

Feedback on queries raised at previous Walworth Community Council meetings

Question	Response
<p>Can bus stop in Rodney Road in front of Trafalgar Place be re-established?</p>	<p>Transport for London agreed that the bus stop on Rodney Road to be closed for a temporary period to allow for the safe construction of the Trafalgar Place development. It will reopen when these works are complete.</p>
<p>Can the council reserve a piece of land for a greenhouse for young people to use?</p>	<p>Development sites have been designated on the adopted policies map (2012) to meet the strategic objectives of the council's Local Plan. The map also sets out all of the current land designations which also include protected open spaces. The council will be preparing a new borough wide Local Plan, and a review of old site designations and the need for new designations will be undertaken.</p> <p>The council currently uses Section 106 planning obligations to ensure that developments make a financial contribution to improving open space provision. In the future development will contribute to open space provision through the community infrastructure levy (CIL). Using these contributions, we will prioritise improving the quality of spaces, improving the range of facilities which are available in open spaces to increase their value to local people, improving their nature conservation value, and improving children's play facilities and incorporating food growing opportunities (such as greenhouses) where appropriate.</p> <p>An open space strategy (2013) has been adopted which provides a framework for the provision of open space. It identifies that allotments and community gardens have an important role to play in the implementation of plans for encouraging local sustainable and community development, and also perform a role in the recycling of green waste. The strategy recognises that there is potential educational and economic value to promoting community food growing opportunities and one of its objectives is for the council to work with schools to make better use of open spaces and to take part in community food growing opportunities. Another objective is for the council to provide a greater range of facilities for teenagers and young people, including a greater range of recreation opportunities and designated areas for hanging out.</p> <p>There are likely to be few opportunities to create new open space within the borough, and any new open</p>

	<p>space created is likely to be better utilised as publicly accessible park space as a result of the increased pressure on limited open space from a growing population. As a result, any new food growing opportunities may be created at existing open spaces. Across the borough, the council will support a range of additional measures to enhance existing open space provision, including encouraging the development of further community gardens, potentially within areas of new development and within housing amenity sites.</p>
<p>Can the council ensure that developers consult with the community?</p>	<p>The council adopted its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in 2008 and this sets out how and when the council will involve the community in the alteration and development of town planning documents and applications for planning permission. This ensures there is effective community involvement in the planning process. The SCI sets out the detailed list of consultation methods that we carry out on planning documents and planning applications. It also states that we expect developers to carry out consultation with communities for major schemes before the application is submitted. The council can not prescribe how developers undertake pre-application consultation. However, the SCI sets out a number of community involvement techniques and indicates where the council thinks these are appropriate for consultation on major applications. Developers should submit to the council, as part of the planning application, a consultation statement setting out the methods of community involvement that were used, details of the representations received and how these have been considered and reflected in the submitted application.</p>
<p>“When is the public to know the truth regarding Newington Library and its future. This is a valuable community asset. It shouldn’t be sold to any private developer or private organisation.”</p> <p>AND</p> <p>“What is happening to Newington Library and the museum? The council has been very quiet on this subject.”</p>	<p>There are no plans to sell the library to a private developer or organisation. In the short-term, however, it is uneconomic and impractical to bring the library back into use due to the extensive damage which occurred during the fire to the adjoining Walworth Town Hall building. The council has therefore agreed to provide a temporary Newington Library within the Artworks scheme on Elephant Road. We expect this to open to the public in the summer.</p> <p>In July last year following the fire, Soutwark’s cabinet agreed a project mandate for the redevelopment of the Walworth Town Hall. This included a vision for a bigger and better library to be included in that new development, a new museum to house the Cuming collection and heritage collections, a flexible event / community space including the provision for hosting ceremony’s for the Registrar’s service. That brief has since been consulted on with over 95% of the public agreeing with the vision. The council is now about to</p>

	<p>commence a process to select a design team to take forward these proposals and we expect to consult further on plans during the summer. The cabinet on 18 March further agreed that the Newington Library building will be incorporated into the scope of the project to examine the benefits that the additional floorspace could potentially provide for the delivery of its agreed vision.</p>
<p>“After the council notices were put on the lampposts in East Street for shop owners not to extend their shops onto the pavement, I notice that nothing has been done to enforce these regulations. Some shops have not taken any notice of it, some have extended their shops to more than a third on the pavement and some have created another business completely on the pavement. Between the market traders extending their pitches at the back onto the pavement and the shops, the pavement has become so narrow that it has become difficult to walk on it. What is the council going to do about it?”</p>	<p>Highways licensing and enforcement officers are aware of the recent encroachment onto the pavement in East Street, and have been working with the markets and street trading team to improve the area with regards to pedestrian access through East Street. Officers have licensed many of the premises along there to allow them to use an agreed amount of the pavement if space allows which does provide officers with a means of managing the use of highway. We regularly remind the shop keepers to ensure that they keep within the agreed limits imposed on them. If officers continue to see problems, we can and will take further action including prosecution.</p> <p>Market officers regularly check pitch sizes and issue penalty points for over-sizing. In the past number of weeks a number of traders have been penalised and fined for this offence. Further issues can result in their appearance before licensing committee for revocation of their licence.</p>
<p>“What methods are Southwark council taking to ensure that contractors and subcontractors are rigorously monitored during any major works project, and what is the process by which customers’/residents’ complaints are reviewed? What sanctions and actions are available to the council, if works are found to be sub-standard by contractors and subcontractors?”</p>	<p>Restructure within the major works team has meant there is greater focus and responsibility to ensure good project management going forward.</p> <p>The project teams are responsible for specific contract areas and one individual partnering contractor. The team led by a project manager includes a contract manager, customer relationship officer, lead designer and clerk of works. Key to this approach is joint responsibility within the team for all the projects across their geographic area. No one team member works in isolation and every team member is involved in the full range of projects within their team.</p> <p>With the introduction of our new project management monitor we have the ability to examine in detail performance against forecast cashflows and delivery against key milestones. The major works teams are responsible for setting the standards and ensuring our contractors maintain these standards throughout the project. The team hold a number of meetings with our contracting partners where the standard items of quality and delivery are included on the agenda. These</p>

meetings include:

- Weekly site operational meetings
- Monthly site progress meetings
- Bi-monthly operational core group meetings
- Quarterly strategic core group meetings

There is also a major works monitoring group chaired by the Strategic Director for Housing & Community Services. The group which meets monthly rigorously monitors the delivery of the housing capital programme in terms of expenditure, performance and timeliness of delivery.

Last year officers also set up a major works core group chaired by the Deputy leader of the council and cabinet member for housing management which meets bi-monthly. The meeting is attended by a nominated group of tenants and leaseholders and other residents who feedback their own experience of major works that have been carried out on their homes. Our partner contractors also attend these meetings and are questioned on key performance indicators (KPI's) which include tenant's satisfaction returns, delivery of works and cost control.

Introduction of our new project management system makes it easier to track cost fluctuations, forecasting and comparisons in meeting agreed milestones. This information is used in our regular partnering meetings to enable greater scrutiny on scheme delivery and outturn costs.

Officers are also now seeing benefits of price harmonisation within our partnering contract coming through, this group has moved forward harmonisation on bathrooms and kitchens and is now bringing together tenders for roofs and windows.

As part of the work on local offers we developed a new consultation process called Putting Residents First. Every new scheme started since April 2012 has followed the principles and processes of Putting Residents First.

The 27 point plan of Putting Residents First provides a template for officers, contractors and consultants that sets out very clearly in stages how, from inception to completion, the council and our partners will work with residents to deliver major works to their homes.

Key to this consultation is establishing a residents' project team for each major partnering works project. All residents are informed about the project teams when they are invited to the first consultation meeting.

The project team is established at the first consultation meeting and meets regularly, usually monthly, until the end of the project.

Any TMO, Tenants or Residents' Association on the Estate will be specifically invited to attend and work with the Project Team. The Project Team will be the main focus for consultation during the scheme.

Meetings are organised and serviced by either Southwark's project manager or contracts manager and are attended by the contractor and Southwark's lead designer or external consultant as appropriate.

Officers recognise that not every resident would want to or have time to be involved in a Residents Project Team so within the Putting Residents First schedule we allow for more one to one sessions including:

- Introductory letters and leaflets
- Public meetings and drop in sessions
- Monthly newsletter including performance reviews of cost, time and quality and coffee sessions
- Mid contract reviews with Contractors satisfaction surveys.
- Estate walkabouts
- The council's own tenants satisfaction surveys
- Final project review questionnaire at completion of Defects Liability Period

Officers have introduced a series of correspondence to accompany Putting Residents First these include; introductory letters and leaflets together with monthly news letters.

Since the introduction of the partnering contracts in 2012 the council has been refining the management of its partnering contracts. There have been lessons learnt and we have made changes to ensure strong contract management is in place. These include:

- Project team members and lead designers understanding their respective roles in managing the partnering contract.
- Understanding of the partnering relationship in the context of a strong contract management regime and serving Default notices immediately when poor performance issues come to light.
- Listening to residents, this has seen the introduction of issue logging to take on residents' feedback. Regular review of the issues log have helped to close down issues more effectively and have helped

	<p>to prioritise the urgency of complaints as well as identifying trends.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring all pre-site commencement issues are resolved and in place before issuing contracts• Monitoring the delivery and quality of workmanship as work progresses, and involving residents more actively in this process.• Properly authorising all sub contracting arrangements and raising early concerns where these appeared to be unfair. <p>Under the partnering contract the council has the ultimate sanction to determine a contract but this is a position of last resort, however the council will not baulk at making that ultimate decision where performance does not meet our expected standards.</p>
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