

BOROUGH PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
15 JUNE 2011

(7.15pm – 9.05pm)

PRESENT: Councillors Ian Munn (in the Chair), Philip Jones, Diane Neil Mills, Geraldine Stanford, Ray Tindle and David Williams.

ALSO PRESENT: Paul McGarry (Regeneration Manager) and Lynne Hartley (Democratic Services Officer).

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Item 1)

No declarations of interest were made.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 APRIL 2011 (Agenda Item 3(a))

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2011 are agreed as a correct record.

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Agenda Item 3(b))

Paul McGarry advised that a briefing note on the response to the Government consultation: Relaxation of planning rules for change of use from commercial to residential would be emailed to Members on the following day, inviting comments to be submitted by Wednesday 22 June (minute 3(b)).

Members asked to be provided with any available updates on –

Minute no. 3(e) “Buy Now Pay Later” scheme – responsibility for the initial acquisition of land.

Minute no. 3(g) the proposal to end the predetermination rules.

4 ADOPTION OF MERTON'S CORE STRATEGY (Agenda Item 4)

The Committee placed on record its thanks to Tara Butler (Interim Spatial Planning Manager) and her team for their work in the preparation of the strategy.

Paul McGarry introduced the report and drew attention to the deletion of Policy CS13, section (i), which had proposed that planning permission involving the loss of open space would only be considered to provide educational establishments. It was noted that CS13 became CS12 in the document as amended by the inspector's report and the Chair asked that hard copies of the revised version be sent to Members.

The Committee discussed the implications of the deletion, noting that it was the inspector's view that demand for primary school places in 2011-13 could be met on brown field sites. Should the Council consider it necessary to revisit the policy to meet demand for places beyond 2013 an enquiry in public would have to be held to consult on the policy change.

The Committee also discussed the changes to the wording of Policy CS 14 Design paragraph c and asked to be sent copies of the tall buildings policy.

RESOLVED: That the Committee recommends the adoption of Merton's Core Strategy to Cabinet and that the Director of Environment and Regeneration be

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authorised to deal with all the necessary adoption documentation and other consequential matters in accordance with the appropriate Regulations.

5 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY – PROJECT TIMETABLE (Agenda Item 5)

Paul McGarry introduced the report and advised that the preparation and viability testing timetabled for September – December 2011 would include an assessment of how the scheme would work in parts of the borough where land value does not support new development, and the associated risks.

The Chair proposed that the Committee monitor the timetable and introduction of the levy and after discussion it was agreed that officers be asked to –

- Consider whether the timetable could be shortened by six months and ensure that it mirrors the implementation of the core strategy
- Consult with Councillors before going to public consultation
- Extend the public consultation to the end of March 2012
- Report the results of the preparation and viability testing to the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Committee agree to monitor the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy in Merton and to receive a further report on the results of the preparation and viability testing exercise.

6 APPROVAL OF MERTON'S LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR SUBMISSION TO THE MAYOR OF LONDON (Agenda Item 6)

Introducing the report Paul McGarry drew attention to the timetable in appendix 2 to the LDS project plan. It was intended that the "Call for Sites" exercise, referred to in paragraph 1.5 of the report, would take place in July/August 2011. This will involve a mail out to landowners in the borough inviting them to advise the Council of any development plans they have.

In answer to a suggestion that the Council should set the agenda for the type of development it wished to see in the borough Paul McGarry explained that this approach would help to identify the baseline and had the advantage of bringing the process into the public domain. Once the Council had the information it could identify sites which potentially meet its core strategic policies and decide which landowners to make contact with. The officer infrastructure for taking forward the Council's Regeneration Delivery Plan will be the Future Merton team and as part of the Plan it is intended to establish a Regeneration Board which will include and engage with elected members.

The Chair asked that officers ensure that landowners are reminded of the Council's policies on development in the mail out and are made aware of the types of development considered appropriate.

The following points also arose during discussion of the report and officers were asked to –

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- Check whether Shop Front Designs should be marked as one of the documents being replaced by the emerging Design Supplementary Planning Document
- Ensure hot food takeaways are included in the relevant policy document.

The Committee also agreed to receive a report on the results of the “call for sites” exercise and that an extra meeting be arranged to coincide with the timetable as the next programmed meeting was not until November.

RESOLVED: That the Committee (1) endorse the proposals for delivering regeneration in Merton over the next three years and for a long term regeneration delivery plan and recommend that Cabinet approve Merton’s Local Development Scheme for submission to the Mayor of London;

(2) agree to meet following the completion of the “call for sites” exercise in order to consider the results.