstone.

282. **Role of Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel:**

The Panel received a report of the Director of Strategic Planning which advised of Cabinet's decision, at its meeting on 12 January 2006, to dissolve the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel (WRAP) following the Panel's meeting on 19 January 2006, and that the Panel's role would be subsumed into the terms of reference of the Neighbourhood Renewal Forum (NRF).

A Member expressed concern that the Panel had not been given an opportunity to formally vote on the subject of its dissolution prior to Cabinet's decision. The Member stated that the wording of the recommendation agreed by Cabinet on 12 January 2006 had been that "the work currently undertaken by WRAP would be subsumed...", which differed from the sentiment expressed in the minutes of the Panel meeting held on 15 November 2005, which stated that "WRAP would be subsumed...". The Member was of the view that this difference in emphasis could have significant implications for the composition and remit of the Panel's successor body, the NRF, and could result in Members of the Panel being excluded from membership of the NRF. In view of her concerns, the Member stated that she would be pursuing the Call-In procedure in relation to Cabinet's decision.

The Chair responded that the purpose of creating an NRF had been to widen participation to ensure greater representation by stakeholders who had an interest in Wealdstone. The reports on Neighbourhood Renewal that had previously been considered by the Panel and Cabinet had stated that organisations represented on the Panel would be offered places on the new Forum. The creation of an NRF had been discussed during formal Panel meetings and the Chair had spoken individually with organisations outside of meetings. The timescales involved in the transition to the new Forum, which had been outlined in the timetable considered by the Panel at its meeting on 15 November 2005, had stated that consultation with stakeholders for the new body was due to take place in February/March 2006. It had never been envisaged that the Panel would exist alongside the new Forum.

In response to a question from a Member regarding whether the Panel could contribute to the terms of reference of the NRF, the Chair advised that Members of the Panel would have an opportunity to be a part of the group that contributed to the new body's terms of reference, but emphasised that it would ultimately be for the new Forum, and not the Panel, to determine the terms of reference.

An Advisor to the Panel expressed concern that the NRF might not represent a significant advancement on the Panel. The Advisor was of the view that the new Forum's wider membership might focus debate on specific "grass roots" issues and that, in the absence of a direct link to Cabinet, focus on wider issues at a strategic level could be lost. In response, a Member highlighted the potential benefits of a more broadly constituted Forum, with more diversified sources of input than currently was the case with the Panel. The Chair stated that the Forum would be a different body that responded to central Government principles regarding neighbourhood renewal, which welcomed greater input from the community.

In response to a question from an Advisor to the Panel regarding what action would be taken if the NRF were found to be failing, the Chair stated that the Forum would be monitored to ensure that it was meeting the needs of the stakeholders, and that it would adapt and change if necessary.

**RESOLVED:** To note (1) the decision of Cabinet, at its meeting on 12 January 2006, that the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel be dissolved following its meeting on 19 January 2006, and the Panel's support of Cabinet's decision;

(2) that the membership and terms of reference of the Neighbourhood Renewal Forum would be developed in conjunction with stakeholders in the period up to and including the launch in March 2006.

[Notes: (i) In relation to Resolution (1) above, and during discussion, it was proposed that voting Members of the Panel be asked to indicate whether they supported the decision that had been made by Cabinet in relation to the dissolution of the Panel;

(ii) upon being put to a vote, the Panel's support of Cabinet's decision was carried (the Chair having used her second and casting vote);

(iii) Councillors Blann, Lavingia and Marie-Louise Nolan wished to be recorded as having voted in favour of supporting Cabinet's decision;

(iv) Councillors Marilyn Ashton, Kara and John Nickolay wished to be recorded as having voted against supporting Cabinet's decision;

(v) subsequently, it was proposed that non-voting Advisors to the Panel be asked to indicate whether they supported the decision that had been made by Cabinet in relation to the dissolution of the Panel;

(vi) three Advisors indicated that they did not support Cabinet's decision and three Advisors indicated that they neither supported nor did not support Cabinet's decision.]

### 283. **Wealdstone Vitality Study**

- (i) Summary Feedback from Workshop following Interim Report from Consultant:  
At its meeting on 15 November 2005 the Panel had received a presentation from Bone Wells Associates, and had then split into groups to discuss the consultants' proposals for Wealdstone and to make further suggestions for improving the town centre. The Panel received a summary of the feedback.

**RESOLVED:** That the summary feedback be noted.

- (ii) Wealdstone Vitality Study and Regeneration Brief:  
Officers introduced a report of the Director of Strategic Planning, which provided initial officer comments on the final recommendations made by Bone Wells Associates, the consultants who had been employed to undertake the Wealdstone Vitality Study and Regeneration Brief. The Panel also received a copy of the Bone Wells Final Draft Report. Officers asked the Panel to identify priority recommendations from the report, so these could be incorporated into the work of the Neighbourhood Renewal Forum (NRF).

A number of Members of and Advisors to the Panel expressed disappointment with the commissioned report, and expressed the view that it lacked innovation and sufficient detail. Advisors stated that the process of consulting with local businesses had not been properly conducted. Information appeared to have been gathered by telephone survey, with little evidence of further research having taken place. An Advisor reported that she had personally conducted surveys and collected information on behalf of the consultant, after being contacted by the consultant two days prior to the Panel's meeting on 15 November 2005, at which the consultants were due to report their initial findings. The Panel agreed that this was unacceptable in view of the consultant's brief.

The Chair reported that she had discussed with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Housing and the Director of Strategic Planning her own concerns regarding the quality of the report.

