

THE EXECUTIVE

23 MARCH 2004

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN CONFERENCE MAY 2004		FOR DECISION
<p><i>This report includes details regarding conference costs in excess of the Delegated Authority allowed under the Council's Constitution: therefore approval is reserved to the Executive.</i></p>		
<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>Urban design is a new area for the Council. The Lead Member for Regeneration has a remit for Urban Design and is the Borough's designated Urban Design Champion.</p> <p>A comprehensive two day conference on Planning and Urban design is being held in Central London on the 19 and 20 May 2004. Attendance at this comprehensive conference would provide an excellent grounding in design issues, assisting the Lead Member for Regeneration and the new Urban Design Group in promoting urban design in the planning and regeneration of the Borough.</p> <p>The total costs associated with this conference exceed the £1,000 limit set down in paragraph 2.2 of the Conference, Visits and Hospitality Rules in the Council's Constitution and therefore the Executive's consent is required.</p>		
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>The Executive is recommended to approve the attendance of the Lead Member for Regeneration and the Group Manager Urban Design at the Planning and Urban Design Conference on the 19 and 20 of May 2004.</p>		
<p><u>Reason</u></p> <p>To assist the Council in achieving its Community Priorities of <i>Making Barking and Dagenham Cleaner, Greener and Safer</i> and <i>"Raising General Pride in the Borough"</i>.</p>		
Contact Bernadette McGuigan	Group Manager Urban Design, DLES	Tel: 020 8227 3881 Fax: 020 8227 3896 Minicom: 020 8227 3034 E-mail: bernadette.mcguigan@lbbd.gov.uk

1. Background

- 1.1 Urban design is a new area for the Council, but is becoming increasingly important in the sustainable planning and regeneration agenda. The importance of and the need to strengthen urban design in the Borough was recognised in the Regeneration Best Value Review. A new Urban Design Group was established through the re-organisation of planning and regeneration to provide this function. In order to maximise the Council's consideration of urban design in the Planning

and Regeneration agenda, it is important to establish the working of this Group and the role of the Lead Member for Regeneration as Design Champion, as soon as possible.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is that the Lead Member for Regeneration and the Group Manager Urban Design attend this comprehensive two day conference on Planning and Urban Design in May 2004. The conference covers all key aspects of Urban Design that are important to the sustainable planning and regeneration of the Borough, to raising quality and to influencing the design agenda.
- 2.2 All of these aspects could be covered through attendance at other conferences. It is estimated, however, that due to the broad and comprehensive issues addressed through this conference, that the alternative would be to attend possibly four conferences to gain the same level of information and knowledge sharing.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 The cost of attending the conference for Public Sector delegates is £1,129 + VAT per delegate. As the Council can offset VAT, the costs for two delegates would amount to £2,258 for the two days of the Conference. The Conference will be held at the Hatton Hotel in Central London, so travel for each delegate would be £5.70, peak rate travel fare from Barking per day. This would amount to a total of £22.80 for travel.
- 3.2 The Conference costs for the Group Manager Urban Design would be taken from the LESD Planning and Transportation Training Budget.
- 3.3 The Conference and travel costs for the Lead Member for Regeneration would be funded through the Members' Training Budget.
- 3.4 The Members' Development Working Party has agreed this expenditure for the Lead Member for Regeneration for May 2004, but stresses that this "should not be taken as a precedent".

4. Other issues to consider

- 4.1 The two day Urban Planning and Design Conference is an opportunity to learn from leading experts in the field of planning and design. Subjects covered include, the value of good architecture, best value rather than lowest cost, the issue of skills and learning, London's design led Urban Renaissance, Campaigning for Effective Urban Design, Raising Urban Design Quality, Creativity and Diversity, the deliverability of major infrastructure projects, urban transport planning, strategic regional development, energy efficiency in buildings, securing schools in the future and environmental performance.
- 4.2 As well as separate seminar sessions, the Conference will also include 4 best practice examples from the UK to illustrate the application of design to the issues raised.

4.3 Attendance at the Conference will enable the Lead Member for Regeneration and the Group Manager Urban Design to identify areas throughout the Borough where urban design initiatives should apply, and work with others to ensure that this is done. It will also help in striving towards design excellence in the Borough's built environment.

5. **Consultation**

The following people have been consulted during the preparation of this report and have either raised no objections or have indicated that they are happy with this report as it stands:

Councillor Kallar, Portfolio Holder Regeneration.
Bob Cooper, Interim Head of Finance, LESD
Su Jolly, HR Training and Development Advisor, LESD
Rossana Kendall, Head of Corporate Human Resources (training and development)

Background Papers:

None