
**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
PANEL**

1 JUNE 2009

Chairman: * Councillor Marilyn Ashton

Councillors: * Husain Akhtar * Manji Kara
* Keith Ferry * Joyce Nickolay
* Thaya Idaikkadar Navin Shah

* Denotes Member present

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1 - Local Development Scheme - Revision

Officers introduced a report to the Panel which proposed to revise the Local Development Scheme to substantially bring forward the delivery of the Harrow Core Strategy. An officer initially explained the background to the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and highlighted that it was an important tool to keep the public informed of Local Development Framework (LDF) documents and to indicate when they could participate in the formation of key documents.

The officer explained that the Local Development Scheme had been revised in December 2008 and had been submitted to Government Office for London (GOL) and Greater London Authority (GLA). The officer reported that both bodies had raised concerns with the Council on revised timetable and the significant extension provided for the delivery of the Core Strategy. Additionally the officer reported that GOL considered that the Government's recent changes to legislation were intended to ensure efficiency in the preparation and finalisation of documents within the LDF.

The Divisional Director of Planning Services outlined the implications of the proposed revised LDS. He explained that the new timetable would result in the Core Strategy being adopted 14 months sooner than previously proposed. Resources would be allocated accordingly within the Planning Policy Team to ensure that the revised timetable for delivery of the Core Strategy was met. This target would take precedence over other Priority Level 1 and Level 2 Document targets within the LDF. The Divisional Director explained that discussions had been held with relevant political parties on the delivery of the document. This was an important governance process and it was anticipated that Members would be consulted on the delivery of the Core Strategy through other forums in addition to presenting reports to the Panel. The Divisional Director reported that he would be liaising with Democratic Services to establish a timetable to ensure that delivery of the Core Strategy went through a more streamlined Committee process for ratification.

The Divisional Director of Planning Services highlighted two changes to the revised LDS which would require amendment from the version presented to the Panel. These included that:

- the formal public consultation on the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document would take place in July 2009 not June 2009;
- the reference in the LDF timetable to republishing the existing UDP proposals map to take into account the spatial impact of the Core Strategy would require amendment, as this was not strictly what was proposed.

During the discussion on this item, Members raised a number of issues which officers responded to as follows:

- the process had commenced to recruit a new member of staff to the Planning Policy team;
- if further delays were encountered in the proposed revised Local Development Scheme, there could be significant impacts. GOL and GLA could direct the Council on how to prepare the documents and any further revisions to the Local Development Scheme would not be signed off unless delivery of the revised targets was guaranteed. A lack of a Planning Delivery grant was also an impact of further delays. However this resource had diminished in any event. However the impact on the Council's reputation was more important to consider as promises had been made to the public and the Council's partners, that a clear spatial vision would be delivered;
- officers were confident that the proposed revised LDS was deliverable. The Planning Policy team would now be concentrating its resources on the Core Strategy;
- a lot of work had been conducted on the consultation on choices for the Core Strategy. However one of the key issues raised by GOL and the GLA was that any further delays could render the evidence obtained by the Council as outdated due to the length of time;
- officers would aim to produce reports to the Panel which would elaborate on the choices available to the Panel and the decision being requested. Reports would be brief and any substantial documents could be attached an appendix to the report. Comments regarding the length of the reports and the amount of paper involved would be taken on board;
- officers would consider producing a rolling index which would record when items had been presented to the Panel and relevant dates on which decisions had been made. Officers would also

investigate how to keep Members informed of progress made on the LDF during periods between meetings.

Members of the Panel also made a number of comments on the item which included:

- that extra work had been added within the LDS than was originally anticipated and this had to be borne in mind;
- one advantage of the revised LDS was that there was now a rich pool of inspectors' letters to authorities on how things could be done better;
- a Bar Chart showing the progress of documents within the LDF was a useful tool for Members. Early circulation of the document before meetings of the Panel would be useful.

The Chairman commented that there had been a change of officers within the Planning Policy Team and that she was confident that the Council had excellent officers in place. The Chairman added that the officers had the Chairman's full support. The Chairman reminded the Panel that GOL and the GLA had been clear in their advice to the Council. She noted that many other boroughs had not been successful when delivering their completed Core Strategies for approval and it was important to ensure that the processes followed and content of the Core Strategy was correct. The Chairman stated that a lot of work had already been conducted in relation to the Core Strategy, so a wealth of evidence was already available to the Council.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Cabinet)

That the draft revised Local Development Scheme be approved for resubmission to the Secretary of State and the Greater London Authority.