



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE FORWARD PLAN SELECT COMMITTEE Tuesday, 3rd November, 2009 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Long (Chair), Councillor Castle (Vice-Chair) and Councillors V Brown, Mistry and Powney

Also Present: Councillors Blackman, Detre, Lorber and Van Colle

Apologies were received from: Councillors Coughlin and Tancred.

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

Councillor Kansagra declared an interest in item 4 (d), call-in of the decisions of the Executive on the 19th October 2009 with regard to the Brent Civic Centre - Concept Design Proposals and Authority to Tender Contract for a Design and Build Contractor as Chair of the Planning Committee. He did not take part in discussion or voting on this item and withdrew from the meeting. Councillor Kansagra also declared an interest in item 4 (a), call-in of the decisions of the Executive on the 19th October 2009 with regard to the Third Pool in Brent – Progress Report item as Chair of the Planning Committee and he did not take part in discussion or voting on this item.

Councillor Mistry declared an interest in item 4 (a), call-in of the decisions of the Executive on the 19th October 2009 with regard to the Third Pool in Brent – Progress Report item as ward councillor for the proposed location, however she did not regard the interest as prejudicial and took part in discussion and voting on this item.

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on Thursday, 24th September 2009**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th September 2009 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. **Matters Arising (if any)**

None.

4. **Call-in of Executive Decisions from the Meeting of the Executive on Monday, 19th October 2009**

Decisions made by the Executive on the 19th October 2009 in respect of the reports below were called-in for consideration by the Forward Plan Select Committee in accordance with Standing Order 18.

4.1 **Third Pool in Brent - Progress Report**

The reasons for the call-in were:-

Previous attempts to provide a pool near this location have proposed large amounts of car parking but this report does not quantify the amount of car parking, making a feasibility study with financial implications, as proposed in recommendation 3, impossible to do.

Councillor Van Colle (Lead Member for Environment, Planning and Culture) introduced the report and responded to the reasons for call-in concerning parking provision. Councillor Van Colle advised that a site for the third pool had successfully been obtained, and the next stage would be to consider what would be on the site, including the extent of parking provision. Members heard that the report had mentioned that consultants had identified parking provision as a key risk and issue and that a detailed feasibility study would be undertaken to provide a full appraisal of options with regard to this.

During discussion by Members, Councillor Castle commented that the feasibility study would address the details of the scheme, including what parking provision was viable. Councillor Mistry also felt that details of parking provision could not be determined at this stage, however she suggested that parking spaces should be maximised to encourage wider use in the borough and for use at night as some potential visitors would be put off if they were unable to reach the site by car. She enquired whether the Roe Green Park site identified was a site specific allocation and whether other sites that had been considered also occupied green spaces.

Councillor Powney enquired whether one of the options which made mention of an assumption of 150 parking spaces was an indicative figure and whether a minimum-maximum range of parking spaces could be provided. He commented that the site had good public transport access and felt that a number of people would travel to the swimming pool by this way. Views were sought with regard to developing a site that was located on green space. Councillor Powney expressed surprise that no parameters or identified costs had been made, despite the site having been identified as a potential site for a third pool since 2006.

The Chair sought reasons as to why 150 parking spaces had been suggested and asked whether the proposals, which also included a gym and were larger in scale than previous proposals would impact upon the parking requirements. She also acknowledged that the site had good public transport links and a new bus route would soon be available to travel to this site. The Chair enquired how many spaces existed at other sports and leisure facilities in the borough and when the feasibility study would be carried out.

In reply to the issues raised, Councillor Van Colle stated that the study carried out had not sought to specify parking space numbers and therefore no figures could be provided at this stage, however this would be more closely examined in the feasibility study to follow. At this stage, the priority was to secure the necessary capital funds to develop the site before the finer details of the scheme could be determined. Councillor Van Colle felt that in view of the planning issues involved, that the site was the most appropriate of those considered for a third pool. He agreed that the site was well served by public transport, including numerous bus routes and its proximity to Kingsbury tube station.

Gerry Kiefer (Head of Sports Service, Environment and Culture) confirmed that Willesden Sports Centre's parking capacity was approximately 150 spaces. She advised that the feasibility study was yet to be commissioned, however the brief for the study was due to go out for quotes around the end of 2009 and the resulting tenders received would give an indication of how long the feasibility study would be expected to take.

Members then decided not to endorse the Chair's suggestion that the contractor chosen to undertake the feasibility study be briefed to consider parking issues closely and that the number of spaces be minimised to what was practically achievable.

RESOLVED:-

that upon considering the report from the Director of Environment and Culture, the decisions made by the Executive be noted.

