

SCRUTINY BOARD (REGENERATION)

MONDAY, 19TH DECEMBER, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor J Procter in the Chair

Councillors B Atha, P Ewens, P Grahame,
J Harper, G Hussain, M Iqbal, R Pryke and
G Wilkinson

Mr G Hall – Co-opted Member

51 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the December meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Regeneration).

52 Late Items

There were no formal late items of business to consider, however, the Chair agreed to accept the following supplementary items which were circulated at the meeting:-

- Report of the Chief Officer, Regeneration Programmes – Establishment of Sub Boards – Housing and Regeneration Strategic Partnership Board - 5th December 2011/East Leeds Regeneration Board – Draft Terms of Reference and Working Arrangements (Agenda Item 7) (Minute 56 refers)
- Leeds Bradford International Airport – Taxi Access – Report of the Director of City Development (Agenda Item 10) (Minute 59 refers)
- Executive Board – Minutes of a meeting held on 14th December 2011 (Agenda Item 11) (Minute 60 refers)

The documents were not available at the time of the agenda despatch, but were made available on the Council's website immediately on receipt and prior to today's meeting.

53 Declarations of Interest

The following personal declaration of interests were made:-

- Councillor R Pryke In his capacity as a Board Member on East North East Homes ALMO; Member of the Aire Valley Leeds Regeneration Board and also a Member on the Leeds Initiative Regeneration Housing Board (Agenda Item 7) (Minute 57 refers)
- Councillor G Wilkinson in his capacity as a Board Member on East North East Homes ALMO (Agenda Item 7) (Minute 57 refers)
- Councillor J Procter in his capacity as a Member of the Aire Valley Leeds Regeneration Board (Agenda Item 7) (Minute 57 refers)

54 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor K Mitchell and Councillor T Murray.

Notification had been received for Councillor P Grahame to substitute for Councillor K Mitchell.

55 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 29th November 2011 be confirmed as a correct record.

56 East Leeds Regeneration Board

Referring to Minute 44 of the meeting held on 29th November 2011, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report setting out the information requested at the last meeting in relation to the East Leeds Regeneration Board.

At the request of the Chair, copies of the following documents were circulated as supplementary information:-

- Report of the Chief Officer, Regeneration Programmes – Establishment of Sub Boards – Housing and Regeneration Strategic Partnership Board - 5th December 2011/East Leeds Regeneration Board – Draft Terms of Reference and Working Arrangements

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Board Members' queries and comments:-

- Councillor A Carter, Leader of the Conservative Group
- Gary Williamson, Chief Executive, Leeds, York and North Yorkshire Chamber
- Andrew Lindsay, President, Leeds, York and North Yorkshire Chamber
- Martin Dean, Head of Leeds Initiative and International Partnerships

The Chair outlined that the purpose of the meeting was for Board Members to question witnesses concerning the proposition that there were too many major schemes in East Leeds for the East Leeds Regeneration Board to manage effectively.

In addition, Members were also invited to comment on the difficulties the Board experienced in identifying the author of the reports which had been circulated by the Chamber for the meeting of the East Leeds Regeneration Board which was subsequently cancelled for 3rd October 2011.

The Chair invited Martin Dean to provide the meeting with background information on the reasoning behind the establishment of the main Boards and Sub Boards, following the restructure of the Leeds Initiative to assist them in their deliberations on this matter. He stated that the Executive Board on 2nd November 2011 had clarified and agreed a framework for the creation

of sub-boards by the Leeds Initiative and the governance arrangements relating to these.

In summary, the Board sought clarification on the following issues, with specific reference to matters contained within the report of the Chief Officer, Regeneration Programmes on the establishment of these Sub-Boards :-

- the reasons why there was so much attention shown in one area and not in other parts of the city as referred to in paragraph 3.10 of the Chief Officer's report. It seemed that there was one reporting mechanism for the East of Leeds and a different one for the rest
- the concern expressed that some Ward Members had not been made aware of their representation on the Sub Boards and of the fact that the membership process was not approved by the Member Management Committee as originally agreed
- clarification of the reporting process in relation to the minutes of the Sub Boards
(The Head of Leeds Initiative and International Partnerships responded and informed the meeting that the reporting arrangements had not yet been confirmed)
- the concern that there were apparent inconsistencies in the way each of the Sub Boards were to operate and that this needed to be addressed
- the need for a similar paper establishing these Sub-Boards to be presented to the Sustainable and Economy and Culture Board
(The Head of Leeds Initiative and International Partnerships responded and agreed to address this issue)
- clarification as to whether the view Leeds Initiative had considered the Employment Land Review and whether any of the new Sub Boards had been presented with a copy of the document
(The Head of Leeds Initiative and International Partnerships responded and informed the meeting that this was a Council issue which would be considered through the formal decision process)

The Chair then invited Councillor A Carter, Leader of the Conservative Group to present evidence to the Board.

