

MINUTES OF THE BLACKHEATH ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 30 November 2017 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors

ALSO PRESENT:

Apologies for absence were received from

1. **Welcome from the Chair**
2. **Safer Neighbourhood Team update**

PC Gary Washington told the meeting that in the last 3 weeks there have been 3 burglaries in Granville Park. The suspect is a black male, wearing a green coat and a distinctive nike backpack.

Theft from Motor Vehicle's remains low, but signals can be blocked from your key fob, so people should physically check that their car is locked

There have been some commercial burglaries in the Village, this has mainly been hairdressers, 1 male has now been arrested in Crayford and his DNA has been linked to these.

Ward Priority Burglary - All victims of burglary are visited and security advice is provided and other houses in the vicinity are warned.

Ward Priority Theft from Motor Vehicle - People still leave items visible in their cars ie Sat Nav, please avoid doing this.

Ward Priority Anti-Social Behaviour – There are quite a few schools in the ward and we do patrols with the teachers to reduce this.

There have been some Sexual assaults on younger people, none in Blackheath ward but some in Greenwich and now Croydon, there are lots of plain clothes officers around schools and bus routes to catch the perpetrator.

Q Can you advise us about raised crossings as some cars really do speed over them, what is their status? I am referring to ones such as on Royal Parade.

A They are courtesy crossings, not a zebra crossing and there is no obligation for cars to stop.

Q When is the next ward meeting?

A We have ward panel meetings, they are not too well attended and the next one is 9 January at Lewisham Police Station at 7pm.

Q Can you look at Skateboarding in the village, people are going too fast and nearly knocking people over, someone will get hurt?

A We will look at this

3. **Lewisham London Borough of Culture**

In the Summer, the Mayor of London made an announcement about a borough of culture competition. The scheme is about using art and culture to make a difference to people's lives. Lewisham already has a good track record for the use of art and culture and we want to build on this. There is a 1.5 million prize for the winner. Winning the competition could also attract additional investment to the borough. People are being asked for their ideas on how to use art and culture to

make a difference, what are the issues that need to be addressed and how to celebrate art and culture across the borough. People are also encouraged to think about the hidden arts and culture within their area.

There is a social media campaign which people can tweet using #loveitlewisham or by visiting www.loveitlewisham.co.uk

4. **Sugar Smart**

Danny spoke about the obesity “epidemic” that is spreading amongst our young people. The statistics were given: 22% of children in Lewisham in their reception year are already overweight or obese. This rises to 40% in year 6.

Danny encouraged all those present to join the campaign by asking their local businesses to go SugarSmart. This involves small steps such as placing lower sugar items within easier reach of customers and moving higher sugar items to the back of shelving (or stocking less of them).

Those interested should visit our website for more details:

<https://www.lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/socialcare/health/diet-and-exercise/sugarsmart/sugar-smart-lewisham/Pages/default.aspx>

or email: sugarsmart@lewisham.gov.uk

Businesses who come on board get a certificate signed by Jamie Oliver and stickers for their shop windows.

5. **Blackheath Assembly Fund**

The following projects were bidding for a share of the £12,500 Blackheath Assembly Fund. For more details regarding the projects contact paul.gale@lewisham.gov.uk

Organisation – Age Exchange

Project – The Magic Table – Dementia IT support

Amount applied for - £1,800

Project Description - We wish to buy and install a new invention called Tovertafel (or ‘Magic Table’). The Tovertafel is a little box that can be mounted on the ceiling. Inside the box is a high-quality projector, infrared sensors, speaker, and processor that work together to project the games onto the table. Because the colourful objects respond to hand and arm movements, users get to play with the light itself.

Tovertafel was developed to create something to stimulate activity – physical, mental and social – in people with late stage dementia. We have tested this technology at Age Exchange with our young onset dementia group and were really impressed by the way it encourages interaction amongst people with dementia and provides stimulation for those further along their dementia journey. The Magic Table would be a great addition to the activities we currently provide for people with dementia and their carers. A short Youtube film of how The Magic Table works is on the link below; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Orok9AijWFg>

Organisation – Wash House Youth Project

Project –2018 Football Programme

Amount applied for - £1,950

Project Description - Weekly Football programme for local young people aged between 8 and 14. The programme will be delivered by two experienced coaches

from Active Kids, who currently work in partnership with Morden Mount Primary School.

The Parkside population is increasing as stage 4 of the regeneration programme is now underway, and given limited space in the development for sports/recreational activities this activity provides young people new to the Blackheath ward with access to a well-maintained floodlit ball court. We are making a concerted effort to engage young people who have recently moved into the area (our October half-term programme attracted several newcomers and 40 young people overall) and we see this project as complementary to our existing term-time and holiday programmes.

More broadly, our football programme will aim to improve health and fitness, and inspire young people to exercise more. Previous experience of football, as well as sports activities more generally, is that this a highly effective way of improving confidence and self-esteem while also helping to break down social and/or territorial barriers that often exist in our communities.

Organisation – Quaggy Development Trust

Project – Older Peoples Lunch Club

Amount applied for - £2,000

Project Description - To take local elderly people on two separate day trips during the 2018 summer period. One trip to Eastbourne in Sussex and the other to Broadstairs in Kent. Both trips will be made by coach. To also provide them with lunch in local seaside restaurants.

During the trips the older people will have the opportunity to integrate and spend time with others. They will also have the chance to visit another area which due to various age related challenges they would not normally be able to access. Knowing that they have something to look forward to will enhance their wellbeing and outlook. These trips also help to alleviate social isolation and promote community cohesion.

Organisation – Carers Lewisham

Project – IT training for carers

Amount applied for – £1,940

Project Description - We want to offer 6 weeks IT training courses to carers of any age who need to improve their understanding of technology and their ability to use online platforms. Based on carers' individual needs, we will offer training on the use of Microsoft Office applications as well as tips and advice on how to access and use online services such as carers' and patient smartphone apps, booking GP online appointments, online grant applications, online carers self-assessments, google search, navigating the Lewisham Council website, etc. Unpaid caring for an unwell or disabled child or older family member or friend can often be a lonely and isolating role which impacts disproportionately upon the health and well-being of the carer. Being socially isolated is one of the main effects of a caring role. One of the project's main objectives and expected outcomes therefore is to connect local carers and create a greater sense of community and mutual understanding and support. Carers also invariably have poorer health and higher stress levels as a result of their role which not only has a detrimental effect on them but also impacts their ability to cope and continue caring.

Organisation – Church of the Ascension

Project – English for Speakers of Other Languages (Holy Trinity)

Amount applied for – £2,000

Project Description - The ESOL classes at the Holy Trinity Centre aim to provide free English language tuition to adults whose first language is not English in order

to raise their competence in written and spoken English; to raise awareness of cultural differences and break down barriers between people of different backgrounds; to include those most at risk of isolation – parents with small children, through the provision of high quality childcare to benefit both local children and their parents; to aid integration into the local community. The classes are held for local residents at the Holy Trinity Centre, Orchard Hill, SE13 7QZ on Monday mornings (9.45-11.45 a.m.) during school term times. The classes, free to students of all ages from 18, have been running for a number of years and are aimed at people whose first language is not English and want to learn and improve their knowledge and understanding of spoken and written English. The classes cater to beginners/improvers and a conversational group for those with some degree of confidence in their spoken English and seeking to extend their skills. There is a policy of continuous enrolment and of inclusive welcome.

The assembly unanimously agreed to fund all of the projects.

6. Lewisham Poverty Commission

Cllr Bonavia explained that Blackheath is most the affluent ward in the borough, but there is still poverty all around us, and Lewisham is in the top 20 poorest boroughs in country for child poverty.

There is now less money available with the council half the size that it used to be and a significantly reduced budget. There were lots of contributions from the local assemblies and many of these were from Blackheath residents. The community is the biggest resource and we should be working more with it and being more creative. The report was published last week with lots of recommendations. The full report is on the website on the poverty commission link.

Rachel Ellis – Blackheath Coordinating Group Volunteer told the assembly that she went to the launch and what came out very clearly was how it can affect all of us and often through no fault, just circumstances. There was a young lady with 4 children, she had a good job as did her partner. But he died and with 3 autistic children in different schools she cannot work as she has to deal with this situation. Often she does not eat as she cannot afford food, this is a bright lady and through no fault of her own she is now in poverty. This is why we have to keep pushing our Council to ensure that we think and work together to find solutions. We also need to look more at things such as career education and improve the aspirations of our young people.

Q The most difficult thing is accessing services when you don't fall into a certain bracket. There is no telephone number for housing benefit. Not everything needs to be done online, some people cannot get online or do not know where to look.

A The report has recommendations as to how we train our staff and how to find a way through the system, yes we are going more online, but we do need to look at other areas when this does not work.

Q People should not have to go through an awful circumstance to get support, kind supportive staff can make a huge difference.

A Yes we will take this on board and we can also report back on the changes.

Cllr De Ryk – It is very easy to unintentionally make cuts that affect one group in a number of ways and the report is looking at this and feeding back into the budget making process so that no particular group of people is adversely affected.

7. Community information

Q I still do not think we have sorted out the refuse, just look at Lee High Road?

A There are obviously some areas where it is not working and we are trying to make this work. It will take a little longer, but if you cannot get through to the Council with your issue do let us know and we will follow this up.

Q What about biodegradable bags, we have to buy them in Tesco for £0.12p, why not issue them or let us buy them from the Council?

A It is a cost and logistic issue, but you can use newspaper.

Blackheath Fireworks - Over 80,000 people attended, there was lots of money raised through donations and sponsorship. Please continue to support this fantastic free event.

Council Tax policy - Cllr Bonavia explained that the Council has been looking at this and next week we will regularise council tax benefit with relief for Care Leavers up to age 25. We are also now more efficient at collecting Council Tax and aim to have a collection figure of 98% now that we have an in-house bailiff collection.

There being no other business Cllr De Ryk told the assembly that the next meeting will be on Thursday 22 February 2018 at Parkside, please do try to visit the centre as it is a wonderful community asset.

The meeting finished at 9.40pm