

MINUTES OF THE FOREST HILL ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 16 September 2014 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Bernards, Maja Hilton and Paul Upex

ALSO PRESENT:

Apologies for absence were received from

17. Welcome from the Chair

Cllr Upex, Chair of the Forest Hill Assembly welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced fellow Councillors; Cllr Hilton and Cllr Bernards.

18. School Places provision

Cllr Paul Maslin and Chris Threlfall highlighted that issues around there not being enough school place provision has been raised in the past in Forest Hill regarding Horniman and Fairlawn. The pressure for school places in Forest Hill and Sydenham will continue. Other wards across Lewisham are experiencing the same problems. They explained that the way the department deals with it is to forward plan by looking at how many places they think they need , then negotiate with schools and their governing bodies about how we are going to supply them. He explained that part of the restraints are definitely financial, 2008 was the first year where extra places needed to be created and it has escalated from thereon. He explained that by now they would have liked to have created more permanent places, not just by putting on an extra class , but, for example, to change one form of entry to two , or a two form entry to three. Some of this has happened but they have had to rely on introducing bulge classes and will continue to do this. One positive is that the process started in 2009/10, so 7 years worth of a bulge class will now create an ongoing space. In 2016 , across the Borough, there will be spaces as one bulge class comes through and the next one starts. The next couple of years are going to be difficult, he explained that for Forest Hill and Sydenham they are in the process of planning and negotiating, with the aim of providing around three forms of entry, through a combination of some purpose expansion and some bulge classes.

Michael Abrahams, chair of Forest Hill Society and local resident highlighted the problems in the area , where children who live 253 m away from the school are not getting spaces when children who live 250 m away are. They are then having to attend schools that are further away with no direct buses to get to them.

Q1. I don't understand why school places weren't put in the local area rather than a mile or a mile and a half away?

A1. It was based on a financial decision that the Council had to take when looking at value for money. The Council is very sympathetic to those who have to travel further, the legal guidelines are stated as up to 2 miles away but we do try to accommodate classes as close as possible to the area whilst looking at best value and budget limitations.

Q2 Down the road from the Horniman, the Council have bought a building that

is to be used for housing, why hasn't it been used for education purposes?
A2. The Council has a responsibility, legally and morally to provide a range of Services. Homelessness has increased, the borough has restricted use of land as well and this decision has been taken to try to balance these competing priorities.

Q3 Is the situation at the Horniman permanent?

A3. Feasibility is being looked at. The Council would like to offer places there but whether this can happen is yet to be decided.

Q4 Will those attending bulge classes now get places in secondary schools?

A4. We are looking at the potential expansion of a couple of schools through using other sites and exploring financial avenues. The cost of building a new school costs around 25 million and we are also looking at who might be the provider of a new school.

Cllr Upex asked Cllr Maslin and Chris to come back to the assembly at a future time to update on these issues. They agreed to do so.

19. Police SNT update

PC Richard Bailey told the meeting that they are currently working on a contact list which would act like an online Neighbourhood Watch scheme called the Residential Community contact list.

All they require is resident's name, address, phone number and email address and updates on crime and local information will be sent. He also said that it is a two way arrangement so residents can also update the police on any antisocial behaviour and crimes that they might witness.

The information collected will not be shared and is data protected.

For more information contact:

ForestHill.snt@met.police.uk

[See Appendix 1-SNT Contact Registration](#)

He also advised that if you want to contact the police there are 2 numbers:

1. 999 for emergency
2. 101 for non emergency, eg car damage, anti-social behaviour

You can also get information from the website:

<http://www.police.uk/metropolitan/00AZGL/>

Burglaries and robberies are down in the Forest Hill ward
Theft from motor vehicles have increased slightly.

There was a query raised on the issue of fly tipping (largely business waste) on Tyson Road. The police advised them to contact the council

Residents need to 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>.

A resident advised that there should be speed cameras on Sydenham rise. This can be passed onto the traffic department within the police to look into.

A resident asked the police to remove the car advertising 'cars for cash' parked on Sydenham Hill as it is advertising on a public highway and is in an inconvenient place. They said they would look into it.

20. SEE3 Legacy - Neighbourhood Planning

Pat Trembath from SEE3 Neighbourhood Planning Legacy attended to update on the final proposal for Kirkdale

She introduced Andrew Budd, a practising architect and Senior Lecturer at Kingston University School of Architecture, who is a member of the Sydenham Society's Conservation and Planning Committee. Andrew had offered the resources of the past year's post-graduate students, working on their Master's degree, by giving them the "live" project of working with local residents to come up with ideas on how to improve Kirkdale.

The area they are referring to in Kirkdale is the Willow Way, Kirkdale, Dartmouth road triangle.

A number of workshops have been held over the past year and the group have agreed that the council-owned redundant depot site (currently being used as a decant site for Adamsrill School) held the key to improvements. This site was part of a larger one strategically designated for industrial/ employment use. It was felt that to improve the area it was necessary to persuade Lewisham Council to change its designation to "Mixed use". A model of the area had been produced and was used to describe what other uses might be identified as lacking locally in several years time - a Dr's surgery, possible educational needs, residential and facilities for possible start up businesses.

The 30-page document has now been completed, see [Appendix2- SEE3 Kirkdale Triangle Proposal](#)

A resident commented that there is a need to be aware of making land available for commercial development because they have a track record of not producing affordable housing which is a priority in this area.

Cllr Upex said that this project starts the conversation to start talking about and addressing these concerns.

In the first instance Cllr Upex asked the assembly whether they agree with the proposal of the site being changed from the designated employment use to that of a mixed use. The assembly agreed by a vote of hands.

21. The Lewisham Big Budget Challenge

Robyn Fairman 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 3 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:

Q1 Can you increase council tax?

A1 If you increase council tax, the government would reduce its grant further so it wouldn't make the difference required to make the savings.

Q2 Does the council have any opportunities to generate income?

A2 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.

Q3 Using the online simulator, why can Lewisham only save £0.5 million by combining services, when other boroughs have managed to save £4- 8 million each?

A3. This question would need to be taken back to the council and looked into, but it could be the way the simulator has been loaded. Sharing with other boroughs to reduce money is being looked into as a high priority.

22. Priorities for 2014 -15 & the launch of the Assembly Fund

The 2014/15 Forest Hill Assembly fund will focus on one or more of the following:

Youth engagement and provision- looking for activities that will appeal to young people. These could include those that are Art , Music, Drama and Sports based. We are also keen to open up the criteria to include ideas around exciting intergenerational projects.

Making Forest Hill more attractive - looking for proposals that will help to keep Forest Hill streets clean and appealing. This could include the planting of trees and flowers or a proposal that would increase street art.

Community events and publicity – looking for proposals around networking events and events that include local groups or those with a family focus; the

development of community spaces; and ideas for improving communication within and between the communities in Forest Hill.

How much is available?

There is £12,500 available for the Forest Hill ward in 2014–15. You can apply for a maximum of £2,500 for each individual project.

What can it be spent on?

The priorities highlighted have been identified by residents, community groups and local businesses who have attended the Forest Hill Assembly Meetings. We want to fund projects that aim to tackle these important issues raised by the local community. The money could be used to start up a project, support a group to develop new activities, or support a larger project that has secured funding from other sources.

How to apply

Complete the attached project proposal form and email to maya.onyett@lewisham.gov.uk. There is further important information on page 5 of this form.

Closing date for all proposal forms is Friday 31 October 2014.

Voting on projects will take place at the Forest Hill Assembly Meeting to be held on Sunday 23 November at Sydenham School, 1.30 – 3.30pm.

23. Community information

Forest Hill Fashion week- Louise Brooks

Louise Brooks explained that Forest Hill Fashion week is in its fourth iteration and was introduced through the SEE3 Portas Pilot.

There will be over 35 events taking place across the 4 days- Thursday 18 - Sunday 21 September.

Activities include fashion shows, markets ,a Wiggary workshop, over 20 workshops, children's activities ,a party, amongst others

Further details can be found on www.foreshillfashion.com

Cllr Upex asked if there was anyone who was interested in helping design the door to door newsletter that goes out to each household advertising the assembly. If anyone is interested please contact maya.onyett@lewisham.gov.uk

A query was raised with the chaos of traffic on Devonshire road caused by parking. Cllr Hilton said you would check on the CPZ consultation.

24. Join the Forest Hill Assembly Coordinating Group

Cllr Upex 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.

25. Close

Cllr Upex thanked everyone for attending.

The next assembly will take place on Sunday 23 November at Sydenham School, 1.30 – 3.30pm.

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

26. Appendix 1SNT Contact Registration

27. Appendix2- SEE3 Kirkdale Triangle Proposal

28. Appendix 3 AssembliesBigBudgetChallengePresentationV3