

Decisions of the Housing and Growth Committee

17 February 2022

Members Present:-

Councillor Richard Cornelius (Chairman)

Councillor Daniel Thomas
Councillor Peter Zinkin
Councillor Thomas Smith
Councillor Alex Prager

Councillor Ross Houston
Councillor Paul Edwards
Councillor Kath McGuirk
Councillor Anne Clarke (Substitute for
Councillor Sara Conway)

Also in attendance
Councillor Claire Farrier

Apologies for Absence
Councillor Sarah Wardle Councillor Sara Conway

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Housing and Growth Committee held on 16 November 2021 be approved as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillor S Wardle.

Apologies were received from Councillor S Conway who was substituted by Councillor A Clarke.

3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor Edwards declared an interest in relation to item 12 by virtue of being a representative on the Barnet Group Board.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)

None.

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

None.

7. GRANGE DEVELOPMENT OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE (AGENDA ITEM 15)

Due to the level of interest and other Members being present the Chairman agreed to take the Grange Development Outline Business Case, Agenda item 15, first.

The Chairman introduced the report which included an exempt section. Officers reported that they had reduced the size of the development in response to concerns and had secured a Greater London Authority (GLA) grant to support the provision of affordable housing.

The Chairman read out a statement from a member of the public who was unable to attend.

Councillor C Farrier spoke as a ward councillor and noted that there had been a number of positive schemes already completed by Barnet Homes. They accepted that the facilities in the Grange Estate needed to be updated and improved. However, the proposal failed to do this and removed communal facilities and green spaces. Previous surveys had highlighted a shortfall in greenspace and a promise had been made when the flats were built that this land would be retained. The consultation was still ongoing and thus this felt premature. They weren't against development, but this was not felt to be appropriate.

Members debated the site and consultation. There were concerns as to whether the consultation had been effective and the impact of the development. There was support from local residents for development in the area as a whole.

Clarification was sought as to whether any of the Members were against the proposals? In response some were unable to comment on the financial case but felt that it was too early in the process for a decision to be made. They were not against the provision of affordable housing but wanted a rethink on the greenspace.

It was proposed by Councillor R Houston and seconded by Councillor P Edwards that the Committee only note that the planning application has been submitted and delete reference to full permission being given. This was to allow further consultation and options to be considered.

The Chairman asked for confirmation of the potential impact of changing the timescales. Officers stated that although the funding was secured this was on the basis that works started by March 2023. It was not possible to make changes to the planning and procurement processes. The Chairman called for the vote on the amendment:

For: 4 Votes
Against: 5 Votes

The amendment was LOST.

The issue having been debated and the amendment rejected the Chairman moved to the vote on the officer's recommendations:

For: 5 Votes
Abstain: 4 Votes

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- 1. Notes and approves the Outline Business Case for development of sites at**

Tarling Road, Brownswell Road, High Road and Central Avenue on The Grange Estate, as shown on the appended red line plan, enabling the planning application to be submitted.

- 2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Housing and Growth Committee:**
 - I. To approve the Full Business Case for Barnet Homes to appoint a contractor and deliver the scheme to completion**
 - II. To authorise the negotiation and settlement of any lawful claims or compensation payments consequential upon the implementation of the development scheme**
 - III. To approve the implementation of a Local Lettings Policy, if there is sufficient highly banded local demand in the period before the development completes.**
- 3. Note that the updated programme budget was presented to the Policy & Resources Committee in February 2022 for information.**

Further, that the Officer Recommendations, 4 and 5, set out in the Exempt report, Agenda Item 23 also be approved.

8. BRENT CROSS UPDATE REPORT

The Chairman introduced the report which provided an update on progress across the programme since the last committee. The report provided updates on the station programme and also on the satisfaction of the Phase Unconditional Date to enable plot development later this year, commencing with Plot 12 (replacement Homes for the Whitefield Estate) and Plot 25 (student accommodation). The report also sought authority to enable decisions to be taken and the required amendments made to various documents to facilitate the ongoing progression of the BXT/BXC regeneration scheme as set out in the recommendations.

Members sought reassurance on the sources of information being used. It was confirmed that the council did work with a number of partners on the Brent Cross project.

Members questioned what input the Council had on the playing fields aspect of the project. Officers confirmed that the playing fields formed part of the overall master plan and this included liaising with local community groups on needs.

The Chairman moved to thank the previous Officer for their work on the project and in bringing the scheme through. This was echoed by other Members who noted that despite challenges they had been an exceptional officer.

Following discussion of the item the Chairman moved to the vote on the officer's recommendations.

