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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
RAINHAM & WENNINGTON AND SOUTH HORNCURCH WORKING PARTY
Havering Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
8 September 2015 (6.00 - 8.15 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group Jason Frost (In place of Osman Dervish)

Residents' Group Reg Whitney

UKIP Group Phil Martin

Independent Residents Group Michael Deon Burton (Chairman)

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors Robert Benham and Ron Ower.

Councillor Graham Williamson was also present.

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

8 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9 SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

An update was given on the school requirements needed in respect of the development at Beam Park. The Head of Learning and Achievement explained that each year a yield is agreed dependant on the number and types of housing in the area. The difficulty would be predicting the ages of children in the area.

There had been a lot of modelling done across Havering for all year groups. A statutory provision was to provide early years settings, for children aged 2, 3 and 4. The majority of early years settings were privately run, however early years could be attached to a new school in the area. Early thinking suggested that 500 early year places would be required at a cost of approximately £5 million.

Officers stated that a more cost effective option would be to expand existing schools. It was estimated that there would be a need for 1200 primary

school places once the development at Beam Park was complete. Whilst a new school would be included in the development, this would provide space for up to 500 places, therefore a further 700 needed to be sought from existing schools. It was suggested that expansion of Rainham Village Primary, Newtons Primary and Brady Primary be done on a phased basis.

It was explained that revenue funding was only available once a child had been allocated a school place. The actual funding was not released until the child had completed two terms, therefore this would be a challenge. Members asked how this lag in funding was dealt with. It was explained that a paper would have to go to Cabinet with a request for contingency funding for the period.

Officers explained that there would need to be 800 secondary school place with 6-8 forms of entry. This would be on the site and cost £25 million. The GLA will fund part of the school schedule, and since the school will not be Council funded or run by the local authority, once a site has been agreed, a bidding process will take place for a Free School or Academy.

Members discussed how children were allocated places at schools and how the funding was used to ensure that the facilities in the schools were of suitable to the size of the expanded school.

Officers explained that the new development would incorporate two new schools, one for Havering and one for Dagenham.

10 **MASTERPLAN AND KEY ISSUES**

A representative from Urban Initiative Studies, the consultant for the Rainham and Beam Park Planning Framework, presented the working party with details of the current proposals. He explained that this would be going out for public consultation in September 2015. The consultants had worked hard on the spatial elements of the plan and it was hoped to go to Cabinet in December 2015.

The location was discussed together with each of the sub-areas. Officers outlined the opportunities and challenges for the area together with the draft vision for the area. It was noted that there were seven character areas in the framework. These were:

- New Road Linear Park – A1306 (Beam Park Way)
- Park View Quarter – this would be mainly apartments and 6 storey buildings
- Beam Park Centre - this would include the station, shops and public space.
- The Beam Garden – mix of residential and historic gardens
- Creekside – Ingrebourne creek and Marshlands
- Rainham Village – Historic village

Whilst this was a new development, the vision was for it to be an extension of the existing neighbourhoods, with the number of developments being joined up. Members were shown where the proposed sites for the primary school might be, however there had already been challenges in that there were gas pipes close to one of the sites, which could be potentially hazardous for building a school on. It was hoped that there would also be a new health facility at Beam Park Centre and a potential gym on the site.

Members raised concerns about the A1306, given the amount of traffic that currently uses the stretch within the Beam Park area. Work had been done over the summer including traffic modelling. Officers assured members that there would be changes made to prioritise the traffic onto the A13 and to prevent any rat running through the site. Officers explained that they had spoken with TfL and that there was potential for one of the bus lanes to be removed, which would improve the route and provide a safer route for pedestrians and cyclists both through the development and beyond.

Concerns were also raised about the maintenance of the green spaces and the height of the buildings. Members felt there was a risk of development going higher in future years, something that was felt to cause social isolation. Officers explained that the site had to deliver a certain threshold of dwellings. It was noted that to build house, space was needed for gardens, whereas apartments could be built with a communal space which could be smaller.

11 A1306 MAJOR SCHEME

In March officers provided details to the Working Group about the vision for the A1306 in the form of a Linear Park. Over the summer period traffic modelling had been done throughout the area, looking at the volumes and capacity of the road in question, with the vision of what it would look like for people living safely in the area.

Following comments and consultation, it was agreed that rather than a Linear Park, that a series of linked Pocket Parks be introduced including a cycle lane. This would site 3-4 parks along the A1306, which would link in with the development as it evolved. The area would be known as Beam Parkway.

Officers provided a presentation setting out the proposals, however added that these were not committed to and could change following further consultation. It was hoped to enhance the Town Square at Beam Park Station. The Pocket Parks would also include an element of play area which could be used straight away. The proposals were to also look at Dovers Corner and how this could be improved.

Members raised concerns about play areas being close to a busy road and who would maintain the parks. Officers explained that they would hope the

developers would contribute to the maintenance, but would wish for the residents in the area to be proud of their area.

Concerns were raised about where the bulk of traffic would be directed to, since both routes north (Cherry Tree Lane and A125) were already busy and by redirecting away from the A1306, this could mean more traffic through residential roads. Officers stated that they were looking at the area as a whole, where possible any traffic approaching from the west would be routed on the A125 to head North all other traffic would be routed onto the A13.

12 MARDYKE FARM/BARRATTS

The Council had received a representation from the GVA on behalf of Barratts for the site at Mardyke Farm. This was lodged as part of the recent public consultation on the new Local Plan.

There have been 49 sites proposed by third parties for removal from the Green Belt.

GVA/ Barratts had submitted proposals for Mardyke Farm to be removed from the Green Belt and redeveloped for housing and other purposes. Barratts are currently carrying out further work to support their submission, and will be coming back to the Council with their proposals.

All the proposals for sites being removed from the Green belt will be looked at when preparing the Local Plan, taking into account the Green Belt boundary review and current work taking place regarding housing needs as identified in on-going evidence building work that will support the new local plan. Officers explained that the current annual housing target figure set out in the latest London Plan was 1,170 units per year. This figure was agreed following close working with the Mayor's London Plan team during the work on the London Plan strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA) and utilises brownfield sites and other land earmarked for development such as parts of London Riverside. It does not require the release of any Green Belt land or land in open space use nor land needed for employment purposes.

Members raised several concerns such as: the protracted duration of the current remediation and restoration works and the possibility that restoration would not proceed in accordance with the approved plans and would be aimed at facilitating a housing redevelopment. Comments were made about the condition of the site being used as a reason for housing redevelopment rather than return to open uses. Members commented on the importance of the site in terms of it fulfilling Green Belt functions such as preventing urban sprawl and maintaining an open area between Havering and its Barking and Dagenham neighbour. Officers explained that the representation from GVA / Barratts does not supersede the requirements of the existing legal agreements linked to the site and its restoration / future uses.

Members asked if they could visit the site and enter it and were advised that it would be inappropriate to do this as the site remains in private ownership and subject to on-going works to support its restoration.

Officers stated that in due course each site included in the responses to the local plan consultation will be assessed against the Government's national planning policy framework and matters such as housing need to see if removal from the Green Belt was justified. Officers confirmed that at this stage there is no commitment on the Council's part to the Mardyke site being removed from the Green Belt. Members commented that in their view there was no justification for the release of the Mardyke Farm site from the Green Belt for housing purposes when the nearby London Riverside area may eventually accommodate several thousand new homes. Officers commented that this may suggest that strongly supporting the current London Riverside proposals and planning and regeneration initiatives linked to it (such as the Rainham Framework project) may be helpful.

13 DOVERS CORNER

Officers informed the Working Party that the Council had responded to the proposals from Persimmon in relation to the site at Dovers Corner. There were concerns in relation to the overall design, the viability and the flood risk.

14 EU LIFE WATER MANAGEMENT BID

There was a number of sources where funding could be brought into the borough through the business inclusion area. A bid had been submitted alongside other boroughs and Groundwork for funding for a solution to the run off of water in populated areas. This was by way of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) which captured water in a sustainable way before releasing into local rivers. These could be incorporated into parks, green spaces as well as being used a play area. The Council would hope to work with developers and landowners on the longstanding issue of flood risk.

Chairman

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