

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SOUTHGATE WARD FORUM HELD ON THURSDAY, 16TH OCTOBER, 2014

MEMBERS: Councillors Robert Hayward, Daniel Pearce, Edward Smith and Bambos Charalambous

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Cllr Edward Smith – Welcomed the public and introduced the new format for the forum and his fellow Councillors. Cllr Bambos Charalambous introduced himself and explained his role as Associate Cabinet member

2. FUTURE OF CHASE FARM

The Future of Chase Farm Hospital – Cllr Smith explained the proposal from the new Royal Free Foundation Hospital Trust who were drawing up plans to re-develop the Chase Farm site with modern buildings. A planning application is expected to be submitted in 2015. Cllr. Smith highlighted that some land may be developed for housing to help pay for the new hospital. Cllr Pearce added that the plans also included a new primary school.

Comments from the public floor: -
- Public Member - Concern over huge cost for this new development.
- Public Member - Lack of understanding and publicity over the current facilities at Chase Farm Hospital and what services would be available in the future. Many unsure what Chase Farm does and does not offer anymore.
- Public Member - Concern over what facilities/services will be available during the transition and rebuild period. Request for further information to be made available. **ACTION**

3. POSSIBLE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Possible construction of a new primary school - Cllr Smith explained that the Councillor is putting together an outline design to be submitted to English Heritage for a Primary School to be built on the Thames Water site in Grovelands Park.

A decision from EH is expected after Christmas 2014 and if EH approve the Council will submit a planning application for a new primary school on the site. Cllr Smith confirmed that a revised application had been submitted for a Primary School to be built in the grounds of the existing Ashmole School on the Borough boundary.

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A 2 Year lease on the Minchenden School site had been entered into by the Council recently to enable the existing buildings to be used as a special needs school for children of primary school age.

- Cllr Charalambous explained that due to the pressure on School places caused by rising birth rates, the Council wanted a new 2 form entry primary school to open in Grovelands in 2016.

- Cllr Smith confirmed that Barnet Southgate College has just completed a brand new £6m facility for autistic teenagers with 200 places on the main campus in Southgate. Cllr Pearce stated that De Bohun Primary School still had half full classes, although the position was improving.

- Cllr Hayward asked Cllr Charalambous whether there was any proposal from The Priory to expand on the Grovelands site. Cllr Charalambous was uncertain and would reply. **ACTION**

Comments from the floor:-

- Public Member - Concern that the Council has many questions to answer and had not responded clearly.

- Public Member - Explained that that the main demand for places is not around Southgate Circus but actually around the North Circular area where a great deal of new housing had come on stream recently. This was supported by others.

- Public Member - Concern about traffic impact if children have to travel further to primary school.

- Public Member - Mr Frank Farmer highlighted again that there is a complete lack of communication over the School, the Priory and that a recent statement from the Bournside Group had not been factually correct.

- The Council has been clear that it strongly supports the development of a school to be built on Grovelands Park.

- Public Member - Complained that the newsletter from Bournside Group was misleading. What will be the cost of building a new school against leasing and refitting an existing building like the Minchenden site. Why cannot the new £6m facility at the College opposite be used?

4. PROPOSAL TO LEAVE PARK GATES OVERNIGHT

Proposal to leave park gates overnight.

Cllr Edward Smith announced that the Conservative Group has called in the decision to leave parks open at night and invited Cllr Bambos Charalambous to respond. There are 100 parks in the Borough and 20 are locked with gates. Cllr Bambos Charalambous stated that he does not believe this proposal will create a huge problem.

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- Public Member stated – Cannot believe that in order to save £26k, the Council are risking leaving the parks open to crime and access into the rears of resident gardens and houses.
- Public Member – asked whether a risk analysis has been done? Highlighted problems of break-ins to houses abutting Broomfield Park. Also people sleeping in the parks. Pointed out that people were camping in the parks in north Enfield and Forty Hall.
- Public Member – Highlighted that the parks are dirty due to lack of wardens. Member highlighted the costs of removing travellers pitching caravans in the parks.
- Cllr Pearce highlighted penny pinching of £26k against £1.1m of written off debt.
- Public Member - Mr Kaponi suggest that Friends groups have the opportunity to lock the gates. Would the Friends be prepared to do the job? Cllr Bambos Charalambous asked to take this back to Cllr Bond – Cabinet Member for the Environment. **ACTION**
- Cllr Hayward asked that the Minchenden Oak Park which had recently been renovated be reconsidered. **ACTION**
- Public members – Friends groups were not consulted on the park gate scheme and they knew nothing until the announcement.
- Public Member – Highlighted that not all of Grovelands Park is used greatly, but some groups do use some areas more than other. Council should start thinking and planning.

5. NUMBER OF BOOKMAKERS

Number of bookmakers – Cllr Smith announced that that legislation is being put in place to give powers to Councils to control the numbers of betting shops. A new classification for betting shops was being introduced. Public Member – reported that David Burrowes M.P. had raised this issue in the House.

Cllr Bambos Charalambous explained that licencing laws and new planning arrangements will allow the Council to better control the number of betting shops in particular areas.

Public Member – Highlighted that the Council has done too little too late and Southgate and other shopping areas are overcrowded with late opening betting shops.

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Consensus that the council needed to be more robust in controlling the levels of betting shops.

6. KURVAN SOFRASI RESTAURANT

Kurvan Sofrasi Restaurant – Concerns over smells caused by charcoal burning ovens. The restaurant was large and had 270 covers. Company that maintains the equipment said that this is the largest kitchen equipment they had seen.

Members – claimed that 25 complaints had been made within last few days. Geoff Bennett, the responsible council officer, had been helpful but there was no progress. Members highlighted that the owner had been heavily fined (£86,000) for flouting rules in Hackney and yet the council thought it was OK to give him a licence in Southgate. It was claimed that as the owner has made efforts to limit the emissions the council could do nothing.

Public Member – The Council should have made sure the contractor installed the correct equipment for health reasons. Cllrs. will press for further action from Environmental health. **ACTION.**

7. TRAFFIC THROUGH CHASE SIDE

Traffic through Chase Side.

Janes Maggs was asked to speak on the Southgate Civic Trust activities which includes traffic matters. She explained what was being planned for the left plot opposite the old Blockbuster site and the complex drainage issues with TfL and Thames21, who are prepared to fund the project. Enfield in Bloom is also involved.

Public Member – Highlighted the Chase Side traffic issues around Asda with controlled and uncontrolled crossings. Not dealing with traffic congestion is creating health and pollution issues with coaches heading down Crown Lane at peak time.

Public Member - Stated that the pavements along Chase Side were quite wide. Could they be reduced to provide smoother traffic flow and provide a better layout for parking spaces? **ACTION**

Public Member - Highlighted the Cycle Enfield scheme. The Mayor is prepared to fund the scheme and yet the detailed proposals are down to the Council. He was unimpressed with the plans. People need to cycle more and be encouraged but not at the expense of damaging retail trade.

Cllr. Edward Smith suggest that Cycle Enfield be saved for the next meeting. He confirmed this would be the first item on the agenda for the next meeting.

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8. POLICE STATION

Police station – Ms Betty Beany stated that the impression is that the station is being closed and may be open for only a few hours in the future. Public Member asked why the building could not be turned into a school. Cllr. Bambos Charalambous said that Police Safer Neighbourhood Team are still located there. A report on what was planned for the police station would be provided at the next meeting. **ACTION**

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified.