



Brent

MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES AND PUBLIC REALM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Wednesday 30 November 2016 at 8.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Kelcher (Chair), Councillor and Councillors S Choudhary, Ezeajughi, M Patel, Tatler and Stopp

Also Present: Councillors

Apologies were received from: Councillors Aden

1. Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair opened the meeting, welcomed those present and thanked officers for their assistance in organising the meeting. The Chair also thanked officers and members of the public for supporting his/the committee's site visit/visit to the Carlton and Granville building.

The Chair then briefly outlined the call-in procedure.

2. Declarations of interests

Councillor Duffy declared an interest as a Member of the Board of the South Kilburn Trust.

3. Deputations (if any)

Deputations were considered under the item ' Call-In of Executive Decision – South Kilburn Regeneration Programme'.

4. Call-In of Executive Decision - South Kilburn Regeneration Programme

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Warren outlined the reasons for submitting the call-in, stating that the community had lost confidence in the project following poor consultation. Councillor Warren asked the committee to consider his proposal to remove Councillor Mashari (Lead Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills) from further involvement in the project and instead create a 'task force' to take the project forward. The task force would include two ward members and would be chaired by the Leader of the Council.

The committee then received deputations from members of the public.

Lesley Barson and Dee Woods (Granville Community Kitchen) provided a brief history of the local community's use of the site and asserted that the Centre was an iconic building that was at the heart of the community. Furthermore, they considered that the underutilisation of the premises was a result of Council policy.

There was considerable concern that the report to Cabinet had not confirmed that the Centre was not to be demolished.

Lesley Benson (Head Teacher Granville Plus Nursery School) addressed the committee advising that the Granville Plus Nursery School was a state nursery school which also provided places for babies and a large number of vulnerable two year olds. The school also had an additionally resourced provision for children with autism. The report that had been considered at the November Cabinet meeting had acknowledged that the school was situated at the Centre but had failed to identify how the school would be engaged with the development of the site. The school was keen to work in collaboration with the council regarding any proposed development of the site and considered it essential that they be fully involved in the design brief for the site.

Members then heard from Roald Versteeg (Chair of Governors Granville Plus Nursery School) who reiterated the school's commitment to work with the council to deliver a facility that continued to serve the local community and asked the committee to seek assurances from the Cabinet that the council would actively work to minimise disruption to the school and ensure that it was fully involved in any proposals for development.

Ros Dun (Independent Chair, South Kilburn Trust) explained that the site had been identified as a suitable location for a South Kilburn Enterprise Hub and £2million of GLA funding had been secured. These plans were underpinned by an assumption that the development would be completed by 2018. Assurances had been sought and received from the council that it would bridge any shortfall from a loss of this funding as a result of a delay to this project. This had not been reflected in the report to Cabinet in November however. The South Kilburn Trust sought a fully collaborative process moving forward for the site.

Responding to the deputations, Councillor Mashari confirmed that a collaborative approach with stakeholders would be employed and a 12-month timetable would be drawn up to ensure that everyone understood the process that would be followed. No tenants would be evicted in Phase 1 of the re-development and the protection of the community function would be paramount in Phase 2. In addition, a Statement of Intent would be provided to clearly outline the relationship with the South Kilburn Trust in respect of the development. Richard Barratt (Head of Estate Regeneration) confirmed that the final proposals for the site would include provision for the Granville Plus Nursery School.

The Committee welcomed the collaborative approach proposed and sought details of how this would extend to local councillors. Confirmation was also sought that the specialist facilities provided by the Nursery School would be protected or replicated in any redevelopment of the site. Members questioned whether there was a broader problem regarding the council undertaking adequate consultation and queried what points of learning had been identified as a result of this issue. It was further queried what measures had been put in place to improve links with the community. The Committee questioned whether the Council's Civic Enterprise Policy could be referred to when considering the potential use of the building. Members sought clarity as to whether the option to demolish the Centre was no longer being considered.