The Chairman moved to the vote on the officer's recommendations:

For: 5 Votes

Abstain: 4 Votes

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- 1) Note progress across the Brent Cross programme as detailed in the report; namely on the station works and progress across the Brent Cross town.**

- 2) Note that the council and its advisors are currently assessing the impact to the station construction programme following the loss of railway possessions in November 2021 (week 35) and in January (week 41) (paragraph 1.6 of this report). The council is working through the programme with Network Rail and contractors to agree a revised programme. However, it should be noted that the station December 2022 opening date may require to be deferred (paragraph 1.6).**
- 3) Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive to implement the procurement strategy for the delivery of Brent Cross West Station western public realm to utilise a combination of the existing station contractor, VolkerFitzpatrick, and TarmacKier Joint Venture (paragraph 1.11), and to enter into contract with TarmacKier to deliver other required highways works on the BX scheme, subject to compliance with all statutory requirements (paragraphs 1.57 – 1.59).**
- 4) Note that the council is finalising the Heads of Terms with Brent Cross Town JVLP to provide the framework for bringing the Retail Park into the Brent Cross Town Joint Venture. The Heads of Terms will be reviewed by the Brent Cross Member Working Member Group and approval is requested to authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and Director of Resources to provide final approval to the same. Following approval, the council and BXT will then formally document the framework. The Committee is therefore asked to delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and Director of Resources to agree and enter into the document and framework through a variation to the Project Agreement within the parameters of the approved Heads of Terms alongside any consequential changes to the associated documents and the BXT Business Plan (paragraph 1.70).**
- 5) Note that the BXT Unconditional Longstop Date has been extended to 18 March 2022 and that the Committee:**
 - a) approves that the First Phase Proposal Boundary is amended as set out in paragraphs 1.32-1.37 of this report,**
 - b) approves that the council may confirm that the Highways Condition is partially waived as set out in paragraphs 1.43 and**
 - c) delegates to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee to confirm acceptance that the viability condition has been satisfied as set of in paragraphs 1.43 of this report ahead of the Phase Unconditional Longstop Date.**
- 6) To enable the drawdown of the Lot 2 Investment Plots simultaneously by 31 December 2022, that the Committee authorises that the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and the Director of Resources may vary the Project Agreement as required and enter into the**

Plot Development Agreement and associated lease and other required documents (in a form which will be a variation to that currently anticipated in the Project Agreement) as set out in paragraphs 1.44-1.46 of this report.

- 7) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Charman of the Committee to agree the Side Letter as required by the Consent Letter set out in paragraph 1.23 of this report**
- 8) To note that the council has appropriated all land within the Brent Cross Town First Phase Proposal as set out in paragraphs 1.63-1.68. Consequently, the land held by the council for the Brent Cross scheme is now held for planning purposes pursuant to S227 of the Town & Country Act 1990 and should be noted by the Director of Resources to record this within the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.**

9. COLINDALE CAPITAL DELIVERY PROGRAMME ALLOCATIONS

The Chairman introduced the report which outlined the priorities for capital investment in Colindale over the next three years. The report sought approval to allocate capital investment to suitable priorities emerging for Colindale under officer delegated authority and subject to sign-off of individual programmes and projects by the relevant executive boards and theme committees.

Members noted that this was positive but queried how far £2m would go.

The Chairman moved to vote on the recommendations outlined in the report.

RESOLVED that the Committee unanimously:

- 1. Note the progress made in establishing governance and investment priorities for Colindale**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman to authorise the expenditure of approved Colindale Capital monies to fund delivery priorities as set out in this paper. All proposed expenditure to be subject to governance arrangements for Colindale and sign-off of individual programmes. Projects to be in line with the approved scheme of delegation and to be signed off by the relevant executive boards and theme committees as appropriate.**

10. SELECTIVE AND ADDITIONAL LICENSING DESIGNATION

The Chairman introduced the report which requested the committee agree to an expansion to licensing for rented properties to include additional and selective licensing requirements covering a number of areas of the Borough.

Members noted that the borough had a number of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) due to the proximity to transport hubs and the large number of transient workers and single people. The proposals were welcome but it was highlighted that it would be important to raise awareness, both for existing landlords and those submitting planning applications.

Officers confirmed that they worked closely with the planning services to ensure that the appropriate permissions were completed. Although the legislation was not linked the services worked in tandem

Members noted that there was some support for widening the selective licensing area, although it was recognised that it was not possible to be borough wide. Where boroughs had made it almost borough wide, this appeared to have been successful. People had taken a while to adjust with anecdotally it proving more popular with landlords than tenants.

The committee was keen to recognise that the scheme was designed to raise housing standards to maintain safe levels rather than raise revenue. Landlords also benefitted from support which helped to inform them of legislative requirements, thus protecting and preventing against potential liabilities.

RESOLVED that the Committee unanimously:

1. Note:

- the consultation activity and coverage in Appendix 1,
- the consultation report in Appendix 2,
- the council's response to comments received in Appendix 3,
- the final report on the additional licensing scheme 2016-2020 in Appendix 4,
- the Equalities Impact Assessment in Appendix 9,
- the updated property condition data based upon new wards and boundaries and resultant conclusions and proposals in Appendix 10.
- the objectives, targets, and reporting timetable in Appendix 11,
- the communications plan in Appendix 14.

