



ROTHERHITHE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Rotherhithe Community Council held on Wednesday 11 January 2012 at 6.30 pm at Canada Water Library, 21 Surrey Quays Road, SE16 7AR

PRESENT: Councillor Jeff Hook (Chair)
Councillor Wilma Nelson (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Columba Blango
Councillor David Hubber
Councillor Richard Livingstone
Councillor Catherine McDonald
Councillor Lisa Rajan
Councillor Michael Situ

OFFICER SUPPORT: Adrian Whittle, Head of Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure
James Oates, Southwark Property
Tara Quinn, Leisure Contract & Facilities Manager
Franklin Uwakaneme, Public Realm Manager
Forid Ahmed, Neighbourhood Co-ordinator
Gill Kelly, Community Council Development Co-ordinator
Tim Murtagh, Constitutional Officer

1. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

The chair welcomed councillors, members of the public and officers to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Paul Noblet.

3. ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

The chair said there was one additional item which had been circulated in a supplemental agenda as item 17:

Determination of statutory objection to proposed formalisation of waiting restrictions in Hillbeck Close.

4. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2011 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting, and signed by the chair.

6. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Civic Awards

Gary Magold, representing the Southwark Civic Association, explained that the Civic Association awarded honours on three different levels: letter of commendation, freedom of the old metropolitan boroughs and life-time achievement. There were also specialised "of the year" awards. This year the association also wanted to honour people who had shown acts of civic engagement or courage during or after the disturbances in August 2011 and to honour children doing amazing things in the borough. He encouraged all those in attendance to submit their nominations by 31 January 2012, either in paper form or electronically via the website.

Recycling / Waste-collections

Ian McGeough, from Veolia, informed the meeting about the new processing and recycling facility off Old Kent Road, which featured several main components. The centre itself which sorted and recycled the waste, the recycling discovery centre for children at Key Stage 2, and a permanent exhibition/meeting space, which community groups could use as a meeting place. He reminded the meeting that the facility at Manor Place was now closed. In response to questions, Ian said the new plant was the first of its kind in Britain although Veolia ran several in mainland Europe. All of Veolia's operations were governed by the Environment Agency.

Southwark Heat Network

David Gee, Energy Programme Manager, explained that the project was about taking heat wasted at the SELCHP plant near Millwall Football Club and using it to provide low carbon energy to heat about 3,000 homes in Southwark. Good progress was being made and the next stage would be to agree heads of terms in the next few months. The system would be operational in 2013. The good news was that a route had been identified that would avoid the need to go through Southwark Park.

Initial Public Questions

In response to a question about the overdue works on St Helena Road which had been allocated £60,000 last year, Franklin Uwakaneme (Public Realm Manager) said the improvements would be carried out in February 2012.

7. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were none.

8. COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATES (IF ANY)

There were no updates. Officers had conducted a surgery before the meeting.

9. ROTHERHITHE & BERMONDSEY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Michael Daniels (Chair of Rotherhithe & Bermondsey Local History Society) explained that the society organised walks, tours and visits with a local history bias. Meetings were the last Wednesday of each month at the Time and Talents Centre. There was a very friendly atmosphere and the society was fortunate to regularly host high calibre speakers. In October the Governor of the Tower of London gave a talk. In the summer there had been walks around Wapping and the Limehouse Tower. In January there would be talks on Charles Dickens in London in advance of the author's bicentenary. The society also had a twice yearly periodical 'The Redriff Chronicle.' Membership was less than £10 per year in part due to help from Rotherhithe Community Council and non-members were welcome to attend events. See rbhistory.org.uk for further details.

10. WHAT'S GOING ON IN ROTHERHITHE

Dr Amanda Squires explained that there were many things going on in Rotherhithe but in the past there had been nothing to link facilities such as Brunel, Time and Talents, The Farm and Southwark Park. A group was formed to produce the Rotherhithe map (second edition circulated). The community council had funded several print runs of 9,000 or more. The popular document led to the map group expanding to form the What's On in Rotherhithe Group. The group helped set up the SE16 website. Organisations were encouraged to advertise on the SE16 site to improve local links. There was also a community notice board for non-commercial purposes. The maps list the key local sites with a two line description and were available at Rotherhithe station, Brunel, The YHA, St Mary's and the Mayflower. SE16 was also on Twitter with a lot of followers and different contributors.

11. THE NEW LIBRARY AND UPDATE ON ALBION STREET LIBRARY

James Oates (Southwark Property) explained that he was involved in the Canada Water regeneration project. Part of that was to sell the old library in Albion Street. The sale of which would partly go to fund the new library. The Cabinet had recently accepted an offer from Canada Quays partnership who intend to knock it down and redevelop it for housing with some community uses and retail on the ground floor. The sale should be complete around March 2012.

In response to questions, James said it would be some time before the new site was built

but there were already discussions with the Police about the possibility of a Police presence on the site of the old library. There had been nine bidders in all. The mix of social and private housing would be decided following discussions and through the planning process. Part of the attraction of selling to Canada Quays was their track record and commitment to the Area Action Plan. They were trying to get the right kind of uses into the building.

Anna Devlet (British Land) added that local groups and residents would be consulted by Canada Quays on the community uses for the building.

In response to questions, James explained that property density would be decided through the planning process. The Albion Street site had guardians currently living in it and the commercial incentive for the developers was to re-build as fast as possible. It was likely to take 18 months to 2 years. Other options were being looked at for Albion Street and over the next few months local people should hear of things being worked on to help improve the area. Residents expressed concerns over Albion Street being run down and many properties were not being sufficiently looked after.

Adrian Whittle (Head of Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure) responded to a question on money spent on the old library by clarifying that the Council had spoken to Beck around 2003 and those works had been completed by 2005. He would look into whether works on the old library were being done as late as 2008.

Adrian said the new library opened on 28 November 2011 and since then about 1,400 visitors per day had used the library compared to 6,000 per month at the old library. There were 40,000 items of stock on display with a further 10,000 in reserve.

In the first six weeks more than 2,500 people had joined the library. The public response had been very positive and the events programme had started. A lot of work was being done with local schools and there had been author speaking events including Jacqueline Wilson (Tracey Beaker author). For adults, Ben Fogle attended and spoke to more than 100 people and theatre productions had also been very popular. Former Councillor Anne Yates was honoured with a plaque in the children's library. There were also literacy, yoga and photography classes. A programme of events for the year had been circulated, several award winning authors had been lined up and there would be a summer reading challenge for children in August.

In response to questions, Adrian said there was a mailing list for events and activities. The Albany, who manage room bookings, were getting about 80 calls per week and hire rooms could be made available to accommodate library users when appropriate.

12. UPDATE ON SEVEN ISLAND LEISURE CENTRE / SOUTHWARK PARK RUNNING TRACK

Seven Island Leisure Centre

Adrian Whittle explained that in June 2011 as part of the capital programme, the council had allocated £8 million as part of the refurbishment of the leisure centre. That was due for 2013/14 and 2014/15 and there were currently no detailed plans. Extensive consultation with the community and key stakeholders would take place.

In response to questions, Adrian said he was not aware of any plans for a new swimming pool. The £8 million was for refurbishment and the centre would have to be closed for a time for that to take place. The consultation would probably start at the end of 2012 and there would be open meetings for ideas and subsequent meetings with drawings. Officers would consult widely and involve community councils and schools.

Southwark Park Running Track

Adrian Whittle explained that the Council was investing £1.5 million in the Southwark Park Sports Complex. The project would include reinstating the athletics track and astro pitch plus redecorating the pavilion. The project had secured £370,000 from the Southwark Olympic Legacy Fund and officers were looking at securing additional funding for the project including bids for the Mayor of London's Facilities Fund, Sport England and the London Marathon Charitable Trust.

