

**MINUTES OF THE FORWARD PLAN SELECT COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2004 at 7.30 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor R Blackman (Chair), Councillor Dromey (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Harrod and Taylor.

Councillors Fox and Kagan were also present.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Moher.

**1. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

There were none.

**2. Deputations**

There were none.

**3. Minutes of Previous Meeting –25<sup>th</sup> February 2004**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2004 be received and approved as an accurate record subject to the following amendments:

- (i) that the final sentence in paragraph 1, page 5 read as: “In addition, a number of clubs had expressed an interest in using the facilities but all bookings would be considered by the Parks Service main office to ensure that there was not a monopoly of usage;” and
- (ii) that the last sentence in paragraph 1, page 7 read as: “Members noted that periodic inspections and small repairs would be necessary over time but it was anticipated that all maintenance would be undertaken and funded by LOBEG.”

**4. Matters Arising**

***Meals Award of Asian and Caribbean Frozen Meals***

The Lead Member for Health and Social Care updated the Select Committee about the composition of the Customer Satisfaction Panel, having recently observed a taste session. Members noted that twenty-three users were present, two thirds of which were women and one-third men. Half of the users received food at home whilst the other half received their food from clubs or day centres. Half of the users were Asian whilst the other fifty percent were of Afro-Caribbean origin. Each of the users completed an assessment form during the tasting session.

The Lead Member explained that each of the companies that were tendering had been allocated a particular route and had been delivering food to a total of two hundred users as part of the assessment and tendering process.

### ***Voluntary Sector Briefing for Member***

The Chair confirmed that a Members briefing would take place on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 about issues regarding the Voluntary Sector.

### ***Estate Access Corridor***

Members were advised that the report to the Executive on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2004, which was previously considered by the Select Committee, had since been amended in light of additional redesign and possession costs.

## **5. Call-in of Executive Decisions**

### **Transport Grants to Voluntary Organisations**

On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2004, the Executive considered a report outlining the new criteria for providing transport grants to local voluntary organisations which, if approved, would be effective from April 2004. The report provided details about voluntary organisations that were currently funded and made recommendations for future funding. The Executive noted the report, approved the new criteria for providing transport grants to voluntary organisations and agreed the allocation of £18,256 to those voluntary organisations that met the new criteria. This decision was subsequently called-in for scrutiny for the following reasons:

- (i) to receive information on the criteria used to determine the eligibility to receive the Transport Grant;
- (ii) to discuss what will happen to those Voluntary Organisations who have had their Transport Grant refused;
- (iii) to receive information concerning the services that were provided by the 22 organisations who were in receipt of grants;
- (iv) to review and explore the appropriateness of the new criteria; and
- (v) to review the level of protected funding for non-successful organisations.

The Lead Member for Health and Social Care and the Assistant Director, Quality and Support provided Members of the Forward Plan Select Committee with background information about Transport Grant funding. The Assistant Director explained that grants had previously been allocated for historical reasons and that in an effort to modernise the process, a review had taken place and a new criteria on which to allocate funding developed. The Select Committee was advised that

officers had reviewed each organisation against the criteria and only five of the currently funded organisations met each of the 6 criteria. Members were advised that it was possible that some of the organisations had not provided a sufficient amount of information on which to match them against the criteria. It was noted however that much care had been taken to try and extract sufficient information from each organisation. Members of the Select Committee were advised that unsuccessful voluntary organisations would be offered assistance to look for alternative funding arrangements and that a transition period would enable those organisations to get additional help and support and to seek additional funding. The Assistant Director stressed that following the review and the development of the criteria, the provision of transport grants to voluntary organisations would be a fairer system allowing funding to be more evenly distributed.

In response to questions from Members of the Select Committee, the Lead Member for Health and Social Care acknowledged that the majority of organisations did not meet criteria 3 and 6. Councillor Harrod requested clarification about the cut off point for criteria 6 and clarity regarding criteria 3 and how this was assessed. The Lead Member responded to suggestions that this was a cost cutting exercise and stressed that adoption of the criteria would simply ensure a fairer allocation of funding that enabled people to get the necessary support and assistance they deserved. The Assistant Director responded to Councillor Harrod's queries by explaining that a benchmark had been applied to criteria 6 in order to determine whether the services provided by an organisation represented value for money. He explained that if an organisation's costs were in excess of a financial benchmark, an organisation would not meet the criteria. However, Members were advised that this benchmark was only one issue of consideration and that individual adjustments might be made to reflect particular circumstances. The Lead Member stressed that all unsuccessful organisations were welcome to discuss and review their application with officers.

Some Members of the Select Committee expressed concern about a number of anomalies in the report that had been presented to the Executive. Members sought clarification about the process that was followed when an organisation stated "costs unknown" and requested to know whether all the organisations that were eligible for funding had met both criteria 3 and 6. The Chair expressed concern that on the basis of the information contained within the report certain organisations might not be being treated fairly due to apparent contradictions in the matching of the criteria and the allocation of grants. He stressed that it was important for Members to understand the criteria, what assessments had been done and how future funding would be allocated. The Assistant Director acknowledged that the information in the report was unclear and that anomalies made it difficult to ascertain how the criteria had been applied.

Commenting on the criteria, the Lead Member explained that criteria 3 was dependent on whether an organisation provided a service that assisted the user to maximise his/her independence. He explained further that this was in the context of support for an individual's social care and/or rehabilitation such as providing transport to people suffering from dementia so that they could undertake reminiscence exercises. Some Members suggested that there were a variety of ways in which a person's social care could be supported such as people in isolation being transported to social events. However, such an example would not meet criteria 3 and some Members expressed particular concern that there was little flexibility to measure the value of the services provided by individual organisations. The Assistant Director explained that criteria 3 looked at an individual's dependency and whether an activity helped that person with their independence. He referred to the eligibility scheme operated by Social Services and explained that it was important to establish how / if a person complied with Department's scheme. The Assistant Director explained that few individuals who were involved in the activities provided by the organisations listed in the report would meet these criteria for receiving support services from Social Services.

The Chair then highlighted a number of organisations where it was felt that people's independence was being maximised but where they did not meet the criteria for funding. Consequently, there seemed to be discrepancies regarding how the criteria, particularly 3 and 6, were being applied. The Lead Member assured the Select Committee that a thorough and objective assessment had been undertaken and that the information provided to the Panel was more substantial than that contained in the report. Whilst acknowledging the Lead Members' comments, the Chair stressed the need to challenge the basis on which the Executive's decision was taken and to ensure that clarity regarding the assessment, criteria and the matching processes was outlined in the report. The Lead Member and the Assistant Director both acknowledged the Select Committee's concerns and supported the recommendation for a further report clarifying anomalies and presenting a clear justification for the Executive's decision.

At this point Councillor Dromey commented on the use of information provided by organisations and suggested that skilled form fillers were more likely to be successful at applying for and receiving a grant. Whilst acknowledging Members' concerns, the Lead member stressed again that the Panel had been very thorough and objective in its assessment. Members were advised that the transition period would mean that deferral of the Executive's decision did not have any immediate funding implications for organisations.

RECOMMENDATION:-

- (i) that implementation of the Executive's decision be deferred until such time that additional information regarding the criteria and a clear justification for the decision taken by the Executive regarding the allocation of Transport Grants be provided;
- (ii) that a further report with a clear justification for the Executive's decision, an explanation of each criteria and clarity regarding how organisations met / did not meet the criteria be presented to both the Executive and the Forward Plan Select Committee.

6. **The Executive List of Decisions –8<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

RESOLVED:-

that the Executive List of Decisions from its meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2004 be noted.

7. **Information Updates requested by the Forward Plan Select Committee at its meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2004**

At its meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2004, the Select Committee requested an update regarding the following item:-

- **Capital Spend on Carriageway and Footway**

Chris Margetts (Principal Highways Engineer) and Phil Rankmore (Director, Transportation) circulated a detailed map of programmed works across the borough. Members of the Select Committee noted that the annual work programme of prioritised works to roads, pavements, signage, gulleys and crossings would commence shortly; subject to the Executive's approval of the proposed scheme on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2004. The Select Committee noted that the consultation process regarding the proposed list of priority works had been thorough and had included feedback from ward Councillors, officers, complainants, insurance claims and the results of an independent survey.

In response to questions from Members, the Director of Transportation confirmed that twenty-nine roads had been prioritised for work in 2004/05 with additional reserve roads also identified. Likewise a similar priority list had been compiled for carriageway resurfacing work in 2004/05 and a list would be compiled shortly for signage works, based on the outcome of surveys that were underway. Members noted that Appendix 1 listed the priority areas for work with those in bold text representing Capital Spend projects.

The Select Committee noted that approximately 50% of ward Councillors responded during the consultation process, higher than in previous years and that all feedback had been taken into account. The Chair acknowledged the increase in spend for the 2004/05 period and was advised by the Assistant Director of Environment that similar amounts were anticipated in 2005/06 so performance indicators were likely to improve as more roads and carriageway work was undertaken. Some Members of the Select Committee queried whether the Council had the resources to monitor contractors undertaking increasing amounts of work and were advised that quality control systems were in place to ensure that work would be done effectively, such as a reorganisation of the Transportation Team to ensure that the quality of work was maintained. Regarding deferred areas of work such as East Lane, Members noted that works on principal roads would remain on the programme until such time that the Council instructed Transport for London (TfL) that work could commence.

Members thanked officers for the helpful and comprehensive pictorial evidence and clarification about how the funding would be allocated for works in 2004/05.

**RECOMMENDED:-**

- (i) that the information update and map be noted;
- (ii) that details regarding the works programme 2004/05 be circulated to all ward Councillors and presented in order of ward; and
- (iii) that a copy of the map detailing the programme of works for 2004/05 be circulated to each of the Group Offices to highlight the extent of works being undertaken in 2004/05.

**8. Briefing Notes requested by the Select Committee arising from consideration of the Forward Plan (Issue 21 – 2003/04)**

**• *Items Selected by Non-Executive Members at Council – Decision Tracking***

The Lead Member for Democratic Services advised the Select Committee that responses to the last round of questions would be considered by the Executive on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2004. Members were advised that a protocol was being developed to promote ownership of the issues by both Lead Members and the service areas. The Chair stressed the need to ensure that the issues raised under this item at Council were effectively monitored and tracked and that the Executive's actions were routinely monitored. The Lead Member outlined the difficulties in monitoring issues such as Wembley Regeneration over a long term basis and stressed the need for non-

Executive Members to be focussed about the issues they raised in terms of policy development. The Lead Member suggested that this item be brought back to future meetings of the Select Committee as a standing item for the purposes of on-going monitoring.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the briefing note be noted; and
- (ii) that responses to Items Selected by Non-Executive Members at Council feature on the Select Committee's agenda as a standing item to ensure routine monitoring of the issues.

- ***A Masterplan for Wembley***

Robin Buckle (Principal Regeneration Officer, Planning) explained that the Masterplan represented a long term vision for regeneration around the new Stadium, in line with the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The Masterplan had been developed in response to the Destination Wembley document which provided a snapshot for the future development of the area. Members noted that the Masterplan would be submitted to the Executive on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2004. Members were advised that the consultation process for the Masterplan had been thorough and that an earlier document had been prepared by Quintain but had since been amended to provide a more focussed vision for Brent in terms of future design and planning. This revised Masterplan represented the Council's vision for regeneration around the new Stadium and would be presented to the Executive with an accompanying report on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2004.

In response to queries concerning how the Masterplan dealt with issues such as medical, education and community facilities, Members were advised that the document dealt with each of these issues explicitly and that they were very important considerations in the whole scheme of the Masterplan. Mr Buckle confirmed that the document was not a broad overview of key issues and that the implications of any future developments in terms of social, housing, education, community and medical needs had been taken into consideration. The Chair suggested that these issues had generally been overlooked in the past by Quintain regarding redevelopment of the area and Members stressed the need to ensure that the implications of Quintains' proposals were considered. Mr Buckle assured Members of the Select Committee that the UDP, Development Framework and the Wembley Masterplan provided the Council with a robust policy platform which would enable the Council to meet pressures from future developers.

In response to questions concerning redevelopment proposals around the Stadium, Mr Buckle confirmed that collectively all of the documents showed ways in which the industrial estate and the surrounding area might be redeveloped and how future industrial and employment usage might be promoted. Members noted that issues such as lease and land ownership were particularly complex issues which generally fell beyond the scope of the Masterplan. Mr Buckle explained that Quintain had purchased York House and was considering other sites around the Stadium. He confirmed that the Council wanted to promote and retain employment in the area but that this needed to be done in a more sustainable environment. In response to a query regarding the development of the road network to support redevelopment in the area, Mr Buckle confirmed that this issue would be discussed with the Transportation Unit.

Members noted that the Masterplan would be published in April/ May 2004.

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

**9. The Forward Plan (*Issue 21 2003 – 2004*)**

Issue 21 of the Forward Plan (23<sup>rd</sup> February to 19<sup>th</sup> June 2004) was circulated to Members at the meeting following its publication on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2004. Members of the Select Committee then requested further information on the following issues:

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the following information updates and briefing notes be circulated for the meeting of the Forward Plan Select Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2004:-
  - (a) Youth and Community Centres Review – Update (full report)
  - (b) 522-524 Kingsbury Road – Lease Renewal (briefing note)
  - (c) E Government Programme 2004/05 (briefing note)
  - (d) Disability Discrimination Act – Fourth progress Report (briefing note on progress to date)
  - (e) Willesden Sports Centre - Closure Relocation Strategy (briefing note on progress to date)



- (f) Supply Demand and Temporary Accommodation (briefing note)
- (g) Final Admissions Arrangements 2005/06 (briefing note)
- (h) Education Capital Budget 2004/05 (briefing note)
- (i) Draft Air Quality Action Plan (briefing note)
- (ii) that the following briefing note be circulated for the meeting of the Forward Plan Select Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2004:-
  - (a) Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes: Design Statements and Affordable Housing

**10. Items considered by the Executive that were not included in the Forward Plan**

There were none.

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Forward Plan Select Committee is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> April 2004.

**12. Any Other Urgent Business**

There was none.

The meeting ended at 9.30pm

R BLACKMAN  
Chair

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