

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON TUESDAY, 8TH DECEMBER, 2020

MEMBERS: Councillors Mahmut Aksanoglu, Maria Alexandrou, Susan Erbil, Margaret Greer (Chair), Tim Leaver, Edward Smith and Claire Stewart (Vice Chair)

Officers: Sarah Cary (Executive Director Place), Bob Doyle (Head of Economic Development), Peter George (Programme Director - Meridian Water), Andy Johnson (Progression and Pathways Manager), Helen Murch (Head of Strategic Planning and Design) Peter Nathan (Director of Education), Simon Gardner (Regeneration Director Meridian Water) Metin Halil (Governance and Scrutiny) and Penelope Williams (Secretary - Governance and Scrutiny)

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Akpinar.

Each member introduced themselves.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

3. LOCAL PLAN AND HOUSING NEEDS

The panel received a presentation from Helen Murch (Head of Strategic Planning and Design) setting out the next steps for Enfield's Local Plan.

1. Presentation

Helen Murch highlighted the following from her presentation:

- Putting the new local plan together to replace the previously adopted plan was a five stage process. Work began in 2015 and the plan is currently at the preparation stage known as Reg 18.
- The work done so far has included the 2015 consultation, the big Enfield conversation in 2017, the 2018 issues and options consultation and a huge amount of other evidence-based work.
- Since 2018 there have been a number of major contextual changes. These include, the climate change emergency, Covid 19, Brexit, changes to the planning system, growing importance of nature recovery, the stalemate with publishing the local plan, technological

advancements, financial and resourcing pressures and deepening housing and health crisis.

- Plans should be based on the assessment of context, evidence and a powerful local vision.
- Enfield now needs to reset the process to take account of the changing context. The Council needs to consider where we are now and where we want to get to. They would need a plan with a clear spatial vision of what we want Enfield to be in 15/20 years and to develop spatial options and policies to reflect the ambitions of the updated vision.
- The next stage of the plan would be highly graphic, map based and would contain masterplans, localised concept plans, maps, photographs and infographics.
- The proposed forward programme envisions the preparation taking place between November and April 2021 with a draft plan submitted to the scrutiny panel in May 2021 and to Council for approval in June 2021. It was hoped the council would be able to reach final adoption in 2023/4.
- All members will be invited to take part in private and confidential focussed engagement workshops early in the New Year.

2. Questions/Comments from Members

- 2.1 Welcome for the forward programme of consultation. There were no plans to recreate the Local Plan Sub Committee, but officers did want to involve all members through a series of workshops before the report went to Cabinet and Council later in the year. Anything discussed at informal Cabinet would be mimicked in the workshops.
- 2.2 There was stalemate on the Local Plan because of a lack of agreement between the Mayor of London and the Secretary of State. This was creating a great deal of uncertainty.
- 2.3 The Government had received over 45,000 responses to their recent planning proposals with lots of opposition. This was not going to be resolved soon. Further rounds of consultation were inevitable.
- 2.4 It was likely that the Council would have to bring forward the plan they were currently working on under current legislation.
- 2.5 Face to face workshops would be preferred, but it was likely that this would be possible, because of the Covid situation and these would probably have to be virtual. Officers were working hard to find ways to make them as interactive and effective as possible.
- 2.6 The dates of the workshops would be notified as soon as possible. They will be included in the weekly Members Newsletter.
- 2.7 The pandemic has brought home how important it was, especially for people's health and mental wellbeing, to have access to green space.

The Chair summed up by saying this was an excellent development and that she looked forward to seeing the emerging policies later in the year.

4. SKILLS AND TRAINING

The scrutiny panel received a presentation including information on the impact in Enfield of the Covid pandemic on skills and training, recovery plans and the Skills and Employment Board.

1. Presentation

The following points were highlighted by Bob Doyle, Head of Economic Development, on skills and training and the impact of the pandemic:

- There had been no major redundancies from major private employers in the borough.
- The number of working age adults claiming unemployment benefit had increased by 164% between January and August this year.
- The greatest rise was among people in the 25-49 age group.
- At the peak of the pandemic, 52,000 people were furloughed.
- Youth unemployment was projected to rise significantly.
- Enfield had a good mix of large employers in a range of sectors that were comparatively resilient, including in food processing, logistics, ecommerce, film and TV production. These were industries that were likely to expand and would be able to create some highly skilled work.
- Craft brewing was another growing industry. Infarm was a new company doing vertical farming.
- The long-term trend data revealed that the number of unemployed claimants in September was at the highest level it had been for the last 34 years. Enfield was 9% above the London and UK average.
- The younger age groups had been hardest hit.
- However, there were some jobs available, primarily in health, teaching and warehousing but there were also a large number of applicants per job.

