

MINUTES OF WALTHAMSTOW WEST COMMUNITY COUNCIL (WWCC)
MONDAY 20th NOVEMBER 2006
Waltham Forest Theatre, Off Forest Road, Walthamstow E17

PRESENT:

Community Chair:
Philip Herlihy

Councillor Chair
Johar Khan

Councillors:

Robert Carey
John Macklin
James O'Rourke
Adam Gladstone
Elizabeth Davies
Afzal Akram (Cabinet Champion)

Sean Meiszner
Bob Wheatley
Geraldine Reardon
Liaquat Ali
Peter Woolcott

Officers in Attendance:

Ben Manku
Jas Dhanjal
Tony Banach
Jon Widdows
Bill Nisbet
Brian Whiteley
Penny Allier
Shirley Haynes
Anthony Lane

Environmental Services
Environmental Services
Better Neighbourhoods Initiative
Olympic Games & Paralympics Team
Community Safety
Community Council Lead Officer
Community Council Officer
Community Council Officer
Committee Manager

Also Present:

James Slater
Wendy Natale
Sunny Martinez
SNT team members
Jonathan Moyes

Waltham Forest PCT
Waltham Forest PCT
Waltham Forest PCT
Metropolitan Police Service
Walthamstow Guardian

Residents Present:

There were approximately 51 residents present at the meeting.

PART ONE
COMMUNITY FORUM

Item

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Community Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

He outlined the agenda for the evening and introduced the Councillor Chair,

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Councillor Johar Khan, and the Cabinet Champion, Cllr Afzal Akram and the Lead Officer, Mr Brian Whiteley.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest. The Chair stressed that attendees to the meeting should state what their reasons were for being in attendance if they were not resident in the wards. He also advised that only residents of the Wards covered by this Community Council were eligible to vote.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / MEETING CONDUCT - GUIDELINES

Cllr Bob Belam and Tony Ranzetta (Whipps Cross Hospital) tendered their apologies for absence. Cllr Geraldine Reardon and Cllr James O'Rourke sent notification that they would be late.

The Community Chair reminded residents of the guidelines that had been agreed at previous meetings. He proposed a further guideline requesting that Councillors refrain from involvement in the first half of the meeting (the Community Forum), confining their input to points of information. Instead, he requested that they discuss issues in the second half of the meeting.

He also thanked the School Council members from Willowfield School who were participating in the proceedings this evening by offering administrative support in the running of the meeting.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

This standing item is intended only to confirm the accuracy of the Minutes of the last meeting and any matters arising should be discussed during the appropriate Agenda item (Item 6).

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record of the proceedings and signed by the Chair with the following amendment(s):

K Lord noted (Item 7.0 page 7 of the papers) that he had requested a breakdown of spending on the arcade site for last year and an answer on who was paid the compensation mentioned in the previous response.

Cllr Gladstone noted that he was in attendance at the last meeting.

Noted the following comments, discussion and responses where relevant:

K Lord noted that the spending for the last year was given as over £400,000, with some £60,000 of that on security. He wanted to know what the difference had been spent on and whom it had gone to pay. He had been pressing for an answer to this issue for three consecutive meetings.

P Herlihy noted that this had been a recurring issue and asked for a show of support from the meeting to continue to pursue an answer to this query.

(The majority of those who voted were in favour – 21 for; 0 against)

S Poulsen requested that this response be detailed and in writing.

P Herlihy noted the clear concern of the meeting over this issue and the support shown for Mr Lord's enquiry and requested that Councillors take this

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acts of graffiti, threatening behaviour by youths in the park and the illegal use of minibikes. He asked whether the massive loss of amenity and costs associated with these activities, including the cost to clean up, justified the action to remove the wardens. He also asked how the council was addressing issues of supervised activities for young people in the holidays and after school.

K Lord noted that the mobile Greenspaces patrols were unable to deal with the intrusion of teenagers into parks after closing. There was only three park staff to patrol 14 parks. He suggested the need for proper liaison and co-ordination between the Council (Greenspaces) and the police to deal with teenage anti-social behaviour.

Cllr Meiszner suggested that his situation was not isolated to Stoneydown Park and was a problem all over the Borough.

Cllr Wheatley noted that he had campaigned for permanent wardens in the past. He also noted that in High Street ward there was a good relationship with the police and they should liaise to stop this anti-social behaviour in the parks. He suggested that residents canvass their local Councillors at surgeries to press for action on this issue.

Cllr O'Rourke noted that High Street ward SNT had been working to get something done with regard to the situation in Stoneydown Park.

P Herlihy noted the points and asked for a response from Greenspaces on the issue of staffing levels, the state of the parks and the security and management. He questioned the value for money aspect and asked whether the savings from reduced staffing levels were offset by increased associated costs to maintain the parks. He also noted that young people were inadequately provided for when it came to places to go and asked for more information on after school and vacation activities. He indicated the clear consensus of the meeting by requesting a show of hands from the audience in support of action on these issues.

A **resident** noted that it was negative and not instructive to vilify all youth for the actions of a minority. He asked instead that the community engage with youth and try and understand the issues that were important to them in an attempt solve the issues together. He cited recent articles surrounding "Zero Tolerance" crackdowns in Leyton on the homeless and youth activity reported in the newspapers as broadcasting the wrong message and did not solve the problems. He noted also that the young and homeless were also victims of crime.

A **resident** asked whether it would be possible to "map" the demographic of young people in the CC area (e.g. age, ethnicity, numbers) to look at better ways to engage with and provide for them. Only by consultation could the community understand the needs of the young and thereby look at ways to improve current facilities or look at alternative ways to provide for them.

P Herlihy asked whether it would be possible to find out for the next meeting.

P Spiro (Friends of Lloyd Park) noted the posters and leaflets on the tables highlighting an important consultation on the future of Lloyd and Aveling Parks.

N Burton**K
Coleman****Strategy
& Social
Inclusion**

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He noted details would be on display in Selborne Walk Shopping Centre (Thursday 30th November to Sunday 3rd December 2006, 11am-3pm) and also in the Changing Room Gallery (within the park). He noted that a £4 million Heritage Lottery bid was being submitted and all residents had a right to say what they thought should go into the improvements and refurbishments. A questionnaire was available for residents to complete. He also invited people to come and enjoy the Winter Fair being held in the Park.

A Eyre noted a long-standing issue in the car park near to the William Morris Gallery on the corner of Bedford Road. She noted groups of young men regularly gathering in the car park from early morning until after dark engaging often in anti-social activities. She noted that her attempts to obtain help from the police had not yielded any satisfactory results and felt that if they had been moved on at the start of summer when the issue became evident then the problem would not have escalated to this level.

Cllr Akram (Portfolio Holder – Community Safety) noted the concerns and that Cllr Reardon had been following up on the issue. He noted that if it were a regular time for the occurrences, say at 11 am, then the SNT could pursue the issue and move them on if necessary, however, if the activities were more sporadic then it became more difficult to act. He noted that officers were looking specifically at this issue and that if any perpetrators could be identified, then it was possible to take action under the anti-social behaviour law. He noted that calls to 999 were specifically for serious matters only.

A Eyre advised that it was not sporadic activity and she did have car registration plates.

PS J Wooding noted that he covered Bedford Road and over the past 5-6 weeks he had consulted with a nearby temple as to why these young people were congregating there. He had also liaised with the Anti-Social Behaviour team with a view to removing the public convenience that shields a lot of the activity. The temple has agreed to cease feeding these youths and over the past couple of weeks they have been moved on several times. He noted that the situation had improved somewhat recently and was hopeful that once the toilet was removed and the car park better lit it would resolve the issue.

A Stannard (Friends of Lloyd Park – Chair) hoped that he plans to clear this car park did not mean that it would be a “scorched earth” policy that would remove all the greenery. He was also cautious to ensure that the car park remained as a car park, as there was little provision around the park at the moment and the Council policy did not support cars in the Borough.

A **resident** was concerned that moving on the problem young people would only shift it elsewhere and would not address the “root cause”. She wondered why they would want to gather there and agreed that education and engagement were the keys to solving these issues.

K Lord was very concerned about proposed restructuring of the leadership and decision-making processes of the local authority as outlined in the Local Government White Paper - Strong and Prosperous Communities. (Under the plans there will be three choices for councils: a directly elected mayor, a

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directly elected executive of Councillors, or a leader elected by their fellow-Councillors with a clear four year mandate. All the executive powers of local authorities will be vested in the leader of the council, with a strong role for the council to scrutinise the leader's actions and approve the budget and major plans.) His concern was that if the structure were changed in this manner there would be a further reduction in democracy and accountability. He demanded a full and open consultation on the White Paper so that the public can decide on the appropriate structure for the Council. He noted that his was the biggest change since 1999 when the Cabinet structure was introduced and, he believed, many felt this was already anti-democratic. He noted that by 2010 there was a planned cut in public assets of some £30 billion and under this new structure no resident would have the right to speak against it.

P Herlihy noted that the item had overrun. He asked the meeting if they would support this item being brought back to a future meeting. (There was a clear consensus to discuss this issue at a later date).

**CC
Officer**

6.2 Matters Arising From The Minutes

A Hussain informed the meeting of Islam Awareness Week (One World) and invited the community to visit their local mosque on an open day (21st November 2006 11am – 4pm) to meet the people and see how a mosque operated. Leaflets were available at the meeting. He was disappointed that publicity for the week had been scarce as it was an important aspect of the “225,000 people, 1 Community” Strategy that had been highlighted so recently. He suggested that community awareness should be an important item on the CC agenda.

M Keegan was representing a group of local residents who had joined together to respond to a Council consultation on road safety on Hoe Street and Forest Rd and the proposed one-way system between Greenleaf Road and the Bell Corner. They were concerned that more traffic will be generated on the residential roads, they will be less safe as a result and there was nothing in the proposal to reflect resident's quality of life considerations, which they saw as the heart of the issue. His 150-strong petition (more than that of the Council consultation) had been ignored, in his view. The Council response to enquiries was that only official forms would be considered. He was disappointed that he Council was following consultation to the letter and ignored the spirit of the process. He requested a more thorough consultation and consideration of a wider range of options, including traffic calming and a street audit (working with residents) to look at ways to improve the quality of the streets.

B Manku noted the points raised, noting that under the terms of the funding, they had one year (until March) to design, consult and implement these schemes. He denied that they were rushing through schemes and took time to take into consideration the point of view of local residents. He noted that there had been several complaints and these had been outlined in reports to the Portfolio Holder to go to Members. It was then up to them to make decisions on the system based on these reports. He noted that if the scheme was not implemented before March then the money would be lost and it would not go

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ahead at all.

P Herlihy noted that here was clearly an issue here and requested that those affected by this scheme meet with Mr Manku after the meeting.

B Manku was happy to discuss issues after the meeting, or alternatively, residents could speak to him at the Chingford Municipal Offices (16 The Ridgeway, Chingford, E4) during business hours.

The item was closed at this point.

7 COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPEND 2006/2007

Residents were invited to discuss further the current options for the spending of the £10,000 Community Council budget 2006/7 before the suggestions were voted upon for allocation of the funding.

Results of the ballot were then collated and noted in Item 10.

The item was closed at this point.

8 ELECTIONS – COMMUNITY CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND PCCG OBSERVER**8.1 Community Chair & Vice Chair**

Nominated candidates for the positions of Community Chair and Vice Chair were introduced and any last minute nominations were taken from the floor before the voting.

Chair:

Mr Phil Herlihy was elected unopposed to the role of Community Chair.

Vice Chair:

2 Nominations – Mr F Raja and Mr K Lord

Mr F Raja – 29 votes

Mr K Lord – 8 votes

Mr Faisal Raja was duly elected to the role of Community Vice Chair.

8.2 Police and Community Consultative Group (PCCG) Observer

The Waltham Forest Police and Community Consultative Group (PCCG) is the grass roots voice for a safer community and its meetings are open to the public. The main function is to help make Waltham Forest safer by providing a unique forum for direct communication between all groups in the community.

Mr Abid Hussain was elected to the position of PCCG Observer for the coming year unopposed.

Noted the following comments, discussion and responses where relevant:

P Spiro offered a vote of thanks to Phil Herlihy for his efforts in the Chair of the Community Council and to Shirley Haynes for her support of the meeting.

P Herlihy thanked the meeting for their support and outlined his vision for the

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meeting where the first half was dedicated to resident discussion with Councillors offering points of information. The second (Formal) part of the meeting was where he felt Councillors could bring their experience to bear on issues raised in the earlier session and if necessary escalate the issue to the Cabinet Champion for reporting to Cabinet for action. He felt in this way that the meeting would see greater local democracy and greater local influence and therefore be more effective.

The item and Community Forum was closed at this point.

PART TWO
FORMAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE

9 WHIPPS CROSS HOSPITAL – FIT FOR THE FUTURE

James Slater (JS), Waltham Forest Primary Care Trust (PCT) presented. NHS Trusts and PCTs are working together on a programme of reconfiguration of health services and facilities in outer NE London. The review aims to look at improving the quality of local health services; providing more services in the community; getting the best out of new facilities and providing services within the budget.

He outlined 5 options:

- Option 1: Queen's Hospital as major acute hospital, Whipps Cross and King George Hospitals remain as district general hospitals (DGHs), with Independent Sector Treatment Centre (ISTC) at King George Hospital;
- Option 2: Queen's Hospital as major acute hospital; One emergency-focused hospital (Whipps Cross) and one elective-focused hospital (King George);
- Option 3: Queen's Hospital as major acute hospital; One emergency-focused hospital (King George) and one elective-focused hospital (Whipps Cross);
- Option 4: Queen's Hospital as major acute hospital; Whipps Cross as DGH and King George as an ambulatory centre.
- Option 5: Queen's Hospital as major acute hospital; King George as DGH and Whipps Cross as an ambulatory centre.

The programme is being undertaken in the context of London-wide review of health strategy. It was noted that the Urgent Care Centre, Maternity Services, Outpatients, Diagnostic facilities and Day surgery would stay at Whipps Cross Hospital. He stressed that at this point no decisions have yet been taken and will not be taken without extensive public involvement and consultation. Preferred option(s) will be reached as a result of public comment, benefits appraisal and scoring and will go out to formal consultation with the wide involvement of patients, the public and professionals. Part of the process will

involve meeting with MPs, Councillors, Overview and Scrutiny, PPI forums, Community Councils, the Joint Partnership Forum, media and other stakeholder groups. Consultation likely to take place early in 2007. As consultation was only still at a preliminary stage, he would be returning in the new year with a more comprehensive presentation.

Further information is available at: www.walthamforest-pct.nhs.uk

Contact: Fitforthefuture@wf-pct.nhs.uk

Noted the following comments, discussion and responses where relevant:

P Spiro noted that Sally Gorham, the PCT Chief Executive, should have been present to take the comments or residents.

J Slater noted that he was the Deputy CE and this was the 4th such CC meeting that he had attended.

P Spiro asked whether people would be expected to go to Romford from Waltham Forest for treatment and whether it was true that the options would be reduced from five to three by the time the final consultation was presented.

J Slater confirmed that there would not be five options, though could not confirm the actual final number.

P Spiro noted that the elderly require resident local specialist provision and this should be maintained at Whipps Cross.

J Slater noted that the ultimate accountability of the service was to provide access to healthcare for all, including the vulnerable and elderly. On the issue of travel times, the London Ambulance service had modelled these and they had been advised by these figures. They were committed to delivering care as effectively as possible.

A **resident** expressed concern that despite the fact that they had been told that no decision had been made, residents were asked to state preferred options. He suggested that the proposed cuts were part of a "rationalisation" resulting from previous financial mismanagement. He likened this fiscal mishandling to the current debate surrounding the cost of the Olympics, suggesting that despite this there will be no calls to cut that programme. Cuts in the NHS service were a direct result of over-spend. He questioned the fact that PFI hospitals such as the ISTC had to be paid whether they were used or not. He called for an end to the overpaid bureaucrats mismanaging the system and demanded that the service be left as people wanted it.

J Slater responded that the NHS had made inroads into the bureaucracy of the organisation and there was a much greater openness now to three years ago. With regard to any financial issues, investigations would reveal the true causes. Increased attendances at A&E and rising demand for services was part of the reason for the overspend. Budgets were formula driven and they did with it what they could. The PFI issue was part of policy beyond his scope, however they were bound to contracts.

M Keesan asked whether projections for long-term population growth for the London area, and particularly the Thames Gateway, had been factored into the proposals.

A **resident** suggested that the hospital had historically always been under-funded and usually balanced at the end of the financial year. The underlying

reason for the under-funding here was the £45 billion spent on the PFI initiatives on £8 million of buildings. He was disturbed to read in the Guardian that Sally Gorham had refused to back the campaign to save Whipps Cross Hospital. Residents all wanted Whipps Cross as a fully functioning general hospital.

J Slater noted that in her position as CE of the PCT, it would be inappropriate for Sally Gorham to indicate allegiance to any particular side as she must maintain objectivity. He noted that the PCT was charged with the role of providing healthcare for Waltham Forest, therefore it was not the mission of the PCT to save Whipps Cross, but to look at the best options and if there was one, then to adopt it. This review is a means to find out what the best service should be for the area. On the issue of population projections, he noted that consultants had been working through all projections for growth in the area and he could discuss these after the meeting if the resident so desired.

A **resident** wished to congratulate the NHS on the improvements since 1993 when her mother died in a hospital corridor. The recent experience of the hospital with her father was a noticeable change and he was treated quickly and efficiently.

Cllr Wheatley noted that some years ago there was a selection of 6-7 hospitals to choose from. His protests to changes at the time were ignored, however, now they were looking at doing the same thing. He urged residents not to be complacent and to support the hospital to ensure that it is maintained as he could testify that it offers excellent service.

Cllr Meiszner asked why Romford was chosen for the new hospital and not Whipps Cross.

J Slater responded that Romford's case had been stronger.

Cllr Khan noted that the general consensus of the meeting was that it was an issue of primary importance. Services at Whipps Cross should be increased and improved, not cut and he urged all 60 Councillors to make their opinions known to the PCT on the issue. He concluded by saying that Whipps Cross Hospital offered an excellent service for the local community and should not be lost to it.

The item was closed at this point.

10 FORMAL COUNCIL BUSINESS

The results from the Spend vote conducted earlier in the meeting were announced. Each Item is listed below with votes cast in brackets ():

1 (30); 2 (28); 3 (18); 4 (0); 5 (16); 6 (27); 7 (35) ; 8 (14); 9 (4); 10 (19); 11 (18); 12 (23); 13 (20); 14 (59); 15 (9).

Cllr Khan noted that the top 4 proposals (14, 7, 1 and 2) added to a total of £8365.

Cllr Ali noted that to add options 10 and 15 totalled £9765 and proposed that these be added to the list.

Cllr Gladstone proposed that the remaining funds (£235) go to option 14 (the Disability Resource Centre).

Cllr Meiszner seconded.

Cllr Khan requested that Councillors vote on the proposal.

(It was noted that the vote was 8 in favour and carried.)

Items included for CC expenditure £2006/7 in order of popularity:

Item 14 – WF Disability Resource Centre - £1365 + £235 (balance) = £1600

Item 7 – Sports Facilities for Young People in Lloyd/ Aveling Park - £2000

Item 1 – Anti-Litter Environmental Campaign - £2000

Item 2 – Schools Environmental Project - £3000

Item 10 – Coppermill Lane Park Football Goal Posts - £1000

Item 5 – Cheney Row goal posts - £400

Total 2006/7 Expenditure = £10,000

On the outstanding issue from the Community Forum regarding the Arcade expenditure from last year:

Cllr Akram agreed to take forward to Cabinet for a response.

Cllr Khan requested that this response be in writing for the next meeting.

There being no further formal decisions required on matters arising from the Community Forum or any further discussion, the item was drawn to a close.

11 **DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The meeting was asked to note that the date dates and venues for the future meetings:

- 5 February 2007 at Hillyfield Primary School, Higham Hill Road, E17

All meetings start at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 9.55 pm

Chair's Signature_____

Date_____

Cabinet
Champion