



**LEWISHAM CENTRAL LOCAL ASSEMBLY
MEETING**
Saturday 23rd February 2019 12pm – 2pm
Hither Green Baptist Church Hall
Theodore Road, London SE13

Record of Meeting

	Item	Actions
1	Welcome, Introduction & Format of meeting	
	Cllr Joan Reid welcomed everyone and went through the format of the meeting.	
2	Reporting back from Assembly funded project	
1.	<p>Red Ribbon Living Well Husseina Hamza, a project leader at the Red Ribbon Living Well project provided an update to the meeting on how the funding they received from the Assembly was spent. The project supports people affected and infected by HIV.</p> <p>Purpose of the project/funding.</p> <p>The project was aimed at promoting awareness about HIV and issues related to it in the London Borough of Lewisham, particularly in the Lewisham Central ward. Some statistic was provided about infection rates. Lewisham was said to have the third highest infection rate of HIV amongst all the London Boroughs with infection rates at 7.2 per 1000 people which is above the London average of 5.2 per 1000 people and 8th in the UK for HIV infections. There is concern that the statistics are rising in certain demographics areas of the borough, particularly amongst the migrant communities of mainly African origin. Although the statistics in Lewisham present a grim reading, RRLW is determined to continue fighting ignorance surrounding sexual health in the London Borough of Lewisham.</p> <p>WHAT THE FUNDING HAS ACHIEVED:</p> <p>ACTIVITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness of HIV testing and prevention – delivering outreach sessions in Lewisham Central • Outreach sessions took place at: Lewisham shopping centre, Glassmill Leisure Centre, Lewisham Hospital and Lewisham 	

<p>2.</p>	<p>Library</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project used focus group to facilitate discussions twice a month. This sessions was used to provide advice and support including Living positive, disclosure, how to support newly diagnoses, HIV and mental health, HIV and diabetic, advice and support to Family and relationship, and Carer. • Outreach held at Lewisham Shopping Centre on World AIDS DAY created the opportunity for people to unite and fight against HIV, to show support for people living with HIV and to commemorate those that had died from AIDS relate illness. • Further outreach session took place at the Glassmill Leisure Centre to promote the “Be inspired health and well-being Project”. The event was organised by GCDA in partnership with Lewisham public health and Lewisham council. Leaflets, and one-to-one advice and support were provide during the session. • Liaising with the sexual health clinics for up-to-date signposting information • A weekly support group provided the opportunity for people to share personal experiences, feelings and coping strategies. For many people, a health-related support group fill a gap between medical treatment and the need for emotional support. • The project gives the service user a safe environment to talk openly and honestly about their feelings. • Some of the feedback received showed people feeling less lonely, Isolate and gaining a sense of empowerment and control. <p>The benefits to the wider community were education and information on testing and prevention. Not everyone knows the impact HIV/ AIDS has in the community. This project enabled the dissemination of information in the community which were essential in the reduction of negative attitudes towards people living with HIV.</p> <p>St Mauritius Over 60s Lunch Club</p> <p>The lunch club was funded by the Assembly and Hyde Housing Trust and lunched on 18th July 2018 with an overall aim of ensuring that members benefits from a nutritional hot meal at an affordable price twice a week. The club aims to increase the social well-being of older and socially isolated people in the community through its membership. The club also aims to foster cultural diversity and provide a forum for members to receive advice from other services provided locally. The club has maintained a regular attendance of around 30 members on a weekly basis and continues to grow.</p> <p>Food is source locally and cooked on the premises. There is a trained cook supported by a group of volunteers. Meals are offered every Wednesday and Friday from 12.30pm to 2.30pm. On Fridays members benefit from an hour long chair based exercise class before meal, from 11am to 12pm. The club charges £5 for a three course meal.</p>	
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	<p>Impact of the project on participants The project conducts regular survey with members and the feedback received so far has been very encouraging. Result shows that many participants enjoyed the time spent at the club and that the food provided is well presented and of good quality. Some reported that they were able to mingle with old friends and also make new once. This shows evidence that the club is clearly addressing a need in the community and making a positive difference to people's health and social well-being.</p> <p>Volunteers and community input From inception, each volunteers at the club contributes up to 4 hours per session at the project including the time spent planning activities.</p>	
3	Consultation on Waste & Recycling	
	<p>The meeting was informed of a consultation on recycling and waste management run by the council in line with the mayor's vision in his manifesto to identify barriers to recycling. The consultation will run from 18th February to April 8th 2019. Residents will be asked to complete the survey online or paper questionnaire with details of what they know about waste and recycling in the borough. As an incentive, there would be five chances to win a £50 Amazon voucher from randomly selected names.</p> <p>Why is the Council consulting?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council is seeking resident's view on how they can improve the services they offer • To work with residents to improve recycling rate in Lewisham <p>What can be recycle? Carton, food tins and drink cans, mixed glass, bottles and jars, cleaning products like shampoo bottle, mixed papers and household plastics packaging. The advice from officer is to leave materials out if in doubt.</p> <p>What happens to the materials collected?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recycling bins are collected from the kerbside of properties and on estate from around the borough and brought to the Material Recycling Facility site in Crayford. • The load are inspected for items that may cannot be recycled. • If the load are contaminated they will be sent away from the recycling facility for incineration or to landfill at an additional cost to the council. • Advice was provided on the use of garden waste service. This includes putting the correct item in the bin provided, putting garden waste loose in bin provided and not in plastic bag as this will contaminate, ensure that bin lids are fully closed, and label bins with house number. • The council sells compost bins at a subsidise cost of £10. This is available to residents who wish to compost their garden waste at home. 	

	<p>A graph showing the average amount of food waste generated by household across the borough was presented. The average food waste per person each week was said to be around 1.3kg. This was one of the driving factor for the introduction of food waste bins.</p> <p>What should be placed in the food waste bin?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any food including raw and cooked vegetables • Meat and fish – raw and cooked • All dairy products such as eggs and cheese • Bread, cakes and pastries • Rice, pasta and beans • Uneaten food from your plates and dishes • Tea bags and coffee grounds • Nut shells <p>Contamination</p> <p>Food in wrappers and plastic bags was said to be a conterminal, and should not be put in the food waste recycling bin. Where there is evidence of contamination, officer will follow the 3 warning process as outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first stage involves sending a letter to a household where contaminated waste was found outlining what has happened and what can go in the recycle bin. • On the second occasion, a formal letter will be sent explaining that if the issue persist the bin will be removed. • The final stage is where the bin is removed. <p>Any enquiries relating to waste and recycling can be sent to the team at: Recycle@Lewisham.gov.uk Telephone: 020 8314 9303</p> <p>A question and answer session followed this presentation.</p>	
4.	Councillor's Update	
	<p>Litter and Flytipping</p> <p>Following a report received from residents, attempt has been made by Councillors to address the issues of flytipping that regularly exist on George Lane and Mount Pleasant Road. Cllr Codd would like to update the residents from these streets during the break. A small green space by Gilmore Road owned and managed by Lewisham Homes was also mentioned. Volunteers have been clearing the litters on this patch for a number of years. Councillors have recently got commitment from Lewisham Homes to address these issues by installing a few bins in the area.</p>	
5.	Mayor's question time	
	A brief introductory update and challenges currently faced by the	

council were outlined by the Mayor as follows:

- The mayor explained the challenges and the impact that the huge cuts to council's budget imposed by central government has had on the provision of services. Lewisham Council's budget has reduced from £400m in 2010 to the current £230m. There are plans to reduce this even further by another £30m
- The main task faced by this administration is to identify where cuts can be made. The reality of this has led to job losses and a reduction in services.
- The council will be setting its budget for 2019-20 at the end of the month and it is certain that it will be using around £2m of its reserve fund to address some areas affected by the cuts.
- The second challenge relates to what is called people's power. The number of people employed by the council has dramatically reduced from 4000 to just over 2000 currently. Front line staff have been protected throughout and the cuts has mainly affected back office staff.
- A third challenge is around culture change. The mayor and councillors were elected in May 2018 on a manifesto building on what has been achieved by the previous administration.
- One of the criticism of the mayoral process in Lewisham was that the Mayor holds too much power, as a result the constitution has been amended recently to include a devolved power between the Mayor and Cabinet. A mission of work is being looked into to ensure that this collaborative process is spread throughout the council.
- A key theme that the mayor was elected on was his commitment to the provision of more social housing. This pledge was aimed at building one thousand new homes in the borough either by building from scratch or buying homes off the open market. 26 different sites across the borough has been identified for this purpose.
- The main challenge however is identified a project manager to oversee its delivery. In addressing this, the council has submitted a bid to the Greater London Authority (GLA) for the sum of £750,00 to develop a team that will get the programme up and running.
- In regards to schools and provisions for young people, this was said to be the second top issue that came up during the election door knock campaign. Lewisham has amongst the best early years education in the country and is a lead borough for primary schools. The main issue is its secondary schools where performance were said to be below the standard expected. As a result around 40% of parents are sending their children to secondary schools outside of the borough
- To address this, the council is ejecting funding into secondary schools in the borough to bring them up to standard. There is £1m a year plugged into a scheme called Lewisham Learning Partnership, launch last month to bring schools together to share good practice and offer support to failing schools.
- Some signs of improvement has been recorded on the latest exam league result. Lewisham performance went up by a couple of percent indicating the first signs of improvements from the new partnership.

