

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

QUEENSTOWN WARD “LET’S TALK” MEETING

**Held at All Saint’s Church, Prince of Wales Drive, SW11 on
Wednesday, 29th March 2017 at 7.30 p.m.**

PRESENT

Council Members

Councillor Govindia, Leader of the Council (in the Chair);
Councillor Hogg, Leader of the Opposition
Queenstown Ward Members: Councillor Dikerdem, Councillor Hanson; and Councillor Nardelli.

Council Officers

Richard Wiles – Head of Commissioning, Prevention and Wellbeing (Adult Social Services Department)
Wendy Miller – Commissioning Manager, Substance Misuse Services (Adult Social Services Department)
Robyn Thomas – Head of Community Safety (Public Health Department)
Sam Emmett - Project Manager (Environment and Community Services Department)
Mark Hunter – Head of Strategic Developments (Environment and Community Services Department)
Mike Singham – Waste Strategy Manager (Environment and Community Services Department)
Marc Howell – Area Housing Manager (Housing and Regeneration Department)
Adam Wells – Head of Pupil Services (Children’s Services Department)
Chris Jones – Asst Director, Housing Strategy and Development (Housing and Regeneration Department)
Ian Ruegg – Housing Development and RP Liaison Manager (Housing and Regeneration Department)
Steve Diamond – Head of Employment and Enterprise Strategy (Chief Executive’s Group)
Camillus Donnelly – Head of Network Management (Environment and Community Services Department)
Henry Cheung – Head of Inspection and Enforcement (Environment and Community Services Department)

Peter Sass and Martin Newton – both Executive and Committee Services (Chief Executive’s Group)

Residents

Approximately 50 members of the public.

INTRODUCTION

The Chairman, Councillor Govindia welcomed residents to the meeting and explained the format of the meeting.

Councillors Hogg, Dikerdem, Hanson and Nardelli, along with the officers present, then introduced themselves.

The Chairman then invited questions and comments from the residents.

ISSUES, RESPONSES AND ACTION

1. Battersea Park

Questions/Comments – There is over £850,000 available for Battersea Park improvements – what will this be spent on and in what time scale? What about possible improvements to the current adventure playground?

Response – Councillor Nardelli confirmed that sums available to the Council were from Formula E (£500,000), developers of nearby sites, and from fundraising undertaken by Friends of Battersea Park. It was intended that works include:-

- new children's park (to age of 12) by Rosary Gate (approx. £150,000)
- reopening of historically used pedestrian entrance on Queenstown Road and associated works (approx. £100,000)
- establishment of new public area on land by Albert Bridge (approx. £70,000)
- feasibility study for repairs to Cascades to resolve longstanding issues (subject to match funding)
- improvements to river wall (now from capital funds (**post meeting note: £260,000**) following further consideration and recognition of the concerns of the Friends of Battersea Park regarding the Formula E income that was being directed to the river wall repairs)
- improvements to sheltered seating with measures to deter 'rough sleepers' from this area
- works to pathways at Albert Bridge Gate

It was noted that works had commenced on some of these items and that further suggestions may come forward from Friends of Battersea Park.

Officers undertook to respond to the question regarding the adventure playground and the resident was asked to leave her contact details.

2. Drug Rehabilitation Unit, Doddington Estate

Questions/Comments – Could some of the section 106 legal agreement and Community Infrastructure Levy funds be channelled into the critical challenge (substance misuse) in this area? How can we address core drug issues?

Response – Councillor Govindia explained that with the Nine Elms developments the usual rules on 106 / CIL money did not apply, as these funds are ringfenced to finance the northern line extension or specific necessary Nine Elms infrastructure rather than being available for other important projects in a wider area, such as might be funded through Neighbourhood CIL. Mr Hunter said that projects available for Nine Elms CIL also included purchase of a site for a new school in the area.

Mr Wiles confirmed funding for the drug prevention services was provided by the Government public health grant and that the Council is fortunate to work with the renowned South London and Maudsley NHS Trust – leading educationalists in the field – who sub-contract to St. Mungo's to provide outreach services.

Questions/Comments – I am a member of the Doddington West Residents' Association (DWRA) – proper consultation was not carried out on the drug rehab unit plans for Doddington Estate. A petition signed by 423 made objections very clear. Renovation works at Doddington and Park Court mean that there are chances to change the current plans. I have worked in drug rehabilitation in the past and the whole 'package' needs to be in place – these proposals do not provide that. Why is the Unit being located at Doddington Estate? The Unit is opposed by many others, not just Doddington West residents, and all should have been consulted. Do not believe the centre of a residential estate with families is best place for the facility – could it not be relocated elsewhere, like the new proposed medical centre in Nine Elms, who will be policing the service? How effective will the Unit be, how many will be attending the Unit and employed there? I caution residents to be circumspect on the Council's consultation – particularly when it is acting both as applicant for permission and as the planning authority. Was the site just chosen on the basis that 3 shops on the estate had been empty for some time and the Unit could be located there?

Response – Ms Miller confirmed that at the initial engagement stage the Doddington West residents' association had still been active and Councillor Govindia said that the Council had then relied on consulting that association when it ceased to operate – it was regrettable that the earlier engagement process had fallen short of the standard that should be expected and dialogue and meetings were now rightly taking place with the re-formed DWRA and the important relationship with residents was being repaired. This re-engagement was different to the more narrowly focused consultation relating to the planning application process.

Ms Miller then gave details of the 'supporting infrastructure' to the service, including social and housing workers, and Ms Thomas confirmed the need to tackle crime and ensure community safety in partnership. It was noted that a police raid in the estate had uncovered a significant volume of drugs. Changes to the built environment on the estate could also help to reduce issues such as use of some staircase areas for drug related activity.

Ms Thomas said that a meeting with residents was planned for early April and that the intention is to put in place changes that would make a difference in the area. Mr Jones confirmed that the focus needed to be on joint working and a joint response to the issues arising on the estate. Treatment and rehabilitation clearly needed to be part of that response as did consideration of improvements that could be made to security of blocks and general environment.

Councillor Govindia made the point that there is general agreement that a facility is needed in Battersea (there is already similar provision in Roehampton and Balham/Tooting) , that the Unit should be sited where considered by evidence most required and that the new medical centre at Nine Elms is still a couple of years away - having accepted that the previous engagement process was not as robust as it could have been the Council is committed to getting this right and would listen to and consider concerns and respond to them. However, although options would be reviewed given the concerns raised and all issues duly considered, this did not automatically mean that a different decision would be made at the conclusion of the process. Officers would ensure those attending the planned meeting(s) would be informed of the final outcome. It was noted that the previous petition referred to had been drawn to the attention of the Planning Applications Committee and, as is standard practice, a response had been sent to the lead petitioner.

Mr Wiles confirmed that it was envisaged a maximum of 40 persons a day would attend the Unit and that the provision is acknowledged as an overall effective treatment system. In response to a question from residents he confirmed that, in relation to the other treatment centres in the Borough, in all the 20 years that he had been involved in commissioning such services there had been no complaint about the management of those services from residents living around.

3. London Concrete Production Facility – Silverthorne Road

Questions/Comments – Why did adequate consultation not take place on an increase in operational hours for this facility? The facility and trucks that use it are responsible for a great deal of dirt, disruption to residents and poor air quality. Is the facility appropriate in a residential area? – lorries are driven fast, road resurfacing is often needed and road junctions blocked by inappropriate vehicles.

Response – Mr Hunter said that letters had been sent to local residents by the Council in respect of this planning application and undertook to speak to the resident at the end of the meeting to confirm details. The Council had advised the facility that the extended operational hours sought would not be appropriate and the application had now been withdrawn with hours reduced.

Councillor Dikerdem also drew attention to comments submitted by a resident, Mr Dunn in relation to the facility and said that it appeared residents in nearby Tennyson Street had not received Council notification about the application.

4. Flanagan's Public House, Bradmead

Question/Comment – Flanagan's pub is to be demolished for a 17-storey apartment building, this local community hub should be protected, there has been a lack of consultation.

Response - Mr Hunter said that the pub had been considered for Article 4 protection but was not part of the agreed list of premises, however an application had been made to the Council for it to be listed as an asset of community value – the proposed new development would include provision of a public house as well as providing affordable housing units.

5. Oasis Open Space

Questions/Comments –The Oasis open space (owned by the Council but just over the Borough boundary in Lambeth) was double locked in November last year – there is concern about future access to this open space area for the public to enjoy. I was told by officers that it was not possible for an application to be made to the Mayor of London for project funding. The Council only seem interested in building on this site – it has been locked up to reduce community value and to make it easier to develop.

Response – Mr Jones confirmed that it was the Council's objective to bring this space and another close by back into use. The key consideration was how to achieve this in relation to the finance required not just to renovate the area but ensure that there was sufficient funding available into the future to maintain this area as a community asset. An option being explored was partial development of the site for residential housing with funding from that development then paying for the renovation and providing a legacy fund to maintain the area. Another site in the area (Blore Close garages that were now disused) would be turned to open space to help compensate for the loss. Mr Jones was able to confirm that a positive initial meeting with Lambeth Council planning service had taken place where they were understanding of the Wandsworth's objectives in seeking a level of development. More formal feedback was due soon but dependent on Lambeth planning writing back to the Council. Consultants had been appointed who it was confirmed that the questioner had met to discuss concerns and issues raised by the option outlined above. Mr Jones confirmed and reassured the residents present that further consultation would take place on any plans that might be brought forward when the position was clearer as to development and improvement opportunities.

6. London Stone Business Estate / Vehicle Movements

Questions/Comments – I am a resident of Emu Road – the London Stone Business Estate and the railway arches comprise a large number of businesses that are dependent on lorries, box vans servicing them – the number of vehicle movements in Broughton Street and other streets can be dangerous. I contacted Network Rail about this. Could we have some signage in the streets saying 'slow' and 'drive carefully'? Cars speed along Stanley Grove and Queenstown Road.

Response – Mr Emmett said that routing of vehicles from the estate area had previously been agreed but was under investigation again – he undertook to take the details of the Emu Road resident. He also confirmed that the residential 20mph speed limit should provide greater reassurance about speeding and that mobile units would provide enforcement options.

7. Air Quality

Question/Comment – Air quality is an issue – what is the Council doing about idling engines?

Response – Councillor Govindia confirmed public education on this matter and action is part of the Council's air quality action plan. Mr Emmett said that stationary idling enforcement could be justified if the vehicle is considered 'parked' although this is sometimes subjective – he undertook to confirm details to the resident.

8. Asbestos Removal

Question/Comment – Who is liable for costs of any asbestos removal from Doddington Estate properties?

Response – Mr Howell said that he would take details from the resident – asbestos is removed under controlled conditions.

9. Street Cleansing

Questions/Comments – I live in Alexandra Avenue - has the Council cut back its number of sweepers? I have counted a large number of days since rubbish was last collected – up to 10 days - and tweeted this. Standards need to improve, there is also debris left after refuse collection – we are being let down by this. A damaged litter bin in Queenstown Road has been removed – could this be replaced?

Response – Mr Singham replied that it is possible to check when a street is scheduled for cleaning on the Council's website - streets with lowest frequency need are swept once a week – nowhere should be unswept for 10 days. Flytip reports are responded to far more quickly. Residents could also request a special clearance within 24 hours where problems arise. He emphasised that the more any shortcomings are reported the bigger data capture the Council had going forward to address any problems. He undertook to speak further to the resident at the end of the meeting. Mr Singham also undertook to investigate the matter of the Queenstown Road litter bin (**post-meeting note: litter bin located in LB Lambeth**).

CLOSE OF MEETING

Councillors then provided some closing remarks before Councillor Govindia thanked residents for attending the meeting and invited them to stay and speak further with Councillors and officers about matters they had raised or to approach them with individual queries. He asked residents to make sure they left their contact details with officers where they had raised specific queries.

The meeting ended at 9.07 p.m.

Peter Sass (020 8871 6005)

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