

SOUTHGATE GREEN WARD FORUM SPECIAL * MINUTES



*Councillors and residents from Southgate and Cockfosters wards invited and in attendance

Tuesday 27th November 2018

Garfield Primary School, Upper Park Road N11 1BH

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Cllr Daniel Anderson, Cllr Anne Brown, Cllr Claire Stewart – Southgate Green Ward;
Cllr Charith Gunawardena, Cllr Derek Levy, Cllr Stephanos Iannou – Southgate Ward;
Cllr Edward Smith – Cockfosters Ward;
Cllr Dinah Barry – Associate Cabinet Member for Enfield West; and
Cllr Ahmet Oykener – Cabinet Member for Property and Asset Management

OFFICERS PRESENT

Harriet Bell, Heritage Officer, Place LBE
May Hope, Local Plan Lead, Place LBE
Neeru Kareer, Planning Consultant, Place LBE
Christine White, Heritage and Urban Design Manager, Place LBE

Approximately 30 residents were present.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

These were received from Cllr Elaine Hayward, and the following local residents: Andy Barker, Felicity Brown, Jigna Depala, Tony Elliot, Andrew Irvine, Anna Marianska, Rajesh Patel and David Solomons.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Cllr Anderson welcomed everyone to a ward forum special dedicated to a presentation and discussion on the forthcoming Local Plan & Heritage Strategy Consultation. Councillors from Southgate and Cockfosters wards were invited for that reason. Cllr Anderson introduced all councillors and officers present.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as an accurate record.

POLICE UPDATE

PCs James Curnick and Jason Kaye, together with PCSO Anjan Deb reported that there had been a lot of concern about the rise in burglaries in and close by the ward, in particular the recent beating up of an elderly resident in Evesham Road that was widely publicised [NB sadly, the resident has since died], an attempted burglary in Ravenscraig Road, a knifing incident in the Costa Coffee in Arnos Grove, and the Morton Way incident on the 19th November whereby an elderly couple were robbed and terrorised in their home. As a result there had been a hastily arranged public meeting of the Minchenden Estate Residents Association, chaired by Cllr Anderson and attended by Bambos Charalambous MP that had taken place last weekend and had over 60 local residents in attendance.

Because of the recent incidents, the police have been working later shifts with hi-vis patrols in the area. This incident was a rare occurrence, but understandably the family and local community are very shaken by it.

The Police urged residents to use social media to let neighbours know if they see anything suspicious or if any incidents happen, but to also let the police know as soon as possible through calling 999.

There are currently 25-30 (max) police officers on patrol at any one given time in Enfield. It only takes a few arrests, or a crime scene for a lot of these resources to be tied up in one place leaving less than 6 officers on patrol.

Police advised residents to install lights that turn on when anyone approaches the house as this has proven to be a huge deterrent and improves safety.

A resident raised the issue about anti-social behaviour on Cranbrook Lane and Bowes Road - guests of the Penridge Suite have been seen sitting on the stairs to flats, smoking and drinking. The Police reminded residents that as long as they are informed at the time about these incidents, they can go and patrol to area to move people on. People have also been seen putting their cigarettes out on the War Memorial in the Grove Road Open Space.

LOCAL PLAN & HERITAGE STRATEGY

Cllr Oykener as lead member on the Local Plan and Heritage Strategy introduced the item.

- An extensive consultation will be going out to residents imminently before the Council formalises the plans.
- The second stage of the Council's consultation will be to come back to residents with some options.
- We need to look at growth, good quality design and from a housing point of view significantly more homes need to be provided per annum.
- Enfield is currently delivering 550 new homes per annum, which is itself below the current GLA plan, which states that we need 780 new homes per year. Both the Mayor of London and the Government want to see a significant uplift in housebuilding with the former expecting in the region of 1,900 new homes and 3,500 new homes per annum respectively.
- Then the question is where do we build these homes?

The consultation will go live on 5th December and the Council genuinely wanted to hear residents' views.

HERITAGE STRATEGY – Harriet Bell and Christine White

The current Heritage Strategy is now 10 years old and needs to be updated. The 2008 heritage strategy was focused on defining and characterising heritage in Enfield. In 2013, the Council held their Heritage Conference, but things have moved on.

The Heritage Strategy is useful, but needs to be owned by the community.

Workshops will be held to develop themes, and museums, local studies and archives will also be used to develop the strategy.

This time, the Council has tried not to worry about defining heritage, but rather to look at how it can work as part of good growth and good design. Heritage needs to work with the local plan and be part of heritage growth.

The strategy will look at design quality, widening place-making, making museums accessible and increasing museum usage, coverage and academic interest.

The strategy will work with cultural groups, will look for inward investment and the public consultation will run in parallel to the Local Plan Consultation between 5th December to the end of the consultation in February. The Council will consider representations and make amendments in light of feedback.

LOCAL PLAN – Neeru Kareer and May Hope

The Local Plan will be adopted later in 2019. The Council has been working towards the consultation draft, but is still at the very start of the new local plan.

The current local plan is guided by the London Plan which the Mayor is currently revising. The Borough's plan is a number of documents and the core strategy was adopted in 2010. Since then, there have been development strategies, area plans and area action plans.

But times have changed since 2010 and there is new planning guidance to meet housing need and population growth. The Council must keep the plan up to date.

If there is no proper guidance in place, then planning applications may come forward and the Council will have no standards to hold them to. The Council's priorities need to be met and there is a housing crisis nationally, regionally, and locally – homes of all sizes are needed. If our priorities have not been delivered, then we need to revisit them. The Council needs meaningful, well-planned growth.

Planning targets are set by the Mayor of London, which includes infrastructure. We must address inequalities in the Borough. We must also improve air quality and our high streets and our planners are conscious of this and conscious that town centres need to change.

The strategy for accommodating growth needs to be planned properly and delivered.

On average, as stated above, the Borough manages to deliver 550 homes each year – a combination of Council-led, Housing Association and private developers - which is already short on our current target of 780 homes pa and the Council needs to address how to raise this average to meet need and both the Mayor's and the government's targets of 1,900 and 3,500 new homes – that's up to 52,500 homes over the next 15 years. The Council is:

- Considering all good growth options.
- Town centres and areas around stations.
- Movement corridors - A10 and A406 and eastern corridor.
- Council's own portfolio of land, estate renewal and regen projects.
- Strategic plan-led approach to Green Belt land - options around Crews Hill.

There are themes and policy approaches and we want better quality design. There is continual engagement with schools and colleges as young people will feel benefits in the future.

Councillor Anderson raised the issue of TfL Cockfosters and Arnos Grove car parks and the fact that TfL have indicated an intention to build on these car parks.

Both Cllr Anderson and Cllr Gunawardena raised concerns over the GLA and Government housing growth figures. The GLA target of 1,900 new homes pa would suggest an annual population growth of 4,750, whilst the Government target of 3,500 new homes pa would suggest an annual population growth of 8,750 pa. The annual growth rate is closer to 3,000. It would also mean around between 71,250 to 131,250 more people over the next 15 years when current projections suggest it will be closer to 45,000. Neeru said that the local plan planning process can help provide an evidence base for the most accurate housing figures.

Councillor Smith suggested that net migration may reduce because of Britain's forthcoming exit from the EU. However, Cllr Anderson stated that annual migration figures are still strongly in the affirmative as this includes areas outside the EU so there is little indication as yet that this would be the case. Councillor Oykenner stated that, whatever way you look at the figures a, 'do nothing' approach is not viable. Through a local plan we can use an evidence-led approach to determine what growth we can accommodate and where. We need to be looking at the large number of people who are in temporary accommodation and at how we can help our younger generation own their own homes.

A resident raised the important issue that the Council has very little money due to Government cuts, and so questioned how the housing development was going to be funded – publicly or privately? He also questioned what the strategy was for the Green Belt.

Cllr Oykenner agreed. The Council had lost £175 million of its controllable funding since 2010 and that the Housing Revenue Accounts has restrictions on borrowing – however these were due to be lifted following a recent Government announcement. Neeru stated that we must plan for both publicly funded housing and private developments and that we must look at historic growth and infrastructure. Figures are moveable, but focusing on the housing need is important. Infrastructure can be determined by the local plan by engaging with local providers, such as the NHS so they too can plan their strategy. The Green Belt can only be reviewed and the review of the boundary will take place as part of the Local Plan.

A resident pointed out that historically, engagement with the community about local plans has not been great, and that some parts of the Borough, such as Hadley Wood, have no free

local press. The resident wanted to know when the next edition of Our Enfield would be out and wanted the Council to engage more with the community.

Neeru stated that there have been press adverts and digital platforms have been used. There has been targeting of younger people and public notices. Our Enfield is not out until next February.

Ward councillors are being encouraged to help with engagement such as through their ward forums and through their connections with communities. Cllr Oykenor is attending various ward forums as the plan comes under his Cabinet Portfolio.

Other residents raised the following issues, mainly around supporting infrastructure factors:

- People need good transport to get around and current transport infrastructure as well as being inadequate is also very cramped.
- Doctors surgeries are reducing and those left have seen ever growing and unsustainable patient numbers. Our hospitals are similarly full.
- There is too little variation in housing opportunities for families – i.e. the resident has 2 adolescent kids – a boy and a girl – who have a two bedroom flat on the 9th floor, when they need three bedrooms. They keep bidding, as they have done for months, every week for a property, but with no success because there are always others who are prioritised and it is therefore a pointless exercise.

Neeru pointed out that the local plan is the way to seek to address these concerns.

Cllr Oykenor highlighted that in the 1980s there were 25,000 council homes, it now when we have 10,000 council homes. Homelessness demand as a statutory duty is very high and housing could bankrupt the Council.

Residents wanted to know how the consultation could be accessed for those residents who are not online. Response – the consultation is not only online as summary documents are in libraries and community centres. Questionnaires can be sent back via freepost.

Residents raised the issue of car ownership, that ownership was very high in Enfield and as the more homes that are built, the more cars will need to park nearby. Cllr Anderson informed everyone that extending the existing CPZs would necessarily exclude new developments, and that the Council will need to extract from TfL, if the development of the Arnos Grove car park proceeds, a funding commitment for all day long CPZs.

Other concerns raised by residents:

- Good design seems to be sacrificed now and we do not want this to continue;
- The need for more planning officers;
- Southgate High Street has a lot of new flats, but not a penny has gone into the pavements;
- New Southgate will become a commuter hub and local people will not be buying the new flats. It will be Mon-Fri residents only; and
- Concerns that Section 106 money won't be used to benefit local people.

A406

Neeru stated that there was initial consideration of a tunnel at the Bowes Road/Wilmer Way intersection and although the potential is still there, nothing more has been said, though the cost would be exorbitant. The A406 does need investment, but TfL is wholly responsible for infrastructure planning.

Christine White wanted to reassure residents that with growth and change, good quality design is essential and the Council is committed to raising the bar. There will be a quality design review panel and the essence of good quality design is a thread that runs through the whole heritage plan.

AFFORDABILITY

Cllr Gunawardena expressed concerns over affordability arguing for this to be truly affordable as regards to how local residents perceive it and not some technical definition. Neeru said that this is a London-wide issue and not only an Enfield issue. Residents stated that New Southgate had become more expensive and that local schools were under pressure from increased population size.

Cllr Anderson thanked Cllr Oykenner and officers for their attendance and expressed the view that the meeting had provided an excellent start to the consultation process.

The meeting ended at 9pm.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed, but will be sometime in January.