

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON THURSDAY, 12TH OCTOBER, 2023

MEMBERS: Councillors Mahmut Aksanoglu (Chair), Hivran Dalkaya, Ahmet Hasan, Mohammad Islam (Deputy Mayor), Joanne Laban, Edward Smith, (Associate Cabinet Member (Enfield North), Mahym Bedekova and Hannah Dyson

Officers:

Joanne Drew (Director of Housing & Regeneration), Richard Eason (Programme Director, Journeys & Places) Andrea Bugli (Capital Delivery Manager, Place Shaping Team), Amena Matin (Head of Regeneration)

Also Attending:

Councillor Nesil Caliskan, Leader of the Council
Adam Messaili, Enfield Youth Council Member

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Nelly Gyosheva and Cllr David Skelton. Cllr Gyosheva was substituted by Cllr Mahym Bedekova, and Cllr Skelton was substituted by Cllr Dyson.

Apologies for lateness were also received from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Nesil Caliskan.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In respect of item 4, Cllr Mahym Bedekova advised that she was the landlord of a property close to Edmonton Green Town Centre.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2023.

4. TOWN CENTRES

Richard Eason (Programme Director, Journeys & Place) and Andrea Bugli (Capital Delivery Manager Place Shaping Team) provided the Panel with a presentation capturing the latest activity, opportunities, engagement activities and local support within the Borough's primary Town Centres.

Questions were invited from Members.

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Members had queries on the Pearson's refurbishment, to which officers explained that Palace Gardens are considering a 'light-touch' redesign, which could possibly see the rear exterior shop front being pushed forward to the overhang to allow for better dressing of the shop window. The Council's role is to provide planning permissions. The Council has held discussions with Palace Gardens and owner representatives on their proposals. Officers confirmed they are having active conversations to ensure that the proposals are attractive while offering a safe environment for all and, by improving the quality of the public realm, the hope was to attract more people to Enfield Town Centre. It was advised that the planning application for Pearson's can be viewed on the Enfield Council Planning Portal.

Members raised concerns on possible plans to change the market square cobble stones which have been in place since Tudor times, and it was reiterated that residents would not be happy to see these removed. Officers advised that they had received a wide range of public opinion on the cobbles. However, to move forward with any proposal for this area, a planning application would have to be submitted to Enfield Council which would follow the same process as any other development issue. The heritage of this area would play a key role in any planned development and no changes would be made without a discussion with the Market Trust.

Members requested clarification on the proposed plans for Coleman Parade and whether these included a dedicated loading bay. Officers advised that the current plans would see the slip road pedestrianised, and the loading bay moved forward to the carriage side of the road.

As requested at the previous meeting of the Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Panel, Members were still awaiting an update on the proposed numbers and location of the electrical charging points which were currently situated at Coleman Parade.

Action: Officers will clarify and circulate this information to Members as soon as possible.

In response to questions regarding the Enfield Town Art mural alongside Marks & Spencer, towards Cecil Road, Officers advised that it is designed to lighten the alleyway making it feel more pleasant to walk through. Close work will continue with council colleagues who inherit the maintenance of the mural with careful thought being given to the future revenue stream for its ongoing upkeep. It was also confirmed that there was a Youth Engagement Action Plan in place and the young people champions had been involved with the murals in other town centres in the borough.

In response to concerns raised regarding the safety of the proposed neighbourhood spaces, especially at night-time, Officers confirmed that they are working closely with the council's Community Safety and CCTV teams together with the Met Police's Design Out Crime Team to ensure the safety of these areas and this has always been a priority in the design process.

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Further information was provided on the launch of Angel Yard, the Living Room Library and the Fore Street murals and officers answered questions raised by members relating to these projects. The presentation also included further updates on the proposed plans for Palmers Green and Southgate.

The Chair thanked Officers for their informative update.

The Panel agreed:

I. To note the report and looked forward to receiving further updates when available.

Richard and Andrea left the meeting at this point.

5. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND IMPACT ON HOUSING

Amena Matin, Head of Regeneration & Growth presented this item, which provided an overview of the current economic conditions, progress at Joyce Avenue and Snells Park (J&S) estates, successes, which there have been a number of, particularly around resident engagement and procurement of grant funding, as well as challenges and responses to these, which has included the mobilisation of the professional services team to progress the masterplan for up to 2000 homes over 10 phases which has good support from residents.

A lot has been happening on the estates in terms of the Council's investments and overall commitment to this project. There have however been a number of challenges; the economy has changed since the start of the project in terms of interest rates, building costs and other external factors, which have all impacted on affordability and viability of the scheme. The other changes relate to enhanced building regulatory standards which were not known in September 2021. However, the Council is continuously reviewing the affordability and viability of the scheme and exploring delivery routes to offset the call on debt and respond to market conditions.

Questions were invited from members.

In response to concerns from Members regarding the viability of the scheme the Leader of the Council, Cllr Caliskan confirmed that there was still a political commitment for the plan to proceed and the way to ensure this would include a re-design, applying for extra grant funding and looking to work with a wide range of partners. She added that the Council are open to looking at the chronology of the phasing so that the scheme can progress and de-risk any loss of grant funding.

Members sought clarification regarding the requirement of a second staircase and Officers advised that in December 2022 the Mayor of London indicated that this would be a requirement in all new high-rise buildings above 30m and more recently (July 2023) Government has announced an intention to move to a secondary stair exit at 18m which has impacted on the scheme progression through planning as the Council intends to redesign and future proof the homes. Therefore, the tender process was abandoned pending a new

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procurement. Officers advised that to move forward and have confidence in the viability of the scheme depended on further guidance from the Government and it was hoped that a formal announcement would be made later this year. However, Members were reminded that the whole sector is in the same situation, therefore re-designing schemes seems the best solution at this time, rather than waiting for Government guidance that may never come.

In response to questions regarding funding, it was confirmed that in October 2021, the GLA allocated grant for 338 homes of which 88 will be for existing leaseholders who wish to stay and take up a new shared ownership home and 250 social rented homes for tenants who wish to remain on the estate. The grant funding approved at this stage was £54.4m. A revised bid was submitted in March 2023 to offset the changing inflationary pressures and approved. This increased the grant allocation to £64,476m (an uplift of £10,060m). The Council was then awarded £50m from the GLA Land Fund for buybacks (subject to contract). This is additional subsidy which will be applied to purchase of leaseholder properties, which overall reduces borrowing call on capital in the early years of the HRA Business Plan. Officers said that the Council have received support at all points from the GLA as they have the confidence that the scheme will be delivered.

In response to a question regarding the 50% affordable housing target as part of the strategy, it was confirmed that this is still the aspiration.

Following a question regarding the Council's confidence in Vistry as a partner, and whether they remain as supportive of the scheme as they did two years ago, the Leader said that Vistry are very supportive in the partnership, but it was recognised that there are challenges from their perspective as well as the Council's perspective around viability. As the Leader, Cllr Caliskan said that her responsibility is that the scheme is viable from the Council's perspective but again, recognised that as a partner, Vistry must ensure that their schemes are viable too. She added that one of the benefits of doing the scheme site by site and phase by phase is because had a different approach been adopted, the Council would now be in a situation where the Master Developer would have complete control of the overall site, and therefore as a Council, we would not be able to negotiate at any stage.

The Chair thanked Officers for their report and attendance at the meeting.

The Panel agreed:

I. To note the report.

6. WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

NOTED the Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2023/24.

7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

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NOTED the date of future meetings as follows:

Wednesday 1 November 2023

Tuesday 30 January 2024

Tuesday 25 March 2024

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm.