

MINUTES OF THE SYDENHAM ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 11 September 2014 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Chris Best, Liam Curran and Rachel Onikosi

71. Welcome from the Chair, Cllr Chris Best

Cllr Chris Best welcomed everyone to the Sydenham Assembly.

72. Updates from previous meetings

2.1 Planning Issues –

- **The Greyhound**

Following the last Assembly meeting a meeting took place between Purelake, the owner/ developer of The Greyhound, Lewisham planners, representatives from the Sydenham Society, local residents and Hexagon Housing Association.

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Chris Best and the various conditions were discussed. The key point from the community was to ensure an A3/A4 use and to get a timetable agreed.

The latest information the planning officers have received from the developer is that they are getting the application submission together, which includes additional detailed drawing information to hopefully minimise the need for conditions beyond that which have been previously discussed but should enable a faster start on site in the event that planning permission is granted. They intend submitting a new planning application sometime after the 15th September 2014.

Given the complex nature of this scheme planning officers are seeking further legal advice and the proposal is to hold a separate meeting to discuss the whole situation.

It is also proposed that the Assembly refer this matter to the Mayor so that a full report can be discussed by the Mayor and Cabinet including what options are available to the Council to progress the rebuilding of The Greyhound.

The Assembly agreed the referral to the next available Mayor & Cabinet meeting.

The Sydenham Society then proposed and seconded the following motion which was passed with no-one voting against and 3 abstentions:

This Assembly will object to any new planning application for the Greyhound that does not contain a timetable for the rebuild of the pub and which does not limit Use Classes to A3/A4

- **Enforcement issues**

There are a number of breaches of planning law in the high street including the removal of shop fronts. These matters are a low priority for the Council in

accordance with the Council's agreed planning enforcement priorities. However, a request has been made to ensure that new shop fronts comply with access requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act.

- **Progress on vacant sites**

Discussions are ongoing with the developer for 22a – 24 Sydenham Road and a planning application is expecting very soon. Work continues on 278 -280 Kirkdale although it is unlikely to complete until into the New Year.

2.2 Highways issues

- **Station Approach**

The demolishing of the toilet block has been temporarily stopped by Network Rail. The Council are waiting to hear from Network Rail and the contractor on when it can be resumed and completed.

Following this the new toilets will be installed and the paving around reset with yorkstone. The brickwork and planter bed will also be cleaned and restored.

Contact officer for Sydenham Road Improvement Scheme is Tom Henry – any queries to: Highways@lewisham.gov.uk

- **Traffic Flow**

The Council has been informed that Transport for London has completed the traffic signal works. The Council has provided feedback concerning the delayed signals and build-up of traffic. This is currently being into by TfL- Contact officer Jack.Pulker@TfL.gov.uk

- **Footbridge on Dacres Road**

Subject to the Council being able to enter into an Asset Protection Agreement with Network Rail, then the main replacement of the span is planned to be undertaken during the February 2015 half term period if possible.

The preparation works will be undertaken in night possessions and so will take place in small stages, the main lift out of the existing structure and installation of the new structure will entail a closure of about 2 weeks.

Contact officer is Tom Henry – any queries to: Highways@lewisham.gov.uk

- **Sydenham Road East – Mayow Road to Kent House Road**

The original construction works on the Sydenham Road East scheme has been completed. The Sydenham Town Centre paving pallet was extended to the start of the signalled junction with Kent House Road in 2013/14.

In 2014/15, the Sydenham Road East funding is for further improvements to the signalled junction with Kent House Road and this will be carried out along with TfL modernisation works. This further budget for 2014/15 will fund some footway works, using traditional paving slabs, going eastwards from this junction, and also by the Bell Green gyratory where the existing footway condition is considered the poorest. This is planned for the Autumn and proposals have been consulted upon in July 2014.

Some further resurfacing is planned for late 2014 and this will be from the Kent House Road junction to tie in with the resurfacing carried out in Sydenham Road. This resurfacing will be carried out after the completion of the adjacent footway works and the junction improvements.

Contact officer is Tom Henry Highways@lewisham.gov.uk

- **Summary of proposed LIP (Local Implementation Plan) Funding to Transport for London**

Lower Sydenham neighbourhood – Park Frontage and Cycling/Pedestrian Routes

£79k for 15/16 and £150 for 16/17

Feasibility study and part implementation of local area improvements around the Lower Sydenham/ Home Park area. The scheme is expected to include enhancements to the area of Sydenham Road adjacent to Home park and also pedestrian and cycle routes between Sydenham Road / Home Park and Lower Sydenham Station. It is recommended that £79k of funding be used in 2015/16 for surveys, development work and other pre-construction requirements such as Traffic Management Orders.

Bell Green Gyratory Improvements

The Bell Green gyratory currently creates a relatively unattractive environment and severance in the local area which is exacerbated by queuing traffic. The adjacent rail over-bridge to the east of Bell Green also offers a very poor environment for the passage of pedestrians with only a single narrow footway.

The gyratory comprises 5 sets of signals from the junction of Perry Rise/Perry Hill until Southend Lane/Worsley Bridge Road. Bell Green, Southend Lane (A2218) and Stanton Way which make up the gyratory are London Distributor roads. The gyratory is included in the borough's Emergency Services Priority Route Network and lies along the routes of buses 181, 352, 202, 194, 356 and 450.

Although the project is still within its feasibility stage the following interventions are likely to feature in the final scheme proposals:

- Linking all of the traffic signals around the gyratory to improve traffic flows and reduce congestion.
- Provide and improve pedestrian crossings at the signal junctions
Create a new controlled crossing facility in Stanton Way.
- Public realm improvements throughout including new trees and street furniture.
- Possibility of a new pedestrian and cycle link through the railway embankment to the north of Southend Lane.
- Minor widening of the existing southern footway under the bridge to 1,200mm (4ft)

There is significant funding identified for the Bell Green site from the S106, for "Accessibility" works around the gyratory with further additional funding to be secured upon further developments in the site area. In addition LIP funding is being utilised for the feasibility stage. The current scheme proposals fit in well with the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy goals particularly contributing to the better streets agenda. It will improve road safety and make accessibility improvements for pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people.

It also fits in with the nearby proposed LIP schemes for Sydenham town centre and Sydenham Road east. Also recent highway improvement schemes have been carried out in the Perry Rise to Catford Hill Corridor and in

Southend Lane.

**Kirkdale/Dartmouth Road – Local Shopping Centre Improvements
£10k for 15/16, £100k for 1/17 and £200k for 17/18**

This scheme involves working with the local shops /businesses to make improvements to the local shopping area at Kirkdale (j/w Dartmouth Road). The main aim of this scheme is to improve the pedestrian realm and accessibility to help regenerate the shopping area. The work will include a review of local cycling facilities and parking. Bus stops in the vicinity of the works will be brought up to Bus Stop Accessibility standards. It is recommended that £10k of funding be used in 2015/16 for surveys and development work.

**Dartmouth Road North – Pedestrian Environment improvements -
£300k for 15/16 and £300 for 16/17**

Dartmouth Road forms one of Forest Hill's two high streets. The public realm environment in the northern section of Dartmouth Road is poor with illegal night time footway parking, unsightly street furniture, a number of vacant shops, a perception of inadequate lighting and anti-social behaviour. Initial funding was allocated for 2013/14 to investigate options by undertaking a feasibility study, consultation and designs to allow the development of proposals for a future programme of works. It is currently expected that the majority of the works will centre on the section of Dartmouth Road between its junction with the A205 and the Forest Hill Pools and library area, seeking to further enhance the public realm improvements resulting from the rebuilding of the pools. Development work on this scheme commenced in 2014/15 and it is recommended that £300k of funding is used in 2015/16 to continue development and commence implementation.

2.3 Sydenham waste improvement strategy

- **Collection arrangements and keeping the pavement clean and tidy**

Refuse provide a daily collection service in the high street. Reminder letters regarding the collection times are being provided on a quarterly basis because of the turnover of tenants living above the shops. We are trying to ensure the pavement remains free of bags – pink bags are for the commercial waste and orange bags for the domestic. All waste should be bagged to prevent staining of the new pavement. A pavement jet wash was carried out at the end of June in advance of the Sydenham Arts Festival. There is funding from the Sydenham Assembly Fund to jet wash on a periodic basis for the remainder of this year.

- **Hot spots**

Earlsthorne Mews (un-adopted road)

Issue

A lack of residential waste bins to address waste needs of residents living above the shops on a small stretch of Sydenham high road, and the alleged misuse of residential bins by commercial businesses.

Action taken

Council removed the small black bins serving these residents replacing them with four big blue bins.

Result

A significant improvement to the waste issues experienced on the Mews; less waste overflow since there is sufficient volume for the bins to store larger quantities of waste.

Ongoing matters

There are still some issues remaining. Councillor Onikosi is currently working with concerned residents to better identify the issues and find the best resolution.

