



Twentyfirst Sydenham Assembly

**Tuesday 5 March 2013, 7pm - 9pm
The Naborhood Centre ,
44a Sydenham Road
SE26 5QX**

Minutes of Meeting

1. Introduction and welcome

Cllr Chris Best welcomed everyone to the Sydenham Assembly and introduced the other Sydenham Ward Councillor Cllr Marion Nisbet. She then stated how delighted she was to see so many young people present at the Assembly. Cllr Best then introduced Paul Burman from Skanska and asked him to provide the Assembly with an update regarding the replacement of the street lighting.

2. Feedback from last Sydenham Assembly

Skansa - Paul Burman from Skanska reminded the Assembly that Skanska is replacing 44,000 street lights across the borough over a 3 year period. He then asked the meeting if there were any questions or issues that he could address.

Q Can you explain the street light in Dukesthorne and Earlsthorne Road, this is in the middle of the pavement?

A This was a mistake as it was put in the wrong place, it will be rectified.

Q What is the process for correction if a light is either too bright or too dull?

A There are leaflets with a freephone number and once we have the details we will investigate.

Q When was the decision taken to choose the lights such as the heritage ones?

A This would have been in 2010 before the contract was awarded, the Council would have decided which streets in the conservation area would get certain types of lighting.

Q The work that you are doing on Hazel Grove has seen grass replaced by sand where the columns are going in, will this be permanent?

A Yes it will be re-instated in the growing season

3. Policing update

Sydenham Police Station - Chief Inspector Bell who is Head of Safer Neighbourhood Policing in Lewisham then addressed the assembly meeting. He told the meeting that by 2015 the Metropolitan Police Service must deliver policing to the capital with a budget reduced by £500 million pounds. This represents a 20% cut in the budget, 80% of this budget is on wages, so to find savings without making redundancies is a real challenge. The MPS is therefore looking at other ways to reduce its budget and this includes:

- Buildings owned by the police - some are not properly used or are inefficient
- Front Counter Service – could this be delivered in a different way
- Restructuring staff – Reducing leadership roles

There are 420 police buildings under review and no sites have been agreed for sale yet. Locally we have our own view and our view is that we want to keep Sydenham Police Station as it is in a good location and is operationally sound. If the closure does go through we will relocate to Catford Hill which still falls within the cluster area.

There are also plans to reduce the opening hours of front counters, Catford will reduce to 40 hours, Deptford 40 hours and Lewisham will be open 24 hours a day. Sydenham Police Station front counter will only have 8-10 visits per day so it is hard to justify keeping it open. We are however, looking at other ways to increase our accessibility.

Future of Neighbourhood Policing - Chief Inspector Bell told the assembly that SNTs have been around since 2005, this will soon change and this is a policing decision. Lewisham area will now be divided into 3 clusters, this will mean an increase in neighbourhood policing numbers from 38 PCs to 134 PC'S with only 18 of these to be ring-fenced. Cluster wards will therefore have more resources with officers on duty daily from 6am to midnight. Cluster policing means that we can direct resources into areas that need them and areas with particular challenges will have more police.

Q I object to the closure of Sydenham Police Station, when the plan was worked out did the Mayor's office look at cross-borough gaps?

A There is no direct correlation between police presence and the location of a police station. If we moved to Catford Hill nothing would change policing wise, the officers will go where the crime is and with 134 officers I can do this more effectively.

Q I am a Lollipop Man on Westwood Hill, can you please do something about speeding cars and lorries as it is an accident waiting to happen?

A Yes we can do a road check, we can speak after the meeting.

Q If this closure happens it will make things more difficult if you have to produce driving documents or report something?

A Yes it would, but some people have this already. We are looking at other ways that you can have access to police though. On the Safer Neighbourhood Website there is a list of public meetings.

Q What guarantee is there that there will be more police if these cuts take place?

A The cuts are being achieved through other measures such as a reduction in senior ranks and officers moved from desk jobs into frontline policing.

Cllr Best then told the Assembly meeting that she is pleased to announce that Sydenham Road will have its own dedicated police officer.

4. Sydenham Assembly Fund Updates

Image Create Express, Hazel Filming Project – Jean Beckford thanked the Assembly for funding the project which is a project spanning 4 generations of life on Hazel Grove Estate going back to 1926 when Queen Mary visited. The project has helped to identify just how much talent there is at Hazel Grove and it was so successful that it was put forward for an award at the Connaught Halls. The project did not win the best in category, but it was shortlisted and the team received medals. On Saturday 9 March Lewisham Homes are hosting the Involver Awards at the Civic Suite, we will be showing the film at the awards.

Hazel Grove Youth Project, XLP – Ian Hiley thanked the Sydenham Assembly for funding this project which has already benefitted 150 young people in the area, predominantly from Hazel Grove Estate. There have been weekends away, a youth club and the XLP Bus is at the Estate every Thursday afternoon.

Residential Weekend Hillcrest – The Young people from Hillcrest thanked the Sydenham Assembly for funding the project which took place during February half term. The group took part in lots of activities and learnt teamwork, life skills and overcoming their fears.

TNG Update –The New Generation Youth and Community Centre will be opening on Monday 10 June. The design has involved young people working with the architects and it will be more than a youth centre, it will be a community centre too. The facility will have the following:

- Fitted kitchen and cafe
- Multi-use games area
- Climbing wall
- Recording studio
- Conference room
- Cinema

Cllr Best told the Assembly that raising the 3 ½ million is a fantastic achievement and the centre is great news for Sydenham.

5. Bell Green development update

Alastair Higgs from Kier Construction gave the Assembly meeting a presentation relating to the Bell Green Development. New shops will include B&Q, Currys / PC World, Pets at Home, Next Home, Toys R Us and a Halfords Auto Centre.

The works are due to be completed in late May with the tenants ready to trade at some stage during the summer. There is still provision for an A3 restaurant.

For more information on the project contact Kier Construction on 020 8778 6333.

Q What are you doing to protect the back of Selworthy Road.

A There are 2 drainage tanks and we will review the landscaping in the area

Q There are issues with security and privacy on Selworthy Road, anyone can look into my garden at present.

A We have looked at the sites and we will be running a new fence with 24 hour security. We will finish as soon as possible and in the long term we will install an acoustic fence on an elevated band.

6. Update on the high street

Sydenham Road Improvements - Cllr Best told the Assembly meeting that the road improvements are going well and are on schedule. The Station Approach asset transfer will take place within the next few weeks and there will also be a new toilet on Station Approach. There are regular meetings taking place with the contractor JB Riney and of course they have a premises at 24a Sydenham Road that people can pop into and look at the plans. Cllr Best also stated that Co-Op and Lidl will subsidise Girton Road Car Park which will enable it to remain free.

Q Will there be power available to Angie who owns the flower stall?

A We discussed this with JB Riney and I have been told that there will be power provision at Station Approach, Venner Road and Queensthorpe, so I will check up on this.

Q Any news on the bike racks?

A These are still to come. All the plans are in the Riney office including the Tree Schedule, and the plans for the studs for the forecourts which will show how far traders can encroach on to the highway as the railings will be going.

Q Are the bins being replaced and what about street clutter such as the BT Phone Box?

A Officers are negotiating with BT but the issue here is advertising. There will be new street furniture in the pocket squares and the bins will be replaced.

Q Will the Fire Hydrant in Queensthorpe stay as it has character?

A We want to keep the heritage features, so yes.

Sydenham Mosaic – Valerie Kelly from Sydenham Mosaic told the Assembly meeting that it was 4 years ago that the idea was put forward and now it has all started to come together and we are almost there. She thanked the Sydenham Assembly for its initial support and the £10,000 that it awarded was really the springboard. The project is almost entirely funded by residents and traders and £47,500 has been raised. The project will almost certainly come in either on or under budget and Valerie particularly wanted to thank Mann and Co, Property World, ST Smith, Whites, Woodfalls and her committee for fundraising. There is an exhibition at Jill the community hub at 27 Sydenham Road and people can also donate there.

Sydenham clean-up day – Cllr Best told the Assembly that this will take place on 14 March at 10am, people should meet outside the Co-Op.

Update on Jill and Easter Bonnet Workshop – Easter bonnet workshops will take place 20th – 30th March and the Easter event will be on Saturday 30th March between 11am – 1pm where traders will be handing out mini eggs.

Sydenham Markets - The market at Station Approach will take place on the last Sunday of every month except for Easter when it will be on Sunday 24 March. Let us know if you want a stall as we want a bit more variety.

The Community Car Boot Sale takes place at Girton Road Car Park on the second Sunday of the month and on the first Sunday you have the Forest Hill Market.

Pop-up Shops - Cllr Best told the Assembly that there will be 4 more pop-up shops by 1st May and Bluebell Woods will remain until 14 March

7. The Sydenham Assembly Coordinating Group

Pat Trembath from the Sydenham Assembly Coordinating Group told the Assembly that we are looking for people to join the group. The Coordinating Group helps to plan Assembly meetings and helps to scrutinise funding applications to ensure that they meet the priorities of the Assembly. There are only about 4-5 meetings per year and anyone who lives, works or learns in Sydenham can join. For more information on joining the Sydenham Assembly Coordinating Group contact Paul Gale on 020 8314 337 or paul.gale@lewisham.gov.uk

8. Information items, open questions and answers

Planning applications - Cllr Best confirmed to the Assembly that Tesco will be moving into the Two Halves and that planning permission has been granted for Sainsburys to go into the Greyhound site. The Greyhound will go to planning on 14 March

Friends of Home Park, plans for the frontage – Ilse Towler told the Assembly that they had been successful in their Pocket Park bid and will be allocated £37,500. The area outside the Library really needs improving and the plans will see it paved and better lit, this will enable activities to take place outside the Library such as readings, we will consult with the public over our plans. Credit must go to Ed Holloway, Anthony Scully, Martin Hyde and Tony Rich.

Q What is the timescale for the project?

A We will start the planning stage this summer, it may be finished by 2014.

Q What about the toilet block?

A There is an application which Darren Taylor has submitted for a bicycle repair workshop, it is a solid building and it could be beautiful again.

Sydenham Community Library – Ilse Towler told the Assembly that from the 25 March the Library will be closed for 3 weeks as it is being redecorated. It will re-open on 15 April and it will have a new Cafe and a Computer shop. There will be a mini Library in Jill at 27 Sydenham Road.

Sydenham Arts Festival – Jonathan Kaufman told the Assembly that this year's Sydenham Arts Festival will be from 29 June to 14 July and it will be the biggest yet. This year they have secured an Arts Council Grant of £27,000 and this will enable there to be 85 events with over 50 of them free. Out of these 33 events will be aimed at families, 20 events will be music related with 3 of these being Opera.

Sydenham Well Park Improvement Group – **Monika Mitchell stated that there is a new Parks Forum in the area which will look to be more active and provide Park based initiatives and activities. The idea is to get people to use the Parks with an ultimate aim of a borough-wide Parks Forum. There will be a 3 Parks walk in late June including Wells Park, Mayow Park and Home Park.**

Transport Improvements – **Barry Milton told the Assembly that by the end of 2014 all East London Line trains will have expanded by one carriage and by the end of 2014 there will be two extra trains per hour between Crystal Palace and Highbury and Islington, this is all due to the expansion of London Overground and this is fantastic news, but we are still pushing for more evening trains.**

Cllr Best then told the Assembly that overall there are some really positive things happening in Sydenham and thanked Barry Milton for producing the Local Assembly newsletter. She also stated that she is delighted to see that street drinkers are significantly fewer due to 10 year anti-social behaviour orders being served.

She then told the Assembly that the next meeting will be on Tuesday 4 June at the TNG Centre where the Assembly priorities will be reviewed.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.