



WALWORTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Walworth Community Council held on Monday February 8 2010 at 7.00 pm at In-Spire - the Crypt at St Peter's, Liverpool Grove, Walworth SE17 2HH

PRESENT: Councillor Lorraine Lauder MBE (Chair)
Councillor Abdul Mohamed
Councillor Jelil Ladipo
Councillor Kirsty McNeill
Councillor Caroline Pidgeon
Councillor Jane Salmon
Councillor Martin Seaton

**OTHER MEMBERS
PRESENT:**

**OFFICER
SUPPORT:**

1. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor James Gurling.

3. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

4. ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There were none.

5. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

6. MINUTES

**7. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS (IF ANY)
(7:10PM)**

There were none.

**8. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS
(7:15PM)**

Elephant and Castle Update.

Councillor Nicolas Stanton gave the committee an overall summary on the Councils position to date.

In 1998, Southwark had begun efforts to regenerate the area. The first phase was to be the area around Bankside. It was recognised that the most exciting part of the borough was the part closest to the river and so it was decided that the regeneration should begin there. The next consideration was the area around the Elephant and Castle. It was felt that London needed a new retail area somewhere in South London and historically, the Elephant and Castle used to be the 'Piccadilly Circus' of South London. Southwark is one of the poorest places to live in the UK and it is the Councils intention to increase opportunities for its populations. Southwark is expensive and it is losing out when individuals make cost comparisons, whether in retail or in accommodation, in other areas. This impacts on local businesses such as pubs and restaurants.

This Council has inherited an enormous stock of Council Housing and flats from the 1960s. The Aylesbury and Heygate are just two examples of blocks which have not been well maintained. The Council is not in a financial position to regenerate all of its housing stock of this nature and so the Executive came to the decision that it would be better if the blocks were to be demolished to make way for a completely new development for the whole area.

Initially the proposition was to move people out of blocks of flats, such as the Heygate and invite developers to help regenerate the area with new developments. However, it was found that developers whilst interested in the area, the Elephant and Castle has good transport links for example, they were not interested in building affordable housing. So the idea was changed.

Proper roads and the encouragement of high street developments were at the heart of a new proposal. Local independent businesses, characteristic of the area should be encouraged where possible allowing the area to have a distinct and unique atmosphere, a little like a cathedral town.

It is expected that new homes will be completed at the end of this year. The Leader went on to say that he completely accepted that the Council had been rather over ambitious with their original plans which, unfortunately, had to be adapted when the credit crunch hit.

In 2005, money was secured to adapt the Walworth Road and the road around the Elephant and Castle. This money was for updating the underpasses under the road traffic islands, which are currently quite unpleasant to walk through. The LDA has secured money and TFL are preparing work for the pavements and the underpass.

'Landlease,' a company procured by the Council will pay Southwark Council in instalments for places such as the Heygate etc. Southwark will share in the profits which can then be used for new projects such as a new leisure centre at the Elephant and Castle. It was taking some time for Southwark to finalise the deal but Cllr Stanton was hopeful that there would be sign off by March 2010.

Southwark is building a new secondary school on Trafalgar Avenue. There will also be a new boy's school. There is initial planning for Eileen House and Southwark is in negotiations with St Modwins, the owners of the shopping centre, regarding its future and possible demolition.

Despite the frustratingly long time, the demolition of the Heygate is due to begin later this year. A meeting attendee emphasised that there should be community involvement in the planning of the Elephant and Castle schemes and it should be that there is independent representation on the steering group which subsequently informs the plans.

Councillor Paul Noblet reported that the Aylesbury Steering Group had been very successful, gaining feedback from local residents and reporting back to TRAs to ensure transparency. A master plan has been scheduled and will be circulated to community groups for feedback. Feedback will then be incorporated into the draft master plan.

There was some discussion on what was planned for the northern roundabout and whether there was a strategy for East Walworth. Councillor Stanton said that there was permission from the GLA and TFL to take out the roundabouts where homes may be developed. However there were difficulties agreeing the funding because of the complexities of ownership responsibility in that area.

