
DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

02 JULY 2007

Present - Councillors Mrs. Brierley (Chairman), A.S. Walsh (Vice-Chairman), Bashir-Ismail, Connell (as deputy for Councillor Chadwick), Critchley, Darvesh, Gradwell, Hall, Hornby, J. Rothwell, Scowcroft, D.A. Wilkinson and Woodward.

Lay Members

Mrs. B. Berry - BATRA and Ms. J. Horan - BATRA

Also in Attendance

Councillor Adia - Executive Member for Development;
Councillor Zaman - Executive Member for Regeneration;
Mrs. S. Crossley - Assistant Director of Adult Services (Culture); Mr. K. Davies - Director of Development and Regeneration; Mr. J. Smethurst - Chief Housing and Regeneration Officer; Mr. T. Hill - Chief Planning Officer; Mr. P. Cathery - Sustainable Development Team Leader; Ms. C. Ellis - Manager, Regeneration and Economic Development Division; Mr. R. Binks - Policy Accountant; Mr. T. Crossley - Strategic Finance Manager; Mr. M. Kelly - Chief Economic Strategy Officer; and Mr. I.D. Mulholland - Scrutiny Team Leader.

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Chadwick.

Councillor Councillor Mrs. Brierley in the Chair

1 MINUTES

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of a meeting of the Committee held on 26th March, 2007 be signed as a correct record.

Attached Reports:

[Minutes](#)

2 COMMITTEE REMIT

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report which set out the powers and duties of the Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee for 2007/08.

Also set out were details of the relevant portfolios for the Executive Members with responsibility for Development and Regeneration.

Resolved - That the Committee's remit be noted.

Attached Reports:

[Committee Remit](#)

3 DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME, 2007/08

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report which put forward a list of suggested issues which the Committee might wish to receive reports on or investigate further during the current Municipal Year.

The report also included information which would aid the Committee in selecting appropriate items for consideration in the future.

Resolved - That the work programme as now submitted be approved.

Attached Reports:

[Draft Work Programme, 2007/08](#)

[Draft Work Programme, 2007/08](#)

4 FINDINGS OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

The Sustainable Development Scrutiny Panel submitted a report which set out the outcome of their investigations. By way of background information, the report indicated that in August last year this Committee established a Scrutiny Panel to investigate sustainable development, with particular attention to the examination of Bolton's mainstreaming of principles into its corporate policies and service delivery.

Members were also reminded of the reasons for the review which in essence were:-

1. The publication of the UK Strategy, "Securing the Future", established the issues that needed to be addressed and how sustainable development would be achieved in Bolton;

2. Physical development was focussed on with particular regard to road, buildings, land use and infrastructure, which were all classed as contributors to the achievement of sustainable development; and

3. Raising the awareness of sustainable development best practice, nationally.

Given the need to ensure a practical review and that the Panel was prohibited from detailed policy development, the Panel determined that four key themes were scrutinised, which were: Sustainable Consumption and Production, Climate Change and Energy, Natural Resource Protection and Environmental Enhancement and Sustainable Communities.

The Panel met on six occasions including witness sessions with the following:- the Co-operative, the University of Manchester, the Environment Agency, the Lancashire Wildlife Trust and the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit.

Members were advised that overall, the Panel found that much good practice was underway in Bolton in response to Government recommendations. Nonetheless, that Panel did identify specific areas where it was felt improvements could be achieved and six recommendations were put forward. The recommendations and the Panel's reasons for each were set out in detail in Section 3 of the report but comprised:-

1. To assess the possibility of using Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 monies to be directed into climate change mitigation and adaptation projects, ecological and environmental improvements, or of such provisions being put in development briefs.
2. Examine whether it was possible to undertake training for Members on the Planning and Highways Committee.
3. Investigate whether it would be possible to educate children for the future of sustainable communities.
4. Consider the future involvement of external partners and sustainable service delivery to examine the achieving of the priorities for a successful sustainable community.
5. Consider the continuance of the Scrutiny Panel as a Policy Development Group to ensure the work of the Panel continued.
6. To examine the further option of entering into a formal project arrangement between Bolton Council and Manchester University to further research and enable climate change adaption measures for Bolton and the urban environment.

In their deliberations, Members made the following salient points:-

- The need to have sight of the planning laws awaited

from the Government relating to household sustainability;

It was indicated that, at present, the Government were consulting on the issue of allowing households to erect sustainable development installations without planning consent; - the need to establish a Policy Development Group, as set out in the Panel recommendations, to continue the sustainability development work;

Members also suggested that the remit of this Group could include the natural environment and the development of a Council Policy on Trees. This would include details of species, life span and when they were most effective in terms of the absorption of carbon dioxide; - the need in the future to carefully manage the trees on the Borough's estates; and - the issue of the possible planting of trees on brown field sites as opposed to the building of new properties.

Resolved - (i) That the six recommendations of the Sustainable Development Scrutiny Panel be submitted to the Executive Members for Development and Regeneration.

(ii) That the Executive Members for Development and Regeneration be asked to prepare a report setting out their response to the recommendations contained in the report and that these responses be presented back to this Committee within six months.

(iii) That the Executive Member for Development be asked to agree to the early establishment of a Policy Development Group, as recommended by the Scrutiny Panel, to also include within its remit issues with regard to the natural environment and the issue of the effective life of trees.

5 PROCEEDINGS OF MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT

The minutes of the proceedings of the Executive Member for Development held on 16th April and 4th June, 2007 were submitted.

In respect of the, Church Wharf Developer Selection item, Members were advised that a further report would be presented to the Executive Member in September, 2007, detailing the proposed Heads of Terms.

With regard to, Brightment Street Development Brief and Bath Street Building Design Proposals, Members enquired as to whether a new slip road had been included in the brief.

In terms of the, Town Centre Security Shutters Project, Members indicated their desire to see a reversal in the trend for solid steel shutters on the high street.

In conclusion, Members referred to the, Newport Street Security Improvement, item and enquired about the make up of the £200 per annum ongoing costs.

Resolved - (i) That the decisions of the Executive Member be noted.

(ii) That Members of this Committee be notified of the following information:-

a) whether a new slip road had been included in the development brief in respect of Brightmet Street and Bath Street Building Design; and b) the make up of the £200 per annum ongoing costs with regard to Newport Street Security Improvements.

Attached Reports:

[Minutes of Meetings of the Executive Member for Development held on 16th April 2007 and 4th June 2007](#)
[Minutes of Meetings of the Executive Member for Development held on 16th April 2007 and 4th June 2007](#)

6 PROCEEDINGS OF MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION

The proceedings of meetings of the Executive Member for Regeneration held on 16th April and 4th June, 2007 were submitted.

In respect of the, Stock Option Appraisal of 24 dwellings at Hamilton Court, Little Lever, Members discussed current problems associated with the site and, in particular, the problem of vandalism.

With regard to the item, Front Doors to Greenway Flats on Hall i'th' Wood Estate, Members referred to security concerns highlighted by some residents concerning the provision of new doors.

Also discussed by the Committee was the general issue of Bolton at Home repair times in relation to broken windows and instances of repairs taking too long.

Resolved - (i) That the decisions of the Executive Member be noted.

(ii) That Members of this Committee be notified of possible adequate vandalism measures that can be introduced at Hamilton Court.

(iii) That the Chief Housing and Regeneration Officer be asked to include an item on a forthcoming meeting of the ALMO Monitoring Group in relation to repair times for broken windows.

(iv) That the Chief Housing and Regeneration Officer be asked to explore security concerns at the Greenway Flats

on Hall i'th' Wood Estate and inform this Committee of the outcome.

Attached Reports:

[Minutes of Meetings of the Executive Member for Regeneration held on 16th April 2007 and 4th June 2007](#)
[Minutes of Meetings of the Executive Member for Regeneration held on 16th April 2007 and 4th June 2007](#)

7 EXTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE

Extracts of the proceedings of the meeting of the Executive held on 16th April, 2007 relating to the Bolton Town Centre Swimming Facility and the Bolton Town Centre Skate Park were submitted.

In respect of the, Bolton Town Centre Swimming Facility options, the Executive Member for Development advised the Committee that scheme options 2 or 3 would now be taken forward and an update would be given on the progress in September, 2007.

Resolved - That the decisions of the Executive be noted.

Attached Reports:

[Extracts from the Meeting of the Executive held on 16th April 2007 relating to the Bolton Town Centre Swimming Facility and the Bolton Town Centre Skate Park](#)

8 PROCEEDINGS OF THE JOINT DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

The proceedings of a joint meeting of the Development and Regeneration and Environmental Services Policy Development Groups held on 16th April, 2007 were submitted

Resolved - That the proceedings of the meeting be noted.

Attached Reports:

[Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Development and Regeneration and Environmental Policy Development Groups held on 16th April 2007](#)

9 PROCEEDINGS OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

The proceedings of meetings of the Development and Regeneration Policy Development Group held on 16th April, 2007 were submitted

Resolved - That the proceedings of the meeting be noted.

Attached Reports:

[Minutes of the Meeting of the Development and Regeneration Policy Development Group held on 16th April 2007](#)

10 DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION 2006/07: BUDGET EFFICIENCY AND PERFORMANCE MONITOR - 4TH QUARTER

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report which considered both financial and service performance for the 2006/07 financial year together with known and approved budget changes since the original budget was set.

Members were advised that the report also considered the financial risks facing the Department and identified how such risks had and were being managed.

In their deliberations, Members expressed some concern at the seemingly increasing lack of Senior Planning Officers within the Council.

Resolved - That the Committee continues to monitor and ensure management of the various performance indicators, as detailed in the report, on a quarterly basis

Attached Reports:

[Development and Regeneration 2006/07: Budget efficiency and Performance Monitor - 4th Quarter](#)

11 BOLTON MILLS ACTION FRAMEWORK UPDATE

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report on the progress being made in implementing the Bolton Mills Action Framework.

By way of background information, the report explained that in November, 2006 the Executive Member for Development approved the Bolton Mills Action Framework, commissioned from King Sturge LLP, and the proposed plan of its implementation which was endorsed by Members of the Bolton Strategic Economic Partnership in September 2006.

The aim of the study was to work with a selection of mill owners and other stakeholders to review planning policy and develop an action plan with a toolkit of interventions, to secure the best use of mill properties or sites for high quality employment or, where appropriate, mixed use opportunities. Sustainability, design standards, best practice, in respect for heritage and optimising economic viability; were all equally important and were considered as part of the study.

The Bolton Mills Action Framework identified 7 Key Objectives:

- To recognise the value of Bolton's mills;
- To conserve the best of Bolton's Industrial Heritage;
- To maximise Bolton's available employment space and provide a 'ladder of accommodation' of varying values;
- To preserve local distinctiveness;
- To ensure that mills were an asset to the communities they sat within rather than a liability;
- To diversify the uses of mills; and
- To recognise that not all mills were an asset to the Communities they sat within - prioritise the best.

The following Actions were adopted as priority and a prioritised delivery plan was completed:-

- Assessment and Prioritisation of all the mills in Bolton;
- To develop and adopt innovative and flexible planning and land-use policies;
- To improve engagement and communication with mill owners and other stakeholders; and
- Make representation to MPs, MEPs and regional bodies such as the NWRDA to raise the profile and knowledge of mills.

The report went on to update Members on the progress made to date with the implementation of the Action Framework focussing on the four priorities above especially the completion of the pilot assessment, the prioritisation of the six Great Lever Mills, and to note the proposed way forward to complete the assessment and prioritisation of the remaining 102 mills in the Borough. Members indicated the need to ensure that there was a good mix of residential and employment usage at the various mills for the good of the town.

Resolved - That the report be welcomed

Attached Reports:

[Bolton Mills Action Framework update](#)

12 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

The following question was submitted by Councillor D.

Wilkinson, in accordance with Standing Order 35.

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Could the Executive Member provide any information on the effects of the closure of the Bolton Tax Office to members of the public and the service provided, together with the impact on removing jobs away from Bolton Town Centre to Manchester. Members were apprised of the following response from the Director of Development and Regeneration:-

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Impact on Customer Service HM Revenue and Customs were anticipating an overall improvement in Customer Service levels as the money they saved from the staff and premises realignment, together with associated process re-engineering, would be applied to front line services. There was no intention to move the enquiry centre from Bolton, so this function would remain, if not in the current building, then close by. **Impact on Staff** The national PSA targets required a reduction of 12,500 staff by April next year, with a further 12,500 by 2011. The Greater Manchester urban target, of which Bolton formed a part, required a reduction from 5,000 to 4,450 by 2010. Staff reductions would take place by natural wastage, a slow down in recruitment and early retirement packages.

It was highlighted that these figures should be treated with some caution, given the fact that they were provided by an unauthorised source in London. Reference was, though, made to a letter being sent to local authorities detailing the processes involved in these changes.

Overall, the impact did not look as though it would be significant in Bolton for either customers or staff.

In their discussions, Members expressed some concern that the envisaged Bolton Enquiry Centre would no longer have the necessary expertise.

Resolved - That the question and response be noted.

(The meeting started at 6.00 p.m. and finished at 7.32 p.m.)