In his submission, he informed the meeting that he was totally in favour of regeneration in any part of the city and conveyed his disappointment about the secrecy of issues leading up to this meeting. He made reference to the difficulties the Board experienced in identifying the author of the reports which had been circulated by the Chamber for the meeting of the East Leeds Regeneration Board which was to have been held on 3rd October 2011 but was subsequently cancelled by the Leader of the Council. Following his own investigations into this matter, it was his assumption that the report author was Paul Forbes, a former Council employee.

In concluding, he raised his concerns about the way in which this matter had been dealt with. He confirmed that the new Sub Boards terms of reference were advisory and would require Executive Board/Council approval. He stated

that he had been advised that the East Leeds Regeneration Board would not include Aire Valley or Thorpe Park.

The Chair then invited Gary Williamson, Chief Executive, Leeds, York and North Yorkshire Chamber to present evidence to the Board.

In his submission, he informed the meeting that the role of the Leeds, York and North Yorkshire Chamber in relation to this issue was to provide a briefing note on the skills agenda/enterprise zone and that the Chamber were not involved in the drafting of any reports. He confirmed that it was Paul Forbes who had submitted the draft papers to the Chamber for comment which was duly acknowledged by the Board.

In summary, the Board sought clarification on the following issues:-

- the relationship between Paul Forbes and the Chamber
(The Chief Executive responded and confirmed that Mr Forbes was recruited by the Chamber as a self employed consultant specialising in Education and Skills issues)
- the concerns raised that Mr Forbes had been approached to be a Member on the East Leeds Regeneration Board

In concluding, Board Members sought clarification from the Head of Leeds Initiative and Internal Relations on the next reporting stages in relation to 5th December 2011 report.

The Head of Leeds Initiative and Internal Relations responded and informed the meeting that a further report on East Leeds would be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration. In view of today's discussion he would ensure that an appendix was added to that report showing the map boundaries for each area for approval. He confirmed that the East Leeds Regeneration Board would not convene a meeting until such time that the report had been considered and approved by the Executive Board.

RESOLVED –That the contents of the report and supplementary information be noted.

(Councillor G Wilkinson joined the meeting at 10.35am during discussions of the above item)

(Councillor P Ewens joined the meeting at 11.10am during discussions of the above item)

57 2011/12 Quarter 2 Performance Report

The Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Access and Performance) submitted a report on a summary of the new quarter two performance data for 2011-12 which provided the meeting with an update on progress in delivering the relevant priorities in the Council Business Plan 2011-15 and City Priority Plan 2011-15.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Appendix 1a – Performance Reports for the Housing and Regeneration City Priorities.
- Appendix 1b – City Development Directorate Priorities and Indicators relevant to the Board
- Appendix 1c – Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate Priorities and Indicators relevant to the Board

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Board Members' queries and comments:-

- Phil Crabtree, Chief Planning Officer, City Development.
- Heather Pinches, Performance Manager, Planning Policy and Improvement
- Maggie Gjessing, Housing Investment Manager, Environment and Neighbourhoods

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification of the city wide consultation with Members regarding the Parks and Countryside investment plan
- the need for Directorates to engage more with Elected Members within their respective wards, in particular around planning issues
- the need to concentrate further on developing the empty properties strategy by addressing the large number of boarded up properties within the city in a cost effective way and thereby providing more suitable housing for those in need
- clarification of the progress achieved to date by the Empty Properties team
(The Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser responded and informed the meeting that this issue was the subject of an inquiry by the Scrutiny Board (Safer and Stronger Communities). He agreed to refer the concerns now expressed to that Board)
- clarification of the procedures in place around managing equality and diversity
(The Performance Manager, Planning Policy and Improvement responded and explained the monitoring and reviews that were undertaken)
- clarification of when the Draft Core Strategy would be completed
(The Chief Planning Officer responded and informed the meeting that it would be presented to the Executive Board meeting in February 2012 for approval)

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That this Board notes the three issues which had been highlighted within the report i.e. Budget, Transport and Planning Performance and supports the work underway to address these issues.

- c) That this Board notes the progress in relation to the delivery of the Housing and Regeneration City Priorities Plans as set out in the Directorate Priorities and Indicators.

58 Review of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

The Director of City Development submitted a report following a fundamental review of SHLAA requested by the Scrutiny Board in its report following completion of its Inquiry on housing growth (Recommendation 6).

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Appendix 1: Extract of Scrutiny Report into Housing Growth, October 2011
- Appendix 2 : Leeds Strategic Housing Land and Assessment – Draft Terms of Reference for the Partnership
- Appendix 3: Practice in other local authorities: questionnaire and results
- Appendix 4: Extract from the SHLAA National Practice Guidance, CLG 2007
- Appendix 5: Extracts from Tunbridge Wells' SHLAA Methodology, SHLAA Report and Core Strategy Inspector's report

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:-

- Phil Crabtree, Chief Planning Officer, City Development
- Robin Coghlan, Team Leader, Policy, City Development

The Chair invited both representatives to explain the behind the fundamental review and proposed make up of the SHLAA Partnership.

Following a brief presentation, in summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- the concern that developers had been full members of SHLAA *(The Chief Planning Officer stated that Government guidance was unequivocal in that house builders were expected to be involved, and in particular give opinion on the deliverability of sites, taking account of market conditions and viability)*
- the concerns expressed about the transparency behind the process operated to date by the SHLAA Partnership and that not all Elected Members were being kept informed of which developments were happening within their ward
- the views expressed at the Boston Spa Churchfield Inquiry that the SHLAA process was a discredited one
- clarification of the further role of the SHLAA process in moving forward *(The Team Leader responded and confirmed that the process was between updates at the present time)*
- reference to the 2011 update of site allocations which will not be published until the end of 2012. Members suggested that a list of all sites coming forward for consideration should be published now with a

health warning that not all sites listed will not necessarily be progressed for a variety of reasons

(The Chief Planning Officer responded and agreed to this proposal)

- examples of Directorates within the Council being unaware of proposals within SHLAA to bring sites forward e.g. Florence Street and Shire View and their potential implications for future school provision
(The Chief Planning Officer responded and indicated that further work was taking place in this area and that a series of meetings about future school provision was underway)

RESOLVED That the report and appendices be noted.

59 Taxi Access - Whitehouse Lane

Referring to Minute 46 of the meeting held on 29th November 2011, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the position with regard to a proposed taxi access on Whitehouse Lane.

In addition to the above document, a copy of a report prepared by the Director of City Development entitled 'Leeds Bradford International Airport – Taxi Access' was circulated as supplementary information. The report provided the Board with further information on advice and guidance received which justified the higher standard of road proposed for the rank when the road itself was unclassified.

At the request of the Chair, the Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser also circulated a copy of the previous report submitted to the Board meeting on 29th November 2011 which contained the comparative costs of the original scheme and the final scheme recommended by officers to Executive Board to provide a taxi rank on Whitehouse Lane.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Board Members' queries and comments:-

- Gary Bartlett, Chief Officer, Highways and Transportation, City Development
- Andrew Hall, Acting Head of Transport Policy, City Development
- Oliver Priestley, Principal Engineer, City Development Department

The Chair outlined that the purpose of the meeting was to question witnesses concerning the advice and guidance the engineers received which required the higher standard of road proposed in the final scheme which was subsequently rejected by the Executive Board because of the high cost of the scheme which had increased from £80,000 to over £900,000.

Prior to discussions, the Board noted that the Director of City Development had advised that there was no relevant correspondence with the airport between 8th April and 25th July 2011 and that the correspondence provided to the Board at the last meeting was complete.

Detailed discussion of the costs ensued on the contents of the report and appendices comparing the original scheme with that of the final scheme which had been presented to the Executive Board.

The Board concluded that whilst noting that officers could not support the original cheaper scheme, Members were satisfied that this could be implemented and that the Executive Board should be asked to reconsider this matter again if agreement cannot be reached with Leeds Bradford International Airport to find a more appropriate solution for the provision of a hackney carriage rank at the airport.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report, together with the supplementary information be noted.
- b) That this Board agrees to recommend to Executive Board that the Director of City Development be asked to continue negotiations with Leeds Bradford International Airport to seek a solution to this issue.
- c) That in the event of the Director of City Development being unsuccessful, this Board recommends that the Executive Board be asked to reconsider this matter and implement the original cheaper scheme proposed for a taxi rank on Whitehouse Lane as originally proposed.

(Councillor J Harper left the meeting at 1.15pm during discussions of the above item)

60 Work Schedule

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report providing Members with a copy of the Board's current draft work schedule. The Executive Board minutes of 2nd November 2011, together with the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st December 2011 to 31st March 2012 were also attached to the report.

In addition to the above documents, a copy of the Executive Board minutes of a meeting held on 14th December 2011 was also circulated as supplementary information.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That the Executive Board minutes of 2nd November 2011 and 14th December 2011, together with the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st December 2011 to 31st March 2012 be noted.
- c) That the Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser be requested to revise the work schedule to incorporate the recommendations made at today's Board meeting.
- d) That the process of dealing with applications for the registration of land as Towns and Village Greens be the subject of a report to the Scrutiny Board in January 2012.

- e) That in relation to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the consultation response to the Government's draft regulations for reform, this Board notes and welcomes the decision taken at the Executive Board meeting held on 14th December 2011.

61 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 17th January 2012 at 10.00am in the Civic Hall, Leeds (Pre-meeting for Board Members at 9.30am)

(The meeting concluded at 1.40pm)