

MINUTES OF THE BLACKHEATH ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 10 November 2022 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Juliet Campbell, Amanda De Ryk and Luke Warner

ALSO PRESENT:

Apologies for absence were received from

1. Welcome from the Chair

Councillor Juliet Campbell, opened the meeting and introduced Blackheath Councillors Amanda De Ryk and Luke Warner as well as Cllr Louise Krupski.

2. Blackheath Environment and Streetscape

Paul Boulton, Head of Highways and Christian Muncey Senior Programme Manager Public Realm gave a presentation on various topics that included:

- Traffic Flow in Blackheath Village
- Speeding concerns on Belmont Hill
- Speeding concerns near Leegate Shopping Centre
- Police sirens on Belmont Hill
- Lee Road - resident concerns of congestion
- HGVs - resident concerns of inappropriate use
- TfL's current position on Kidbrooke Park Road weight restriction:
- Various bags on Greenwich side of pavement
- Cutting back street trees
- General tidying
- Jet cleaning village pavements

Residents were then given the chance to ask questions.

Street cleansing

Question: When are the collection times?

Answer: You can find collection times and information on the Council website at:
www.lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/wasterecycle

Question: Which app should be used for waste issues ie fix my street?

Answer: Preferred use is of the Love Clean Streets app:
www.lovecleanstreets.com/reports

Question: How can residents report issues regarding trees

Answer: Report issues on our website at:
www.lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/environment/trees/report-tree-problems

Question: There are concerns around tree care, trees have been removed around The Glebe with no replacements. Are there any plans to replace trees that have been removed with new trees?

Answer: Officers will look to replace trees and investigate why they have been removed, they will also check the location of empty pits. The pit may be diseased which is why it wasn't re-planted there.

Cllr Krupski added that the Council are currently carrying out a detailed analysis about where the trees are. The Council wants to ensure that there are trees for everyone across Lewisham and they are working with Street Trees for Living and looking into best outcomes. It is not just about planting a tree it is also about maintenance and working with local residents to look after them.

There was also clarification around why we tarmac around pits, the reason is because they are a trip hazard.

Question: How can residents find out about programme/analysis?

Answer: Initially contact the Councillors with more details and they can then best direct you.

Question: How are trees permitted, is there a consultation before they are planted?

Answer: Residents or groups in the borough can get more information from <https://www.streettreesforliving.org/> or visit <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/environment/trees/how-to-get-new-trees-planted>

Question: A clean up on Blackheath village is needed as are more bins as the current ones are overflowing.

Answer: There is currently a bin trial, and the Council will be looking at bins in village.

Question: A resident raised concerns around broken glass on the Heath. Where can this be reported? There's also a lack of police in village, and no police presence.

Answer: Litter and other issues can be reported directly to Glendale <https://lewisham.glendalelocal.co.uk/get-in-touch>

You can also report issues at: www.lovecleanstreets.com/reports

If this is an issue then residents can raise concerns and send photos to local Councillors.

If you have concerns about policing you can contact your Safer Neighbourhood Team <https://www.met.police.uk/a/your-area/met/lewisham/blackheath/>

Question: How often are blocked drains checked?

Answer: All gully's are checked and cleared once a year, use love street app to report a blocked drain.

Traffic and road safety

Question: There are Issues around the Lawn Terrace one way system, speeding cars and also anti-social behaviour. Road markings are also not clear. Can council confirm if it is also a police issue?

Answer: Officers will have a look into this, but speeding itself is something for the police to deal with and preventative measures will be the Council.

Question: Is St Margaret's School due to get a Safer Street?

Answer: Yes this is planned and it was hoped to have this installed in November.

Post meeting update: The Council is in the process of confirming potential implementation dates with Transport for London as this scheme is on the boundary with their road network. The Council will update the school and local residents once a date has been confirmed.

Lime bikes

Question: Why are Lime bikes allowed to be put anywhere and why is the Council allowing it?

Answer: The Council does not give permission for the use of the bikes. It's a public highway and there is no restriction to their use. Officers are speaking to Lime to come to an agreement around the use and control of the bikes to come up with a solution that works for everyone.

Question: What should residents do if the bike is causing a hazard on the street

Answer: You can report issues direct to Lime at: london-ops@li.me

Question: Is there a discussion with other boroughs to work together regarding electric bikes?

Answer: Electric bikes are unregulated. There is a push for proper government regulations for hire bikes and scooters. Lewisham decided not to do a trial as they wanted to do more research. London councils are pushing hard for more regulation.

Although there are concerns about Lime bikes, they can also have a positive effect and benefits, therefore, it is important that we come up with a plan that works for everyone.

Question: Can we have Santander bikes

Answer: Santander bikes are currently expensive, but the Council will work with TfL to work out the best solution within the budget constraints.

Question: The signs outside Blackheath Halls and along Lee Road are not police compliant, and have the wrong signage, can the Council look into this?

Answer: Officers will look at whether these signs are compliant.

Cllr De Ryk mentioned that queries have been raised regarding zebra crossings, bikes speeding and other speed measures. Awaiting response from officers.

Question: Concerns raised around the LTN claiming it was causing air pollution and traffic displacement. What is council doing to minimise harm to children. There are concerns around the data provided. A public consultation was done but nothing to follow up.

Answer: The Council are aware of questions raised around data provided. A review of the LTN has taken place and was reported to the Council's Mayor and Cabinet in January. It was agreed that further monitoring would take place and the latest set of monitoring reports including on air quality and traffic was published in September. Christian Muncy read out a statement from the Department for Transport supporting the Council's position.

Cllr De Ryk requested that monitoring was not carried out during school holidays.

Answer: Officers committing to doing further studies and not doing it during school holidays

Officer's also committed to monitoring Lee Road as part of wider studies and is working with TfL to look at historic traffic flows.

All the information about the latest data is provided in the LTN monitoring reports on the Council's website. Please see the two links below:

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=6495&Ver=4>

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=7912&Ver=4>

Question: Can you elaborate on the study in regards to HGV'S. What are the restrictions and rules? Can we restrict HGV's entering the village either by putting restrictions at the bottom of Lee Rd or by looking at width restrictions in the Village at the top of Montpelier Row by the mini roundabout?

Answer: The Council will work with TfL and is looking at a Borough wide strategy. We will need to do surveys and data collection and look at the implications of restrictions on the roads.

Question: Are the Council going to do traffic counts? The last traffic count for the LTN report was undertaken during the school holiday's, next time when traffic counts are undertaken for the LTN report can they been done without using such manipulative tactics, and take them well clear of school holidays?

Answer: In preparation for the last LTN monitoring report, which was approved by the Council's Mayor and Cabinet in September, during April 2022 the Council installed over 50 traffic counters in and around the monitored area. Due to the large number of traffic counters required some had to be laid prior to the actual start date of collection. Data from all sites that were surveyed were recorded at least up to Friday 29th April and many going beyond this time. With the majority of private schools returning by Monday 25th April, this provided us with a full week of data from Saturday 23rd April to Friday 29th April. Therefore, the data is suitable for assessing the scheme. A new round of monitoring is planned this spring, which as normal practice will be timed to avoid school holidays.

Question: There is very heavy traffic around Kidbroke Park Road, what is being done to reduce traffic flow?

Answer: The Council will look at areas where environmental restrictions could work. We need to look into where the vehicles will go and understand what the impacts are before any study.

Question: Can the Council challenge the traffic count data being provided by TfL to back up the LTN situation?

Answer: Lewisham undertook its own surveys to monitor and amend the LTN after it was implemented in 2020. The monitoring report of September 2020 has shown that the scheme is meeting its stated objectives.

Question: The large roundabout on Shooters Hill is regularly (daily) stacked up, better traffic controls like yellow box enforcement, and traffic lights need to be considered, is this something that the council could take up with TfL?

Answer: TfL are the highway authority for the A2 rather than the Council, however, we will continue to work with them on this to try and reach a satisfactory outcome.

Question: HGV'S shouldn't go through Blackheath village. Royal Borough of Greenwich and Lewisham Council need to work together with TfL?

Answer: A study is underway to identify potential areas for environmental weight restrictions to control routing of HGVs. Blackheath village will be included in the list of areas to be considered.

Question: The width restriction on Lee Park is often driven into, is the Council responsible for width restriction

Answer: Yes. We will review the signing to make sure it is effective.

Question: The Kidbrooke Village signage says road closed. This is wrong information, can the sign be removed or updated?

Answer: Officers will look into this matter.

Question: Are there any plans for Lewisham to work with delivery companies on last mile Electric Delivery "vehicles" (Not just bikes).

Answer: Officers will be looking into this

Question: There is currently a review on the roundabout on Lee Road, can the Council also emphasise the danger of the area. There is no easy way of getting across and it needs police enforcement and better structure

Answer: Officers will look at this as part of the review.

NCIL projects update

A number of projects which are in receipt of ward NCIL funds provided updates on the progress that they are making.

Play Area for Blackheath: Diane Summers, from the Blackheath Society and the Friends of Blackheath Play Area, reported that planning permission had now gone in for a children's play space on Blackheath, made possible by the £60,000 NCIL grant from Lewisham Council. Diane explained that it wouldn't be a conventional playground with swings and roundabouts but, instead, a space to explore, with logs, boulders, natural materials, seating and planting appropriate to its site on the edge of the Heath. The location, in Talbot Place, in front of the disused changing rooms, will be transformed from a neglected area of grass and cracked paving and Lewisham has pledged to provide much-needed toilet facilities. The plans for the play area, including the proposed design, were detailed in the Blackheath

Society's Autumn Newsletter, available in the publications section on its website www.blackheath.org.

St Margaret's Church Playground: St Margaret's received £10,000 NCIL funding for a play area at the West End of the churchyard (Lee Terrace/Brandram Road) A proposal for a wooden construction play area, shielded from the church drive by hedging was submitted to Southwark Diocesan Advisory Committee (Southwark DAC) for Faculty approval. Southwark DAC was supportive of the proposal and was content to 'recommend' it subject to resolving queries with Lewisham Council regarding local planning consents, which have been sent to the Council for response.

Greening Blackheath Hill: Cllr De Ryk gave an update on behalf of the Blackheath Hill neighbours group.

Over the last year or so we have been campaigning to 'green' Blackheath Hill – i.e. to plant more greenery to help reduce the adverse effects of air and noise pollution and improve the overall environment. The NCIL grant received from Lewisham Council will go towards exploring the feasibility of greening the Lewisham side of Blackheath Hill. The group also produced a short video highlighting the problems caused by heavy traffic which you can watch on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_w2T1EezrY

3. Community information

Question: What is the role of the Children and Young People Select Committee in protecting the health of our babies and children, with reference made to the findings of the inquest into the death of Ella Kissi-Debrah.

Answer: Cllr Warner – I would be happy for you to get in touch with me to discuss how, if at all, your concerns could intersect with the CYPSC's work.

Update: Cllr Warner has written to the resident to reaffirm his openness to having this discussion and suggesting that Cllr Sorba who Chairs the Select Committee is copied in.

Resident Leanna (who specialises in mentoring and youth work) introduced herself as a new resident to the area. Leanna also asked about what engagement was being done with younger people to get them involved in meetings and engagement in the area.

Cllr Warner thanked Leanne for the work she has been doing and also highlighted that there is currently some engagement work happening around Parkside regarding youth engagement. Cllr Warner also welcomed ideas of how youth engagement could be increased in the ward. Cllr Campbell will also follow up contacting Leanne to discuss engagement work in the local area. Leanna also told residents about the local black Caribbean food business Pristine eats on Lee High Road, where Lewisham residents can receive a discount on orders. Leanna's contact details: Prstineeatscatering@outlook.com Instagram:

@pristineeatscatering @pristineyouth

4. AOB

Next meeting

The next assembly meeting will be held online followed by an in person meeting at a different venue. Dates of the meeting will be circulated once confirmed.

Update: The next assembly meeting will be on Thursday 30th March from 7pm – 9pm. This meeting will be online and details will disseminated closer to the meeting date.

Councillor contact details

Blackheath Councillors contact details:

Councillor Juliet Campbell: Juliet.Campbell@lewisham.gov.uk

Councillor Amanda De Ryk: amanda.deryk@lewisham.gov.uk

Councillor Luke Warner: Luke.Warner@lewisham.gov.uk

AOB

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 9pm.