The following points were highlighted by Sarah Cary on recovery plans:

- A transition board has been set up co-chaired by the Secretary of State and the Mayor of London.
- There is High Street Co-ordination Group focusing on high street issues, offering guidance on winterisation, co-ordinating licensing initiatives, sharing good practice and flagging the need to co-ordinate political and police messages.
- There was also a London Recovering Board which was looking to the longer term to provide strategic direction to and democratic oversight of London's recovery work. They would be fostering collaboration and have set nine mission-based goals.
- From this follows a sub-regional partnership made up of seven east London boroughs including Enfield. They are monitoring the impact on

local jobs, residents and businesses. London was looking worse than the rest of the UK.

- Enfield was putting in place measures to develop an economy that works for everyone. They would keep grant programmes running and provide help for new business.

The following points highlighted by Andy Johnson (Progression and Pathway Manager):

- The Enfield Skills and Employment Board was being established to provide a forum to allow discussion between local employers, the local authority and other stakeholders on strategic issues.
- It is chaired by the Leader of the Council and attended by other cabinet members. Other members are also being invited to take part including representatives from local employers, colleges, key sectors, the DWP brokerage scheme and Job Centre Plus.
- The first meeting took place on 23 November 2020.
- The board will link with existing employment strategies on Meridian Water, Children and Young People, Enfield Poverty and with the Inequality Commission, the Economic Development Strategy and Local London.
- The Board would be focusing on the journey from school to employment, the breadth and suitability of vocational skills training, life skills and ESOL provision, embed the pathway to work with residents with SEND, devolution of the Adult Education budget, extending partnerships, co-ordinating the governments plan for jobs, forecasting emerging and future skills, defining and positioning the role of the two new skills academies, exploring the idea of a new institute of Tech in the borough and developing a new skills and employment strategy.
- It was an important new initiative especially at this time of rising unemployment. The council will be working with employers to devise proper progression pathways and opportunities. There will be a lot to do in the next 6 months.

2. Questions/Comments from Scrutiny Panel Members

2.1 Support for the work on a pan London basis, but concerns about the impact of austerity and that many of the people in sectors where unemployment was high would not have expected to be in this position.

2.2 Over 52,000 people in Enfield had been furloughed and these jobs were probably under threat. The Council needed to be responsive to their needs. Many of these people would have been working in Central London. There were programmes which would cross borough boundaries and help business come back to life.

2.3 Concern that Enfield did not have a good track record in encouraging existing businesses to grow.

2.4 Over 50% of employees in the larger companies like Metaswitch were Enfield residents.

2.5 It was acknowledged that the furlough data could be broken down into more granular detail.

2.6 Enfield's Neighbourhood Fund was derived from the Community Infrastructure Levy. Fifteen percent of which has been put aside for community projects. It is hoped it would continue beyond the next two years.

2.7 Enfield was also distributing grants to business, with funds provided from recent Government funding initiatives, as quickly as possible.

2.8 The approved programmes for young people would start in the New Year. Kickstart as soon as it is approved.

2.9 Although the Civic Centre was closed two of the four hub libraries were open.

2.10 Young people had to be sign posted to programmes and referred by the Job Centre.

2.11 While being unable to comment on the specifics of licensing applications, the Council was looking at being supportive of businesses and extensions to existing out door licenses would be considered as part of their programme of support,

The Chair thanked the presenters and members for their comments.

5. MERIDIAN WATER - SUPPORTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The panel received a presentation from Simon Gardner (Regeneration Director - Meridian Water) on the work being done to support economic development as part of the Meridian Water project.

1. Presentation

- The aims and aspirations for Meridian Water were to adhere to the highest quality of design and place making, to build 10,000 mixed tenure homes, create 6,000 new quality jobs, build new facilities including restaurants, health centres and schools for the local community, to enable local people to be the principle beneficiaries, to lift Edmonton out of the top 10% of the most deprived wards, to create a legacy to be proud of in 50 years using the highest environmental sustainability standards.
- This would be based on three key pillars of placemaking: park life on the doorstep, a place to make and create and mixing uses to create animated streets.

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- Currently a contractor has been selected for non-rail strategic infrastructure works and a grant agreement signed for £170m.
- As part of Meridian One, Vistry Partnerships have already submitted a planning application for 300 homes and another is due to be submitted for 600 homes in April 2021. Construction is due to start in March.
- A development partner has been selected for Meridian Two to deliver 270 or more affordable homes with 3,000 square metres of commercial space.
- Cabinet has granted authority to market a site for student or co living accommodation for Meridian Three.
- As part of Meridian Four, Cabinet has agreed to appoint a professional team to work on a reserved matters application for 800 homes for a scheme to be delivered directly by the London Borough of Enfield.
- Four employment strategy outcomes have been identified; to create 6,000 high quality jobs at London Living Wage or above, to deliver 1,000 new high quality jobs, to enable no less than 10% of all investment to benefit local employers and to deliver 1,000 construction jobs over 25 years – 25% from local labour.
- There are three main drivers for the creation of jobs: construction activity, meanwhile employment uses and occupation of non-residential commercial spaces.
- Economic activities include use of the drumsheds for live music events and filming, the BLOQs social enterprise maker spaces, Troubadour filming, creative workspaces on the Teardrop site and community garden and skills academy as part of Meridian One.
- The Council has recently set up a new Council wide skills and employment board. There will be skills academies linked to the Meridian one Vistry development and one associated with Troubadour.
- Social value would be an important part of all procurements. There is a target of at least 10% of construction spend to go through local employers to support local jobs and apprenticeships.

2. Questions/Comments

2.1 In the first year Troubadour will be creating 25-30 new jobs in Enfield. The Skills Academy will provide up to 500 places a year as part of Phase Two.

2.2 The skills academies will be working with rather than competing with local schools and colleges, filling gaps and creating opportunities that existing settings cannot provide.

2.3 A commercial retail strategy is being put together to work out what types of business will need to be attracted to fill the ground floor commercial spaces. They wanted to avoid too many betting shops or a focus on only one type of shop. The strategy should lead to local jobs for local people.

2.4 It is anticipated that there will be a mixture of uses including a small amount of retail, lots of food and beverage outlets, affordable workspaces, a health centre, and gym. The intention is to create a vibrant local area and attractive public realm.

2.5 The target for local jobs is 10%. If 10% is delivered this will bring £350m into the local economy.

The chair thanked Simon Gardner for his presentation and members for their comments.

6. MERIDIAN WATER WORKSTREAM - UPDATE ON RECOMMENDATIONS

The panel received a report from Peter George, Programme Director Meridian Water, updating members on the next steps for the Meridian Water project.

1. Presentation

- The report on the incomplete Meridian Water scrutiny workstream had only recently been produced.
- Some clarification had been sought.
- The review had focussed on the following themes: housing, affordability, density, employment, green open space and financial modelling.
- A community housing and local lettings plan will be published next Summer. This will be the first opportunity for local people to bid for housing.
- A registered provided framework was being put together.
- Work on site on Meridian Water One would start in Spring 2021.
- An Environmental Sustainability Strategy had been approved confirming a 30% open space target.
- Version 2 of the Masterplan was now subject to consultation and would be going to Cabinet for approval in 2021. Members were encouraged to contribute to the consultation.
- Work on delivering the 2 hectare Brooks Park and a children's park would be begin in 2021.
- The site was not large enough to do everything that the Council wanted to, so choices would have to be made between density of housing, height of buildings and the amount of open space that could be provided.

- By 2023/4 it was planned that 450 new jobs would be created and an additional 500 people employed every year.

1. Questions/Comments

2.1 Support for the high quality report produced by the workstream and the view that many questions which had been raised were still outstanding.

2.2 Further information and a detailed rationale was sought on how all the different aspects of the projects were to be interlinked.

2.3 There were difficult choices and trade offs to be made but no decisions had yet been taken. Officers were aware of the strong views of local people and there would be comprehensive engagement and consultation before decisions were made. It was intended that local people would be the main beneficiaries of the project.

2.4 Financial modelling would be carried out to protect the Council's investment. A report would be produced later in 2021.

2.5 Once the pandemic was under control the Council would be better able to assess its long-term impact. It was likely however that the trend to work from home would not be reversed and this would be taken account of in the new developments. Local community workspaces would also be provided.

2.6 Edmonton was short of good quality open spaces and there was a need to provide them. Thirty percent was proposed. There would also be private open spaces within the housing blocks with safe play areas.

2.7 There would be family homes in Meridian Water One. The exact proportion of affordable homes had not yet been decided. This would be subject to planning. There were still opportunities to express opinions. It was likely however that the developments closer to the station would be of a higher density.

The Chair thanked Peter George for his presentation. A further update would be provided in March 2021.

7. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2020 were received and agreed as a correct record.

8. WORKPROGRAMME 2020/21

The panel noted the agreed work programme for 2020/21.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

NOTED the dates scheduled for future meetings:

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- Wednesday 3 February 2021
- Wednesday 17 March 2021

Wednesday 3 February 2021

- Estate Regeneration – discussion on the social, environmental and economic outcomes of Alma, Ladderswood, New Avenue and Electric Quarter
- Local Plan – discussion on emerging policies

Wednesday 17 March 2021

- Joyce and Snells – review of regeneration project structure and outcomes
- Meridian Water – discussion on how the project is addressing local needs and supporting resident health and wellbeing

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting and wished them all a peaceful and reflective new year.

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified.