

**Minutes of the Development Sub-Committee
6 November 2023**

Present:

Councillor H.R.D. Williams (Chair)
Councillor S.N. Beatty (Vice-Chair)

Councillors:

M. Beecher	R. Chandler	L. E. Nichols
M. Bing Dong	M. Gibson	J.R. Sexton
T. Burrell	K. Howkins	

Substitutions: Councillor Woodward (In place of N. Islam)

Apologies: Councillor N. Islam

142/23 Apologies for absence & Substitutions

Apologies were received from Councillor Islam. Councillor Woodward attended as their substitute.

143/23 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

144/23 Disclosures of Interest

Councillors Beatty, Beecher, Burrell, Chandler, Gibson, Howkins, Nichols and Williams advised the Committee that they were members of the Planning Committee and therefore would not be making comment on any applications due to come before the Planning Committee.

Councillor Sexton advised that she was a Surrey County Councillor.

Councillor Nichols advised that he was a member of Knowle Green Estates Board.

145/23 Questions from members of the Public

There was one question from a member of the public, this was raised under the relevant agenda item.

146/23 Ward Issues

There were none.

147/23 Urgent Actions

There were none.

148/23 Forward Plan

Councillor Nichols requested that the Asset Management Plan be added to the Forward Plan to come to the Sub-Committee in three months.

The Committee **resolved** to note the Forward Plan.

149/23 Thameside House, Oast House, Benwell House Phase 2 and Ashford Multi-Storey Car Park Current Planning Submissions

The Sub-Committee considered a report on whether to progress the planning submissions for the above developments.

One question was received from Mr Nigel Rowe in relation to this item:

“The Sub-Committee is asked to decide whether to withdraw certain Council planning applications, including for Thameside House and the Oast House, on the grounds that their proposed heights and densities do not have the support of the majority of Councillors and that if these schemes were rejected by the Planning Committee it might make the sites “less attractive to future delivery partners”. Can Members please confirm that flood risk and the Environment Agency’s long-standing position relating directly to these sites, particularly Thameside House, are also principal and critical considerations?”

Response from the Chair:

“As part of any planning application ensuring appropriate flood mitigation for the site is included is a key part of the design. Flood Risk Assessments must be undertaken, and appropriate flood mitigation included within scheme design as part of the application criteria. The Council employ specialist flood consultants to produce these mitigation measures for inclusion within the application and address the flood risk applicable, which will differ on a site-by-site basis.

The Environment Agency are a statutory consultee as part of the determination process and will review the proposals made and provide advice to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) accordingly. Therefore, ensuring an appropriate flood consultant is part of the design team is a principle and critical consideration for the remit of this Sub-Committee, however it is for the LPA and not this Sub-Committee to be satisfied that all critical risks associated with the flooding on the application site have been fully addressed.”

The Group Head – Assets introduced the report and explained that the recommendation was that applications for Thameside House, Oast House and Benwell House Phase Two should be withdrawn as there was a lack of support from Councillors due to the proposed height and mass of the schemes. The application for Ashford Multi-Storey Car Park should be progressed as the majority of Councillors supported the development and had been more involved in the scheme design.

The Sub-Committee queried the status of the outstanding budget for the three schemes proposed for withdrawal. The Group Head – Assets advised that any remaining budget would be put towards any new proposals for those sites. The value of the outstanding budgets would be communicated to the Sub-Committee outside of the meeting.

The Sub-Committee were informed that if the Sub-Committee approved the recommendations, the LPA would be advised that the submissions would be withdrawn. Any relevant design work and surveys could be used to support new applications for the sites.

The Sub-Committee **resolved** to:

1. Approve the withdrawal of the current Thameside House planning submission.
2. Approve the withdrawal of the current Oast House planning submission.
3. Approve the withdrawal of the current Benwell Phase 2 planning submission.
4. Approve the progression of the current Ashford Multi Storey Car Park planning submission for determination.

150/23 Asset Management Strategy

The Sub-Committee received an update on the Asset Management Strategy from the Asset Management Consultant who advised that the Strategy would be presented to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on 27 November 2023 for recommendation to Council in December.

The Sub-Committee thanked the Group Head – Assets and the Asset Management Consultant for the work on the strategy.

The Sub-Committee asked when the Asset Management Plan (AMP) would be presented to the Sub-Committee. The Group Head – Asset advised that

changes proposed by the working group had been incorporated into the plan and that it was intended to be a living document so future changes could be made. It was agreed that the AMP would progress as planned to CPRC on 27 November 2023 and Council in December, but would return to Development Sub-Committee in three months.

The Sub-Committee queried the steps taken to secure income within the investment portfolio. The Asset Management Consultant advised that the Council pro-actively monitored the credit worthiness and financial standing of clients. The Group Head – Assets stated that changes have been made within the team to allow Asset Managers to spend more time engaging with tenants.

The Sub-Committee asked how a decision would be made on future reporting and governance of the investment portfolio and whether a Sub-Committee or Working Group would be most appropriate. The Group Head – Assets advised that a report would need to go through proper channels and take into consideration wider changes to the committee structure. A final report would go to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

The Sub-Committee **resolved** to note the update.

151/23 Proposals for Partnership Development Delivery - Timetable/Framework

The Sub-Committee received an update on the proposals for Partnership Development Delivery from the Group Head – Assets who advised that decisions would be required on individual schemes as well as the wider Staines Masterplan sites. It was proposed that a presentation from a regeneration consultant could be included as part of the December Development Sub-Committee meeting. Workshops with Ward Councillors would be held prior to the December meeting to explore the scope for individual sites.

The Sub-Committee queried whether a regeneration consultant had been appointed and were advised that options had been considered but not yet approached.

The Sub-Committee queried which sites would form part of the Staines Masterplan and were informed that this would be one of the key discussions for the December Development Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee expressed concern over getting the strategy approved at Council in February 2024, at a time when the Budget would also be considered.

The Sub-Committee advised that they would like further information about how residents would be engaged and were informed that this could be discussed with the regeneration consultant.

The Sub-Committee **resolved** to note the update.

152/23 Exclusion of Public and Press (Exempt Business)

It was proposed by Councillor Beecher, seconded by Councillor Nichols and resolved that the public and press be excluded for the following agenda items, in accordance with paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) because it was likely to disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because, disclosure to the public would prejudice the financial position of the authority in being able to undertake even-handed negotiations and finalizing acceptable contract terms.

153/23 Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) Property Acquisitions

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Group Head – Assets on the possible acquisition of three residential properties through the Local Authority Housing Fund, two for Round One and one for Round Two.

The Sub-Committee **resolved** to approve the recommendations as set out in the report.

154/23 Waterfront Development Report

The Sub-Committee received a presentation on the Waterfront Development from the Group Head – Assets, and the Leader of the Council.

The Sub-Committee **resolved** to agree to the recommendation set out in the presentation.

155/23 Quarterly Update on Projects

The Sub-Committee received an update on projects from the Asset Management Consultant.

The Sub-Committee **resolved** to note the update.