



COMMUNITY COUNCILS
A voice for your community



Walworth Community Council

Main Meeting

Draft Minutes of the Walworth Community Council Meeting held on
Wednesday March 14 at 7.00PM
at Thurlow Lodge Community Hall, Thurlow Street, SE17

Present

Councillors: Abdul Mohamed (Chair), Lorraine Lauder (Vice-Chair), Paul Bates, James Gurling, Martin Seaton, Jane Salmon and Kirsty McNeil

The meeting opened at **7.13pm**.

1. Introduction and welcome by the Chair

Councillor Mohamed began the meeting by welcoming residents. He explained the process to be followed at the meeting and introduced Members and officers. He informed the meeting that the proceedings would be taped.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Caroline Pidgeon.

3. Disclosure of Members' interests and dispensations

None

4. Notification of any items the Chair deems urgent

None.

5. Confirmation of minutes and matters arising

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on February 7 2007 be approved as a true and accurate recording of that meeting, and be signed by the Chair.

Councillor Bates requested that the Clerk be congratulated on the quality of the February 7 2007 minutes.

Mr Cherrill asked that, in future reports on crime, numbers should be reported rather than percentages.

6. Deputations (if any): There were no deputations.

7. Community Slot: Southwark Arbitration Unit

This item was postponed to the next meeting.

**8. Southwark's bid for traffic improvements to Transport for London:
Annually, the Council bids for funding for local transport improvements. This is done via the Local Implementation Plan Annual Progress Report (LIP APR). This also feeds into our five year transport strategy.**

The timescale for the bid is:

- Mid May - Submit to council's Executive
- June - Submit funding application for £7million, with likely allocation between £3m and £4m
- December – Results are announced by TfL

There are specific TfL programme areas, including:

- Road Safety
- Walking
- Accessibility
- Maintaining the network
- Cycling
- Public transport

The public can get involved by letting the transport planners know about daily transport issues, submitting ideas for the Project bank.

The following comments/questions were raised:

- Mr Cherrill expressed concern that the traffic diverted away from the works in Walworth Road was making other streets unsafe (for example, Thurlow Street). In response, David Moffat from Transport Planning explained that, prior to the road works in Walworth Road, the changed flow in local streets had been modelled to anticipate and resolve potential problems.
- Mr Clark said that when planning for road improvements and parking improvements, where surveys done in advance in regard to health & safety, prior to spending taxpayers' money. Also when it takes three times as long to take a journey, how does this help traffic flow and emissions. Mr Clark said that cyclists were at risk at the top of Elsted Street, due to poor road layout. In response, David Moffat said that Safety Audits were always undertaken prior to implementation of a design scheme. In the longer term, planners will continue to consider the impact on various road users.
- Councillor Lauder said there was a problem at the junction of Portland Street and East Street; there have already been serious accidents at the junction. *Response awaited.*
- A resident expressed his concern at the invisibility of cyclists wearing black and displaying no lights at night. In response, David Moffat said that there were cycling training courses at Southwark schools.
- Mr Cherrill complained that if there were a number of bendy buses stopped at bus stops, it was hard for the elderly to get to the last bus.

Resolved: That Andrew Downes be requested to attend the next meeting, with an update on the Walworth Road improvements, and to respond to residents' concerns.

9. Crime Update:

Superintendent Chinchen outlined the situation on a Borough wide basis. There had been a small number of shootings in Peckham in February, but overall violent crime continued to fall – serious violence had declined 22% in the last year. Unfortunately, a small group of young people were responsible for the attacks in the Peckham area.

Street robbery is 12% down this year, with a similar reduction in thefts from cars; there was a smaller reduction in thefts of cars.

10. Safer Neighbourhood bases and the closure of some police stations in Southwark:

Superintendent Chinchen said that the Walworth and Peckham police stations will remain open, with counters, custody suites and parking. The stations, which would be closed, were Camberwell, Rotherhithe and East Dulwich. Most of the police stations under threat of closure were late Nineteenth Century or early Twentieth Century buildings, and there had been very little investment. They were not entirely fit for purpose for a modern police service, as the accommodation they offer is inflexible and the buildings are expensive to run. There will be a strategy of a smaller number of big police stations.

To replace the closed big police stations, there will be 8 – 10 Safer Neighbourhood bases, which will be closer to the areas where officers patrol. These should be in place within the next 18 months.

These bases should have an interview room and a conference room, and some will have counters. Superintendent Chinchin was visiting all the Community Councils to try and get the best view of what the community needed. There is a possibility that a base will be located in the Chaplin Centre and in the redeveloped Aylesbury estate.

- Ms Vincent expressed concern that there were people using drugs in her block, and there were hoodies. Superintendent Chinchin explained that the Safer Neighbourhood Teams had priorities, but were working with Police & Community Support Officers and Street Wardens to address problems. Extra Police & Community Support Officers will be allocated to the trouble spots in the Borough. He added that hoodies were not all criminals, and some hoodies were also concerned about street crime. However, the police are putting resources into dealing with street crime, as this has a huge impact on the area. A team of police officers are working round the clock on allegations of robbery, and stop and searching for guns and knives.
- Councillor Bates said he wanted to see the number of Police & Community Support Officers preserved in all the Safer Neighbourhood Teams, and was there any news of the Faraday base. Superintendent Chinchin said there was no discussion about reallocating Police & Community Support Officers. The difficulties of putting the Safer Neighbourhood Team base in the Chaplin Centre was the poor fabric of the building, however the control room could be moving out, freeing up space for the Safer Neighbourhood Team base.
- Mr Cherrill asked if local bases were better than police stations. Superintendent Chinchin said that Safer Neighbourhood Teams should be deployed as close to the locations they are patrolling. Police Stations are not in the best locations, and the moves will reduce the cost of parking etc. This is a London-wide strategy, and the proceeds may not come back to Southwark.
- The Chair said that big police stations give the public confidence. Superintendent Chinchin said that Walworth police station will remain, with its custody suite and police vehicles. Two Safer Neighbourhood Teams would possibly be located at one base.
- Ms Abdalla said she had asked her Safer Neighbourhood Team to send an officer to come to their International Women's Day event, but no officer attended. Superintendent Chinchin said he would take details and investigate, but pointed out that Safer Neighbourhood Teams only had six officers to cover a large area and range of work. Their primary duty is to uphold the law.
- Mr Beedell asked what the average response time was. Superintendent Chinchin said that there was night and day cover, with a response car based in Walworth or Peckham. The response time to 90% of calls was 12 minutes, but a serious incident could mean that there was a shortage of police officers available for other calls.
- Councillor Seaton said that the main problems were at night, and this has a profound impact on residents' lifestyle. There was a need for balance between foot patrols and response cars on the street. Superintendent Chinchin said that the highest demand is in the late evening.
- In response to Ms Amodia, John McHenry said that the Street Wardens worked up to 10:30pm
- Residents said they wanted more police visibly on the streets. Wardens do work together with the police by sharing intelligence and premises. Police do not walk with Wardens as their Risk Assessments and radio nets are different.
- There are eight Street Wardens based in Walworth, together with two supervisors and one manager. Walworth is a priority area. The Wardens need to know the priorities of the community so they can respond to them.
- Councillor Seaton said that the Heygate estate had insufficient cover and criminals are attracted into the area. Will the Wardens' response team go home at 10:30pm?
- Superintendent Chinchin said the police are trying to arrange a visible presence, and direct resources to problem areas. The Wardens' response team will work later, but work within their own remit and risk assessment.
- A resident said that it was too dangerous to distribute leaflets on the Heygate. Superintendent Chinchin said that the Neighbourhood Task Force assists Safer Neighbourhood Teams with warrants etc. that are needed to raid crack houses.
- Ms Childs asked if the police did not have enough money to pay for night shifts? Superintendent Chinchin said that the data from 999 calls etc was analysed to ensure allocations of resources every six months. The Safer Neighbourhood Teams are not the only police officers covering an area.
- Mr Crawford said that in Lambeth and Westminster, Wardens work night shifts. There is a need for a visible presence on the streets at night. Superintendent Chinchin said that crime was not just committed at night, but at peak times during the day.
- Mr Clark said he wanted more police officers, as distinct from Police & Community Support Officer or Street Wardens.

(i) Public Question Time - Answers in italics were provided after the meeting

- (ii) Mr Clark asked: "When planning traffic improvements, and parking, have they done on the spot surveys in regard to Health & Safety in their plans, before spending taxpayers' money? Also, when it takes three times as long to do a journey, how does this help traffic flow and emissions?"
- (iii) Mr Charnock asked: "Why is it that the City of London estate in Old Kent road has immaculate grass and palm trees, when my grass area is turned into a mud site because of football and dogs? These activities are allowed by adults who do not use the football area provided."
- (iv) Mr Charnock asked: "Why do shopkeepers extend their displays of goods beyond the shop front and on to the pavements?"
- (v) Ms Vincent asked: "Why are there so many loose paving stones, and bad roads where the people and elderly can have a bad fall? I tripped in Wooller Street. No lighting – why is this not being addressed by the Council."
- (vi) Mr Noble asked: "There was a danger of gas digging hole at Comus House between flats 5 & 6, since February 2007. The job has been completed and the hole was left open. Children are dropping into the hole. Please tell the Council to block it as soon as possible."
- (vii) Mr Clark asked: "Why was a hole in the footpath resurfaced when a new lamp post is put in next to the old one, when it will be pulled up when the old lamp post is removed? Why not do it all at the same time, saving the taxpayer money?"
- (viii) Mr Noble asked: "Could you please invite Raj Sarda, the Area Housing Manager to the next meeting?" *It should be noted that Housing issues are not within the remit of Community Council, as they can be addressed at the appropriate Area Forum.*
- (ix) Mr Noble asked: "Referring to paragraph vii of the Public Questions section of the minutes of the February 7 2007 meeting: who is the Chair of Comus TRA? When did Charlotte Glazier and Edwin Emakpose meet the Chair for a discussion? Why couldn't they forward a written notification (Area Housing Office) to the TRA that funding is already with them and confirm the project starting date? Could you please contact them to confirm when this project is starting?"
- (x) Mr Crawford asked: "Are there designated places where the street cleaners are supposed to leave blue bags, and when are they picked up? Bags are left in different places, before midday, on Browning Street and never picked up until next morning. The bags tend to become magnets for residents to dump their own rubbish around."
- (xi) Mr Charnock asked: "TV has advertising with regards to motorcyclists at junctions. Cyclists are dressed in dark clothing when roads are wet and headlights from oncoming vehicles can give a blind spot to dark cyclists. They should be in highly luminous clothing for their own safety."
- (xii) Mr Beedell asked: "When shops are closing in East Street, I have noticed that they are sweeping inside their shop and leave the rubbish on the pavement. The street cleaners do not come until the next day! Can shopkeepers be advised to keep the pavement in front of their shop as clean as the inside of the shops?"
- (xiii) Mr Beedell asked: "Can officers of the Council attend our meetings as promised?"
- (xiv) Mr Beedell asked: "In Queen & King Street and Orb Street, vans park in the middle of the road, blocking it for emergency vehicles. Can something be done?"
- (xv) Ms Parks asked: "Bring back Police old ? , know your community. Keep the school children in school, school hours is your business. The law must be kept at all time, both side, prevention is better than cure. Policing should be strong foundation never changing policy. I see the difference over the years. We need a strong foundation."

Members' decisions

Resolved: Mr Dainton was reappointed to the Governing body of Michael Faraday Primary School

The meeting ended at 9.20pm

Signed:

Councillor Abdul Mohamed (Chair) on (date):

