

MINUTES OF THE FORWARD PLAN SELECT COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 22nd August 2007 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Coughlin (Chair) and Councillors V Brown, Detre, Leaman and J Long.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Malik.

1. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

There were none.

2. Deputations

RESOLVED:-

that Mr Chambers address the Select Committee for the item on *Dollis Hill House – Results of Marketing Exercise*.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting – 25th July 2007

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the meeting held on 25th July 2007 be received and approved as an accurate record.

4. Matters Arising

Protective Parking: Wembley Stadium Event Day Parking Controls

Information and clarification regarding a number of points raised at the meeting on 25th July 2007 under this item was circulated to members of the Select Committee.

5. Call-in of Executive Decisions from the meeting of the Executive on Monday, 6th August 2007

There were none.

6. The Executive List of Decisions for the meeting that took place on Monday, 6th August 2007

RESOLVED:-

that the Executive List of Decisions for the meeting that took place on Monday, 6th August 2007 be noted.

7. Briefing notes/information updates requested by the Select Committee following consideration of earlier versions of the Forward Plan (2007/08)

(i) Draft Library Strategy

Councillor Van Colle (Lead Member for Environment, Planning and Culture) and Marianne Locke (Assistant Director, Arts and Learning) were present at the meeting to respond to questions on this item.

Marianne Locke (Assistant Director, Arts and Learning) introduced the briefing note before members of the Select Committee and explained that the item had previously been withdrawn from the Forward Plan as members wanted to revise their approach to the draft. A report was now anticipated to the October meeting of the Executive, following the usual consultation process to determine legal and financial implications. It was noted that following consideration by the Executive the draft strategy would be subjected to widespread consultation. Thereafter, the final recommendations, influenced by the results of consultation, would be taken back to the Executive for approval. The final report was anticipated in January 2008.

In response to questions regarding consultation routes, Ms Locke explained that public consultation would take place through the Council's area and service user consultative forums as well as by issuing surveys in libraries and One Stop Shops. There would also be detailed discussion with two friends groups as part of the consultation process. Following a query regarding the Efficiency Strategy and linkage to the Library Strategy, Ms Locke explained that the Council's Efficiency programme was closely aligned to the refurbishment work underway in some of the borough's libraries and more notably with the proposals for modernising the Council's approach to customer contact through the One Stop Shops. Ms Locke referred to the changes underway at Kingsbury One Stop Shop and the pilot scheme for customer contact and explained that there was a new approach to libraries within Brent, something which would be reflected throughout the Library Strategy. Members were advised that discussions were underway with the Head of Customer Services and other partners to consider customer contact and library user needs. It was noted that funding remained an important consideration and would dictate what could happen to existing buildings, particularly those that were old and in need of refurbishment. Members noted that the issue of accommodation would be a major consideration within the strategy.

At this point, Councillor Van Colle (Lead Member for Environment, Planning and Culture) advised members that the public had contributed to shaping the way that library and customer contact services would be delivered in Kingsbury in the future. This was the first time that such consultation had been undertaken and it was felt that it would have a positive impact with increased user levels. Consequently, the Lead Member welcomed the opening of the new Kingsbury Library in due course.

In response to a query from Councillor J Long regarding residents' expectations of the library service, Ms Locke explained that people wanted access to computers; safe children's areas; more learning activities; increased space to meet with councillors; improved and increased levels of stock; and most importantly, the opportunity to influence layout and design, all for the benefit of residents. Some queries were raised regarding the potential impact that the Kingsbury development would have on other libraries within the

borough but members were advised that the future of all libraries and the overall service would be detailed in the Strategy. With regard to the anticipated implementation date, members were advised that the Strategy would be implemented in March 2008, subject to initial approval by the Executive in October and final approval in January 2008. It was stressed that the main purpose of the Strategy was to profile the borough's library service and encourage resident usage.

Councillor V Brown commented on the use of refurbished library accommodation by councillors to hold surgeries with local residents and queried whether adequate facilities would be available to all councillors in light of her own experience of being declined such facilities at Ealing Road Library, following its refurbishment. Ms Locke confirmed that she was happy to investigate this particular issue further but stressed that not all libraries afforded sufficient space in which to hold surgeries. However, where possible this would be considered and encouraged.

In response to a question from the Chair regarding whether all twelve of the existing library sites would remain open following implementation of the Strategy, the Lead Member for Environment, Planning and Culture confirmed that no decision had yet been taken to close any existing facilities. Ms Locke confirmed that the draft strategy would be considered by the Executive in October 2007 and that the public consultation period was likely to last between 4-6 weeks. Implementation was therefore anticipated in March 2008, following final approval of the Strategy by the Executive in January 2008.

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note and update be noted.

(ii) Borough-Wide Roll Out of Voucher Parking Trial

Members of the Select Committee were advised that the proposed report would now be amalgamated with a forthcoming report on the Parking Policy, which was due to be reported to the Executive in November 2007. It was noted that the initial Parking Policy report was reported to the Executive meeting in July 2007, and briefly mentioned voucher parking. Consequently, an update would be submitted to the Select Committee for consideration in advance of decision making, which was expected in November 2007.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that a detailed update be presented to the Select Committee for consideration in advance of decision making by the Executive; and
- (ii) that the relevant lead officer and Lead Member attend the appropriate meeting of the Select Committee to respond to members questions on this item.

(iii) Award of Contract for the Non-HRA Housing and Social Care PFI Project

Members of the Select Committee were advised that since the last meeting on 25th July 2007, this report had been deferred for decision making. As a result, the Forward Plan had been updated and it was anticipated that a report would be presented to the Executive in October 2007.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that a detailed briefing note be submitted to the meeting of the Forward Plan Select Committee on 26th September 2007 outlining the details of the proposed report; and
- (ii) that the Lead Member for Housing and Community Care and the relevant lead officer attend the meeting on 26th September 2007 to respond to members questions on this item.

(iv) Dollis Hill House – Results of Marketing Exercise

Councillor Van Colle (Lead Member for Environment, Planning and Culture) and Sue Harper (Assistant Director, Leisure and Registration) were present at the meeting to respond to questions on this item.

Mr Chambers addressed the Select Committee on this item and referred to the written notes that had, at his request, been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Mr Chambers referred to the bidding process, suggested that people may have been deterred from submitting bids as a result of the planning guidance and queried how many people sought information about the bidding process. Mr Chambers then went on to query whether the Council was aware of the Attorney General's position regarding the site and whether any suggestions had been put forward about the future use of Dollis Hill House. Mr Chambers concluded his deputation by inviting questions from members of the Select Committee.

In response to a question from Councillor Detre about Mr Chambers' views as to what should happen to the House, Mr Chambers explained that he had previously submitted a number of possible options to the Council regarding the future of the House including use of the House as an official residence by the Mayor of London; use as a training school for park apprentices; some residential use including space for a caretaker or park employee; use as a museum; and use as a specialist library to reflect local history. In response to a question from Councillor V Brown concerning the potential cost implications of each of the suggested options, Mr Chambers explained that he had written to various people in the past concerning potential funding options and that Dollis Hill House Trust had previously reviewed some of the financial implications of such options. However, it was acknowledged that future plans would require some degree of financial input from the Mayor of London.

Ms Harper then went on to respond to some of the issues raised by Mr Chambers and explained that the bidding process would be detailed in the final report that would be considered by the Executive in September 2007 and

would include details on the number of organisations requesting details. Likewise, the existence of a covenant would be detailed in the report, although no changes were anticipated from the position in the previous report.

In response to questions from members of the Select Committee, Ms Harper confirmed that the drafting process was almost complete and therefore a report would be submitted to the Executive on 11th September 2007. Ms Harper confirmed that based on the initial evaluations of the submitted bids, two bidders were invited to interview, having successfully exceeded a “scoring hurdle” set within the evaluation procedure. It was confirmed that those bidders that did not meet the cut off point for evaluation scores were informed in writing that they had not been successful in meeting the criteria. Members noted that at this point, one of the bidders submitted a revised bid which, following evaluation and a further rescoring, meant that that they too were invited to interview. Members were advised that a fourth bidder did not wish to participate in the competitive bid process. In response to queries regarding whether any of the bids fell outside the footprint of Dollis Hill House, Ms Harper explained that whilst no specific details could be provided at the meeting, most bids required additional space outside the footprint of the House, especially in relation to parking and service access. Mr Harper confirmed that as a result of the park setting and it being a residential area, bids struggled to fully comply with existing planning requirements – an issue which had arisen in the past when trying to identify a viable future for the House.

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note and update be noted.

8. Briefing notes/ information updates requested by the Select Committee following consideration of Version 3 (09.07.2007 to 09.11.2007) of the Forward Plan

(i) Clock Cottage, Kenton Road, Harrow

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the briefing note be noted;
- (ii) that a further briefing note on this item be submitted to the meeting of the Forward Plan Select Committee on 26th September 2007 for further consideration and to facilitate to debate on both this matter and the Award of contract for the Non HRA Housing and Social Care PFI Project; and
- (iii) that the relevant lead officer and Lead Member attend the meeting on 26th September 2007 to respond to members questions.

(ii) *Compulsory Purchase of land at Dollis Hill Industrial Estate for provision of new John Kelly School*

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

(iii) Children's Centres

Some members commented on the lack of clarity regarding the recommendations that would be considered by the Executive at its meeting in September 2007. It was acknowledged that some concerns had been raised by residents and members regarding access to and use of the community centre on St Raphael's estate and members requested that the Executive be informed of the Select Committee's views on this particular issue.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the briefing note be noted; and
- (ii) that the Executive be informed that the Forward Plan Select Committee wishes that the Community Centre on St Raphael's estate be retained and used by young people of all ages in the future.

(iv) S106 Planning Obligations SPD – Approval for Adoption

RESOLVED:-

that the Briefing note be noted.

(v) Proposed Climate Change Strategy

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

9. The Forward Plan – Issue 4 (2007/08)

Issue 4 of the Forward Plan (03.09.07 to 04.01.07) was before members of the Select Committee. Following consideration of Issue 4 of the Forward Plan, the Select Committee made the following requests:-

(i) Clock Cottage, Kenton Road, Kenton, Harrow and Award of Contract for the Non HRA Housing and Social Care PFI Project

Due to the linkage between the items, Members of the Select Committee requested detailed briefing notes to the Select Committee meeting on 26th September 2007 outlining the background to and detail of the proposed Executive reports.

The relevant Lead Members and lead officers for both items were requested to attend the meeting and respond to members' questions.

(ii) Olympic Way, Wembley

Members requested a briefing note on this item to the meeting of the Select Committee on 26th September 2007 with clarification about the proposals at this site.

The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were not requested to attend the meeting.

(iii) Authority to award contract for Consultant Advisors for the Civic Centre Project

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item to the Select Committee meeting on 26th September 2007, although it was noted that a report was scheduled to be considered by the Executive on 11th September 2007. Consequently, members sought a full update on the issues considered by the Executive in addition to a copy of the final report.

The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were requested to attend the meeting and respond to members' questions on this item.

(iv) Proposal for Borough Wide Controlled Drinking Zone

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item to the meeting on 26th September 2007 in advance of consideration of a report by the Executive in October 2007. Members' sought clarification about the details of the proposal and in particular requested information regarding the anticipated financial implications of implementing such a scheme.

The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were not requested to attend the meeting.

(v) Award of Contract for the Provision of a Day Service for Asian Older People

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item to the meeting on 26th September 2007 and sought particular clarification about why exemptions were necessary in this instance and the justification for circumventing Standing Orders. It was noted that whilst this report was scheduled for consideration by the Executive on 11th September 2007, information was still required at the next Select Committee meeting.

The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were not requested to attend the meeting.

(vi) Review of Free Parking Areas

As per its earlier request, the Select Committee requested a detailed update on this item to the meeting of the Select Committee on 26th September 2007.

The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were not requested to attend the meeting.

(vii) Progress in the contract for the provision of a Multicultural Day Care Service for Older People

The Select Committee requested a detailed briefing note on this item to the meeting on 26th September 2007.

The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were not requested to attend the meeting.

Briefing notes previously requested and due for consideration at the meeting of the Select Committee on 26th September 2007, subject to confirmation about the timescales for decision making:-

- (i) Wembley Security Arrangements

Briefing notes previously requested and due for consideration at the meeting of the Select Committee on 24th October 2007, subject to confirmation about the timescales for decision making:-

- (i) Stonebridge HAT Ballot Result
- (ii) Borough Wide Roll-out of Free Voucher Parking Trial
- (iii) Carlyon Print
- (iv) One Stop Shops and Tricycle Theatre

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 will be held on Wednesday, 26th September 2007.

12. Any Other Urgent Business

Committee Clerk

On behalf of the Select Committee, the Chair congratulated Lorraine Brook (Scrutiny Support Officer) on her recent appointment as Members Support Manager at the London Borough of Hackney; expressed thanks for her support to the Select Committee and wished her well for the future.

The meeting ended at 8.25 pm.

D COUGHLIN
Chair