4.2 Authority to Participate in a West London Collaborative procurement for the Provision of Home Care, including Housing Related Support and "Integrated" Home Care for Adults

The reasons for the call-in were:-

The financial reasons given are not proven. There is no comparison of NW London with other boroughs to show that expenditure is higher than any other authority. Nor does the report mention the number of service users and anticipated demand.

Members agreed that this item and item 4 (c) below be considered simultaneously as both involved similar issues. Martin Cheeseman (Director of Housing and Community Care) responded to the call-ins, advising that the decision to be involved in a West London Collaboration Procurement was as a result of considerable analysis of Adult Social Care spending by the West London Authority (WLA) boroughs. Members heard that residential and domiciliary care represented the biggest spending for each of the WLA members. The Council currently procured such services individually, however in the context of changes taking place to the Social Care market and the emphasis on the individual and the personalisation of services, it was becoming increasingly difficult for boroughs to predict their budget requirements and there was an increased risk of overspending. The analysis undertaken by the WLA had concluded that significant savings could be made through undertaking a joint tender exercise as potential contractors would be able to offer better value by serving a larger market. The advice the Council had

received had suggested that there would be both savings to the WLA and to the Council.

During discussion, Councillor Castle enquired whether the Council could withdraw from the collaborative procurement if it proved to be more costly than the present arrangements. Councillor Powney enquired whether the potential savings from a collaborative procurement may in any way compromise quality of service. The Chair sought views as to whether decisions concerning service providers would depend on the majority view of the WLA members and what the implications for the Council would be if its view was in the minority. She also enquired about service provision eligibility criteria comparisons between the WLA members.

In reply, Martin Cheeseman stated that it would be unlikely that the Council would continue to be involved in the collaborative procurement if it was shown that its costs would actually increase. The purpose of the collaboration was not just to make savings, but also to ensure and improve standards and providers who had obtained at least a 2 or 3 star rating from the Quality Care Commission would be sought. Members noted that all WLA members were committed to raising standards and Martin Cheeseman added that the Council hoped that the collaboration would provide the opportunity for it to close the gap in quality service to those WLA members whose standards were presently higher. The Select Committee heard that although each borough had their own eligibility criteria with regard to service provision, they all had similar requirements. Martin Cheeseman advised that ultimately it was up to each borough whether they accepted the decision of the WLA. He commented further that collaborative procurement was made even more necessary by the need to purchase services in a more efficient way not just for the reasons already mentioned, but also because of the overall increase in key demographics. Ensuring quality of services would be specifically addressed in a separate exercise.

Councillor Lorber (Leader of the Council) added that the tendering exercise would be undertaken in line with all relevant criteria and emphasised that its objective was to secure the best value for the Council.

Members then decided not to endorse the Chair's suggestion that any downgrading of services as a result of the collaborative procurement compared to what was presently provided be reported to the Executive.

RESOLVED:-

that upon considering the report from the Director of Housing and Community Care, the decisions made by the Executive be noted.

4.3 Authority to Participate in a West London Collaborative Procurement for Residential and Nursing Care for Adults

The reasons for the call-in were:-

The financial reasons are not proven. There is no comparison of NW London with other boroughs to show that expenditure is higher than any other authority. Nor does the report mention the number of service users and anticipated demand.

RESOLVED:-

that upon considering the report from the Director of Housing and Community Care, the decisions made by the Executive be noted.

4.4 Brent Civic Centre - Concept Design Proposals and Authority to Tender Contract for a Design and Build Contractor

The reasons for the call-in were:-

- To increase the number of car parking spaces at the new Civic Centre to the maximum allowance under current and future planning guidelines.
- The economic case for increasing the amount of car parking spaces
- Consideration of the total car parking capacity required at the Civic Centre particularly for community or private events when the stadium and/or arena are in operation.

Councillor Lorber, in response to the reasons for call-in, began by explaining the objectives of the Civic Centre. The Civic Centre would be in accordance with the Council's objective of providing best service to residents and meeting their needs and that it would provide for the majority of the Council's services on one site. Overall, the costs would be neutral and the Civic Centre would be ideally located within the Wembley Regeneration area. Members heard that the Civic Centre would be designed to accommodate 2,000 staff and key partners of the Council. There would be flexible use of space, including a substantial office accommodation, a hall and a library.

Addressing the specific reasons for call-in, Councillor Lorber confirmed that the provision for up to 158 parking spaces had been agreed at the Executive. The maximum that could be achieved from the concept design under the Council's present Unitary Development Plan standards was 174 spaces, however Councillor Lorber stressed that the Council needed to take a lead in the community in addressing environmental targets and in encouraging alternative methods of transport. The proposals afforded the Council the opportunity to make arrangements with other parking providers when necessary, such as on major event days. Overall, Councillor Lorber felt that parking provision would be adequate, adding that event day visitors made more use of public transport than when Wembley Stadium was previously open. However, efforts would be made to increase both public transport provision and use of it in the area as possible.

