

## **Rainham & Wennington & South Hornchurch Working Party.**

### **Update on the Rainham Compass Programme.**

#### **Background**

The Rainham Compass vision, agreed by cabinet in June 2009, outlined the Council's ambition for Rainham Village, the London Riverside and the surrounding area. Set around the 4 key points of Village, Enterprise, Community and Riverside, it detailed ambitious plans to preserve and promote Rainham's rich heritage while further strengthening the community and providing greater cultural, educational and economic opportunities for local people.

A further report to cabinet (see below) in February 2014 set out a five year review of the Rainham Compass and its achievements. The key headline was that over the five years since its inception the Rainham Compass programme had delivered on all [23] of the recommendations relating to specific projects and initiatives as set out in the June 2009 Cabinet report. Also that alongside the main programme of projects identified in the report significant additional regeneration activity has been undertaken and is continuing throughout the Compass area.

#### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to consider the progress and achievements of the Rainham Compass Programme.

And

Review progress made under each of the four themes at future working party meetings and consider whether work has been completed or where regeneration activity should be continued and intensified.

#### **Rainham Compass Themes.**

##### **1. Rainham Village.**

"We want to preserve and add to the attractive heritage of the Village and enhance the quality of life by providing an improved and safer local environment, enriched by educational and cultural opportunities for everyone."

Rainham Village has been the focus of significant regeneration investment and activity, 10 of the 23 original 2009 report recommendations dealt with projects designed to transform the built heritage, public realm and transport infrastructure. All the major projects have been delivered including the New Rainham Library, Rainham Station Interchange, the Rainham Traffic Management System, the Tesco Walkway and open space, shopfront improvements and large areas of public realm improvements, Rainham Village School refurbishment and creation of a new Childrens' Centre. The Rainham Village Christmas and Summer Fayres have been supported and are extremely successful and a number of cultural events have been held in the restored Rainham Hall Gardens and a further programme has been developed with the National Trust as Rainham Hall and the Coach House is restored and developed into a mainstream National Trust

heritage destination. Additional work is nearly complete to transform Rainham Station forecourt as a gateway to the Village and Marshes and to create new space in the ROYALS centre to provide a Youth Enterprise project and event space.

The Rainham Village programme as set out in the 2009 cabinet report is complete.

However, further projects are developing or were not considered in the original programme, for example the need to refurbish and extend the Creekside Park, secure high quality residential development on the Broadway site, extend the shopfront improvement scheme, develop the heritage tourism economy and create opportunities for business growth. Support to local GPs in securing a site and funding for a new surgery and clinic in the Village. Developing a scheme to deliver a new leisure centre and secure new housing opportunities for local people.

## **2. Rainham Enterprise.**

“Centred on the opportunities afforded by CEME, we want to offer more training for local people to help them take advantage of the economic development of the Thames Gateway region. Creating thousands of high value jobs for local people and building an infrastructure to support local businesses is a priority.”

The Riverside remains strategically important to both Havering and London as a major business and employment growth area and with the largest reservoir of brownfield industrial land in London it is important for securing growth in London's economy. Changes to NNDR and Council funding will also raise the profile of the area's potential as a business growth area and the Council's role as a business friendly authority in supporting the areas development.

The Rainham Enterprise programme has had notable successes –

The re-election of the BID and continuing partnership working to secure improvements to the public realm and crime prevention measures.

The CEME centre is recognised as a world class centre for innovation and design, with a focus on engineering, manufacturing and technology clusters, and with additions to the campus including the High Speed Sustainable Manufacturing Institute and the planned ELUTEC Academy has enhanced that reputation. CEME has a successful Innovation Centre run by Oxford Innovations which operates at or near capacity. CEME is seeking funding with support from the Council and the BID to provide additional start up and early stage accommodation. Continued working with CEME is a vital part of the vision for the area.

The Tesco distribution centre development on Beam Park has created 1,200 new jobs and the Wildspace business units and Beam Reach 8 development are now fully occupied and sustaining a further 1,000 new jobs.

For the Riverside to achieve its potential as a major focus of business growth, creating an additional 5,000 new jobs and attracting new investment and firms a comprehensive programme of enabling work is required.

The Council is currently working in partnership with the London Riverside BID to develop a strategic programme of development opportunities, including physical

improvements to the appearance of the area, which suffers from poor perception and image among potential investors.

The business area is almost completely unserved by public transport and work is underway to assess the constraints on growth that poor access to public transport causes – firms report difficulties around recruitment and retention, some firms only recruit on the basis that employees have access to cars – and what improvements, particularly to bus services, will be needed to stimulate and accommodate future growth.

Other work is looking at which potential business sectors may be encouraged to locate in the Riverside for example high value added hi tech industries could cluster around CEME and which improvements to the areas “offer” could secure inward investment.

The GLA is a major landowner in the area with 35 hectares of developable land. . Apart from the successful Easterpark development and the Tesco's distribution centre, progress has been slow in attracting inward investors. It is important that the Council's input is maintained to ensure potential developments are appropriate and reflect the Council's Business Growth Strategy objectives. The GLA are embarking on a procurement exercise for a development partner across all its sites, it is important that the Council's objectives are embedded in this process.

Additional issues include the comprehensive regeneration of the Salamons Way area - currently extremely run down, visually unattractive and an image stereotype of the worst kinds of activity, bad neighbour uses that deter quality firms from locating in the area. The proposed Belvedere/ Rainham river crossing currently in consultation, which will have far reaching impacts in the area.

### **3. Rainham Community**

“Focussing on the communities to the west and north of Rainham Village, we aim to create a greener environment with high quality homes for local people. We also aim to improve public transport and increase local opportunities to access first class education, health and other local facilities.”

Much has been achieved including the popular Orchard Village residential development now in its last phase. On the former Carpetright Site – Construction is nearing completion on the largest Passivhaus development in East London and will provide 52 affordable homes of 26 x 4 bed houses, 8 x 3 bed houses, 12 x 2 bed apartments and 6 accessible flats. New Plymouth and Napier Houses - Council investment of £1.5 million to bring 88 flats up to decent homes standard ensuring that every flat in the block has a new kitchen and new bathroom with the aim of completing work by summer 2014 with innovative plans to install a winter garden in every flat and create 16 new family homes.

The creation of the Havering College construction campus with 600 students. The creation of 53ha of new and accessible green space on the Beam Washlands.

The future focus will be on the large residential development and employment sites along the A1306 particularly on the GLA owned Beam Park site and the adjacent Somerfield development and Dovers Corner ensuring that development

is appropriate, high quality and delivers new housing opportunities for local people. This will include the masterplanning of the A1306 and development of a series of public realm and transport improvements for TfL LIP funding. A new rail station at Beam Park is vital to ensure existing communities are able to access employment opportunities where public transport has historically been poor. New development will require new schools and community infrastructure work is continuing to identify needs and funding and sites to deliver them.

Skill levels in the area are currently amongst the lowest in London and one area of South Hornchurch is still amongst the 10% of most deprived in the country. There is a need to address these issues and ensure that local residents are able to benefit fully from the new opportunities offered by the areas ongoing regeneration.

#### **4. Rainham Riverside**

“Creating high quality public spaces and easy access to the beauty of the Thames and Riverside area is at the heart of our vision to develop Rainham as an attraction in its own right. Supported by partnership work and multi-million pound investment, we aim to boost the local economy based on the area’s environmental heritage.”

Successful village environmental improvements are described above. But at the heart of this ambition is Rainham ‘Wildspace’ – involving the development of a 640 hectare regional visitor destination comprised of Rainham, Wennington and Aveley Marshes and the adjacent landfill site.

There has been major progress delivering funding for the entire site totalling c£30m, the establishment of the RSPB Rainham Marshes Nature Reserve and the Purfleet Environment and Education Centre, the Rainham to Purfleet Path, Rainham Marshes Local Nature Reserve, Rainham to the River – access improvements to the River and Marshes, Rainham Trackway linking Rainham Village and the station directly into the marshes through an innovative high level walkway, Mardyke Bridge and the Three Crowns Open Space.

Despite these successes a lot more needs to be done to achieve the regional visitor destination ambition and the economic development advantages that would come with this. The Council, with the support of RSPB, is seeking to develop a new, higher level governance arrangement for Wildspace, with a Partnership Board chaired by the Leader of the Council. Veolia ES plc, however, will only support the project through a S106 Agreement if it achieves planning permission for extended landfill period brought about by changes in the waste management industry. Moreover funding has become scarce and the Council and its partners rely greatly on the continued support of the Veolia North Thames trust in the regard.

#### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to consider whether:

1. The vision, goals and ambitions of the ongoing Rainham Compass Programme and the four project themes of Village, Enterprise, Community and Riverside are still relevant to the continuing regeneration of Rainham and the London Riverside, or require a revision of focus and activity. And:
2. Review progress made under each of the four themes and consider whether work has been completed or where regeneration activity should be continued or intensified.