Moving on to transport, Councillor Stanton said that when the Jubilee Line was first opened in 1998, there was a lot of excitement about having new, well designed stations to locations in Southwark. In comparison, the Northern Line and the Bakerloo Line at the Elephant and Castle are hidden away and it is very confusing trying to find your

way to either of those lines. The Elephant and Castle underground station is now operating at full capacity. The Executive Members said that Southwark would love to see something like the Jubilee line happen to the area along with the complete redevelopment of the tube station. However, whilst the shopping centre was over the station it would not be viable to attempt to develop it. It was also unclear as to who should foot the bill for any redevelopment. Councillor Stanton said that Landlease and TfL wouldn't want to foot the whole bill but there had to be some hard core negotiations between all the players and what money they might be prepared to put in.

Members on the committee said that they appreciate that this is a very complex issue with many aspects to consider. However, local people are very interested in what is happening to their area and they want to be involved in what is going on, to ensure transparency.

As mentioned earlier, the steering group for the Aylesbury had been very positive in making sure local people were involved. Local people in Walworth wanted similar participation. They felt that whilst sensitive information would remain confidential, the designs for the area should be consulted on.

Councillor Stanton agreed that there should be local consultation on plans. The reason that nothing had come forward to date was because matters had not progressed that far. Some time ago there was some initial consultation at an exhibition attended by people from the London College of Communications and local schools. They were asked what they thought about the idea of regenerating the area. The feedback was very positive with 98% saying that they thought it was a fantastic idea. Councillor Stanton said that there was a real opportunity for local consultations this summer.

With regard to safety: There were concerns from a few people in attendance, that there should be safe disposal of any asbestos found on the Heygate. Its problems had been highlighted on the London Hazards Website. Councillor Stanton reassured the meeting that there would be pest control measures put in place along with measures to ensure the safe removal of any harmful substances including asbestos.

A meeting attendee was concerned that the regeneration scheme had been a long and painful process. All residents had been promised new homes but the reality was that only about 300 people would actually get one. The attendee wanted to know if Southwark was going to ensure that Landlease will deliver the other promised 700 homes.

Councillor Stanton said that he understood the stress that had been caused and that the developments had been traumatic. Promises had been made in good faith and Councillor Stanton apologised that the initial promises were not being fulfilled. However, social housing will

be available, should people wish to return to the area. People seeking housing would go through private development schemes which offer a more exciting regeneration project.

Councillor Seaton thanked Councillor Stanton for his update. Councillor Seaton said that the term 'early housing estate' could no longer be used for these sites. He also wanted to support what others had said regarding the local people being consulted over redevelopment plans, rather than feeling disconnected from the project. He also wanted a clear commitment no part of Nursery Road Park would be developed upon. He expressed his frustration that there was still no clarity about what is going to happen to the shopping centre and if it was demolished, what would take its place on this site.

Councillor Noblet responded by saying that the Council did not intend to build anything on the land of Nursery Road Park. He told the committee that there were no plans to use compulsory purchase orders or to build on the shops there. The Council is to give the small businesses which existed there a chance to re-establish their businesses on such agreements as 'step rents.' Step Rents enable businesses to start with smaller rents until they have built up their businesses sufficiently to start paying the going rate.

Councillor Stanton said the he wanted the areas to be more 'green' and he would find out if it would be possible to establish air quality control units around the area.

Councillor Noblet said that there was a plan to build on part of the park and car park if it were feasible. However it is still unsure whether it is feasible and even if it were, there certainly would be no decision before the election.

Councillor Noblet said that by 2015, 2,000 tenants would be coming back to the area. He said that if there were others who wanted to come back too, they would need to inform the Council to start the process. Although Council housing is very much desired by local people, financially Southwark have to go down the Housing Association route. He acknowledged that there could be problems for some having to pursue this route. It could be tricky if a tenant had a dog or a cat for example.

Councillor Stanton said that in fact, once people had moved out of the area they may not necessarily want to come back. The first housing sties will be up later this year to welcome back some of the people who wished to return. He also said that local people would be kept in the picture about housing availability and they would be consulted on developments.