With the Chair's approval, Councillor Detre addressed the Select Committee. He stated that overall he supported the Civic Centre proposals which would accommodate approximately 2,000 staff and councillors, 500 to 600 library visitors daily, 63 councillors and host approximately 600 events a year. On event days and major shopping days, he commented that on-street parking was not available and that the Civic Centre's requirements could not be compared to the Town Hall's. Councillor Detre felt that in order to attract visitors to the Civic Centre, providing appropriate parking spaces would be necessary and in his view up to 60 additional spaces could be provided. He suggested that a daily charge of £5 would be sufficient to recoup the costs of providing additional spaces and that the car park would be full on most days. Councillor Detre also stated that travelling late at night

without a car was problematic which provided another reason why additional parking spaces were necessary.

With the Chair's approval, Councillor Blackman also addressed the Select Committee. Councillor Blackman stated that considering that the Civic Centre would be in existence for a long time, that it was important that the building design provided flexibility for existing and future uses. He commented that there could be a significant increase in the use of carbon neutral electric cars in future and that an extra floor in the basement could be designed so that it could accommodate this future need. With regard to using other parking providers, Councillor Blackman stated that this exposed the risk of the Council being overcharged and that the greater parking capacity the Council had, the less leverage parking providers would have in setting higher parking fees. Furthermore, potential competitors to the Council with regard to hosting events may gain an advantage as they would be able to offer more parking spaces and be a more attractive venue. In addition, the interests of staff and visitors to the Civic Centre needed to be considered. In view of these issues, Councillor Blackman suggested that parking spaces in the basement area should be maximised and that a £5 daily charge would cover the costs of providing this.

During discussion by Members, Councillor Castle enquired whether the costs of providing 32 additional parking spaces would equate to £1.9 million, adding that in view of the high volume of traffic in the area and good public transport links that it would be imprudent to spend additional money on providing more parking spaces. Councillor Mistry commented that the Civic Centre would be used by its partners and be in use 24 hours, and that if it intended to receive revenue through holding late night functions, that Members should bear in mind that public transport would be limited late at night and in the early hours, whilst the safety of those travelling at these times, which could include children, should also be considered. In view of this, she felt that there would be sufficient demand to travel to the Civic Centre by car and so the number of parking spaces should be maximised to what was permitted under planning guidelines, adding that income could be generated by parking fees. Councillor Mistry also commented that corporate organisations tended to hire out schools' parking spaces when large events took place in Wembley.

Councillor V Brown enquired whether a fee had been decided for use of parking spaces at the Civic Centre. Councillor Powney sought views as to whether the construction of additional parking spaces would have an effect on carbon emissions. With regard to the target to obtain an outstanding design award for the Civic Centre, Councillor Powney asked what the potential cost difference would be if this was not achieved. The Chair enquired whether electricity charging points would be provided at the Civic Centre.

In reply to the issues raised, Councillor Lorber confirmed that an additional 16 parking spaces could be provided under UDP at a cost of £1.9 million, however he did not feel this would be a good use of money, especially as the Council was taking a lead on environmental issues. With regard to late night use of the Civic Centre, Councillor Lorber commented that approximately 2,900 parking spaces were available at Wembley Stadium, about five minutes walking distance from the Civic Centre. He suggested that many visitors to the Civic Centre who travelled by car were likely to be dropped off there and picked up later after the event had

finished, thereby not needing use of parking spaces. Councillor Lorber reiterated that the 158 parking spaces on site was adequate, especially in view of other parking facilities available in the area, adding that Quintain were considering building a multi-storey car park close to the Civic Centre with a capacity of between 500 and 1,000 spaces. The Select Committee heard that increasing parking spaces to 174 could be challenged by the Mayor of London which could delay the project and cause additional costs. Councillor Lorber stated that even building an additional floor would still mean significantly less than 60 additional spaces being created. He also advised that an additional temporary 200 parking spaces could be available when the Civic Centre opened to allow staff to make changes to enable them to travel to the Civic Centre by alternative means to the car. The Select Committee noted that parking space fees had not yet been set.

Aktar Choudhury (Assistant Director – Civic Centre Project, Business Transformation) added that constructing more parking spaces were likely to increase carbon emissions and that the objective was to reduce existing carbon emissions by 40%. He advised Members that the Council aspired to an Outstanding British Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) award for the Civic Centre and that increasing parking spaces could impact adversely on the chances of obtaining this. The potential financial loss in not achieving this could not be confirmed at this stage, however Aktar Choudhury advised that the design award also took issues such as use of local resources into account. Electrical charging points would also be provided, however their locations were yet to be determined.

RESOLVED:-

that upon considering the report from the Director of Business Transformation, the decisions made by the Executive be noted.

5. The Executive List of Decisions for the Meeting that took place on Monday, 19th October 2009

RESOLVED:-

that the Executive List of Decisions for the meeting that took place on Monday, 19th October 2009 be noted.

6. Briefing Notes/Information Updates requested by the Select Committee following consideration of Version 6 (2009/10) of the Forward Plan

6.1 Proposed Disposal of 38 Craven Park Road, Harlesden, NW10

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note on the Proposed Disposal of 38 Craven Park Road, Harlesden, NW10 be noted.

6.2 Cultural Strategy for Brent 2010 - 2015

With the permission of the Chair, Dilwyn Chambers, a resident, addressed the Select Committee. Dilywn Chambers commented that the 2005 Cultural Strategy

had involved consultation with a number of organisations that undertook cultural activities. However, he stated that no cultural organisations he was involved had been consulted in respect of the 2010-2015 Strategy. He emphasised the importance of inclusion of the various cultural organisations, especially as the Strategy was a Brent one, as opposed to a Council one. Members heard that the public meetings referred to in the briefing note between 10th July 2009 and 9th October 2009 had only attracted a very small number of members of the public, whilst the Chair of Brent Arts Council also had no knowledge of the consultation taking place. Dilwyn Chambers remarked that he was awaiting a response from Brent Association for Voluntary Action to a request to provide information on organisations in the voluntary sector that had been involved in the consultation.

Councillor Mistry stated that she had spoken to several organisations who had felt that their views had not been valued. She enquired to what extent children had been consulted, including through schools, and what organisations had been involved in the consultation. Councillor V Brown felt that a number of responses should have been received if the consultation had appeared in the Brent Magazine.

Members then agreed to the Chair's suggestion that a briefing note be provided at the next meeting detailing who of the 400 local organisations contacted had responded to the consultation, what involvement was there with organisations from the voluntary sector and from schools and were there any changes made to the proposals following the responses to the consultation.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the briefing note on the Cultural Strategy for Brent 2010-2015 be noted; and
- (ii) that a further briefing note be provided at the meeting of the Select Committee on 2nd December 2009, detailing who of the 400 local organisations contacted responded to the consultation, what involvement was there with organisations from the voluntary sector and from schools and were there any changes made to the proposals following the responses to the consultation.

6.3 Authority to Participate in a West London Collaboration Procurement for Residential and Nursing Care and Adults and Authority to Participate in a West London Collaboration Procurement for Domiciliary Care

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note on the Authority to Participate in a West London Collaboration Procurement for Residential and Nursing Care and Adults and Authority to Participate in a West London Collaboration Procurement for Domiciliary Care be noted.

6.4 Extensions of the Direct Payments Support and Advice Service Contract with Penderals Trust and Proposals to Review the Current Arrangements for the Service

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note on Extensions of the Direct Payments Support and Advice Service Contract with Penderals Trust and Proposals to Review the Current Arrangements for the Service be noted.

6.5 Future Acquisition Strategy for the Brent Transport Fleet

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note on Future Acquisition Strategy for the Brent Transport Fleet be noted.

6.6 Printing Review Tender Results

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note on Printing Review Tender Results be noted.

7. Briefing Notes/Information Updates requested by the Select Committee that are not on the Forward Plan

Council Contracts Database detailing Current and Future Contracts

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note on Council Contracts Database detailing Current and Future Contracts be noted.

8. The Forward Plan - Issue 7

Issue 7 of the Forward Plan (09.11.09 to 07.03.10) was before members of the Select Committee. Following consideration of Issue 7 of the Forward Plan, the Select Committee made the following requests:-

Termination of Middlesex House and Lancelot Housing Scheme

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item providing the background details to the decision due to be considered. The request was made by the Chair.

9. Item from Earlier Versions of the Forward Plan

Petition for Changes to Consultation Process

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item providing information as to whether the decision by the Executive on 16th October 2009 that consultation documents make it clear that consultations are open to all residents within a single household represents a change in policy of consultation undertaken by the Transportation Unit. Clarification of whether the consultation documents returned must be originals or whether a photocopy is acceptable was also requested. The request was made by the Chair.

10. **Items considered by the Executive that were not included in the Forward Plan (if any)**

None.

11. **Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forward Plan Select Committee was scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 2nd December 2009 at 7.30 pm.

12. **Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

J LONG
Chair