



WALWORTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Walworth Community Council held on Monday 24 January 2011 at 7.00 pm at Walworth Methodist Church, London, SE5 0EN

PRESENT: Councillor Martin Seaton (Chair)
Councillor Neil Coyle (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Patrick Diamond
Councillor Dan Garfield
Councillor Lorraine Lauder MBE
Councillor Darren Merrill
Councillor Abdul Mohamed
Councillor Helen Morrissey

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Richard Livingstone
Councillor Ian Wingfield

OFFICER SUPPORT: Margaret O'Brien, Head of Housing Management
David Franklin, Licensing Officer
Jack Ricketts, Transport Planner
Richard George, Business Improvement Officer
Pauline Bonner, Neighbourhood Coordinator
Lee Griffiths, Community Council Development Officer
Alexa Coates, Principal Constitutional Officer

1. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and ask councillors to introduce themselves.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Bowman.

3. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Councillors made the following declarations of interest:

Agenda item 9. Licensing - Sex Establishments Consultation.

Councillor Lorraine Lauder MBE, Personal and Non Prejudicial, as chair of the Licensing committee.

4. ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There were no urgent items, however the chair invited Cllr Diamond to address the meeting.

Cllr Diamond requested that councillors agree to a special meeting of the community council, with a focus on green spaces in Walworth. He proposed that the meeting be held on 1 March 2011.

Councillors were in agreement to hold an additional meeting and the chair advised that invitations would be sent once a date was finalised.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2010 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the chair.

6. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were none.

7. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

The chair made the following community announcements:

Civic Award Nominations

The deadline for Civic Award Nominations was 31st January, nomination forms were available at the meeting

St Saviour & St Olave's School for Girls on the New Kent Road

Daisy Froud from AOC the design team working on an extension to the school informed residents that she was available at the break to discuss ideas for the extension with local residents. Daisy had brought along some initial outline plans for residents to input into.

8. LEND LEASE - CONSULTATION UPDATE

Susie Wilson, from Lend Lease, gave a brief update on the consultation process since the

last meeting. Susie reminded residents that the focus of Lend Lease was on a specific area within the core area of elephant and castle. She advised that the draft consultation strategy was moving forward and that Lend Lease would seek the views of local residents and groups before this was finalised. Susie encouraged people to fill out the questionnaire and let Lend Lease know how they wanted to be contacted.

Since the last meeting some introductory meetings had taken place with organisations such as: Community Action Southwark, Southwark Council and Elephant Amenity Network. Susie advised that Lend Lease would be seeking the views of the community on a range of issues including: the context and quality of the scheme, what the temporary uses of the site might be, sustainable transport and the ecology of the site.

Lend Lease can be contacted by email at: enquiries.elephantandcastle@lendlease.co.uk

Susie took questions from the floor relating to plans for community facilities such as a new library, whether a regular newsletter would be published, how new policy developments would affect the development, whether Section 106 priorities would be part of the consultation, when a gathering of the broader community would take place including all the groups Susie had identified in her update, how the potential 80% increase in social rents would be dealt with, the future of the utilities contract for the site and the development of the shopping centre.

In response, Susie and Rob Deck from Lend Lease, advised that the new library was not part of Lend Lease's scope, and that a newsletter would be published in early February. Rob commented that Government policy regarding social rents is not yet clear. Lend Lease is not a social landlord, but along with other developers Lend Lease will be interested to understand how Councils and Social Landlords will respond to new policy developments. Susie confirmed that early discussion regarding training and employment priorities had begun with Southwark Council and community priorities will be considered during the consultation and engagement process and will inform any S106 contributions. A baseline masterplan is expected in the spring and this will be shared when there is something concrete to consult on. Lend Lease will continue to work with the council to seek an alternative energy solution. The shopping centre is part of the total regeneration area but is not owned by Lend Lease, however Rob explained that Lend Lease are in discussion with the current owners and hope to develop an integrated outcome.

Councillors asked Lend Lease to confirm they would facilitate a meeting of local organisations, and that as part of the consultation their plans for training and job opportunities would be outlined. Lend Lease agreed that training and employment is one of their priorities. Rob also confirmed that Lend Lease would implement the 'London Living Wage' scheme for contractors working on the Elephant & Castle project.

The chair closed the item by requesting that councillors provide Lend Lease with details of their local contacts in the community so that the consultation would be as far reaching as possible.

9. LICENSING - SEX ESTABLISHMENTS CONSULTATION

David Franklin, Team Leader Licensing, explained that a change in legislation meant that

sex establishments were now a licensed activity. He explained that the council had developed a draft policy outlining the criteria for sex establishments and that a questionnaire was available for residents to comment on the draft proposals. David was also seeking views on whether there were any locations in the area which might be suitable for such establishments.

Attendees took part in a voting exercise which sought views on the availability of suitable locations; the results are attached as an appendix to the minutes.

David took questions from the floor relating to: the financial benefits sex establishments could bring to an area and where they were situated currently. David stated that some people argued that this type of establishment created job opportunities and that there were no known establishments in the Walworth area as there was no requirement for licensing other than if they required a music and dancing license. As far as the council were aware there were currently none.

10. TRANSPORT - TRANSPORT PLAN CONSULTATION

Jack Ricketts, Transport Planner, informed residents about the new transport plan and the process for consultation. The Transport plan identified ways to improve travel to and from the Borough, sets out the investment plans for the next 3 years and long terms goals for the next 20 years. A questionnaire was available for residents to express their views and the consultation runs until the 18 March 2011.

11. UPDATE ON HOUSING REPAIRS SCRUTINY

Cllr Gavin Edwards, chair of the Housing and Community Safety Sub-Committee, attended the meeting to update residents on the scrutiny review into the housing repairs service. Cllr Edwards had attended the community council meeting in November where he conducted a voting exercise on the repairs service. Cllr Edwards explained that the review had focused on how the performance of the service was measured.

The scrutiny subcommittee recommendations were to improve the current performance indicator system. Some of the suggestions of the committee included: developing a culture of openness and transparency between officers, councillors and tenants, repairs should be followed from start to finish with one reference number per job, performance should be measured by a satisfaction survey rather than reports by individual contractors and the collation of satisfaction results should be fundamentally changed so that satisfaction is rated as: very good, good, poor or very poor and only very good or good should be considered satisfactory.

12. HOUSING - YOUR SERVICE YOUR CHOICE

Margaret O'Brien, Head of Housing Management, gave a presentation on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget and informed residents that the council was seeking their input in setting priorities in terms of how to achieve savings. Margaret advised that social rents would increase by 7.08% in 2011-12 and explained how the housing budget was split. Margaret asked residents to take a booklet and use the stickers provided to indicate

where they felt the housing service's priorities should lie.

Margaret took questions from the floor relating to: how much money could be saved by better monitoring of/more investment in the repairs service, who has responsibility for housing repairs, would there be a report back in 6 months on the outcome of the housing repairs scrutiny, the impact of the potential 80% market value social rents, the quality of outdoor repairs and a specific question on repairs to kitchen cupboards in terms of what the council was responsible for.

In response Margaret explained the service was seeking to make savings through contract efficiency and that £1.2 million was currently being held back from one contractor due to performance issues. Margaret explained that as Head of Housing Management she was responsible for the repairs service and praised the scrutiny review into the service as it highlighted problems officers were not previously aware of. A housing review group was being established which aimed to give residents more control of elements of the housing service such as the management of contracts. The 80% market value social rents would not affect the housing service budget as this would apply to new tenants, the impact for the council would be on future development/regeneration programmes. It was difficult to explain which repairs the council was responsible for so Margaret took the details of the resident at the end of the item so she could look into her particular case.

Cllr Edwards hoped that the lessons learned from the scrutiny review into internal repairs could be applied to outdoor repairs as he suspected many of the same problems would exist in that area. He explained that overview and scrutiny would revisit the topic in 6 months time to review how the recommendations had been implemented; he hoped that the drive for further efficiencies could be the subject of further scrutiny in the future.

Cllr Diamond called on councillors to lobby their local member of parliament to protect vulnerable residents in the area.

The chair invited Cllr Wingfield, cabinet member for housing management, to address the meeting. Cllr Wingfield took questions from the floor relating to the possibility of linking rents to income and holding senior officers in the council to account. Cllr Wingfield explained that it would not be lawful to link rents to income and that, in any case, this might impact on social mobility and aspirations of residents. He also stated that the cabinet had implemented a new structure for the housing department and a new director with specific responsibility for the service had recently been appointed.

13. A FAIRER FUTURE FOR ALL - UPDATE

Cllr Livingstone, cabinet member for finance and resources, updated the meeting on the budget consultation and directed residents to a results report which had been circulated. Cllr Livingstone explained that the draft budget would be considered by the Cabinet on the 26 January and again on the 8 February. A plain English guide to the budget report would be available on the council website, which explained the technical jargon in the report. Residents had the opportunity to give their views on the budget until 8 February and final decisions would be made by Council Assembly on 22 February.

14. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following public questions were raised:

Who's idea was it to close the parking shop on Old Kent Road without consultation?

In response Cllr Morrissey explained that she was in contact with the relevant cabinet member regarding this and would provide a full response to the community council.

Before Christmas, on two occasions, asbestos was dumped on the Newington Estate. Will the council now provide tenant, residents and contractors with details of the surveys held on the 'Asbestos Database' in order to prevent asbestos being worked or dumped in a dangerous manner?

On the corner of Morecombe Street and Browning Street, how often is the green space supposed to be cleaned of litter and who is responsible? At the moment it is cleaned less than once a month, could it be attended more frequently?

Can the community council be supplied with statistics of through traffic gathered in Walworth in recent years, including Heygate, Rodney Road, Browning Street, Stead Street, Thurlow Street and the Western end of East Street?

In September 2010 the cabinet office minister and the leader of the House of Commons stated in Parliament that there was no legal requirement to be on the electoral role. Why does Southwark council insists on registering?

15. LOCAL PARKING AMENDMENTS

Executive Function

RESOLVED

That the following local parking amendment be approved

Perimeter of Burgess Park (1011Q3034)

Install 7 (blue badge) destination disabled bays (Addington Square, Neate Street, Wells Way).

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED

That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2, Access to Information Procedure rules of the Constitution.

17. SCHOOL GOVERNOR NOMINATIONS

Executive Function

RESOLVED

That Mr John Springford be appointed school governor at Surrey Square Foundation primary school.

Meeting ended at 10.10 pm

CHAIR:

DATED: