

# MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS PANEL MINUTES

## 12 JULY 2017

**Chair:** \* Councillor Keith Ferry

**Councillors:** \* Stephen Greek \* David Perry (1)  
\* Susan Hall \* Sachin Shah  
\* Barry Macleod-Cullinane Anne Whitehead

\* Denotes Member present  
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

### 80. Attendance by Reserve Members

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

Ordinary Member

Councillor Sue Anderson

Reserve Member

Councillor David Perry

### 81. Appointment of Vice-Chair

**RESOLVED:** To appoint Councillor Susan Hall as Vice-Chair of the Panel for the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

### 82. Declarations of Interest

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

**Agenda Item 9 – the New Civic Centre**

Councillor Susan Hall declared a pecuniary interest in that she owned the leasehold for a commercial premises in Wealdstone. She would leave the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

## **All Other Agenda Items**

She also declared a non-pecuniary interest in that she was a Member of the London Assembly. She would remain in the room whilst the matters were considered and voted upon.

### **83. Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2016 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**RESOLVED:** To note that none were received.

### **84. Public Questions , Petitions & Deputations**

### **85. Information Report - Harrow Town Centre Vision**

The Panel received a report of the Divisional Director, Regeneration & Planning which set out the current vision for the town centre as set out in the Development Plan and provided a summary of the various projects that were being undertaken and highlighted a number of issues which had been identified through working with town centre stakeholders.

Following questions and comments from Members, an officer advised that:

- in recent years there had been a significant loss of office space in the town centre. This had partly been due to changes in planning policy and permitted development rights which now allowed the conversion of office space to residential use. He did not have to hand the exact figures regarding this and undertook to circulate this information to Members after the meeting;
- there continued to be demand for small, serviced office space in Harrow and the availability of these would likely increase in those new developments which were located in the regeneration sites.

There was a link between the demand for office space and the level of business rates in an area. An increase in the number of residential developments in the borough meant an increase in council tax as well as increased spending in the town centre. He would need to verify with the Finance Department data regarding the balance between business rates revenue and council tax revenue received by the Council and undertook to circulate this information to Members after the meeting;

- the Area Action Plan (AAP) would review whether the levels of infrastructure, for example, school places, GP surgeries etc was adequate to support the increase in residential units and subsequent population increase.

The Chair advised that a recent review had shown that approximately 25,000 square metres of office space and 2,500 jobs had been lost in the town

centre. It was important to note that the Council did not have any control over this. He added that there would be a limited amount of small office space available at the development at the former Kodak site. The Council should be looking at how it could support and grow the local night time economy. One proposal that might support this would be to pedestrianise College Road to enable outdoor seating for food outlets. Furthermore, new developments, for example the one proposed at Greenhill Way might be designated as mixed use, which meant that they could include retail, leisure and residential units.

The Chair added that the two monitoring cameras in the town centre, one on St Ann's Road and the other on College Road had shown that there had been a year on year increase in footfall in the town centre by 8% and this figure was growing. In fact, there was evidence to show that footfall in Harrow town centre was higher than that in Watford or Uxbridge town centres. With regard to the spend profile in Harrow, local retailers who attended the Town Centre Business Improvement meetings had advised that a large proportion of their consumers were from outside Harrow.

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

## **86. New Civic Centre**

The Panel received a presentation from the consultants and architects responsible for the proposed new civic centre.

Councillor Hall left the room during discussion of this item.

Following questions and comments from Members, the consultants and architects responded as follows:

- it was anticipated that improved glazing in new developments, improved night time lighting and landscaping features which would open up the area surrounding the proposed site of the new civic centre would lead to a reduction in anti-social behaviour and crime in the area;
- a detailed construction management plan for this scheme and all the other schemes in Wealdstone would ensure that disruption during the construction period was kept to a minimum;
- it was proposed that the new civic centre be seven storeys high with a roof garden on the fifth storey. The proposed residential building would also be below the level of the Palmerston Road development, which is seventeen storeys in height;
- extensive consultation had been carried out locally and most local residents were aware of the height and scale of the proposed new developments in Wealdstone. Once these were completed, Wealdstone would benefit from a high quality and stronger skyline;
- the proposed new developments in Wealdstone, which included the new civic centre site, the Byron Quarter site as well as that at the

former Kodak site would have a regenerative effect on the wider Wealdstone area. This coupled with the sale of the public house on Wealdstone High Street, which had been a hub of anti-social behaviour, and the opening of an Asda supermarket on the high street indicated that investor confidence in the area had improved. These changes would reduce the levels of anti-social behaviour, vagrancy and crime in the area;

- a parking and traffic assessment and travel planning had been carried out for each of the proposed schemes. Officers anticipated some increase in traffic and parking and would focus their efforts on key hotspots in the area. There were also plans to install locally an underground car park. Discussions were on-going to bring forward a multi storey car park and a car park behind Wealdstone station. A cumulative impact assessment in relation to parking and traffic management and infrastructure needs would also be undertaken. It was difficult for the Council to dictate to TfL or Network Rail, however, the Council had entered into strategic discussions with both providers regarding transport needs and the likelihood of increased transport pressures in the area;
- detailed information regarding the phasing of the projects in Wealdstone would be submitted at the September 2017 meeting of Cabinet;
- there were several precedents to the developments in Wealdstone in other London boroughs, and these had successfully encouraged modal shift among local residents.

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

#### **87. Bryon Quarter**

The Panel received a presentation regarding the Byron Quarter re-development.

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

#### **88. Update on Various Projects**

The Divisional Director of Planning and Regeneration provided an update on the major development projects in Harrow.

Following questions, the Divisional Director advised that following the recent Grenfell Tower tragedy, a review of fire safety arrangements at all of the Council's housing stock had been undertaken. Where the Council held information regarding private developments, these too had been assessed and further enquiries were ongoing. Following a fire safety audit at Bradstowe House, the cladding used had failed the relevant test and follow-up work on this was ongoing, with a number of options under consideration. He added that the Council was not involved in the management of the building. The Fire

Service was satisfied that Bradstowe House did not need to be evacuated as there were a number of other fire safety arrangements in place at the building.

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

**89. Future Topics and Presentations**

**RESOLVED:** That reports be submitted to the next meeting on the following topics:

1. A report on the integrated Construction Traffic Management Strategy for Wealdstone;
2. An update from the chairs of the Design Review Panel on on-going work;
3. An assessment of economic activity in the town centre.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.45 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR KEITH FERRY  
Chair