- Other commitments includes support to assist 100 refugee families into the borough. This was said to be part of the commitment to making Lewisham a refuge for refugees and migrant families. The support offered by community groups who have been instrumental in helping provide accommodation, furniture and food etc. was commended by the mayor.
- A total of 15 families has been received so far. There are plans to increase this to 100 families.
- On staffing, plans are underway to bring back procured services in-house and reduce agency contracts. Some of the staff on this contracts have been offered permanent contract by the council.

Question Time

Q1. A question was asked about the NSPCC unsuccessful bid to the council main grant. What is the council doing to address and contribute to the sustainability of such organisation?

Response: The council invest in the main grant programme and will fund groups like NSPCC and other organisations who are have successfully met the funding criteria. Around £2.4m has been set aside for this purpose. All successful bidders are guaranteed funding to support their projects over three years. Since this is a specific question about an organisation, the mayor will seek further information from officers responsible for this area of work.

Q2. A question was asked about the operation of Parking restriction (CPZ) around the Woodlands

Response: A brief explanation on how the CPZ works and is managed was provided. As with any CPZ application, a referendum is held. Legally, the council has to wait for 5 years before another one can be done. A review of CPZ across the borough is being planned. Currently there is a flat fee which applies to all CPZ zones. This is about to change so that the fee will now be in line with the road tax that vehicle owners have to pay depending on how much emission their vehicle produces. The changes will apply to both residential and business parking permit and is aimed at improving air pollution. The proposed changes will be announced over the coming weeks.

Q3. A question was asked about rubbish dumping and flytipping and fortnightly waste collection on George Lane. The smell which is generated as a result is becoming unbearable for residents.

Response: Mayor explained that unless there is a significant change in the funding that council receives from central government, it cannot go back to weekly waste collection. Mayor and councillors have held back a proposal to reduce road sweeping on residential streets to once a month. A reduction in the number of enforcement officers was also cited as a problem. There are currently 6 officers in this role and funding has been made available to provide each officer with body camera which can record people littering the streets which can assist with prosecution

of offenders. The other contributory element to this issue was identified as properties bought and converted into several bedsits. Landlords are maximising the rental income acquired from these rented accommodation many of which are paid for through housing benefit. To address this problem, the council has introduced Article 4 which now requires landlord to get permission from the council before they can convert houses into flats / bedsits.

Q4. A question was asked about air quality and warnings signs which advise people where pollution is high.

Response: There is an app that provide guidance on the level of air pollution in the borough and advise people of areas where they will be exposed to less air pollution. The council is also investing in electric cars and more electronic charging stations. People also need to help the improvement by making less car journey. There is a recognition that in order to achieve this, there is a need to improve public transport infrastructure, working with TFL to campaign for the extension of the Bakerloo Line into the borough to improve transport connectivity. The borough has also secured some funding to carry out a feasibility study for the installation of a segregated cycle super-highway on the A21 road linking the north of the borough down Bromley Road into Lewisham. In addition to this there are plans to introduce a scheme known as the Healthy Neighbourhood Plan where the borough will be divided into 18 cells. These will not be ward specific but rather neighbourhood specific. Four cells will come together to make a neighbourhood. Each neighbourhood is expected to receive funding of up to £250,000 to implement measures that brings about improvements to roads, cycling etc. A visit of a similar scheme in Walthamstow has been conducted by councillors to see how intervention on a small scale in a neighbourhood could reduce car journeys and increase cycling and outlook for pedestrians. All of this helps towards achieving a cleaner air quality. The mayor also cited the introduction of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone which rapidly could lead to a decrease in air pollution.

Q5. How does the council intend to ensure that all housing association properties are well cared for and of suitable quality? Are there any plans to take some of these housing stock back by the council?

Response: Mayor explained that one of the mistakes made in recent decades was around the sale of council homes to housing associations. The mayor mentioned the conversation he has had with housing association as a councillor post Grenfell, about cladding and fire safety in blocks of flats. Plans are in process to buy homes off the open market and use for council housing. The council holds regular meeting with all the housing association operating the borough and also conducts a resident satisfaction survey. A further explanation that even though the council do hold housing association to account this can be difficult to achieve as each organisation will have its own management team and guidance on dealing with complaints and several other issues such as antisocial behaviour etc.

Q6. What is the council doing about young people getting social housing especially young men?

Response: The council does recognise there is a need for more social housing particularly for young people and there is a commitment to get all social housing programme across the 26 sites identified developed. It also recognise the need to strike a better deal with private developers to provide social affordable housing within their scheme. The mayor and senior council staff made a study visit to Islington Council where a pioneering social housing scheme is being tried. Working with planners to understand what social housing means and what affordable housing means to the council. The Mayor of London has helped with the introduction of a new scheme called the London Affordable Rent model. In the scheme, a two bedroom home rent is set at £750 monthly. Lewisham hopes to adopt this scheme. A lot of new developers have bought into this and are keen to work with the Mayor to achieve this aim.

Q7. As a frequent bus commuter, I would like to know when bus stops in Lewisham will be equipped with bus arrival display panels and also how to complain about local bus services

Response: Transport for London (TFL) are responsible for the information panel. Bus company are run by private franchise which makes it more complex for TFL to control. Mayor will get a response to this question.

Q8. I and many other local adults in Lewisham are becoming frustrated with the increasing presence of the Saxon Crown swim club in the Glass Mill swimming pool. Extra sessions are often held randomly with no prior advice given to Fusion Leisure to allow the latter to update their online pool timetable or even pre-warn the staff working there.

Response: Whilst the council encourages children to be active and learn to swim, there is a need to look at timetable to protect the provision for swimming for all. This issue will be fed back to the leisure centre.

Q9. Has the mayor got any plans in place to deal with the beggars that frequent the station at Hither Green and the surrounding local shops.

Response: This was said to be a major issue London-wide. There has been an increase in street homelessness an aggressive begging in Lewisham. The mayor advised that people report aggressive begging to the police as it is a police issue. The council works with homeless charities across the borough who works with people begging and provide them with support for shelter and other long term problems.

Q10, What is happening with Milford Towers in Catford?

Response: As part of the regeneration of Catford Town Centre, Milford Towers is currently used by the council to place people on short term rental contract. Council is working with residents to look at what the regeneration of the area will look like. But also focusing on getting a high level of social homes and looking at ways to protect other iconic building such as the Catford Broadway and independent retail shops. An architect has been appointed to work with community groups and the wider community on a masterplan. Ideas are already being filtered through on what this may look like. This will also include changing the current road layout which was said to be an hindrance to the growth of the area. The south circular is right in the middle of Catford. The proposal is to reroute this road to the back of Lawrence House in order to make way for a new Town Centre.

Q11. Is the council doing anything about empty properties when considering provision of housing for the homeless?

Response: The council has recently increase the charges on landlords who leave homes empty. There is a repair timeline granted and when this expires the charges will apply. A main problem for the council is around enforcement. There is a small team within the council responsible for this area of work. The council is reliant on residents to help in identifying where these homes are.

Q12. A question was asked about the delays to the redevelopment of the Ladywell Playtower?

Response: Gildmore and Curzon Cinema won the bid for the Playtower. Part of their commitment was to have two cinema screen, a café and also to provide a step down accommodation for people leaving the hospital and some private residential. There seems to be some confusion around the provision of the step down accommodation as the developers thought the council no longer wants this in the development. As an alternative, the developers are proposing a small number of social housing to be included in the redevelopment. The mayor have requested for more options which will have more social housing and information on the density of the site. Ongoing discussion continues about the level of social housing in the development.

Q13. When will the building development in the centre of Lewisham finish?

Response: The estimated date of completion is not known. The planning application of the second phase which will include a cinema has just been approved. Some other information of interest was provided. Lands Securities (Lewisham Shopping Centre management company) is also looking into what they can do to improve the centre of Lewisham.

Q14. A question was asked about the CITI bank building in Lewisham?

	<p>Response: This building has been empty for years and have gone through multiple ownerships. A Russian owner now owns the site and is believed to be land banking. It is possible that they are waiting until a decision is taken on the extension of the Bakerloo Line. The council wants to use the site for housing, however, one of the things that the coalition government did very early on was something called “granting permitted development”. This meant that owners of office or commercial properties have an express guarantee to convert them into residential. The only way the council can stop such conversion is where it is proved to pose environmental reasons e.g. noise pollution. There is no requirement that they have to provide social housing or meet space standard.</p> <p>The chair thanked the Mayor for attending the meeting.</p>	
8.	Any Other Business	
	There were no announcement under this item.	
9.	Declaration of interest	
	There were no interest declared at this meeting	