2. Approve:

- the proposed amendments to the schemes in Appendix 5,
- the adoption of the standards for licenced properties in Appendix 6,
- the conditions for licenced properties in Appendix 7,
- the fees for property licensing in Appendix 8,
- the updated Enforcement Policy in Appendix 15

3. Approve:

a. the making of the designations for:

- a borough-wide additional licensing scheme in Appendix 12,
- a selective licensing scheme in the new wards of Burnt Oak, Colindale North and Colindale South as detailed in Appendix 13

b. for the Deputy Chief Executive to be delegated to sign each designation on an appropriate date in the future, as discussed in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3, to bring those schemes into force, no sooner than three months from the date of designation.

11. THRIVING UPDATE

The Chairman introduced the Thriving update report, which provided an update on progress across the thriving workstreams. They noted that whilst there was uncertainty as to when COVID-19 restrictions would end, the council would continue to do it's best.

Members had asked questions at Council due to the potential impacts of hybrid working on town centres. Whilst this had benefitted some areas with increased local spending there were still areas of concern. Increased home working and children studying from home had an impact on broadband and infrastructure provisions. Barnet was fortunate in that it benefitted from good transport links but there would be more hybrid working.

Members were also concerned about standards of accommodation and the need to work with public and private sector landlords. More needed to be done, in particular for example with the flats above shops.

The Chairman and other Members responded that this was being piloted in North Finchley. It was recognised that good transport links did lead to people travelling out of the area for entertainment. The Discover Barnet Campaign had had some success, but it was difficult to encourage people out during the day when working from home.

Members commented that outdoor trading during the pandemic had on balance been positive. The council could charge for licensing and this was needed as there was some enforcement and walk arounds required to tackle those taking things too far.

Following consideration of the item, the Chairman moved to vote on the Officer's recommendations as outlined in the report.

RESOLVED that the Committee unanimously note the report.

12. BARNET'S CLOSED CHURCHYARD MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Chairman introduced Barnet's Closed Churchyard Management Plan which set out how they would be maintained. They noted that this was a legal requirement.

Members queried whether support was received with Commonwealth War Graves for example. The Chairman confirmed that this was the case and that, subject to maps being clarified where required would the Committee agree to the Officer's recommendations as outlined in the report.

RESOLVED that the Committee unanimously approve the Closed Churchyard Management Plan for the London Borough of Barnet and associated appendices.

13. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUSINESS PLAN

The Chairman introduced the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

Labour confirmed that as in previous years they would abstain.

The Chairman moved to the vote on the officer's recommendations:

For: 5 Votes

Abstain: 4 Votes

RESOLVED that the Committee, following the review of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan by Policy and Resources Committee on 9th February, approve the updated Housing Revenue Account Business Plan as attached in Appendix 1.

14. COPPETTS ROAD PROJECT OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

The Chairman introduced the report which set out the Outline Business Case for a potential residential development at Coppetts Road.

Members welcomed the scheme including the securing and use of the Greater London Authority grant for the provision of affordable rent housing.

The Chairman moved to vote on the recommendations outlined in the report.

RESOLVED that the Committee unanimously:

- 1. Notes and approves the Outline Business Case for development of the Coppetts Road site as shown on the area outlined in red on the appended plan enabling the planning application to be submitted.**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of the Housing and Growth Committee to approve the Full Business Case following planning consent and tender, including appointment of the preferred contractor once they are identified. This is dependent on the final contract value sitting within the approved budget and satisfactory financial due diligence checks being undertaken.**
- 3. Note that the updated programme budget was presented to the Policy and Resources Committee in February 2022 for information.**

15. LITTLE STRAND, NW9, FULL BUSINESS CASE

The Chairman introduced the Business Case for Little Strand, NW9.

Members felt that it was a good scheme but queried whether a 20 mph area could be considered with community spaces. It was agreed that this would be fed back to officers.

The Chairman moved to vote on the recommendations outlined in the report.

RESOLVED that the Committee unanimously:

- 1. That the Housing and Growth Committee notes and approves the Full Business Case for the Little Strand, NW9 project.**
- 2. That the Housing and Growth Committee delegates authority to the Director of Growth to agree the appointment of the preferred contractor once they are identified. This is dependent on the final contract value sitting within the approved budget and satisfactory financial due diligence checks being undertaken.**

16. COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the Work Programme.

17. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

None.

18. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee resolved – that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of

business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

19. ANY OTHER EXEMPT ITEM(S) THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

Cllr K McGuirk made a motion to thank the Chairman for their work in the past year, recognising that whilst they had differences of opinion, they still had the same end in sight. This was seconded by Cllr R Houston and approved unanimously.

The Chairman thanks the Committee for their time and dedication.

20. EXEMPT BRENT CROSS UPDATE REPORT

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the information contained in the exempt report be noted.

21. EXEMPT COPPETTS ROAD PROJECT OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the information contained in the exempt report be noted.

22. EXEMPT LITTLE STRAND, NW9, FULL BUSINESS CASE

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the information contained in the exempt report be noted.

23. EXEMPT THE GRANGE DEVELOPMENT (PART OF THE HRA 250) OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

It was noted that the Officer Recommendations, 4 and 5, set out in the Exempt report, Agenda Item 23 had already been approved earlier in the meeting.

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the information contained in the exempt report be noted.

The meeting finished at 8.00 pm