In response to questions, Tara Quinn (Leisure Contract & Facilities Manager) said that the timing of consultation would depend on when funding was secured and officers were working hard on the appropriate bids. If additional funding was not secured then residents would be consulted on using the funding already in place. The running track was key in securing funding as it was the only such facility in the borough. Some of the earlier work done by McAlpine on the track and gym could be used as part of the project.

13. SOUTHWARK'S BUDGET FOR 2012/13

Councillor Richard Livingstone (Cabinet Member for finance, resources and community safety) explained that last year a three-year budget was set to take the council through a difficult period of savings due to central Government funding reductions. The second year of the budget for 2012/13 was set out on display boards and residents were invited to comment on the proposals. For example, the amount given by Government fell from £314million last year to £268million next year. Council tax revenue would increase slightly due to new properties being built in the borough.

There would be no additional cuts over and above those proposed in the three-year budget. Some money would be going back into adult social care. The Government had given some money for freezing council tax next year. The council would be introducing a Cleaner, Greener, Safer revenue fund in 2012/13. The draft budget was agreed in December and had been open to consultation since then. There were forms available and e-forms on the council website so that residents could feed their comments into the budget process. The Cabinet would welcome groups coming along to discuss the budget if a formal request was made. The final recommendations by Cabinet would be on 7 February and the Council Assembly would make a decision on the budget on 29 February 2012.

In response to questions, Councillor Livingstone said:

- The cuts were hitting the voluntary sector badly and a transition fund had been set up last year. So far about £730,000 had been allocated to groups and about the same amount would be available for next year.
- The 25% cut to the council budget would affect community councils. The Democracy Commission had looked at how they might be re-formed with those savings whilst continuing to do the same work.

- £5.3million was coming out of reserves and put into this budget to address some of the issues and problems.

14. HIGHWAYS DEVOLVED CAPITAL FUNDING FOR 2012/13

Franklin Uwakaneme (Public Realm Manager) explained that the community council had £100,000 to improve the road network. Residents now had that the opportunity to indicate their preferred locations by sticking dots on the maps in the hall. Roads, footpaths and potholes could be identified. Alternatively residents could complete the forms which were circulated. Following the process the community council would have the relevant information from which to make an informed decision.

15. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A resident asked about the road from Plough Way to Greenland Quay where there was some damage caused by tree roots. The managing agent had said there was a dispute over responsibility. Councillor Hubber said he would follow that up.

A resident asked for the item on Open Strategy scheduled for the April meeting 2012 to tie in with a recent Government Inspector's report on population as more people would need more open space.

Councillor Livingstone said he would follow up on a request for actual crime statistics in the Surrey Docks area. He added that generally violent crime had fallen whilst acquisitive crime was on the rise. Councillor Hubber said that he understood there had been a rise in crime and more prevention advice was needed. The Surrey Docks Safer Neighbourhoods Team would be asked to present at the next meeting.

In response to questions on how highway repairs were co-ordinated with different types of brick and tarmac, Franklin explained that usually if there were problems, tarmac was applied as a temporary measure with the appropriate material being used after that when possible.

A resident raised the proposed merger of Bermondsey and Rotherhithe community councils and doubted the interest of some items for most of those likely to attend which could lead to their demise. Others said the meetings had brought the community together and their good work was under threat from the merger plans.

There was a lengthy discussion about the proposed merger with Bermondsey. Several residents said that citizens of Southwark should have been invited to sit on the Democracy Commission. The chair said the proposed merger of community councils would be an item at the next Rotherhithe meeting.

16. DETERMINATION OF STATUTORY OBJECTION TO PROPOSED FORMALISATION OF WAITING RESTRICTION IN HILLBECK CLOSE.

Executive Function

Members considered the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the objection received regarding the proposed formalisation of an existing at any time waiting restriction in Hillbeck Close be rejected.
2. That officers be instructed to make the order for the existing at any time waiting restriction and to write to the objector.

The meeting ended at 9.20pm

CHAIR:

DATED: