

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL
NORTHCOTE “LET’S TALK” MEETING
BELLEVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL, BELLEVILLE ROAD, SW11 6PR
TUESDAY 9 JULY 2019 AT 7.30PM

PRESENT

Council Members

Councillor Kim Caddy (Cabinet Member, Deputising for the Leader of the Council)
Councillor Peter Dawson (Northcote Ward Councillor)
Councillor Louise Calland (Northcote Ward Councillor)
Councillor Aled Richards-Jones (Northcote Ward Councillor)
Councillor Jo Rigby (Deputising for Leader of the Opposition)

Council Officers

Chief Executive’s Group

Sophie Bimson – Community Engagement Manager
Lorrinda Freint – Business and Enterprise Manager
Gareth Jones – Democratic Services
Elizabeth Kingdom – Partnership Officer
Colin Lucas – Community Safety Team Manager
Fiona Rae – Democratic Services

Environment and Community Services Department

Nigel Granger – Area Team Manager East Team (Development Management)
Nick O’Donnell – Assistant Director (Traffic & Engineering)
Don Ogunyemi – Deputy Head of Network Management
Michael Singham – Waste Strategy Manager
David Tidley – Transport Strategy Team Manager
Sharon Wright – Head of Inspection and Enforcement

Housing and Regeneration Department

Mark Bailey – Deputy Area Housing Manager

Children’s Services

Jennifer Stapleton – Service Lead Family Support

Residents

Approximately 20 members of the public were present.

INTRODUCTION

Councillor Caddy welcomed residents and explained the format of the meeting. Councillors and officers in attendance then introduced themselves. A summary of the questions and comments from residents and responses are provided as follows.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM RESIDENTS

Refugees

Issue: A resident enquired what financial incentives the Council would give private landlords to rent to refugees, whether the Council would top up refugees' rents to the full level, and what assistance would be available to help refugees transition to social housing after the end of the two year scheme.

Response: Councillor Caddy asked the resident to contact her via email so that a response could be provided. She highlighted that this was a very important issue and she knew that Children's Services were working very hard to provide assistance.

Peabody Estate

Issue: A resident noted that the 1st phase of the Peabody Estate development was completed on time but there had been little information since. He enquired whether the delay was due to a change in the number of social rent and 'for sale' units.

Response: Councillor Dawson noted that an update was provided in May 2019 and Peabody were finalising negotiations with the contractor, Sisk. He noted that another update was expected at the end of July 2019 and he would try to publicise it. It was anticipated that Sisk would be on site to commence Phase 2 by October 2019. Nigel Granger explained the developer was in difficulties two years' ago at the end of Phase 1 and had submitted a follow up application for more units and an uplift in social housing (intermediate, affordable rent, and shared ownership); this was approved by the Planning Applications Committee. After the developer had submitted additional detail and this was approved, works would commence.

20mph zones

Issue: Residents enquired how 20mph zones were enforced. Some ideas were suggested, including using 20mph or 30mph limits at certain times of day and removing speed bumps to reduce pollution and save money on repairs which could be used to fund additional policing of the road.

Response: Councillor Calland noted that Northcote Road and Bolingbroke Grove were originally excluded but, following a recent survey, would become 20mph roads. It was explained that there were wider, ongoing discussions with the police about penalties and it was hoped to increase the enforcement of 20mph zones. Nick O'Donnell noted that roads had different environments and levels of traffic and different methods may be appropriate. It was explained that there were increasing local authority powers around speed cameras and the Council was investigating, including the possibility of movable cameras. It was noted that the Council was

aiming to focus on residential roads, leaving the Police to focus on main roads. The Council was currently involved in a Londonwide working group about assuming more powers to deploy and enforce 20mph speed cameras and hoped for a trial soon.

Councillor Rigby noted that Bolingbroke Grove was part 20mph and part 30mph and that 20mph signs were smaller and less visible. She explained that new cars had ISA (Intelligent Speed Adaptation) technology which prevented driving over the speed limit; she had asked Zip Car to activate this technology but they were reluctant.

Councillor Richards-Jones noted that speed limits which varied at different times of day were used nationally on motorways, known as 'smart roads'. He noted that this required significant infrastructure which was not feasible on residential roads.

Councillor Dawson noted that speed checking with handheld speed cameras was done in partnership with the Police on Broomwood Road, Bolingbroke Grove, and Clapham Common West Side; residents could contact him to request speed checking on other roads. Councillor Rigby noted that this slowed people down but did not educate them; she suggested using signs advising of the speed limit.

Nick O'Donnell noted that the 20mph scheme had reduced speed and decreased accidents. He added that the 'worst type' of pollution was also reduced at 20mph. He noted that there was clear evidence that removing speed bumps increased speeds and accidents. He stated that the annual £3 million cost of resurfacing was not outweighed by the significant cost of removing speed bumps and an increase in accidents. David Tidley noted that many speed bumps had been installed at the request of schools as the Police were not able to consistently enforce speed limits.

Real estate advertising boards

Issue: A resident noted that there were many real estate boards in the area, which were an eyesore, and asked whether the existing ban on boards could be extended.

Response: Councillor Richards-Jones noted that there was high turnover in Wandsworth which resulted in a number of boards. Nigel Granger explained that the ban was permitted under the Express Advertisement Regulations. He highlighted that each ban required a well-reasoned case and supporting circumstances and would be scrutinised. Councillor Richards-Jones asked the resident to email him the name of the particular streets to see if it was possible to apply for a ban.

Discretionary Social Fund

Issue: A resident enquired why a single parent would not be entitled to receive furniture from the Discretionary Social Fund.

Response: Councillor Richards-Jones noted that the Discretionary Social Fund had certain criteria and funding would depend on the individual cases. He asked the resident to email him with the detail so that a response could be provided.

Recycling

Issue: A resident noted that Wandsworth was the 6th worst borough for recycling and did not collect food waste and enquired when these issues would be addressed.

Response: Councillor Richards-Jones noted that food waste was not currently collected but was periodically reviewed. He explained that it involved vehicles collecting small quantities of food waste and this did not result in a clear reduction of the Council's carbon footprint. He acknowledged that other boroughs collected food waste but this was often exclusively for street level houses. The current system was simple and there were few barriers to participation. Councillor Rigby noted that she would like on site composting for all new blocks, to be removed by the management company and used for community gardens. Councillor Dawson noted that no waste had gone to landfill since 2012 which differed from many other local authorities.

Michael Singham confirmed that Wandsworth had the 6th lowest recycling rate in the UK based on DEFRA statistics. He highlighted that Wandsworth's residual waste was incinerated to generate energy and did not go to landfill and every tonne of waste incinerated generated around a quarter of a tonne of ashes, aggregates, and metals, nearly all of which was recycled. This recycling was not captured in DEFRA's published figures but, if included in the figures, would result in a recycling rate of about 42% rather than 22%. It was also noted that other local authorities, often in rural areas, quoted higher garden recycling figures but there was little waste of this type in Wandsworth. Wandsworth also had a high proportion of purpose built flats and large estates where high recycling performance was hard to achieve. In addition, there were discounts for residents who wanted to purchase composting equipment with a range of (vermin proof) options for garden, balcony, and indoor use. It was explained that the dry recycling figures compared well with other, similar authorities.

Issue: A resident enquired why shredded paper could not be put in the recycling.

Response: Michael Singham noted that what was recyclable in an area depended on the recycling plant and the market. He explained that shredded paper tended to fall through small gaps in the recycling plant process and ended up in the sorted glass stream; this affected the quality of the glass recycling and made it difficult to sell. He noted that a blower had been added to keep shredded paper out of the sorted glass stream and that, combined with asking residents to exclude shredded paper from their recycling, this had resolved the issue of glass quality.; it was possible for residents to compost it.

Play Streets

Issue: A resident noted that residents had to pay £60 for 'Play Streets', where a road was closed to allow children to play; she asked the Council to waive this cost as there were only three major commons and disabled parents could not access these.

Response: Councillor Calland noted that there were a number of green spaces in the Borough which the Council worked hard to maximise and maintain, such as the Chivalry Road playground. It was noted that the reasons for the charge and the possibility of waiving it would be investigated. Councillor Rigby suggested that it

might be possible to combine applications to share the cost; something similar had been done in Richmond and she suggested investigating this. It was added that the Tooting and Balham Mosque was sponsoring five Play Streets events.

Ticks

Issue: A resident noted that the commons were being used more and that he had noticed an increase in ticks in the country. He felt that the Council should provide advice to residents on the risk of ticks and the diseases that they carried.

Response: Councillor Caddy noted that this issue might be beyond the scope of this meeting but that it would be borne in mind.

Library redevelopment

Issues: A resident enquired how many and what type of affordable units would be provided by the library redevelopment. She noted a recent letter from Secondary Headteachers about the risk of losing teachers who were unable to live near schools.

Response: Councillor Richards-Jones noted that there would be 17 units and it was projected that no affordable housing would be provided. He explained that the scheme was a Council development and that the 17 units would fund a library and community hall. Councillor Dawson noted that, if market conditions allowed, the priority would be to provide one or two affordable units; Councillor Richards-Jones explained that this would be examined by a viability assessment.

Affordable and temporary housing

Issue: A resident noted that the Winstanley and York Road Estate regeneration project would result in 4,800 homes being built but less than 500 would be new Council homes. She added that 2,052 families were on the temporary housing list and enquired what could be done to address these issues.

Response: Councillor Caddy noted that the regeneration project was developed in the aftermath of the riots. The Council worked with local residents and the option chosen was a major regeneration project. It was highlighted that there would be 530 replacement and 110 new social rent units and a new library, community centre, leisure centre, and park; the Council was invested in working with the local community and local organisations. Councillor Caddy stated that temporary housing was an issue across London, not specific to Wandsworth, and could not be solved through the regeneration project alone. She stated that the Council was doing what it could to solve the short and medium term problems.

CLOSE OF MEETING

Councillor Caddy thanked residents for attending the meeting.

The meeting ended at 9pm.