An attendee said that he was concerned that standards had gone down in the building industry in recent times and that 13 people were killed last year because of poor practice. He felt that the asbestos in

some of the blocks of flats was still a cause for concern.

Councillor Noblet responded by saying that the obligation was on the developer and the Council to ensure the safe removal of toxins from any building before it was demolished. The Council have been very stringent on new developments in the area such as the 'Strater Tower' for instance and that the negotiations are still taking place to ensure the highest possible safety standards.

The Chair thanked Councillors Stanton and Noblet.

There was then a quick announcement about the Global Exchange Programme. People were invited to take young people into their homes on a global exchange project. The project is an international volunteer exchange programme for young people aged 18 – 25yrs. It is a partnership between the British Council and Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) to encourage young people to learn about work and experience other cultures.

**9. ISSUES AFFECTING OLDER PEOPLE
(7:45PM)**

This item was deferred to the next meeting due to Officer illness.

**10. CGS - CLEANER GREEN SAFER 2010/11
(8:00PM)**

The deadline for applications was January 8th. Internal checks have been made and 26 applications have been shortlisted. Those that have been discarded will be added to the community project.

The successful bids will be announced on the 16th March and those who have been unsuccessful will be notified.

**11. POLICE AND COMMUNITY WARDENS UPDATE
(8:05PM)**

This item was deferred.

**12. EAST STREET CROSSING
(8:30PM)**

There was then a short update on East St. At the last meeting there was a question about initial study improvements. There are

currently discussions going on with TfL and there will be a further update at the next meeting.

Councillor Seaton said that there was no pedestrian control on East St and Old Lant Road and this meant there was a high probability that this could lead to accidents. Councillor Seaton requested that this was looked into.

13. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (8:40PM)

A member of the public wanted to know if Viola could be invited to a future meeting to discuss the Manner Place Depot.

John Morris Close was sited as a place where there was a lot of overdevelopment and parking. The road has been bought and the owner wanted to build in the street which they felt would affect the character of the area. It was thought that this item should go to the planning meeting.

Regarding the East St Market: An MP had proposed a special meeting. Local people wanted to know what had happened to that meeting?

The Chair closed the meeting at 21.09pm

14. MEMBERS' DECISIONS (8:50PM)

Summary of the actions / decisions: Monday February 8 2010

6. DECISION: That the minutes of the Walworth Community Council meeting held on December 9 2009 be approved as an accurate record of that meeting. Action: Walworth Councillors.

8. ACTION: Councillor Stanton (Council Leader) to look into whether it is viable to have air quality control units in the Elephant and Castle area as a part of the regeneration process. Action: Councillors Nick Stanton/Paul Noblet.

10. ACTION: A local TRA Chair said, that £22,000 Cleaner, Greener, Safer money had been granted last year but as yet no works had taken place.

Cllr Lauder asked for officers to report back to the next meeting with an update. Action: Elonora Oliva/CGS team.

12. ACTION: Officers to report back to the next meeting on:

- i) The possible improvements that can be made to reduce the risk of accidents at the junction of Penrose Street and Walworth Road.
- ii) The possibility of a pedestrian control / safety measure at the junction of East Street and the Old Kent Road.

Action: Richard Harris/E&H/Highways

AOB. ACTION: To look into the prospect of 'Veolia' being invited to a future meeting to speak about the Manor Place Depot. Action: Chair/Sally Masson

13. ACTION: East Street Market to be an agenda item at the next meeting on 16 March 2010. Action: Chair/Bob Barber?Neil Martindale.

14. DECISION (EXECUTIVE): That the local parking scheme, Oakley Place be approved for implementation subject to the outcome of any necessary statutory procedures. Action: Tim Walker/Paul Gellard.

14. DECISION: That Ellen Fraser be reappointed to the role of School Governor at Townsend Primary. Action: Pam Rayment.

14. DECISION: That Jason Williams be appointed to the role of School Governor at Robert Browning Primary. Action: Pam Rayment.

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CHAIR:

DATED: