

# MINUTES OF THE FOREST HILL ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 8 December 2016 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Bernards, Maja Hilton and Paul Upex

## 1. **Welcome from the Chair, Cllr Peter Bernards**

Cllr Peter Bernards, Chair of the Forest Hill Assembly welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Cllr Paul Upex and Cllr Maja Hilton.

## 2. **NHS Update - Dorothy Muir**

**apologies sent.**

## 3. **Forest Hill Library Update - Michael Abrahams**

**Michael Abrahams** explained that the library is now operating with just over a 100 volunteers aging from people in their 20's to those in their 80's.

They need more to keep it running. The boiler has been fixed so the heating is now working.

New computers are currently being set up and there are a variety of events taking place, including toddler groups, and book clubs.

So far it is going well, the agreement is in place for 25 years so there is a long way to go.

Currently there are 3 people (volunteers) in the library at any time – 66 hours per week to be covered which amounts to 3 shifts a day.

They are still learning and welcome feedback and would like the Forest Hill assembly to be a platform to do this and support the ongoing work and development. The assembly has given £5,000 funding and the library are working on planning activities to provide anything from philosophy to remarketing the children's library. 6 weeks of Crowd funding has raised just over £10,000 which is a wonderful reflection of the support from the local community, residents, businesses and organisations. Also some areas of the library will be rented out. Overall this allows the library to run with the same amount of books. Additionally, books can be ordered in and eBooks are also on offer and in the long term they are looking for more books to be sourced. They will also run events in partnership with V22- Louise house which is next to the library. A special thanks and acknowledgement of all the hard work and contribution so far was given to all the volunteers and Simon Hicks who is managing the library.

The library is made up of a partnership of 3 organisations, namely, The Forest Hill Society, The Forest Hill Traders Association and V22 Louise House.

## 4. **SNT update - written update provided**

**Regarding Burglary;** There has been a noticeable decrease in the number of reported residential burglaries, though there has been a slight increase in the number of non-residential burglaries and these have generally affected sheds etc.

On this note, our neighbouring ward, Perry Vale have had a number of instances where residents have found that access has been made into their gardens, though entry wasn't made to any building. We have had one reported instance in our ward and this occurred near to Millennium Gardens. Again, thankfully no access was made to the resident's home, though we appreciate anything like this is worrying. Could I ask people to ensure their sheds and garages are secured with approved locks. Again, if anyone needs any advice on suitable locks or crime prevention in general, can they contact us and this can be arranged.

**Regarding Violence against the person;** The number of reported crimes involving violence towards people over the last three months is again down compared to the previous reporting period.

**Regarding our previous update over Elliott Bank and inconsiderate parking of vehicles during school drop of and pick up time;** We have received fewer complaints over inconsiderate parking on this road but again, if people are concerned over this, please make contact with us and we can refer these concerns to Highways and again request they send parking attendants to patrol this area. Again I have to be clear on the subject of parking. This is an offence that the police have no jurisdiction over unless a vehicle is causing an unnecessary obstruction, parked in a dangerous position or preventing someone from leaving their drive. With regards to Thorpewood, the team have patrolled Elliott Bank on a number of occasions and yes, several parents were found to be parking inconsiderately and duly moved on. Inconsiderate parking outside schools is an issue that affects most schools in Lewisham and indeed London. Although we cannot be in Thorpewood outside the school on a daily basis, we have been in contact with parking services and they have had their CCTV/Camera car stationed in this road as well as parking enforcement officers.

**Regarding Millennium Gardens and the Town Centre;** We have received few complaints regarding Millennium Gardens other than that previously mentioned in our burglary update. Concerns over this area and adjacent roads are still a priority to us and we will continue to patrol these areas. Regarding ASB by begging in the Town Centre, as stated previously, having identified those responsible, one individual again offended and received a Community Protection Notice Warning due to their ongoing behaviour. Following this we have to date received no further complaints regarding this individual, though we are now aware of others who are begging in the Kirkdale and neighbouring Sydenham areas and are looking to deal with these individuals in much the same way.

Regarding the ASB in general, our ward panel members have given us a tasking for the next three months to answer and deal with complaints of ASB within the ward. To this end, if anyone has any concerns over ASB in their area, please make contact with us either by ringing 020 8721 2723 or by e-mail at [ForestHill.SNT@met.police.uk](mailto:ForestHill.SNT@met.police.uk). Your call or e-mail will be dealt with in strictest confidence or alternatively, the public can contact us through **either online at Crimestoppers-uk.org or by calling 0800 555 111**

I hope this update is suitable for purpose and request any complaints or questions be forwarded to us either in person by ringing 020 8721 2723 or by e-mailing the team on [ForestHill.SNT@met.police.uk](mailto:ForestHill.SNT@met.police.uk)

## **5. Dartmouth Road Update - written update**

Written update from **28/11/16 key stakeholder meeting notes:**

Overall: the key stakeholder group seemed satisfied that their main concerns had been addressed in the design.

