

**Minutes of the Development Sub-Committee
20 May 2024**

Present:

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

Councillors:

M. Beecher	D.C. Clarke	L. E. Nichols
M. Bing Dong	M. Gibson	J.R. Sexton
T. Burrell	K. Howkins	P.N. Woodward

Apologies: Councillor R. Chandler

In Attendance: Councillor C. Bateson

46/24 Apologies for absence & Substitutions

Apologies were received from Councillor Chandler.

47/24 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

48/24 Disclosures of Interest

Councillors Beatty, Beecher, Burrell, Chandler, Gibson, 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.

Councillors Sexton advised that she was a Surrey County Councillor.

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

49/24 Questions from members of the Public

There were none.

50/24 Urgent Actions

There were none.

51/24 Forward Plan

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

52/24 Update Report - Development Delivery Strategy

The Sub-Committee considered a report on the updated Development Delivery Strategy which outlined the various delivery options for Council owned sites and the criteria by which they could be assessed. A further Member workshop would be held and a site prioritisation list would be presented to the Business, Infrastructure & Growth Committee in September 2024.

The Sub-Committee queried whether the strategic priorities set out in the appendix to the report would be guaranteed even when delivering sites through partnership with external developers. The Sub-Committee further asked how the Council would ensure the Corporate Plan Objectives would be achieved when partnering with external organisations. The Group Head Assets advised that the strategic objectives would serve as a starting point, where it would not be possible to achieve certain goals it would be outlined in the individual site report. The Chair added that the purpose of the strategy was to allow flexibility so that the Council could take bespoke decisions on each site.

The Sub-Committee queried the make up of the working party that would be considering the site prioritisation list and was advised that it would consist of ward councillors and administration group leaders.

The Sub-Committee **resolved** to recommend to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee to:

1. Approve the introduction of a Development Delivery Strategy.
2. Approve the form and content of the draft Development Delivery Strategy attached to this report.
3. Approve a Councillor led working party to produce a development site prioritisation list to be considered at the September Business, Infrastructure and Growth Committee meeting for approval, and
4. Refer the Development Delivery Strategy to Full Council for adoption.

53/24 Neighbour Consultations - Benwell House Phase 2 (BHP2) & White House Phase 2 (WHP2) Residential Sites

The Sub-Committee considered a report on the outcome of neighbour consultations for Benwell House Phase 2 and White House Phase 2 Residential sites. The Development Management Consultant summarised the issues that had been raised in relation to BHP2, stating that residents primary concerns related to loss of light, privacy, TPO trees and height and massing. With regards to WHP2 concerns were focussed on traffic, flooding, infrastructure matter and the principle of housing on the site was questioned by some.

The Sub-Committee commented that the previous planning application for BHP2 had received over 200 objections and queried how many residents had been spoken to in the recent consultations. The Group Head Assets advised that this was a very focussed consultation with ward councillors and adjacent local residents that would be most affected. The Chair added that this should be considered the first step in a longer process.

The Sub-Committee requested that at future consultations notes are taken and circulated to all councillors.

The Sub-Committee queried where the funding would come from for the architectural drawings and was advised that for WHP2 there was a surplus which would be accessed, while for BHP2 this would be funded from the revenue budget.

Councillor Gibson abstained from the vote.

The Sub-Committee **resolved** to:

1. Note the feedback from residents
2. Approve the engagement of an architect to undertake feasibility drawings that articulate forms of viable development that align as closely as possible with residents' feedback
3. Approve a budget for the architect of £1,000 for each project.

54/24 Presentation on the Waterfront Scheme

The Sub-Committee received a presentation on the proposed Waterfront scheme. The Development Management Consultant highlighted the benefits of the scheme which included; local employment economic regeneration; and increased industry confidence. The presentation highlighted how proposals for the site had changed across the years and compared the new scheme to other local schemes in respect of height and massing. The Development Management Consultant explained that the demise envelope would cap the new scheme at a height of 30 metres.

The Sub-Committee queried what 'suitable mitigation' against flooding could look like and were advised the EA would likely want to be satisfied about mitigation against the impact of flooding but to also provide betterment. The Chair added that Arora's architect for the scheme had experience of dealing with flood risk mitigation in similar locations.

The Sub-Committee queried whether there would be public mooring for boats and were advised that the actual river front was outside of the schemes demise envelope. The Group Head Assets stated that at this stage there would be a lot of questions that could not be answered, many of the details would be worked out as part of the developer's public consultation and planning process. The Group Head Assets reminded the Sub-Committee that the Council would not be involved in the design.

The Sub-Committee stated that they hoped the developer would engage with the design codes and were advised that if it were a statutory, material planning document at the time then they would have to work with it. It was explained that the Council other than as LPA could not direct any part of the development, but any planning policies etc would have to be adhere to as with any application.

The Sub-Committee asked how long it would be before meaningful income was received from the project. It was advised that as the answer would likely disclose confidential information the meeting would need to enter closed session.

It was proposed by Councillor Howkins, seconded by Councillor Clarke and **resolved** to exclude 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 maintaining 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.

The meeting returned to open session.

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

55/24 Ashford Victory Place – extinguishment of Spelthorne Borough Council and Knowle Green Estates contractual obligations

The Sub-Committee considered a report on which sought approval to terminate the conditional contract to transfer Ashford Victory Place to Knowle Green Estates Limited. The Development Management Consultant advised that the signed Section 106 agreement would run with the land, which would mean whoever brought it would have to fulfil those obligations. The Sub-Committee were advised that the contract with KGE would expire in March 2025 and even if we were to try and develop the site we would not complete in time. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the KGE Board were happy with the proposal.

The Sub-Committee **resolved** to:

1. Approve the request to formally terminate the Conditional Contract dated 3rd March 2022 between the Council (1) and Knowle Green Estates Limited (2) for the sale and purchase of Land at Ashford Hospital, London Road, Ashford (Ashford Victory Place Contract), and
2. Authorise the Group Head of Corporate Governance to enter into any legal documentation to terminate the Ashford Victory Place Contract.

56/24 Exclusion of Public and Press (Exempt Business)

It was proposed by Councillor Sexton, seconded by Councillor Beecher and **resolved** to exclude 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 maintaining 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.

57/24 Local Authority Housing Fund Acquisitions

The Sub-Committee considered a report on the possible acquisition of multiple properties as part of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) Acquisitions. The Chair reminded the Sub-Committee that they were not being asked to authorise the purchases but to make a recommendation to CPRC and Council.

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

58/24 Year End Valuations 31/3/2024

The Sub-Committee received a presentation on the independent valuations of the Investment & Regeneration portfolios as of 31 March 2024, conducted by Carter Jonas and based on formal "Red-Book" values.

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

The meeting finished at 21:34