



**BLACKHEATH LOCAL ASSEMBLY
MEETING
Tuesday 29 January 2013 7.30pm – 9.30pm
St Matthew Academy
St Joseph's Vale, London SE3**

Record of Meeting

	Item	Actions
1	Welcome, Introduction & Format of meeting	
	Cllr Chris Maines, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the agenda.	
2	Blackheath Police Safer Neighbourhood Update	
2.1	<p>New Policing Model Sgt Ruth Wilshire explained how the new policing model would work in practice. Currently, the Blackheath Safer Neighbourhood teams is led by an inspector who is supported by a Sgt alongside two Police Constable (PC) and three Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs). The team recently lost a PC who was referred to another unit. Under the new policing model, the structure would comprise of One Sgt, one PC who will be the face of the area. He would be responsible for patrolling and dealing with the usual safer neighbourhood problems and would be supported by a team of underlying officers and one PCSO. It was stated that the new model would see the area gaining more police officer rather than losing them. The PC is likely to be Gary Washington who has been working in the area for a number of years. The new team will be enhanced by the borough support unit. Resources to support the whole scheme would be flexed and diverted to areas identified as having greater needs.</p> <p>The other element to the model would see a difference in the function hours of the team. The team would provide cover until 2am in the early hours an initiative which would be adopted</p>	

	<p>Met-wide. This model however raises issues of concerns from the community. There was a general feeling that resources would be diverted to more needy areas such as the north of the borough at the expense of the relatively quieter areas like Blackheath. The Sgt reassured the meeting that that every efforts would be made to ensure that Blackheath resources remains unaffected. The new model is expected to begin in June 2013.</p> <p>The meeting requested clarification on the proposed closure of police stations across the borough. It was explained that the main police station at Lewisham would remain, however, Brockley Police Station is earmarked for closure whist the future of Catford Police station is to be reviewed in 2014. People wishing to learn more about the new model are asked to request a slide show from the Safer Neighbourhood Sergeant.</p> <p>2.2 Crime statistics update</p> <p>The crime figures for Blackheath remains low. There was a spade of reported burglary received from residents in Dartmout Grove which saw up to 8 cases within a two weeks period. Measures put in place to address these issues includes the provision of advice to residents, the location of the Safer Lewisham Partnership bus in the area with four PCSOs on board where resident can raise questions they may have and regular door knock and leaflet drop exercise.</p> <p>With regards to current crime pattern in the area, theft is said to be on the high. These covers a wide range of things including theft in shops, of motor vehicle and in motor vehicle. There were nine reported offences in January. The team currently have three leads on drug related offences, the outcome of which will be displayed on the SNT webpage.</p>	
3	Update on Downgrading of Services at Lewisham Hospital	
	<p>Lewisham Council Executive Director for Community Services provided this update. She provided a brief explanation of the recommendations proposed by the Special Administrator appointed last year to look into hospital efficiency in South London. It was reported that over 8,000 response was received following the recent consultation on the proposal. Over half of the responses came from Lewisham. The recommendations proposed were listed as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the 3 hospitals that makes up the South London Health Trust will become more operational efficient. The report recommends that Queen Mary in Sidcup is 	

- developed as a hub for urgent care and rehabilitation.
2. It also recommends the disposal of surplus and underutilised premises across the whole of South London.
 3. That additional fund is made available to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Greenwich and the Princess Royal Hospital in Bromley to offset the cost of their PFIs which was deemed very expensive.
 4. That a transformation of Health services is needed with specific changes to community based care, emergency care, paediatric care, maternity care and elective services.
 5. That South London Health Trust should be dissolved and another organisation should take over the management of the 3 hospitals mentioned in the report.

One of the recommendation proposed by the administrators to bring down cost was to reduce the number of A&E services from 5 to 4. The one that was picked for closure was the Lewisham Hospital A&E department. In relation to paediatric services, the report recommends that the current service is replaced with a midwife led birthing unit backed by an obstetric unit. These service would only be available to for those who are likely to have an uncomplicated birth as there would be no doctors on hand to deal with complications during childbirth. It was also stated that the other four hospital would have an inpatient unit which would no longer be available in Lewisham.

As for children, the only service that would be available would be an urgent care services or non-emergency services. Lewisham hospital would be developed as a non-complex elective surgery site which would cater for things like planned hip or knee replacement operated on a waiting list system. The service would not cover injury resulting from a fall as this could become complicated. The final recommendation is that Queen Elizabeth in Greenwich and Lewisham Hospital should merge as one hospital.

Lewisham Council's response to the recommendations proposed are that it believed that the trust special administrators did not have the powers to make such recommendations under the legislation because his role was mainly to look at the 3 hospitals that were running at a financial loss and Lewisham hospital was not one of those.

Another vital point raised by the Council in their challenge relates to the current partnership working that has developed between the Council and Lewisham Hospital aimed at reducing the number of older people going into hospital. This is aimed at promoting better care for elderly patient in the community rather than being admitted into hospital. The expectation is that if the proposal by the administrators goes ahead, the Council would be expected to spread this partnership across the other

	<p>4 hospitals. The Council is concerned that forming such relationship would take time and as a result could lead to delays in care packages for the elderly when they are released from admission.</p> <p>The Council also took the view that they did not think that the stand alone midwife led birthing unit was good enough to give choice to pregnant women in Lewisham to have their children locally. Also that the appointed hospital does not have enough capacity to take on patient from Lewisham following the closure of it's A&E department. Travel time was also raised as an issue. It was expressed that the travel route from Lewisham to Queen Elizabeth in Greenwich are very complex and many family would find it difficult to visit their loved ones admitted to the hospital.</p> <p>The report also recommends the disposals of half of the current site at Lewisham hospital. It is envisaged that the disposal could affect the psychiatric care that is currently available at the hospital and works closely with the current A&E department. This argument is supported by the GPs who have been working together under the new health reform arrangement.</p> <p>The Council with other local organisation has written to the Secretary of State stating that the TSA has not taken into consideration those point raised about working Ultra Vires but also that not enough consideration has been given to the recommendations. As such the Secretary of State is asked to reconsider this aspect. A decision on the representation is expected by Friday. The Council will prepare a challenge if the views they have expressed on the recommendations have not been favourably considered.</p>	
4	Street Lighting renewal programme	
	<p>An officer from Skanska and Lewisham Council explained in brief the street lighting renewal contract in Lewisham. The contract is to run over 4 years and the designs of lighting is done on a street by street requirement basis. The new lighting would be designed to comply with the current British Standard which sets out the type of lighting installation on public footway. In some cases this might require moving of lamp-post from it current location depending on the design chosen. For every area, letters would be sent out to residents 4 weeks in advance before the works commences.</p> <p>Reference was made to a pre-meeting between members of the Blackheath Society with Lewisham Council and Skanska concerning the designs of lighting for Blackheath. The issue</p>	

	<p>presented at the meeting was that the contractor did not take into consideration the needs in Blackheath in particular the streets which currently have heritage lighting. The meeting were told that officers from Lewisham Council and Skanska are currently considering the points raised by members of the Blackheath Society and the financial implications of their request.</p> <p>Some resident expressed concerns that they did not received any notification before works commenced in their area. A further concern was raised concerning the changes to some of the street earmarked for heritage lighting without due consultation with residents. Some street would now be replaced with normal lighting instead of heritage lighting. The meeting was told that following all the complaints received all works in Blackheath has now being put on hold and the contractors are now reviewing its delivery schedule.</p>	
5	Break and Refreshment	
6	Blackheath Children Play Park proposal	
	<p>Cllr Amanda De Ryk and Martin Hyde from the Council Green Scene Department presented the play space proposal to the meeting. It was mentioned that the Assembly agreed to use its funding this year on large project rather than invite bids from local organisations. There was a decision to spend all the fund on a legacy project which will have a presence in the ward. As a result the idea of developing a play space on a section of the Heath for children to address one of the main Assembly issue of concern was suggested.</p> <p>To progress this idea, a working group was developed and talks has taken place with local schools and community organisations in the area. An area known as the Elliott Pitts was suggested as a location for the play space. The idea is to develop a pocket park, an area naturally suited for pockets of activities. Some of the benefit of the scheme would ensure the improvement of health, fitness and well-being of everyone in the ward in particular young people.</p> <p>Further discussion are being held with the Council Green Scene department about possible equipment for the play space. This could include seating areas, a sensory space to cater for children with special needs with low level chains to create nice sounds. An initial survey has been undertaken to assess the suitability of the site but it is proposed that a full ecological survey be undertaken by an independent surveyor in the Spring. The results of this survey will be fed into the</p>	

consultation process and would be open and available for residents to see.'

It is suggested that the equipment that would be installed would be made of natural timber which is hoped would be stimulating and challenging for users. They would comprise of climbing and swinging equipment and encompassing the natural elements which can be used by local schools. The importance of accessibility for parent with buggies and wheel chair users has also been taken into account. Timber boards would be laid out in some areas to create a path. The scheme would look at interpretation and an explanation of equipment to ensure people understands the area. This could be in form of a nature trails or an interpretation board.

Funding the Scheme

The project has so far secured a sum of £36,000 from section 106 funding secured from the housing development behind Lewisham Tesco. A further £50,000 has been promised by the London Marathon Charitable trust. A bid has also been submitted to the Mayor of London Pocket Parks Initiative and it is hoped that the Assembly will give its approval to the use of its £15,000 grant towards this project.

Suggested timetable

- January/February/March – Funding confirmation
- April/May – Ecological survey
- June July – Award landscape design contract
- July/August – Design Consultation
- July/August – Planning consent (if required)
- October/November – Award main works contract
- January 2014 – Start on site
- April 2014- Completion
- May 2014 – Official opening

A series of question and answer session followed this presentation. A few local residents voiced their concerns about the process and the choice of Elliott Pitts as a location for the development of a children play space. One of a number of issues they raised was that the site currently attract drinkers and drug dealers after dark and is a magnet for anti-social behaviour. They also considered the erection of play space equipment as illegal and against statutory regulations and by-laws designed to protect the Heath. The meeting was asked to take a vote to agree the use of the £15,000 Assembly fund towards the play space development. A vote was taken by show of hands to consider whether to allocate Assembly fund towards this project. Around 45 people voted in favour and 7 people against.

7	Blackheath Showcase	
	<p>A member of the Assembly Coordinating group updated the meeting about an idea explored by the coordinating committee at their last meeting. Instead of holding the assembly meeting scheduled for March, the group suggested the idea of holding a drop in session where resident can view n highlight of what is on offer in their ward. The event would feature a range stalls by groups and organisation operating in the Blackheath area. Resident would have the opportunity to find out what is taking place locally.</p> <p>The main focus of the event would be the display of the plans and designs for the Blackheath children play space. The event would take place on Saturday 23 March 2013 from 1pm to 3pm at the Bake House, Age Exchange Centre in Blackheath Village.</p>	
8	Councillor's Update – Issues relevant to Blackheath	
	<p>Council's budget cuts The implications to Council budget since the government reduced the strength of funding granted to local government was explained to the meeting. Lewisham Council has made a savings o £53million since 2010. A further £40million has to be made by 2015. The next financial year budget would be set on 27 March 2013. It is likely that the Council would be looking at reviewing the Council tax budget again this year. The proposal presented is to face out Council tax benefit. It was highlighted that this decision would have an impact on unemployed people in Blackheath who would be expected to pay this bill as from April 2013. The Council in recognition of this has set up a hardship fund to support local people. An amount of £100,000 has been set aside for this purpose.</p> <p>Blackheath Bus Lane It was announced that the Bus Lane in the Blackheath Village which has not been operated for quite some time is to be removed by Transport for London by April 2013.</p>	
9	Declaration of interest	
	There were no declaration of interest declared at this meeting.	

1. Blackheath Assembly Agenda