- **Budget:** Les Senior reported that there was a requirement to reduce the project cost by £200k from estimated cost supplied by TfL's term contractor Kier Highway to meet the allocated project budget, therefore additional cost elements coming out of the meeting discussion, e.g. extra granite crossings, were not possible without other trade-offs. LBL, design consultants and TfL officers will be meeting Kier Highways to resolve. Unconfirmed meeting date proposed is 13<sup>th</sup> December.
- **Programme:** Works are projected to start in late February and to finish 8 to 9 months later. Works will probably proceed in sections starting from the A205 northern end, although the exact programme of works is up to the contractor to decide and agree with the Council. It was noted that during this time there will be disruption on Dartmouth Road with contra-flows employed to manage traffic flows. However, it is unlikely that the road will need to be closed during the works.
- **Materials:** everyone had been to view the panel. The general consensus was that the red granite wasn't as dominant a colour as the design team had suggested, although no-one had seen it when wet, which is when it stands out most. David Pope provided samples of possible alternatives. After the meeting Cllr Hilton, Les Senior and David Pope went to review the new samples adjacent to the panel and the following palette was agreed:
  - Keep the smaller units of the deep red granite as an accent within the paving scheme.
  - Exchange the darkest grey granite for the blue grey sample
  - Add in the pink granite that varies in tone between red and blue to tie in the pinky colours with the greys.
  - Retain the other colours

### **Action: PCL Construction to advise the final mix for LBL's contractor**

- **Forest Lodge:** Les Senior explained the previous parking arrangements where parking occurred on the footway were not legal, as the land up to the front garden wall is Public Highway. LBL cannot be seen to be supporting this. LBL's lawyers have been in correspondence with the lawyers of the freeholder of Forest Lodge and there has been no challenge to the Council's position. Only one parking bay is shown on the proposals outside Forest Lodge, as there are constraints due to underground utilities and the proximity to the crossing and bus stop that prevent additional space being available.
- **Road width and markings:** Confirmed as 6.4m with no centre line. This measurement was agreed with TfL Buses and is sufficient to let 2 buses

pass. It also fits in with London Cycle Design Guide recommendations of having a lane width of no more than 3.2m. Double yellow lines throughout should stop the parking problems associated with Sundays and times outside the current restrictions.

- Sylvan Post: it was suggested that the area by the Sylvan Post is already well covered with trees, therefore the new tree in a planter closest to the pub entrance should be deleted. Works to thin the existing Robinia's crown are also required. **Action: PCL to amend drawings to include this. Additional CE to be added to Thorpewood Ave crossing CE.**
- Planters: Confirmed that where there is an opportunity to include informal planters, the Forest Hill Society would be prepared to take on the maintenance. Locations and numbers would have to be agreed; prime locations would be where proposed trees may not be able to go in because of underground utilities.

Drawings attached however please note they are not final and are subject to change.

## 6. Group discussion exercise

Discuss the following questions:

1. What do you think is good about the Forest Hill assembly?
2. How can we make it better?
3. Why do you attend the local assembly?
4. What do you think would bring along more of your neighbours?
5. What do you think stops people getting involved in the Forest Hill coordinating group and assembly?
6. How can we change this?

### Group 1 Feedback:

- It's good that there is an opportunity for the meetings to happen.
- Informal
- Allows an opportunity to meet the councillors
- Good for community updates and local news.
- Forest Hill Pools and Sydenham School are good venues, the bus stops are limited to the Honor Oak Fellowship.
- Venues should be rotated.
- Meetings should not be held in the dark evenings
- The meeting needs to be more business-like, with a more organised agenda and more staff to organise.
- No minutes of the meeting at every meeting.

### Group 2 Feedback:

- It's good that the assembly programme exists and gives an opportunity to ask questions, discuss local issues and offers funding.

- The website is out of date and doesn't identify with Forest Hill.
- Agenda on digital website
- More on marketing and promotions e.g. give leaflets out outside the train station.

**Group 3 Feedback:**

- The frequency of assembly meetings is good and there are positives and negatives for change of venues. We need to look at dates more closely as tonight coincided with late night Christmas shopping events.
- We should invite more young people in leadership positions, liaise with local schools and the Young Mayor.
- Why are BME residents underrepresented at the meetings?
- Issues seem to drive attendance (Hornimans updates, controlled parking, etc). We need to make sure the agenda is relevant.
- Maybe we could link events with meetings.
- We could be more effectively using social media and forums.

**7. Join the Forest Hill Assembly Coordinating Group**

Cllr Bernards 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](mailto:maya.onyett@lewisham.gov.uk) for further information.

**8. Community information**

- Cllr Upex updated on the train services proposal – Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) launched an extensive consultation setting out proposed changes to the timetable which ended on 8<sup>th</sup> December. Lewisham Labour has passed a motion at full Council, 23/11/2016, expressing some concerns around these proposals and asking the Public Transport Liaison Committee to investigate in more detail to address the issues of overcrowding during peaks times and the reduction of peak services to London Bridge to four trains an hour from Sydenham, Forest Hill, Honor Oak, and Brockley. There is also disappointment with the proposal of diverting all East Croydon Trains to West Croydon which will make it harder and longer to get to Gatwick and other destinations in Sussex. Cllr Upex will keep the assembly updated.