

MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 31ST JANUARY, 2022, 7.00 - 7.50 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Sarah Williams (Chair), Councillor Sheila Peacock (Vice-Chair), Councillor Dhiren Basu, Councillor Peter Mitchell, Councillor Liz Morris, Councillor Reg Rice, and Councillor Viv Ross.

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred to the notice of filming at meetings and this information was noted.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Gina Adamou, Councillor Luke Cawley-Harrison, and Councillor Yvonne Say.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

5. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / PRESENTATIONS / QUESTIONS

There were no deputations / petitions / presentations / questions.

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED

To confirm and sign the minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on 25 October 2021 as a correct record.

7. PLANNING SERVICES UPDATE - 2021-22 QUARTER 3

The Assistant Director of Planning, Building Standards, and Sustainability introduced the report which provided an update on the work of the Planning Service for Quarter 3.

The Head of Development Management provided an update in relation to development management as set out in the report. It was noted that applications had increased by approximately 10% and performance rates were 100% for majors, 91% for minors, 91% for other applications, and 91% for PSOs.

It was highlighted, as set out in paragraph 5.9 of the report, that there had been an increase in pre-application meetings which had resulted in increased income of £30,000, which compared to £19,000 during the same period last year. It was explained that new fast track services for householder written advice and certificates of lawfulness had been introduced in April 2021 and had been popular as well as generating additional income.

It was noted that another major application had been lost at appeal and this had taken the Council over the threshold of 10%, above which an authority was eligible for designation. It was explained that this would not automatically result in designation as the authority's overall performance and other statistics were strong.

In relation to planning enforcement, it was reported that there had been an increase in complaints and that notices remained high at 56. It was added that there would also be some significant income from a confiscation order against a landlord who had refused to comply with enforcement notices.

In response to questions from the Committee, it was noted:

- There were approximately 124 applications that had taken longer than 26 weeks. The Head of Development Management explained that a number of these applications had been decided but were awaiting finalised section 106 agreements. It was explained that officers worked to finalise the outstanding applications as much as possible.
- There was a reference to hybrid committee meetings in paragraph 5.12 of the report but it was noted that members of the Committee were required to attend meetings in person in order to vote.
- It was noted that it was unfortunate that one of the recent appeal losses for Guildens, Courtenay Avenue was allowed following a challenge to the original inspector's decision to dismiss the appeal.
- It was noted that the average decision day for applications had increased from 83 to 85 days. It was explained that caseloads had increased; recruitment was underway for two vacancies and the interview process was due to complete in the next few weeks.

In relation to Planning Policy and Infrastructure, the Head of Policy, Transport and Infrastructure Planning provided an update on the new Local Plan. It was noted that there was a working group to inform the emerging Local Plan, which had met four times in 2021 and planned to meet again in 2022. In addition, an evidence base was being collected to inform the plan; details of the evidence base were provided in the report. It was aimed to consult on the draft Local Plan in summer 2022.

Regarding the Haringey Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), it was noted that the CIL Draft Charging Schedule had been submitted for independent examination. It was proposed to increase rates in the east of the borough only. In late 2021, the examiner had submitted some questions; the Council had responded and had been informed

that there would be no public hearing. The examiner's final report was expected in early 2022.

The Council had received the inspector's report for the North London Waste Plan (NLWP) in late 2021 which had confirmed that the NLWP was compliant and sound, subject to main modifications, and could now be progressed in each borough. It was noted that all North London boroughs would be seeking approval for the NLWP and further detail would be provided to the Committee in future.

It was also reported that the Environment Bill had become law in November 2021. A key requirement in the Act will be a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement for developers to demonstrate a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity. The government had gone out to consultation on the BNG and how it would be applied; the Planning Policy Team would be drafting a response to this consultation shortly.

The Head of Policy, Transport and Infrastructure Planning noted that Haringey had achieved 75% in the Housing Delivery Test results for 2021, a significant improvement from 60% in 2020. The Council was no longer subject to the more stringent National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) presumption in favour of sustainable development and could now give maximum weight to its own Development Plan. However, there would still be a requirement to produce a Housing Delivery Test action plan as the Council was slightly short of the target delivery threshold.

It was noted that, during the pandemic, the government had made two time-limited permitted development rights concerning outdoor markets and moveable structures. Following consultation, the government had now made these rights permanent.

In response to questions from the Committee, it was noted:

- The Head of Policy, Transport and Infrastructure Planning clarified that the NLWP was produced by local authorities and was separate from the North London Waste Authority (NLWA). It was explained that the NLWP focused on land uses and was not reliant on particular site proposals, such as the Edmonton Energy from Waste facility.
- In relation to housing delivery, it was noted that the test had been identified as unfair as it held councils accountable where the building of developments was out of their control. The Head of Policy, Transport and Infrastructure Planning noted that he did not have the exact figures for the number of homes that had been granted planning permission this year but that these could be provided.
- For the new Local Plan evidence base, some members requested additional information about the Archaeological Priority Area Study and the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment. The Head of Policy, Transport and Infrastructure Planning noted that some information about types of development was provided in Appendix 1 to the report and that additional information would be provided as part of the member working group.
- In relation to the two permitted development rights that had become permanent, it was considered that the government had not gone as far as the Council would have liked in terms of safety requirements. It was noted that the licensing regime also had some role in relation to safety measures.
- The Legal Advisor noted that there was already a policy position for biodiversity gain but that the Environment Act would strengthen this requirement.

In relation to Building Control, the Head of Building Control Services noted that the number of applications had increased and that market share had increased, although it was explained that had been slightly impacted by a large number of applications from Homes for Haringey. It was stated that work on Dangerous Structures was a prominent part of Building Control's work and included out of hours calls. It was noted that there had been a couple of significant out of hours calls where a contractor had been required. It was reported that proactive work had continued in relation to falling masonry in Green Lanes, Crouch End, and Muswell Hill. It was added that, where the team had not received responses from properties, surveyors would be attending sites to review; where issues were identified, the team would write to people directly to inform them that works were required.

The Head of Building Control Services noted that the team was continuing to monitor the progress of the Building Safety Review which was anticipated to be finalised in April 2022. It was highlighted that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities had issued new Approved Documents which were due to come into force in June 2022. Under the Building Safety Bill, it was suggested that all surveyors would require individual licences and this was being progressed in the Council's Building Control Team. It was added that there was now an apprentice in Building Control and a second apprentice post was about to be established.

In response to questions from the Committee, it was noted:

- Some concerns were expressed about the effects of basement developments. The Head of Building Control Services explained that there were a number of developments that were not or could not be inspected by the Building Control Team. It was suggested that any residents with concerns about basement works could contact buildings insurers who should be able to provide help and advice. The Assistant Director of Planning, Building Standards, and Sustainability confirmed that there were some policies and conditions relevant to basement development and that the new London Plan had a better policy position but it was noted that basement development in itself was not a reason for refusal.
- It was anticipated that, once the Building Safety Bill became law, the requirement for surveyors to be licensed would lead to increased quality. The Head of Building Control Services noted that this could lead to increased costs. It was added that Building Control did not deal with temporary works and so there may not be a significant impact in relation to temporary works.

RESOLVED

To note the report.

8. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

CHAIR: Councillor Sarah Williams

Signed by Chair

Date