Councillor Mashari confirmed that the 12 month timetable could identify suitable opportunities for formal consultation with local councillors but emphasised that an open-door policy was in place for members to discuss the development of the site. It was acknowledged that there had been insufficient consultation with the community regarding the July Cabinet report; however, moving forward there would be managerial and political clarity regarding the development. The production of the 12 month timetable would ensure that the process would now be transparent, open and accessible to the public. Althea Loderick (Strategic Director for Resources) confirmed that work would be undertaken under the leadership of the Regeneration team to consider potential opportunities for maximising use of the site. Richard Barratt added that this work would be expanded beyond the council to include the South Kilburn Trust. Responding to the query regarding the option to demolish the Centre, Richard Barratt stated that in his view this was no longer a likely option in view of the strong community opposition.

The Chair then invited questions from non-Cabinet members in attendance at the meeting.

Councillor Conneely sought assurance that working practice in the council had changed and a similar situation could not reoccur. Councillor Duffy expressed concerns regarding the continued involvement of the Lead Member and asserted his support for the creation of a task force to ensure the community would be afforded a voice in the development of the project. Councillor Pitruzzella asked the committee to seek a clear commitment on the form of consultation and collaboration proposed for occupiers of the centre and the South Kilburn Trust and suggested that a formal mechanism be considered to ensure that local councillors were consulted about any proposed developments within their Wards at an early stage of the proceedings. Councillor Nerva also asked the committee to consider making a recommendation to ensure appropriate consultative mechanisms were embedded for all future developments.

In response to the questions posed, Councillor Mashari reiterated that a fully collaborative and transparent approach would be employed in taking the development forward and this would be done in partnership with the South Kilburn Trust. The 12 month plan for the progression of the project could be brought back to the committee for further scrutiny at an appropriate time. Addressing concerns regarding consultative practice within the council, Althea Loderick advised the committee that there were a number of other schemes developing from a property perspective and assured members that very early engagement with ward councillors would be undertaken.

The Chair thanked members of the public, councillors and officers for their contribution to the meeting and invited the committee to consider the recommendations set out in the report from the Head of Executive and Member Services. Following discussion the committee RESOLVED:

- i) Having considered the call-in of decisions taken by the Cabinet at its meeting on 15 November 2016 regarding the Carlton and Granville Centres Site, the committee agreed that the decisions not be referred back to Cabinet and could take immediate effect.
- ii) In addition to the above, the committee recommended to Cabinet that:

- a. the support of the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee for the continued use/occupation of the Carlton and Granville Centres Site by the Granville Plus Nursery School be noted;
 - b. it be agreed the use of the Carlton and Granville Centres Site by the Granville Plus Nursery School be paramount to any discussions regarding the future of the site;
 - c. it be agreed that the Granville Plus Nursery be fully involved regarding the design of the facility;
 - d. it be agreed that a twelve-month timetable detailing the collaborative process for determining the future development and use of the site, engaging all key stakeholders, be produced as soon as possible in association with the council's partners in the project, the South Kilburn Trust and the Greater London Assembly;
- iii) That the Constitutional Working Group be asked to consider:
- a. establishing a formal mechanism to capture Ward Member consultation in any significant decisions affecting their areas, ensuring that Ward Members have sufficient chance to review and comment on any proposals prior to Cabinet consideration;
 - b. a process to ensure that appropriate consultation has been conducted prior to significant decisions being undertaken and explore the possible inclusion of a 'stakeholder' section in Cabinet reports;
- iv) That the twelve-month timetable regarding the development of the Carlton and Granville Centres Site be presented to the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee in three months' time;
- v) That a report detailing in full the extent and nature of the collaboration between the council, the community and key stakeholders in the progression of the development of the Carlton and Granville Centres Site be provided to the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny committee in six months' time.
- vi) That the Head of Executive and Member Services ensures that clarity is provided directly to members and on the Council's website regarding the areas of responsibility within each of the Cabinet portfolios.

The meeting closed at 9.58pm

M KELCHER
Chair