

16 OCTOBER 2017

## **BOROUGH, ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD**

16 October 2017

- \* Councillor Jenny Wicks (Chairman)
- \* Councillor Angela Goodwin (Vice-Chairman)

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|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| * Councillor Nils Christiansen | * Councillor Julia McShane |
| Councillor Andrew Gomm         | * Councillor Bob McShee    |
| * Councillor Liz Hogger        | * Councillor Mike Parsons  |
| Councillor Gordon Jackson      | * Councillor Mike Piper    |
| * Councillor Nigel Kearse      | * Councillor Matthew Sarti |

\*Present

Councillors Philip Brooker, Lead Councillor for Housing and Environment, Nikki Nelson-Smith, Lead Councillor for Social Welfare, Heritage and the Arts, and Caroline Reeves were also in attendance.

### **BEI14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Gordon Jackson.

### **BEI15 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

### **BEI16 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 13 September 2017 were approved. The Chairman signed the minutes.

### **BEI17 PUBLIC ARTS STRATEGY**

The Lead Councillor for Social Welfare, Heritage and the Arts explained that the Public Art Strategy would identify its key priorities for 2018-23. The process of developing and installing public art involve consultation with communities, facilitated by Arts Officers, with the potential to reach a broad range of people. This process enhanced community cohesion, ownership of the piece, and a sense of place. Most people who responded to the Public Arts Strategy consultation thought they understood how public art was funded, but were not aware of the mechanism for doing so: developers funded the majority of public art projects as part of the planning process. Many artists were keen to work on commissions with communities in Guildford and this Council was keen to attract good local, national and international artists to the Borough, as well as new and early career artists.

The Board received a presentation on the Public Arts Strategy consultation from the Arts Officer, who reported that a cross-party Project Board had been responsible for the development of the draft strategy. Public consultation took place between 23 June and 28 July 2017 using a flexible approach to engage with as many people as possible. Most respondents agreed that the content was suitable, and all agreed on the strategy's themes, priorities and vision. As a result of the consultation process, the strategy was amended to incorporate a statement on how public art could raise the profile of wider issues and diversity. There would also be mentoring for new and early career artists, as well as opportunities for commissioning as part of commercial development. A panel would be set

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up to monitor actions set out in yearly action plans. The strategy was due to be launched in January 2018.

The Arts Officer informed the Board that artist mentoring would be on a project-by-project basis, with more experienced/established artists being commissioned for larger scale projects. There would also be opportunities for local or early career artists to work on smaller projects. Arts Officers would be able to support communities wanting to fund their own initiatives, but appropriate funding streams for such projects would need to be found from other funders and were extremely tight and very competitive.

The Board heard that the cross party group had taken a key role in developing the strategy, and the process had been interesting and thorough. Feedback from the consultation process had suggested that it was as important to have small pieces of local art as it was to have larger statement pieces.

The Board asked to receive an update on progress after two years, and commended the strategy to the Executive.

### **BEI18 DESIGN GUIDE**

The Lead Councillor for Housing and Environment informed the Board that the current design guide dated from the 2003 Local Plan. Changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) meant that a new document was needed to complement the new Local Plan. It was proposed that a phased approach should be used to drafting the new design guide, with the first element being the section on residential extensions, as the majority of planning applications in Guildford were from householders. That section of the design guide could then be implemented in 2018.

The Design and Conservation Team Leader reminded the Board that it had received examples of good design guides at a previous meeting, since which time a review of the proposals had been undertaken. The Board received a presentation on the review from the Principal Urban Design Officer, who provided an outline of the proposed Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the draft schedule leading to its adoption in 2018.

The Board heard that there was a new planning policy context, with an emphasis on sustainable development and good design, which meant that an update to the design guide would give a strong basis for encouraging good design, and refusing poor design. The residential extensions guidance would sit under current design policy and complement the new local plan. An internal review of the design guide had already been undertaken to see if it remained fit for purpose, which had included a review of existing and emerging design guidance. The review had identified a number of key priority areas, including the residential extensions guidance, and this was being addressed first in order to bring it in line with current and national policy. The new residential extensions guidance would need to be concise and accessible to the public, whilst promoting good design.

The Principal Urban Design Officer went on to explain the key stages involved: the project brief had already been laid out, and internal working groups set up, whilst the next stage would be to develop the guidance. A Planning Committee workshop had been organised for 07 December as part of this process. The aim would be to have the residential extensions guidance adopted by March 2018, and officers were confident of meeting this target.

The Board noted that, whilst 96% of applications were for household development, it was the remaining 4% of applications that had the biggest effect on the borough. Concerns were raised about the prioritisation of the residential extensions design guidance over the more general design guide. Following the adoption of the local plan, the Board felt there might be

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a rush of applications for larger developments, and it was therefore important that the wider design guide was complete at that point. Gosden Hill was cited as an example where pre-application discussions were already taking place.

The Board pointed out that the timetable for adopting the residential design guidance was extremely ambitious, particularly if radical changes were made to the document, and concerns were raised that slippage to this timetable would impact on the delivery of the wider design guide. The Board suggested that, since the residential extensions guidance would sit beneath the wider design guide, the latter document should be the one to be completed first.

The Board heard that the residential extensions guidance was needed, and officers hoped that in completing this first, they would achieve a quick win that would set a benchmark for quality of materials, scale and form, and other details. There would be resource implications in completing the wider design guide first, and if the work was done externally, this could take up to a year.

The Design and Conservation Team Leader agreed to look again at proposed timescales, however the Board's main concern remained around the impact of the prioritisation of the residential extension guidance over the wider design guide. The Design and Conservation Team Leader also agreed that a flexible approach was needed, as the design guide would have to meet the needs of councillors, officers, the public and agents. The Design and Conservation Team Leader noted the Board's concerns and agreed to discuss them with officers.

The Lead Councillor for Housing and Environment agreed to speak to the Lead Councillor for Planning and Regeneration to determine whether additional resources could be put into place to ensure that the design guide, including the residential extensions guidance, was complete by the time the new local plan came into force.

The Board expressed an urgent wish to have a task group, so that elected members could have input into the process. Members were keen and willing to be involved in this. The suggestion was fully endorsed by the Chair.

**BEI19    PROGRESS WITH ITEMS PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED BY THE EAB**

The update report was noted.

**BEI20    EAB WORK PROGRAMME**

The work programme was noted by the Board.

The meeting finished at 8.28 pm

Signed .....

Date .....

Chairman

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