

Planning Policy Advisory Panel

Minutes

2 November 2023

Present:

Chair: Councillor Marilyn Ashton

Councillors: Christopher Baxter David Perry
Stephen Greek Zak Wagman
Nitin Parekh

**In attendance
(Virtual):** Krishna Suresh

**Apologies
received:** Asif Hussain

60. Attendance by Reserve Members

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

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Asif Hussain

Councillor Krishna Suresh

61. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that there were none.

62. Minutes

Following a Member's question as to the detail included in the minutes, the Chair advised that as the meetings were webcast the discussion could be viewed in detail and that the minutes are not verbatim of the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2023, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

63. Public Questions

RESOLVED: To note that no questions had been received.

64. Petitions

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions had been received.

65. Deputations

RESOLVED: To note that there were no deputations.

Resolved Item

66. New Harrow Local Plan - draft Spatial Vision and Objectives

The Panel received a presentation on the new Harrow Local Plan and officers:

- (a) provided an update on the preparation of the Plan.
- (b) documents the draft Borough Profile and draft Spatial Vision and Strategy and Strategic Objectives for the Plan and sought the Panel's feedback on these; and
- (c) outlined the next steps.

During the presentation, Members were advised that

- (i) Evidence base work:

All draft Local Plans were examined by the Planning Inspectorate for 'soundness'; plans must be found sound before they could be adopted by the Council. One of the 'tests of soundness' under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was that a plan must be 'justified'. This meant it must represent 'an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence' The evidence needed to be justified.

- (ii) Stakeholder engagement:

The Local Plan was a key land use policy mechanism for most functions of the Council (i.e. housing, heritage, economic development, transport, education, social care, parks, biodiversity) and also impacted upon Council landholdings.

All relevant areas of the Council had been approached with respect to the effectiveness of the current Local Plan, any emerging issues and pressures, and what they would like to see included in the new Local Plan.

Many of these service areas were directly involved the drafting of policies relevant to their functions and all would be requested to review relevant policies before the draft Plan was presented to the Panel.

Service areas had also been involved in the preparation of any evidence base documents relevant to their area.

An initial discussion had been held with the Greater London Authority (GLA) as the Harrow Local Plan must be in 'general' conformity with the London Plan. These discussions were general in nature, focusing on the sorts of matters that had caused issues with general conformity in other boroughs. A further discussion would be held before the first formal round of consultation (Regulation 18 consultation) on the draft Local Plan.

Duty to Cooperate meetings had been held with a number of adjoining boroughs (i.e. Barnet, Ealing, Hertsmere), with another to be held shortly. The Duty to Cooperate was a requirement of the plan making process; it was largely intended to replace the system of formal regional spatial strategies in England to address cross-borough planning issues of a strategic nature (i.e. housing and employment need, infrastructure etc).

(iii) Plan drafting:

Significant progress had been made on the drafting of the new Local Plan. The draft table of contents was included at Appendix 1 of the officer report. The table of contents was evolving as policies were drafted, with several policies being consolidated where possible and additional ones added where the need became evident.

The report sought Members comment and feedback on the overarching spatial vision and objectives for the new Local Plan as per the report.

Following the presentation, Members asked questions and made comments regarding the Local Plan.

A Member asked about the viability report and what kinds of viability had been looked at. Officers advised that viability elements considered were the cost of land and sales value of properties and value of construction costs. In addition, the implication of what might be required in terms of affordable housing and what the costs of that might be to the scheme, any environmental standards that might be required, including those required by the Local Plan were also considered, so really tests to see if all those cumulatively still meant that development was viable in the borough. Policies cumulatively could not be set that might make development unviable because then the plan would be undeliverable.

Members also asked whether the plan being changed or just having additional improvements made. The officer advised that large elements of the plan

would be taken forward but there were some changes to make it more streamlined and work better.

Members asked about the protection of the heritage sites. Officers advised that the new Local Plan would capture those areas that did not quite make the grade for conservation area status, namely the new concept of local areas of special character.

Members questioned whether there was going to be development on the boundaries of the Borough and not just the centre of the Borough. The Chair advised the Local Plan was for the whole of Borough.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 6.48 pm).

(Signed) Councillor Marilyn Ashton
Chair