Tannsfeld Road

Issue

(i) Poor waste management at the top end of Tannsfeld Road (j/w Sydenham High Road) concerning the flats above shops on the High Road and nearby business premises.

(ii) Persistent fly-tipping

Action taken

Council officers attended the street speaking to residents and businesses about keeping waste bins at the rear of the flats (where there is sufficient space to do so) rather than causing an unpleasant look on Tannsfeld Road especially when the bins overflow.

Further action taken: officers attended for a second time letting the estate agents (that manage some of the flats) know that enforcement action could be taken if residents do not adhere to keeping bins in the identified location.

Waste has been cleared

Ongoing matters

Council officers will be monitoring Tannsfeld Road twice a week.

- **General waste issues**

Residents should be aware of the **Love Lewisham Application which should be utilised** to report fly-tipping in your areas. Please see further details on the council website- <http://www.lovelewisham.org/reports>.

Download!

Love Lewisham App to your mobile -

<http://www.lovelewisham.org/account/logon>

Green Garden waste collection service

The Council offers the collection of green waste within 10 days. Sacks are £10 for 10 and they can be purchased via council site or from some libraries. Please see

<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/wasterecycle/Garden-waste/Pages/garden-waste-collection-service.aspx>

- **Serious problems waste/flytip**

Contact cllr_rachel.onikosi@lewisham.gov.uk or 07875094513.

- **Enforcement**

Following complaints the Clean Streets (Enforcement) Team visited the high street recently to look at the mobile phone kiosks and issued a fixed penalty notice of £100 to 5 Sydenham Road for breach of forecourt licensing conditions. The mobile phone kiosk at 38 – 40 does have a forecourt licence and is able to trade mobile phones.

The unlicensed sale of fruit & veg also resulted in a fixed penalty notice of £150 to a shop in Kirkdale.

2.4 Skanska Streetlighting issues

Side two of Bishopsthorpe Road will commence in the next few days, Earlsthorpe is all completed apart from the removal of one old column, Dukesthorpe we have columns 3 & 4 left to connect, Queensthorpe is currently scheduled for 29/09/2014, Kingsthorpe is currently scheduled for 05/11/2014, and Princethorpe is yet to have a date scheduled, although we expect the whole of Sydenham to be completed by the end of the year.

Christmas lights will continue to be provided as part of the PFI contract from Cobbs Corner to Mayow Road. The Assembly set aside funds last year for a Christmas event in the high street that includes lighting up the Christmas tree. It is hoped that the tree will once again be sponsored by a local business.

2.5 Zanzibar Night Club – appeal hearing

Two public meetings have taken place on the 23 July and 14 August and the Appeal hearing is on the 16 – 19 September.

The conclusion from both meetings was that a night club with a capacity for 890 and a licence until 5am is not compatible with a residential area with a limited supply of car parking. The sound proofing works carried out inside the building still give leakage to the neighbours and the noise created by patrons leaving at 5am is not able to be controlled – now across a wider residential area because of the prevention of illegal and double parking along Kirkdale. Those that do come by public transport hang around waiting for the first train back to London at 6.55am to Canada Water on the Overground Line on a Sunday morning. The off licence is open at 6am so more intake of alcohol is available.

Residents stated that the noise has got worse since the end of May and there are concerns with the frequency of most Saturday nights and every other Friday. One of the key concerns is that the venue is not well patronised by local residents – from what was said most of the clientele come by car from across London when the other clubs close at 2am.

A key concern with the lack of parking is that barriers are put across the top of Spring Hill to prevent access to the rear area as it is a cull de sac – Peak Hill Avenue on the left hand side is a no through road and cars have parked across driveways. At the meetings residents from further up Kirkdale said they had been disturbed in the middle of the night on Collingtree Road and Peak Hill and could not get back to sleep.

One of the comments was that “it was like living in a war zone” with all the barriers on Kirkdale outside the night club making it difficult to access the bus stop plus the barriers on Spring Hill were blocking the public highway – residents want to live in peace and quiet enjoyment of their homes not in an unsafe and noisy environment.

At the Licensing Committee in March John Wright said that he was having meetings with Belinda Lester, Louise Brooks and Jonathan Kaufman to develop a business model that could work 7days a week with a licence until 2am. The new owner has been quite clear that it is a business model that will only work with a 5am licence.

The conclusion from many residents is that they were prepared to compromise on a 2am licence if the night club was well managed and attracted a more diverse audience than at present – however some residents are wanting the current night club closed because of the inability to control the activities of patrons in a residential area by the management of club alongside the increase in late night noise since the end of May.

Following this, Cllr Best reported that the appeal has now been withdrawn and the 2 am licence will need to be endorsed by Bromley Magistrates next Tuesday 16 September when the new timing will take effect.

A resident commented that anti social behaviour still needs to be monitored even if the licence has been changed to 2 am and asked neighbours to keep logs of any nuisance and disturbance.

Contact officer is Cheryl.collins@lewisham.gov.uk

73. Presentation on Street Trees

See Appendix 1 for Briefing

There were concerns on the pollarding of trees on Longton Avenue. Vince explained that they were pruned to the British standard and will prolong their health and longevity. In an urban environment. Other considerations such as housing, pedestrian safety and traffic needs to be taken into account so trees cannot be left to grow too large if this could have a negative effect within that environment.

He explained that there are budgetary limitations, so replacing trees in parks such as Wells Park is difficult, but possibilities of finding funding , for example via the assembly funds, could be looked into.

If you have a tree related enquiry and would like to arrange for an inspection of a council managed tree please contact the Customer Service Centre on: 020 8314717

74. Presentation on supporting Residents Associations To Be Confirmed

- **Creating a new Residents Association for Wells Park**

Cllr Best highlighted the strengths of being in a group and forming a Resident Association with a collective voice and providing a sense of community spirit. There are several Resident Associations currently in the area:

- Longton Avenue - LARA
- Beaulieu Avenue and Longton Grove - BALGRA
- The Thorpes Residents Association
- Trewsbury Road Residents Association
- Waverley Court Tenants & Residents Association

Lewisham Homes and other housing associations welcome the setting up of residents associations but find that groups come together over a specific issue and find it hard to keep residents involved.

Following the tragic death of James Hunter in Wells Park Road, Cllr Curran has been liaising with local residents and introduced Cynthia, Luzolo and Nzilla who are interested in setting up a Community Association in the Wells Park area, made up of housing estates, roads and local businesses, to represent the myriad of people who live in the area of Wells Park road. Lazola explained that the group is called Reach for Changes:

REACH - Raising Expectations And Creating Hope.

CHANGES - Community Hope And Nurturing Group for Elders and Seedlings.

They would like to start by creating a Peace garden to improve the area and provide a focal point for the community to encourage older people as well as the younger generation. Events have started and they would like to expand from there.

If you would like to get involved in Reach for Changes contact Cynthia on 07983295706

75. Lewisham's Big Budget Challenge

Presented by Genevieve Macklin, Head of Housing.

She explained that the challenge Lewisham faces is that the Council has to reduce its spending by a considerable amount; £1 in every £3. This is driven by central Government reducing its grants within Lewisham and every other local authority across England.

In Lewisham, savings of £85 million needs to be found over the next 3 years.

She explained that this was not a formal consultation but a means to get a conversation started and gain initial feedback on the subject and what lies ahead.

The purpose of the presentation was to explain:

- **How the Council currently spends its money**
- **Where that money comes from**
- **How our income is being cut**
- **How and when decisions will be made**
- **How you can influence those decisions**

See appendix 2 for presentation details.

Feedback cards were completed and handed in.

To give your views or have a go on the online budget simulator go to

www.lewisham.gov.uk/bigbudgetchallenge

This will be open until 22 October 2014. Consultation and scrutiny will follow and the Council will set the new budget on 25 February 2015.

Summary of questions/ comments raised:

Q. Is it fair to say that because the cut is so big (£85 million) a cut would have to come from Children and Adult Social Care?

A. It is fair enough to say that if 50% of the net budget goes to Children and Adult Social care and you didn't reduce spending within these services, then you would have to take significantly more from the other remaining services.

A resident commented on the Barnet Graph of Gloom, a PowerPoint slide showing that within 20 years, unless things change dramatically, the north London council will be unable to provide any services except adult [social care](#) and [children's](#) services. No libraries, no parks, no leisure centre's – not even bin collections. He

fears that the reduced spending will continue further than 3 years, irrelevant of what government is in place.

Q. On a positive note, if residents in the borough are increasing, wont they be contributing to Lewisham's income?

A. Yes, certainly through things like council tax. In terms of the way the government grant funding settlement works there may be a bigger contribution based on increased residents, however it will probably never match in the way the current grant is distributed.

Q. Is Lewisham Council looking at sharing services across other borough's to reduce spending?

A. Yes they have been proactive on this, already our IT and finance services are shared and have saved money. (Borough's include Bromley, Croydon and Greenwich) .We are looking at other services, eg Housing and staff reduction as well. Plus services have been put on line to reduce costs . 600 staff members have already been cut.

Q. Are Lewisham's assets being looked at?

A . Lewisham has been proactively looking at its assets, including looking at selling, but also working on making better use of its assets and generating income for a more long term approach, eg The Town Hall has been cleared and is now used to let out (room hire) to community groups and organisations.

Cllr Currran acknowledged that this was a painful process. He added that the Sydenham Councillor's feel very strongly that there should be more resources to pay for services to maintain a decent civil society that we should all be entitled to.

76. Priorities for Sydenham Assembly funds £12,500

Cllr Best highlighted the following priorities that have come from previous assemblies and the Sydenham Assembly Action Plan, and the assembly agreed to inviting community groups and organisations to submit bids to support and deliver on these priorities:

- **Funding events in Sydenham high street**

Jonathan Kaufman spoke about the various events he was hoping to take forward under Sydenham Arts including more activities in the high street alongside Easter, Halloween, Christmas and other events

- **Funding to enable events on the Sydenham library piazza**

Ilse Towler spoke about the library piazza and It is hoped that the space can hold literacy events, provide markets, café, entertainment and the lighting of a Christmas tree in Lower Sydenham

- **Funding Street Trees**

Following the earlier presentation the cost of a street tree is around £250 that includes delivery, preparation and planting. Trees need watering and nurturing and if local groups wanted to support trees then bids would be welcome to provide some funding for trees

- **Support for setting up new Residents Associations**

Following the earlier presentation the aim is to support new residents associations/community groups that bring the community together and support activities that give residents a voice

- **Funding creative surface on rear wall at Station Approach**

With the completion of the works to Station Approach there is a need to make the area as you walk out of the station more appealing – ideas have included street art, artistic map of the area or a notice board.

77. Join the Sydenham Assembly Coordinating Group Pat Trembath

- **Feedback forms - agenda items next meeting**

Pat Trembath highlighted the importance of completing the feedback forms and invited members to join the coordinating group which plans the assembly and discusses local issues and updates. If you would like to join contact maya.onyett@lewisham.gov.uk for further information.

78. Information items and open questions and answers

Sydenham Arts festival was given thanks and recognition as being a brilliant community festival.

Jonathan Kaufman explained that they have started the process for the Sydenham Arts Festival (SAF) to become a charity and hopes to have funding by the end of the year to provide activities all year round. They are also looking for people to join some 'focus group' meetings, exploring the future of SAF.

Any community groups or organisations who want to get involved with this can email him on director@sydenhamartsfestival.co.uk

- Volunteers for Christmas events and activities

Cllr Best welcomed any local choirs that would like to sing at the event following the next assembly on Saturday 6 December or if anyone has ideas on other activities, for example, drumming sessions are taking place at the next market.

Saturday 13 December will hold the Christmas market and any offers for help would be greatly received, including delivering activities such as face painting, helping make Christmas lanterns and any other activities that are fun and create a great community spirit.

If you would like to get involved contact Cllr Best CllrChris.Best@lewisham.gov.uk

Cllr Best wanted to check that every Sydenham resident received a newsletter inviting them to the assembly. It was noted that Taylors Lane didn't receive them.

A resident raised the problem of fly posting and stickers on the high street. He highlighted two solutions;

1. To get the street cleaners to take them down
2. Lewisham Council should contact the number on the posters/ stickers and prosecute.

Cllr Best outlined that they have previously got together in groups and have cleaned the high street getting rid of graffiti and fly posting. Time Credits can also be used for this kind of activity whereby an hour credit (gained from an hour spent cleaning the high street) is given to be spent on another activity chosen from a list. Cllr Best said she was happy to organise this if people were interested.

Another resident asked why the street cleaners couldn't notify the council of fly tipping instead of relying on residents to contact Love Lewisham.

Cllr Onikosi said she would look into this. She advised that if people have any issues with waste to contact her on cllr_rachel.onikosi@lewisham.gov.uk

An update was requested on the overhanging trees and hedges at the top of Berrymans Lane, corner with Mayow Road. The derelict bungalow at 127 Mayow

is managed by Lewisham Homes and is a long term void. Cllr Best has previously emailed on the subject and will follow up as the hedges are still overhanging causing problems for pedestrians.

79. Dates for the next Assembly meetings

- **Saturday 6 December – 2pm at Sydenham Community Library followed by carols and lighting up the Christmas Tree**
- **Wednesday 11 March 2015 – 7pm at Sydenham Centre**

Cllr Best thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

80. Appendix 1 Briefing Note - Tree Management