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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 25.5.2017

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY, 25 MAY 2017

COUNCILLORS: Derek Levy (Chair), Abdul Abdullahi, Guney Dogan, Nneka Keazor, Michael Rye, Ertan Hurer.

STATUTORY CO-OPTees 1 vacancy (*Church of England diocese representative*), Mr Simon Goulden (*other faiths/denominations representative*), Mr Tony Murphy (*Catholic diocese representative*), Alicia Meniru & 1 vacancy (*Parent Governor representative*) – *Italics Denotes absence*

OFFICERS: Peter George (AD Regeneration & Environment), Jeremy Pilgrim (AD Property Services), Paul Gardner (Regeneration Officer Neighbourhood Regeneration), Alan Fleming (Meridian Water Programme Director), Ann Freeman (Finance Manager, Capital & Projects), Claire Johnson (Governance & Scrutiny Manager), Elaine Huckell (Scrutiny Secretary)

Also Attending: Councillor Doug Taylor (Council Leader), Councillor Edward Smith, Councillor Alan Sitkin (Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Business Development), Councillor Ahmet Oykenar (Cabinet Member for Housing and Housing Regeneration), Councillor Achilleas Georgiou (Deputy Leader).

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WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting. Councillors Michael Rye and Guney Dogan were welcomed as new members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Apologies for absence had been received from Tony Murphy and Ian Davis.

It was noted that Councillor Ertan Hurer was substituting for Councillor Edward Smith at the meeting.

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ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

Councillor Nneka Keazor was elected as Vice Chair for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were put forward. It was noted that Councillor Achilleas Georgiou attended the meeting for agenda item 5 only.

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CALL-IN OF REPORT: MERIDIAN WATER: LAND ACQUISITION

The Chair moved this item for discussion under Part 2.

Councillor Levy referred to the 'rather late' receipt of papers from the Regeneration Team. Councillor Rye said it was reasonable that members be sent papers at least 48 hours before a meeting to enable them to digest the content and if necessary speak to colleagues about any issues that may be apparent. He stated that he would not be prepared to consider a call-in, in future, if papers were not provided a minimum of 48 hours prior to a meeting. Councillor Levy agreed that it was important that papers were received by members in good time. He referred to the procedural aspects of the call-in which meant members would be looking at the decision taken by Cabinet on the 9 May 2017. The additional briefing paper provided by the Regeneration team gave details on further aspects of the land acquisition. However, he said this additional briefing paper is for information only.

Councillor Smith outlined the reasons for call-in, which were included in the Part 1 agenda. He welcomed the additional information that had been provided in relation to the proposed purchase of the two industrial sites in Meridian Water: A 10 hectare site known as Stonehill Estate (Stonehill) and a 3 hectare site known as Hastingwood Estate (Hastingwood). He confirmed that the information provided was useful, however he mentioned that a technical question regarding the issue of VAT was still to be answered. This point was later discussed with Councillor Hurer and Ann Freeman (Finance Manager, Capital & Projects) who mentioned that any VAT costs arising from any potential 'change of use' would be covered by the Master Developer.

Responses were provided by Councillor Sitkin and Councillor Oykenner (as relevant Cabinet members and also by officers. They outlined details of the decision to approve the purchase of the two sites (Stonehill and Hastingwood) in the east of the Meridian Water Regeneration Area. This decision is subject to the demonstration of overall viability of the Meridian Water scheme, a decision that has been delegated to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Business Development and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency.

Discussions focused on:

- The annual income arising from the existing and proposed temporary (meanwhile) uses arising from the purchase of the two sites and whether this would cover the annual financing costs of borrowing needed to purchase the two sites.

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- The financial viability of the proposed development of the two sites including the on-going review of SIL (Strategic Industrial Land) by the GLA and the implications of this on the Meridian Water Development.
- Different scenarios were put forward giving the possible outcomes following the re-designation, or not, of SIL land at this location. It also presented the implications for not acquiring the sites. It was confirmed that even using the worst case scenario i.e. that SIL land is not released then a reduced scheme could be delivered which would still make it viable.
- The acquisition of the two sites would bring the potential to unlock development of the east bank area of the Meridian Water site to realise the potential of 10,000 homes and 6,700 jobs.

Councillor Smith was of the view that the additional information requested should have been available in the original report. In terms of the impairment issue he said there may be concerns if we do not go ahead with the proposal.

A vote was then taken and the Committee unanimously **AGREED** to confirm the original Cabinet decision.

At this point Councillors Taylor, Sitkin and Oykenner left and Councillor Georgiou returned to the meeting room. The following officers also left –Peter George, Jeremy Pilgrim, Paul Gardner, Alan Fleming and Ann Freeman.

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WORK PROGRAMME & WORK STREAMS 2017/18

The Chair invited Councillor Georgiou, Deputy Leader, to outline the Cabinet's priorities for 2017/18 and discussion took place on possible scrutiny topics.

Councillor Georgiou referred to financial pressures on Enfield including the funding for our health and police services which, he said, is not what it should be. The 'Fair Funding' campaign aims to tackle this. Cabinet would be looking at issues for the borough resulting from population growth, and the increased demands from people who are on low incomes, who need to access our services including their need for affordable housing.

The following issues for consideration were discussed -

- Loneliness and Social Isolation. Research shows physical effects of isolation are bad for health. Health interventions - Councillor Georgiou referred to an increase in sports centre usage but mentioned that data showed that there was a need to encourage more women to become active in sport in the borough
- Human Trafficking - this includes prostitution issues in the borough. It was thought that as this area was closely connected with 'Gangs' and 'Drugs' problems, it was suggested that this should be looked at as a linked topic.

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- Knife Crime/ Policing/ Safer Communities -Police numbers is an issue often raised by the public. In light of recent events in the borough, knife crime is one that should be included as a linked topic. An issue to consider is whether there would be the same level of knife crime if there were more police allocated to the borough. It is also necessary to look at the implications of joining together Enfield and Haringey policing, and what this may mean for Enfield.
- Mental Health – It was noted that there had been a workstream last year on CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service). Councillor Abdullahi, as Chair of the Health Scrutiny Standing workstream, referred to the JHOSC – the Joint Mental Health committee which he attends and which covers the three boroughs – Haringey, Barnet and Enfield.
- NHS Community & Primary Care.
- Housing – There are limited options for some people and there is a high demand for new homes in the borough. The new housing allocations policy for Enfield should be sent out for consultation in the near future.
- Contracts Compliance / Housing Repairs – a workstream had looked at problems in respect of some of our housing contracts/contractors for last year. This could be reviewed as part of the general topic for scrutiny on Contacts Compliance.
- Cycle Enfield/ Streetscene changes and High Street retailers – A linked topic which could look at how it may be possible to boost our local economies and support local retailers. It was commented that there may be a place for re-designating some shops for housing purposes, which would increase footfall. It was noted that the use of CPO's may be appropriate.
- Scrutiny of Enfield Trading Companies - There is a need for scrutiny to be undertaken of these companies especially as it is likely to be an expanding area in future. It was stated that although a Cabinet decision can be called-in, it is not possible to do the same for the Enfield trading companies in a formal way. It was noted that an annual report is provided on them to Council. The process needs to be examined to look at how we can improve the governance arrangements.
- Home to School Transport service- Councillor Keazor would be interested in taking this issue forward
- 'Bedblocking' - under Adult Social Care - It was noted that this area is 'in hand' and is examined under the Health Scrutiny Standing workstream.
- The Council's relationship with the voluntary sector

It was thought more pre-decision scrutiny may be undertaken and one area where this may be useful would be when looking at the Local Plan process e.g we could look at identifying more SIL sites.

Crime Scrutiny Standing work stream – there may not be a need for a separate standing workstream on this issue in future.

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The issue of member support was discussed, it was hoped that more Cabinet members might attend the meeting in future and not only during the call-in process. It was hoped that there would be greater participation from members at the workstream meetings. It was thought this might be easier to organize if their meeting dates could be included on the Council calendar at the beginning of the municipal year. Councillor Georgiou said he would take these issues back.

The Committee agreed the first tranche of workstreams, it was noted that some topics can be dealt with in a shorter time frame than others –

- Human Trafficking (Including Gangs and Drug issues) – Councillor Rye leading (to be scoped)
- Transport Connectivity, including SEN transport – Councillor Keazor leading (to be scoped)

Action – Workstream Chair with Scrutiny Officer

Councillor Levy asked members to liaise with Claire Johnson if they have any further comments/ suggestions.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 APRIL 2017

AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2017.

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DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Noted the dates of future meetings and provisional call-in dates.

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EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

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PART 2 AGENDA CALL IN RE: MERIDIAN WATER LAND ACQUISITION

See item 4

Councillor Levy thanked everyone for attending this meeting.

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