

## Alice in Winterland

### Notes of Kirby Estate and Slippers Place residents meeting

Date: Monday 8 October 2018  
Venue: Cherry Tree Tenants Hall  
Time: 6pm to 7pm

#### Attendees:

Cllr Al-Samerai (The Chair)  
Cllr Lury (Cllr L)

Aileen Cahill (AC)  
Marcus Van Ger Gaag (MVG)  
Mandy Janes (MJ)  
Miilie Devereaux  
Security Nation  
Anne Whyte  
Charlie Simm

Ward Cllr Bermondsey North  
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for  
Culture, Leisure, Equalities and  
Communities  
LBS Head of Culture  
Golden Tours  
Continental Drifts  
Continental Drifts  
Security Consultants  
LBS Event Operations  
LBS Senior Events Officer

#### Notes of meeting

**The Chair**, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. Senior council officers on the panel were then introduced. The chair set out the meeting format which would allow four minutes per speaker to address key points, followed by questions from the floor.

**The Chair** then invited AC to address the meeting

**AC** introduced herself as Head of Culture

**AC** said that this meeting is for residents to put forward their concerns and get answers to their questions. If they cannot be answered, questions will be taken away and answers would be communicated to them via the website which is updated regularly. MVG will then be invited to give an overview of the event.

**AC** told attendees she wanted to take the residents through, very briefly, how the event application process works and what has been going on over the past few months and used a slide to illustrate this.

- Event proposal comes in to the events team it is assessed, discussed and all the details are reviewed in terms of meeting all internal requirements.
- If it does meet the requirements, there is then an internal agreement in principal to go forward with the development of that event.
- At that point the engagement process starts with ward Cllrs, stakeholders, Friends of parks
- In this case early meetings took place with ward Cllrs and the Friends of the Park

A stakeholder list is created and contacted with invites to meetings.

**AC** then apologised to the residents of the two estates that were there today as it was not realised that they did not have sufficient representation to be able to come to the meetings that were held.

The official application goes in and is agreed in principal subject to going through the statutory processes of licensing, planning application.

There is also a process called Safety advisory Group (SAG) - this is a very important part of the process of all events. This is a multi agency group that meet to oversee event plans and is attended by council officers, regulatory services, highways, police, Transport for London (TfL) to oversee event management plans and safety plans which need to approved and signed off before an event can take place. This process can take several months.

If licensing or a planning application (if relevant) is approved, it then goes to the SAG process and the event goes ahead. After the event, a complete review and assessment takes place including seeing if there are any lessons to be learned for future events.

**AC** then addressed a question which had been asked about who had made the decision for the application to go ahead. **AC** responded that she had made the decision and it was a delegated authority agreement subject to usual conditions of licencing and planning and successful SAG sign off.

**AC** was interrupted by Cllr AAS who asked about what date it had been signed?

**AC** responded that it was July / August - summer (did not have the exact date to hand)

*Questions were then asked from the floor about where the income from the event goes?*

**AC** responded that the income goes to support free events in the borough: including:

- Bermondsey Carnival                    £60,000
- Fireworks Night                        £80,000
- Rotherhithe Festival                    £5,000

**Cllr L** also commented that there were also other free events in the borough which are important.

**The Chair** then asked **AC** then to sit down as the time had elapsed.

**MVG** gave an overview of the event (slide show)

- It is a family focused lantern and light festival There are 162 lanterns between 1 and 7 metres tall set in 35 different scenes based on Alice in Wonderland /Through the Looking Glass
- Why choose Southwark Park for the event? The decision to choose Southwark as the location was because there were no activities or events like it in this part of London. Winter Wonderland, Kew, Chiswick, Clapham Common all take place in other parts of London.
- Organisers wanted to produce something which would engage children and be an interactive experience. Local schools were being encouraged to participate as performers, carol singer and narrators. Each of the 35 scenes requires narration and a different child from the local area could be involved in narrating the stories.
- The site would also include stalls, bars, Santa's Grotto and Christmas themed stands
- The production company (Continental Drifts) have been in touch with local businesses regarding trading opportunities – maximum 20 stalls.
- The event is geared towards families and it is not intended to be a winter wonderland event with big bands and bars and lots of alcohol consumption.
- Licensing requirement is a 9pm finish is in place from Sunday to Thursday with a 10pm finish on Friday and Saturdays
- Discounts - Resident letters went out to 7,000 households offering a 40% discount to local people.
- Engagement - Meetings were arranged with local committees working within the engagement area. They attended five local resident meetings.

**The Chair** commented that even with a 40%, it is still £25 for a family of 4 - that is a lot of money.

**The Chair** then thanked AC and MVG for their presentations and although it was a whistle stop through the points, it was hoped the questions which will come from the floor would enable them to use their information to answer. Questions will be grouped to help answer them.

*Issues of concern and questions came from the floor*

**The Chair** commented that the residents of the Slippers and Kirby estates were issued an apology from the council tonight as they did not have a TRA and this is why they were not consulted. It is important that this is noted, as they did not have a T&RA - that is not the fault of the residents.

**The Chair** said that further comments about consultation will be taken and also about the very principal of using the park in this way.

#### **Questions and comments from the floor:**

- Is this is a fait accompli?
- Information was misleading regarding T&RA's – councillors were notified in February.
- Slippers Place and Kirby Estates are nearest to the park but the first they knew about it was when a letter was received only three weeks ago from Neill Coyle.

- An on-line petitions has been organised with regards to change of use
- Did the council contact the Fields in Trust? They had not heard from the council.
- Mills Stream House - they had not been informed.
- Bonamy T&RA had not been consulted.
- Has the licence has already been done?
- Question regarding policy – FoSP had stopped lots of big events from happening in the past – anything private or corporate was stopped. There appears to have been a complete change of policy in a short time.
- More consultation should have been done. Only three people attended the meeting in June.
- This is about privatisation and sets a precedent.
- Franklin Close and Gomm Road residents were not aware and they live by one of the exits. Gardens from some properties go directly into the park.
- Where does the money go if there is already a budget for events?
- Concerns from residents in Amos Way.

**The Chair** commented that if only three people attended the stakeholder event meeting this should have raised alarm bells and added that this is about privatisation of the park,

**The Chair** commented that the council may say a contract is signed but it is up to the community to say why that should not be the case .This issue can be addressed at the end of the meeting with next steps.

**The Chair** then responded to questions which were asked about the licence application:

- The contract was signed in July/August but was subject to licensing and planning permission.
- License application a few weeks ago – residents did not know about this as the notices were in the park. Ward Cllrs objected to the licence. The Lib Dems went to the hearing and got the finish times reduced to 9pm.
- A Labour Cllr was present to support the event but was not permitted to speak there were also other Cllrs there making different cases.
- Planning permission – this has not been decided yet – the formal deadline has gone but objections can still be made
- Residents can object to the planning application via the council website.

**The Chair** then posed the following questions to AC:

- Should the council have been consulting with residents regardless of having a TRA in place?
- Has Fields in Trust been consulted?
- Why has the policy been changed?

**AC** acknowledged that with regards to estates on this side, clearly communications had not been received and apologised for this.

**The Chair** commented that although AC had apologised but asked if lessons have been learned made a wrong decision is an apology is not enough.

**AC** then went through the engagement process:

- In the early stages there were four ward Cllr meeting all ward Cllrs were invited.
- At the first meeting only three Cllrs attended.

**The Chair** asked who have attended the meeting

**AC** stated no Liberal Democrat Cllrs had attended

**The Chair** responded that one long email had been received email with a mention of lanterns in November in one stating alarm bells should have rung.

**AC** continued to speak about the engagement process saying that two stakeholder meetings had taken place.

*At this point the meeting got very noisy with a lot of the public speaking over each other.*

**The Chair** asked AC to list the locations of the public meeting and how they were publicised

**AC** responded that there were two stakeholder meetings that the promoter had led on at the parks office. Stakeholder lists were used to inform people about the meeting

**MVG** commented that the first that they had attended was held at Southwark Park, organised by the council. Two stakeholder meetings were then arranged by their company at Southwark Park office.

**The Chair** commented that local people were not aware of the meetings and that they were poorly advertised. The local people were not consulted - this should be done by letter and not to just rely to just relying on T&RA's. Cllr L should take note of this.

**AC** said that clearly some people didn't hear about the meetings and it there has to be another method by which the message can get out.

**The Chair** commented that the council has signed a contract but it is never too late. Planning permission has not been given yet which can still be objected to. There are top decision makers here tonight who can say that this is not good enough and that things can be changed or at least limited significantly. This can be addressed at the end of the meeting.

**AC** commented that people have been asking about where the letter drop went (shows slide of letter drop area)

**The Chair** asked when the letter drop went out.

**AC** responded that it went out last week and the letter explained all about event.

**The Chair** commented that this should have happened before the contract was signed as a process of consultation – the letter was only sent out last week dated September and arriving in October.

**AC** commented that information was available on the website on a stakeholder page. If local people had not received the letter then this point would be picked up by the council with the promoter.

**The Chair** has made a note of the estates where people were represented and will pass on these details.

**The Chair** then addressed another question regarding what has changed in principle about policy because this is unprecedented in terms of scale. Cllr L as Cabinet Member was invited to respond.

**Cllr L** said that going forward there were two points to raise in terms of consultation:

- Firstly, part of her role is consultation and a decision has been made to set up a series of principles for consultation and engagement. This is because too often people feel that they are not being consulted.
- A process will be carried out to identify a set of principles that the council can be held accountable to and means consultation and engagement happens properly.
- This is not something the council can do alone and will call upon the community to be involved. This process is just beginning and there will be more details early next year.

**The Chair** commented that Rebecca is going to do a consultation about consultation.

**Cllr L** responded that this was not a consultation about consultation but a co design process with the community to come up with a set of principles for consultation.

**Cllr L** said that the council continues to fund events in parks. The council has set officers the challenge to make the events team self financing. The council are under financial pressure and cannot continue to deliver the free events programme without income coming in.

A decision had been taken to look at events in our parks, not 24 hours a day 7 days a week 365 days a year but look at the ways at how the money can be brought in to continue to provide the events for free. In broad principle terms this is what has been decided.

This policy is across all parks in Southwark. There are many events proposals submitted but do not get considered as they are not deemed appropriate or suitable

This event is one which officers have considered would be suitable to hold in the park at this time of year. If people are not happy the council want to know and to understand the concerns – this is why officers are here this evening.

**The Chair** wanted to hear from residents from the floor and commented that what has been said indicates a clear change in policy. This is a dangerous change as it effectively means that bits of private space can be privatised. Charging people £25 with a discount to come into their park. There is a clear policy decision and this is a battle to be had at the town hall. In terms of this event it is important to understand the concerns.

**The Chair** went on to address the question about Fields In Trust – and asked if they had been consulted?

**AC** confirmed they have been contacted and that a discussion had taken place earlier that today.

### **Continued questions and comments from the floor**

Has the event has been approved officially?

**Cllr L** responded saying that the decision has been approved in principal. There are multiple points, licensing, planning if we cannot reach an agreement on what a safe event looks like, those are all stages where this event will not go forward.

**The Chair** then commented that the Cabinet Member has the power to overturn it.

**Cllr L** responded to say that this was not in her power to overturn this decision.

### **Continued questions and comments from the floor**

- Why does it have to be on site for 10 weeks?
- The summer event (Bermondsey Carnival) only goes on until 8pm – why has 10pm close been approved?
- Is this going to have a bearing on events in future?
- There is income generated from filming and other events – can this figure be known?
- A FOI was submitted about the financial details about the event but the only detail available is that 20% hire fees are retained for damage. No details are available because this is commercially sensitive information about the financial details - why is this?
- Under the new principals of consultation - are all stakeholders equal?
- What percentage cut is the council getting for this event - how can we be assured that the best deal is being done?
- Public resources being used - all information should be transparent.
- These things should go to tender.
- If the question is that the residents cannot have free events unless you do this - take over the park for three months - this question should be put out to the community to find out if they want this?

**The Chair** commented that if this is the trade off, the council should ask the community is it worth it? The community cannot have free events if parks cannot be used for events - this is the question which should be put to the community.

### **Continued questions and comments from the floor**

With regards to tickets, is it just a family and individual event or are there corporate packages available?

**The Chair** advised the attendees that it was worth asking about the bus tours.

**AC** stated in response to questions about income that discussing the figures this is not possible as it is commercially sensitive information.

**The Chair** responded that if the council are saying that it is commercially sensitive information then in her capacity as a ward Cllr, she will be seeking legal advice on this issue and will follow it up personally.

**AC** in response to a question about income from filming explained that there is other income from filming but these figures are not here tonight but as this is this is information which goes into budgets, the details can be made available.

**AC** in response to a question about if this income cover free events she responded that these free events are only a portion of the events supported across the whole borough

**The Chair** commented that the question being asked was about getting enough money from this event to cover those three events?

**AC** responded that this is not what the question is - the question is about income from filming and other events last year. This cannot be answered without having the facts to hand.

**The Chair** then asked MVG to confirm to the meeting about package tours and costs to residents.

**MVG** confirmed that they were intending to run a shuttle service from Waterloo to the park.

*Many people spoke up at his point and were dissatisfied with this answer with many raised voices in the room, talking and speaking over each other.*

**The Chair** commented that the meeting had made their feelings clear and asked if corporate packages were available

**MVG** responded that they are looking at corporate packages

**Cllr L** then raised the point that a question had not been addressed in relation to asking the community about events in parks.

**AC** said 65% of people who come to fireworks are from SE16 and in excess of 90% of people said the event was good / very good. The council are happy to go and talk to people.

**The Chair** commented that the point being made is that it is a specific trade off - it has been presented this evening that residents have to put up with it.

**Cllr L** responded that it is not a trade off it and said that Southwark Park and many parks in the borough have had event applications going to them. Peckham Rye park held the Gala this year it was the first large scale event.

**Cllr L** responded saying it was not a trade off. The council have set the ambitions that this team is self financing - it currently is not - and we have to look at the events we can deliver.

**The Chair** responded to the question about numbers at the event commenting that her understanding was that there will be 2,000 visitors at any one with new visitors accessing the site every 30 minutes. This could mean that 2,000 visitors arrive at 3pm followed by another 2,000 and 3.30pm and so on. The Chair corrected herself saying the anticipated figure was 500 every 30 minutes and not 2,000.

**The Chair** addressed the question of the equality of stakeholders to Cllr L saying that the assumption being that the answer to this question is yes.

**Cllr L** responded that the principles were not going to set out tonight as that would defeat the purpose. This is the whole point of having the process of writing the principles for consultation and engagement .The debates will be had to enable the right outcomes to be reached.

#### **Continued questions and comments from the floor:**

- The duration of the event is long - will it fund all events over 2019?
- Bus tours - why are they bringing buses to it?
- Why not down south end of the park? Less density populated
- How can you assure residents about security?
- Pollution - are there quality issues - how can you assure they won't park in high pollution areas?
- Resident letter - bringing the park back to where it was and damage - how long will this take?
- What percentage of local people will go? Prices are up to £69 for family to go.

**The Chair** commented that the discounted tickets do not apply after the 14 December or on Saturday or Sunday.

*Questions were raised from the floor regarding access, security and the perimeter fence. Concerns about the route through for children.*

**MVG** then brought the meeting through slide showing the site map site:

- A perimeter fence will be installed around the tarmac routes.
- The height is 3.4 metres and it is made of steel shield.
- A condition of use of the site stipulated by the council was to provide a route through the site from East to west.
- The location of the two generators were shown on the map.
- Security Nation, the security company contracted for the event, addressed the meeting commenting that as an approved company they assess the risks associated and ensure the event runs smoothly and safely.

**A question from the floor:**

- What are specific arrangements outside the park.

*Many people then started speaking together and The Chair had to intervene.*

**The Chair** commented that it was clear that there are concerns about security. These concerns are not so much about what happens within the event but about what happens outside on the local estates and Gomm Road.

**Cllr L** reiterated the role of the SAG who will look at all of the plans around security issues and parking if the event goes through planning.

**The Chair** commented that the thing that would solve it is the event not happening.

*Further questions from the floor referred to anti social behaviour, young people and fireworks and the existing pressures in the area asking what the plan for security on the estates was.*

**The Chair** commented that there are clear concerns about security safety that are not being addressed - people are concerned about security on the estates.

**AC** responded that in relation to the SAG which the police attend, they look at it in the round and all concerns go to that meeting - the question cannot be answered here, AC will investigate getting security onto the nearby streets and estates as the issue of security is a big concern amongst residents.

**The Chair** asked why the event was lasting ten weeks and why after 10pm, was this is a cost covering exercise?

**MVG** responded that they had looked at the timings of other events in London and it needs to be dark as it is a lantern event. The early start was to accommodate young kids to attend with parents as under 3's are free. It goes to 10pm because people would still like to bring their children out.

**The Chair** commented that the question people would like to know is would you do it for a shorter period of time or finish it earlier?

**MVG** responded that this is something which will need to be discussed with the council.

**The Chair** asked if MVG was willing to have this discussion. The meeting was then asked do people think - rather than the event not happening at all - but if it was happening, it should be for a shorter period of time?

*The floor answered yes.*

**Questions and comments about transport and parking from the floor:**

- Shuttle buses what are the numbers and how often will they run?
- Albins annual event on 12 Dec. This is a large local event and organisers need to be speaking to Albins
- There is a major event coming up in 2019. Will the park be fit for purpose?

**MVG** responded that a traffic management plan has to be produced which gets submitted to the SAG. The promotion advises people to travel by public transport. With regards to Shuttle buses, this has not been determined yet and set down points will need to be discussed with TFL.

**The Chair** commented that can it be agreed vocally that you do not do shuttle buses?

*Minimal response from floor*

**The Chair** continued to ask how parking is to be enforced to stop people parking on Gomm Road and other areas and estates.

**MVG** reiterated that information on their website and on the tickets encourages people to not travel by car. Signage will be put up about parking.

**MVG** said he had spoken to Albins and have agreed that there will be no performances from the bandstand at particular times.

**MVG** commented in response to questions about damage to the park and protection that the site has been designed to use the tarmac paths only and temporary trackway will be used on grassed areas. MVG then tried to introduce MJ from the production company to talk about trackway protection but The Chair said there was no time and the meeting needed to wrap up.

**The Chair** said that a poll would be conducted and asked for a show of hands for people who do not want event to go ahead.

*Show of hands in the room majority hands up in agreement.*

**The Chair** commented that the feeling in the room is clear and there are real concerns which cannot be addressed tonight. People can still object to planning – a link will be sent to those who want object.

**The Chair** then asked Cllr Lury about how people can be listened to.

**Cllr Lury** responded that concerns have been listened to but she cannot overturn this decision as a cabinet member. The decision has to go through planning and the SAG and if it does not meet the criteria that means that it can safety go ahead, then it will not go ahead.

**The Chair** said that the ward Cllrs will raise the residents concerns at the planning committee meeting and asked if it was possible for council officers who signed the contracts to say 'sorry we finally got out and consulted residents, we made a mistake, sorry' it might cost the council some money, we are in the wrong' -we should do that.

**AC** responded that there is an agreement in place which is going through a legitimate process.

**The Chair** interrupted asking if the length of the event be shortened?

**Cllr L** responded that all of these issues are up for debate at planning meeting.

**The Chair** responded that planning does not decide the length of events.

**AC** added that MVG has stated that this will be discussed.

**The Chair** asked who he would be having this discussion with.

**AC** responded that it will be discussed with the council

**Cllr L** commented that we now have a list of concerns which will be taken away and discussed with AC and MVG for follow up on these concerns, the timings and all of the safety issues and other things.

**The Chair** suggested a ward Cllr be invited to the meeting to represent the residents and she is happy to attend.

**The Chair** then talked about next steps:

- Future consultations – suggest that the council does not just rely on just T&RA's
- The Chair will look at Issues of transparency of income.
- Suggest the council look more closely at parking enforcement and security around the event.
- Residents were encouraged by The Chair to attend the planning meeting and to submit objections No date in place yet and The Chair will keep people informed.

**The Chair** in response to a question about whether this could be called to scrutiny said that this was not possible as it had been an officer decision. The policy issue we can ask to be scrutinised at the council at cross party committee the principal of privatising our parks because it is public space and belongs to all of us.

**Meeting closed at 19:20**