

Building a Better Harrow Residents Regeneration Panel
17 September 2019 at Harrow Civic Centre
Meeting 21

Attendance

Officers: Daniel Lester, and Leanne Cooper

Councillors Keith Ferry and Sue Anderson

Panel members: Raj Kumar (facilitator / chair), Mihir Benison, Louise Baxter, Nafeesa Chalisa, Tanvi Vyas, Magali Peyrefitte. Kiran Chotalia, Manjul Shah, Vishaal Shah, Consolata Ndungu and Joanna Bowyer

Apologies: None

Items

Introductions - Raj welcomed the attendees.

Holiday Snaps – Mihir advised that some panel members had recently visited Sheffield, Saltaire, Newcastle, Whitby and Hull as part of a regeneration tour. Hull in particular offered a good example of how public realm improvements and curating occupiers of spaces could contribute positively to a place.

Matters Arising

- Arc House: No update had formally been provided to the Panel. However, it was noted that Nomad were about to move in to Arc House and the BID will be making contact with them.
- Staffing: Kirstin Shields remains in post leading on regeneration. Julian Wain has been recruited to manage the Strategic Development Partner process and contract and will be in post soon.
- BABH Website: Still early stages of procurement, but other groups within the Council have agreed that this should cover a wider range of content with a larger audience. Further feedback on content and how to make the site more engaging and interactive were welcomed.
- Panel recruitment: New members would be beneficial and recruitment to the Panel should be progressed.

Action: Daniel/Leanne to progress recruitment of new panel members.

Strategic Development Partner Update – Daniel Lester

- Interested parties have been shortlisted and a discussion process is currently ongoing. The Panel are to be involved in the process before it concludes once bidders have been narrowed down to 2 or 3 parties, at which point different options will be clearer.

- Form of Panel input to process not known currently, but anticipated that this will take place in January/February 2020 to tie in with procurement programme.

Questions

- How is the shortlist being narrowed down? *The process of dialogue is transparent to be fair to all parties. Criteria are to be used, with weighting according to the importance to the Council of different issues.*
- Who will decide on the nature of the Panel's involvement in the process? *The new manager of the Strategic Development Partner process will have a big say, but it will also depend on the final parties and their proposals which will affect the scope for influence by the Panel.*
- Do the shortlisted parties have local connections? *Use of local suppliers will be considered as part of the social value score for bids. The Council will also want evidence to demonstrate that bidders are able to work in an area like Harrow or with a council like Harrow.*
- Are bidders expected to do public events/engagement? *Not until successful.*
- Will consultation build on what has gone before? *Yes. Parties have been provided with information on the work that has been done before and this previous engagement is one of the selling points of the opportunity.*
- Are the GLA involved in the procurement process? *The GLA attended the launch event and LBH always work closely with them so anticipate this will continue.*
- What was the interest? *There was a very good response rate of bidders.*
- What is the timetable to complete the process? *Approval of the Partner is due to be considered by Cabinet in April 2020 to be appointed thereafter.*

Scheme Updates – Daniel Lester

- Waxwell Lane has started on site with groundwork.
- Haslam House scheme is due to start on site imminently.
- A number of small infill developments of new Council-built homes are taking place, including the recently completed Allerford Court scheme.
- Grange Farm contractor now in place and Phase 1 due to start on site.
- Vaughan Road scheme is no longer progressing owing to viability. The site is to be sold for development following Cabinet approval.
- Noted that demolition had taken place on The Collective's site adjacent to Palmerston Road.
- La Reve scheme in Wealdstone now complete.

- Greenhill Place (Lyon Square) is to go to Planning next week and due to start soon after. It was noted that this was a good example of where the Panel had been able to feed in to the process, and where the architects had taken on board feedback and listened to the community.
- Poets Corner Plot S site (to rear of Blawith Road) is not part of the wider site being progressed under the Strategic Development Partner process. The Council are proposing to develop a row of affordable homes to be retained as Council stock here. The land is to be transferred to the Council's affordable housing delivery vehicle and details are to be brought to a future meeting of the Panel.

Questions

- Lessons should be learnt from the lengthy, detailed and expensive consultation process required on such a small site such as Waxwell Lane.
- Were there details of the number of homeless people/those in temporary accommodation, which could show how delivery of new homes is improving the situation? *Details are to be brought to future meeting on affordable housing.*
- Why did it take so long for the Council to find Vaughan Road scheme was unviable, and when will it be brought to market? *Optimism bias. The report has only just gone to Cabinet. This is clear what the Council will require as part of development (for example expansion of the CPZ, improved lighting).*

Action: Details of Poets Corner Plot S development to be brought to a future Panel meeting.

Action: Daniel to advise Panel of marketing of Vaughan Road site and of any information on the ground floor commercial unit within the La Reve scheme.

Wealdstone Liveable Neighbourhood Bid – Daniel Lester

- Panel members invited to attend Wealdstone Action Group Community Meeting (6.30pm on 25 September at the Red Brick Café, High Street Wealdstone).
- Wealdstone Square is progressing on site.
- Council Highways team have submitted previous bids to the GLA for Liveable Neighbourhoods funding. The GLA advised that these were unsuccessful as no evidence had been provided that the community actually want changes here.
- To address this, engagement is required but given previous over-consultation in the area and stage that plans have reached a different approach is to be taken using the Commonplace web platform. This will show on a map what is proposed and ask if people agree with what is proposed or have suggestions of what should be done differently.
- Feedback on the current site is requested from the Panel. Daniel will provide a link for review.

Questions

- Noted that encouraging walking and cycling is great, but must also make sure that places remain accessible for those who are unable to walk or cycle.
- The Liveable Neighbourhoods bid should be linked to the High Street Fund work to ensure that proposals complement each other.
- A schedule of the different funds/programmes going on was requested, starting with Wealdstone.

Action: Panel to provide feedback on Commonplace website to Daniel.

Action: Schedule of different funds/programmes ongoing in Wealdstone to be provided to the Panel.

Action: Meeting notes to be forwarded to Shezhad/Sudheesh and Alex Dewsnap for information.

Mayor's Infrastructure Young Professionals Panel – Mihir Benison

- As introduced at the last meeting, the YPP has a role to be an advocate for the Mayor. Have been reviewing the current Infrastructure Delivery Plan for London, and given that this was produced in 2015 there have been changes such as to technology and climate change which need to be taken into account in the next iteration. The YPP are providing feedback to inform this review process.
- Harrow has been selected by the YPP as a case study to apply thinking on future infrastructure, focusing on the Opportunity Area part of Wealdstone and the idea of streets as an area where transport, utilities, lighting, housing etc. come together.
- Possible themes being considered are:
 - Government target for zero carbon by 2050. Harrow has declared a carbon emergency and targeting zero carbon by 2030. How well placed is Harrow to achieve this?
 - How well placed is infrastructure to meet the demands of the future given demographic change, and what needs to adapt to meet these needs?
- YPP will be visiting the area on 19 October, and Panel may join this. Details will be circulated.
- The YPP are due to present the proposal for the research to the Mayor in December with findings to be presented in May/June 2020 following the election.

Questions

- What does private car use look like in the future? *Much greater use of automatic vehicles and access to transport hubs and mass transit systems for people to move around.*
- Who is on the YPP? *A mix of professionals covering fields such as transport, drainage, development, planning, architecture.*

Action: Panel to provide any feedback or ideas for the YPP's research to Mihir.

Twelve Month Programme

- Feedback was provided on the draft programme:
 - Housing Association chief exec to be invited to session on affordable housing.
 - Reviving High Streets meeting to be brought forward in light of current bids in Wealdstone.
 - Green space/open space did not appear on the programme and is an important part of Harrow's local distinctiveness which should not be overlooked.
 - Given local concerns, ASB should be considered as part of the review of schemes.

- Other dates to note:
 - 21 and 22 September – Open House events, including Whitefriars Studios
 - 10 October – World Homelessness Day. One of the units in St Ann's is to showcase art on perceptions of homelessness and contributions sought. Any proceeds will go to Crisis and Firm Foundation.
 - 25 October – Diwali event in the town centre switching on some of the festive lights.
 - 30 October – main light switch on in the Town Centre.
 - December – Regen Panel to organise a social event.

Action: Daniel/Leanne to review programme according to feedback.

AOB

- The Panel were sad to note that this would be Joanna's last meeting as a member.