The following points were raised during the Panel's discussion on the priorities for the future regeneration of Wealdstone:

- The Panel felt it would be important for a 'big name' supermarket to construct an outlet in the town. Officers advised that a developer with links to a well-known supermarket had submitted a planning application to the Council's Development Control Committee but had subsequently withdrawn it. The Chair requested that officers continue dialogue with the developer to monitor progress in this regard.
- A Member expressed the view that allowing road traffic back into Wealdstone High Street would improve the visibility and accessibility of the businesses in the area. Another Member disagreed with this view, and stated that, in his view, opening the High Street to traffic would create problems with congestion and illegally parked cars.

- The issue of access from Ellen Webb Drive to Headstone Drive was identified to be of importance, as well as the availability of parking for traders and disabled users of the centre.
- The Panel indicated that the development of an Asian wedding centre, which had been suggested in the consultants' report, would not be an appropriate priority for Wealdstone.

An Advisor queried whether the 'Red Brick Café' would be opening all day on Saturdays, as this would attract greater customer numbers and increase awareness of the facility. The Chair responded that it this would be a decision for the management of the Café.

**RESOLVED:** That officers be requested to take forward to the NRF the priorities identified by the Panel.

284. **Byron Park Recreation Ground - Newsletter:**

Officers advised the Panel that a letter summarising the findings of the recent consultation on Byron Park Recreation Ground would be distributed, along with a newsletter, with the next edition of 'Harrow People'. The letter would request feedback, which could then be reported to the NRF.

**RESOLVED:** That the position be noted.

285. **Neighbourhood Renewal:**

The Panel received a presentation from officers on the Wealdstone Neighbourhood Renewal Forum (NRF).

The NRF would be based on principles set out by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, which encouraged processes of local consultation. An officer group had been established in preparation, and this had been considering issues such as reporting mechanisms. Information on the establishment of the Forum would be distributed to target attendee groups, and a mailshot on the NRF would be distributed with 'Harrow People.'

Key events leading to the commencement of the Forum had also been arranged, including a 'Love your Local Neighbourhood' day that would be taking place on 14 February 2006. This would invite comments and involvement from the community prior to the official launch of the Forum on 13 March 2006, which would provide a further opportunity for interested parties to comment and contribute.

Officers highlighted some of the achievements of the Panel, which included:

- A reduction in crime, and fear of crime, around Byron Park;
- An improvement in street cleanliness;
- A reduction in dumped cars;
- Introduction of the Safer Neighbourhood Scheme;
- Opening of the Wealdstone Centre;
- Creation of the Wealdstone Active Community;
- An improved partnership of working with neighbourhood teams.
- The introduction of Street Wardens.

Officers emphasised that, whilst the NRF would have the potential to attract specific funding associated with neighbourhood renewal, the Panel had used existing funds to achieve the above, which was to be commended.

A Member queried whether it would be possible for Members who were not Ward Councillors to participate in the Forum. Officers responded that, in the models they had examined, only Ward Councillors normally attended the meetings, but owing to the NRF being locally rather than nationally funded, there could be some latitude in this regard, though this was not an officer decision.

The Chair said that the NRF emphasis on local funding meant that there would be scope for the Forum to decide its own issues of priority. Officers were requested to provide Members of the Panel with information relating to other Neighbourhood Renewal Models.

**RESOLVED:** That (1) the above be noted;

(2) that officers be requested to circulate information relating to Neighbourhood Renewal Models to all Panel Members.

286. **Wealdstone Active Community:**

A representative of Wealdstone Active Community (WAC) updated the Panel on recent activities as follows:

- The WAC Programme for 2006 had not been completed but would be distributed as soon as it was finalised.
- Local memories of the 1940s were being compiled for the 'Living History' event scheduled to take place in January 2006.
- An organisation had approached WAC for assistance in identifying organisations who could employ people with learning difficulties for short periods.

The Chair suggested that an advertisement be placed in 'Harrow People' to assist in the recruitment of volunteer organisations, and that Harrow Association of Voluntary Services might also be able to assist.

**RESOLVED:** That the position be noted.

287. **Update on Policing in Wealdstone:**

Due to apologies having been received from both representatives of the Metropolitan Police, the Panel did not receive a statement.

**RESOLVED:** That the above be noted.

288. **Any Other Business:**(i) **Petition regarding Parking Enforcement in Wealdstone**

The Chair brought to the Panel's attention progress on a petition concerning parking enforcement in Wealdstone High Street, which had recently been submitted to Cabinet. It was added that the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport would be attending the next meeting of Wealdstone Traders' Association.

**RESOLVED:** That the above be noted.

(ii) **Wealdstone Police Station**

An Advisor expressed concerns regarding the future of the Police Station building in Wealdstone when new premises for the Police was found. The Advisor referred to a letter she had received from the Metropolitan Police department responsible for property, which stated that the current building would be too expensive to renovate for police purposes.

Members of and Advisors to the Panel agreed that the Police Station building was attractive, and should be preserved if possible. A Member of the Panel added that it was her understanding that the building was Locally Listed.

**RESOLVED:** That officers be requested to (1) investigate whether the Police Station was a Listed Building; and

(2) forward the Panel's concerns to the Neighbourhood Renewal Forum.

289. **Date of Next Meeting:**

The Chair advised that, in light of Cabinet's decision to dissolve the Panel immediately following this meeting, it would not be necessary to arrange any further meetings.

The Chair thanked everybody who had been involved with the Panel for their valuable contributions and stated that she looked forward to commencing work on the new NRF.

The Vice-Chair paid tribute to the responsive and courteous manner in which the Chair had overseen the work of the Panel.

**RESOLVED:** That the above be noted.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 9.02 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MARIE-LOUISE NOLAN  
Chair