

NINE ELMS VAUXHALL STRATEGY BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held virtually on Tuesday 20th April 2021 at 10am.

PRESENT

Members of the Board:

Councillor Jack Hopkins (Co-Chairman, in the Chair) Lambeth Council
Councillor Ravi Govindia (Co-Chairman), Wandsworth Council
Councillor David Amos (Lambeth Council)
Councillor Aled Richards-Jones (Wandsworth Council)
Danny Calver, Transport for London (TfL)
Philip Robins, St Modwen
Jules Pipe, GLA
Stephen O'Driscoll, R&F Holdings
Aseem Sheikh, Vauxhall One

Officers and observers:

Wandsworth Council – Steve Diamond, Kathryn Stewart, Katherine Yexley, Sam Emmett, Esther Swales, Mark Hunter, Declan Costello, Alex Rinsler, Cathy Lynch, Holly Weaver
Lambeth Council – Sara Waller, Thomas Branton, Laura Cheyne, Matt Dibben
TfL – Robert Niven
Tideway – Allen Summerskill
Vauxhall One – Charlotte Cywinski
Ballymore Group – Michelle Burton
Nine Elms Vauxhall Healthcare Programme Manager – Andrew Grimes

Apologies:

Gordon Adams – Battersea Power Station Development Company
Sean Burke – Berkeley Group
Andrew Travers – Lambeth Council
Jon Evans – Wandsworth Council

1. Introductions and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (Paper No. SB21-02)

The minutes of the meeting of the Strategy Board on 22nd October 2020 were agreed as correct record.

3. Reporting Framework (Paper No. SB21-03)

Mr Matt Dibben opened the item by explaining some of the highlights from the report, including that Vauxhall Park was now open to the public and that improvement work

had also been commissioned at Old Paradise Gardens and Pedlars Park. Acquisition of a 58,000 sq. ft. 'bunker' and 40,000 sq. ft of ground floor commercial space at Keybridge House was completed by General Projects creating Storybox - a new creative workspace and leisure complex currently being marketed. Planning approval has now been granted for 30-34 Old Paradise Street, which is a net zero carbon development and winner of New London Awards 2020 Working category, and an interesting project has been undertaken to improve air quality in Vauxhall with Guy's and St Thomas' Charity and Gehl Architects.

Ms Kathryn Stewart also drew the Board's attention to some particular highlights which included that the Arch 42 gateways project had made progress and the competition phase of LFA was complete. TfL is working to open up the arch way and was coordinating works with different partners on both sides of the arch to ensure a safe and welcoming route is opening with the NLE. The gateways installation was also being looked at. Other highlights included a Highways scheme of road improvements which were on track to complete in the autumn with the planting of new trees at Nine Elms Lane, with works due to complete before the opening of the Northern Line. Ms Stewart also thanked the Board for their support in the discussion with UKPN which had meant the coordination of the works was back in the "business as usual phase". Officers had also continued to deliver the cultural programme over the Winter, and upcoming events such as the Happy Streets outdoor family festival would be adapted to be run in a Covid Secure way, along with the long-awaited launch of Mud Skipper.

Ms Stewart added that there had been new business announcements, as some businesses had timed their reopening with the recent lifting of some Covid restrictions. The report included the continuing good job outcomes and the final scheme of Local Benefit which was moving ahead. The works to improve 8 play space and sport spaces on local estates were continuing with a projected date for the commencement of works in autumn.

Mr Alex Rinsler commented that the Happy Streets family festival was scheduled for Saturday 10th July.

Councillor Ravi Govindia asked a question concerning the extra capacity for school places generated by Wyvil Primary School, and whether the extension of the school was creating a surplus of school places or if these would all be taken up by local children. Ms Sara Waller responded, that data regarding this could be provided and would be monitored.

Councillor Ravi Govindia asked whether the Stride Programme could be looked at in further detail by the Strategy Board, and in response Mr Steve Diamond explained that the Stride Programme could be brought back to the Nine Elms Strategy Board. It was important to look at retaining the existing businesses in the area but also to look at how future businesses would use it too. It was widely known that Nine Elms is becoming a creative tech cluster, with Apple expecting to move into the area in Spring 2022, and it was sensible to have conversations with Apple in conjunction with Battersea Power Station in order to have a coordinated plan. Mr Diamond offered to bring the discussion to a future Strategy Board meeting. Ms Sara Waller added that there were a number of different levels of relationship with Apple that

needed to be managed correctly, and so this was a very important issue for the Board to cover.

Councillor Jack Hopkins concluded the item by informing the Board that data around school place planning needed to be shared outside of the meeting to assess how the Wyvil extension would impact the distribution of places. He also explained that it was important for the Board and officers to recognise how the creative hub of Vauxhall would connect to other neighbouring boroughs and London more broadly. Other areas such as Brixton and Waterloo had creative businesses clustering around them, and so it was important to see how these partnerships would work in an area such as Vauxhall.

Councillor Ravi Govindia emphasised this point by adding that the wider linkages of the opportunity area along with the inner workings of the area itself would be a useful piece of work to explore, as it was important that Wandsworth and Lambeth were not an island away from the rest of their boroughs.

RESOLVED – That:

- (a) the contents of the report be noted.

4. Vauxhall Gyratory Update & Vauxhall Programme (Paper No. SB21-04)

Mr Matt Dibben opened the item by informing the Board that the 2013 SPD still provided the right vision and principles for bringing development forward in Vauxhall, but it was important to test and refresh direction to ensure this was still suitable for a post-Covid Vauxhall. Mr Dibben gave a presentation explaining the different aspects of the Vauxhall Programme and the next steps regarding the planned gyratory removal.

Mr Thomas Branton explained that it had been a year since the Secretary of State had given planning consent for the Island site. There had been slow progress due to Covid but there had been a number of discussions to progress the gyratory scheme, although uncertainty around TfL's funding settlement needed to be dealt with alongside this. At present there was further work being undertaken to build the economic case for the redevelopment of the town centre, and the Strategy Board had committed previously to raise support for the scheme at the right points, which were hopefully coming soon. There had been engagement from TfL at a senior level to commit to the scheme with the caveat of funding, and this sentiment was shared by developers also.

Ms Sara Waller emphasised to the Board that this scheme would be difficult to deliver and would require a whole table push in order to get there. There was a very sound rationale for undertaking the works from a financial standpoint and for the scale of public investment required. Lambeth Council has committed £12.8 million to the scheme and the commitment from TfL has been consistently sound. She suggested this item be brought back to the Strategy Board at the next opportunity.

Mr Aseem Sheikh added that over the last year since planning consent was granted, the BID levy for Vauxhall had exceeded expectations, and it was a very positive sign that the hotels and small businesses around the gyratory had invested in the area and the site demonstrating their commitment.

Councillor Ravi Govindia thanked the officers for their presentation and commented that a lot of the proposed successes for the scheme were predicated on the gyratory working as it should do. He also asked whether the office study would go beyond Vauxhall to assess the office buildings in the whole opportunity area.

Mr Danny Calver responded to his first point by explaining that progress with the gyratory was all down to the funding discussions with Government. This scheme was long-standing and thanks to the financial support of Lambeth Borough alongside the hopefully significant funding settlement it would be brought forward. He added that there were still some factors to consider, such as the interaction between this site and the bus station, and how this process would be phased. He added however that there were ways of keeping this process moving and once the funding settlement was agreed and financial certainty for the scheme was reached then it would progress.

Mr Matt Dibben responded to Councillor Govindia's other query, by explaining that the office study was a borough-wide study for Lambeth specifically, and whilst the entire opportunity area had not been included in this study, the data from Lambeth would be highly relevant to all neighbouring areas, and could be shared with Wandsworth upon completion.

Councillor Ravi Govindia asked whether TfL were approaching the Department for Transport in order to access another pot of money allocated to schemes such as this one, and when the Board could be informed of the progress with the funding. Mr Danny Calver responded by saying that all the funding was inter-linked and they were looking at accessing the MRN funding in order to push this scheme forwards. If this scheme was not funded sufficiently by the funding settlement, then it would be a priority to find the funding elsewhere over other schemes. He added that the current funding would run out in the middle of May 2021 and once the agreement is settled and the length of time the funding was for was established they could inform the Board of the predicted timeline of events.

Mr Thomas Branton re-emphasised Lambeth Council's support for the gyratory re-development and highlighted two key risks for the scheme, the first of which being the funding settlement that still needed to be reached, and the lack of certainty around overall development costs. At present the predicted cost of the scheme was £50 million but it could end up being higher or lower than this figure and would also be reliant on the amount of funding that could be secured by TfL for the project. The delivery of Vauxhall town centre was critical and would be dependent on a cost-efficient scheme.

Councillor Jack Hopkins concluded by stating that whilst the item would be brought to the next Strategy Board in the Autumn for an update, there would be lobbying in the meantime to generate further support for the project and all parties were committed to seeing this scheme through.

RESOLVED – that

- a) the update be noted; and
- b) that the item is brought back to the Strategy Board at the next meeting for consideration.

5. Northern Line Extension Update (Paper No. SB21-05)

Mr Rob Niven, Head of Investment Delivery Planning, London Underground Major Projects, provided the Board with an update on the Northern Line extension. He informed the Board that the Northern Line Extension was still on track for its target completion date and over Christmas there had been the first testing of a train on the line. He explained that there had been a delay with the artwork proposed for the Nine Elms Station as the resin the artist would use had not passed the necessary safety tests, and so a further discussion would be had in order to create a different piece of art for the station; this was a necessary feature as it was one of the planning conditions for the development. The stations in the Northern Line extension had been designated Zone 1 and Kennington would now be a Zone 1 and Zone 2 boundary station and so the fare travelling from that station would be cheaper. There would be a ramp-up of tests over the coming months with more tests to ensure the safe opening of the extension on time. The next step was to plan the opening celebration, which whilst needing to be as momentous as the occasion called for, also needed to respect the financially-constrained time London was facing. He concluded by reiterating that the extension was still on track and the project would increase momentum as Autumn approached.

Councillor Ravi Govindia asked if there were any potential risks to watch out for with this project now, and in response Mr Niven explained that the trial operations could take any length of time depending on their success, so the official opening date was completely dependent on how those went. He also added that the signalling provider for the project was thinly spread over a number of projects for TfL and so this could also be a risk. It was important to have every aspect working sufficiently before public access was granted in the Autumn.

Councillor Ravi Govindia queried why the artist would produce a proposal that would not meet the testing requirements, and in response Mr Niven explained that the brief had requested this and where the proposals were not compliant, it had been anticipated that it would be possible to secure the necessary derogations. Once it was established that this would not be possible, the artist had been given the opportunity to revise the materials to meet the safety requirements.

Ms Kathryn Stewart described the proposed celebration event for the Northern Line Extension's opening, the "Line of Light", and explained how it was planned to recruit local groups for the event have it choreographed to music with 10 different soundscapes included. It was hoped that the event would engage young people to learn how the event worked from a technological base, and that the event would utilise and support local businesses to create a festival feeling. It was important to ensure the event was Covid-secure as it was unknown where London would be with

restrictions in the Autumn. The ACE application had been submitted and it was now a wait to find out if the funding was granted. Ms Stewart went on to clarify that the weekend at the end of October was proposed for the event, and this could only be secured once the date of the NLE opening was settled upon. It was hoped that this “Line of Light” would be a symbol to London of the area being open and connected and ready to contribute to London’s recovery.

Mr Jules Pipe explained that he would be happy to give his support to the project, and Councillor Ravi Govindia added that it was important for all key partners of the project to demonstrate their support.

Mr Matt Dibben added to Ms Stewart’s description, by informing the Board that it was the hope that residents and tourists would walk along the line and that key Members of the Community along the route would be reached out to. Ward Members would be consulted about this in order to speak to their residents about the project.

Mr Alex Rinsler concluded the item by adding that the engineering works for the NLE were underneath all different types of land, such as private homes, schools and council flats, and this unifying aspect would be celebrated with this event. He added that he would be meeting with the TfL on 7th May to discuss the project.

RESOLVED – That the update report be noted.

6. Health Facility Update (Paper No. SB21-06)

Mr Andrew Grimes opened the item by signposting all in attendance to the report and its executive summary, in which he explained that in the middle of the Healthcare Programme the organisations had changed from Wandsworth CCG and Lambeth CCG, now to South West London CCG and South East London CCG, respectively. He explained the different investments for each borough for each stage as laid out in the executive summary, and added that the Wandsworth Nine Elms Square site was in the works, and the Pandemic, the digitation of the NHS in Covid, and increasing impact of the integrated care system would have changes to determine the exact offerings for the Wandsworth sites.

Councillor Jack Hopkins asked about Mawbey Brough in particular, and how the capacity of the Health Centre could be increased without capital investment. Mr Grimes explained that the Health Centre had been analysed to determine its capabilities and potential capacity, and it had been determined that due to the digitisation of the NHS that the Centre could increase its capacity without any major works. There were minor room upgrades that were required but these would be dealt with by the CCG. It was important to note that there were constraints in undertaking major works on the Mawbey Brough Health Centre, as the TfL tunnels ran directly under the building, and so to complete any substantive works on the site would be a difficult project.

Councillor Ravi Govindia sought clarification on the timeline of the Sleaford Street development, and in response Mr Grimes explained that the site would be handed

over to the NHS in 2022, and it would take a year to get the site fitted out to the clinical grade required for a medical facility, meaning its completion was late 2023.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted for information.

7. Any Other Business

There was no other business for consideration.

The meeting ended at 11.14 am.