

FEEDBACK ON PREVIOUS MEETING / MATTERS ARISING
WALTHAMSTOW WEST COMMUNITY COUNCIL 13 SEPTEMBER 2005.

1) **D Spiro** requested confirmation that Cllr C Robbins was still Cabinet Champion for the Walthamstow West Community Council.

Response: Response to be given at the meeting.

2) **K Lord** had issues surrounding members of the Community Council speaking at Cabinet. He was concerned that public speaking rights at Cabinet for members of the public had been curtailed and believed that any member of the public should have the same rights as an elected representative of the Community Council. He asked how Cabinet planned to consult with the people on public speaking rights and believed that the current proposals put forward in the consultation on changes to the CC constitution were flawed.

Response: Daniel Fenwick, Corporate Solicitor

There are no plans at the moment to discuss speaking rights at Cabinet. The previous discussions were whether Community Councils were to have speaking rights at Cabinet. That discussion concluded that Community Councils should report issues to Cabinet through the Cabinet Champion Portfolio Reports.

3) **M Grimshaw** was concerned that his recycling Black Box had not been emptied for some weeks from his residence in Blackhorse Lane.

Response: Keith Weir, Head Of Environmental Services

Apologies for this missed collection. Calls to the Council's Recycling Contractor on 020 8496 2628 will ensure that missed collections will be rectified within 24 hours.

4) **D Spiro** noted that there were real problems with the WFD service, which was slow and punctuated by irrelevant messages requesting candidates to adopt. He added that the Clarence service used to be good and efficient, however, now it is to be handled by WFD, which means that you are on the line for at least 10 minutes.

Response: from Andy Ralph Waltham Forest Direct Manager

Waltham Forest Direct has recently been going through huge amounts of change. We now have better systems to deal with customer enquiries and are able to link up with the back offices more efficiently. Because of this we have had longer call handling times, however we are now putting in place initiatives

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to reduce customer waiting times and provide the excellent service our residents are used to"

Initiatives being set up are: reviewing current processes, eliminating as much "failure" demand as possible i.e. repeat callers where we have not got something right the first time, system development and optimisation and Service reviews

Statistical information

Clarence Jan - July 04

Calls received - 52444

Calls abandoned - 2925

Average delay in answer - 20 seconds

Clarence Jan - July 05

Call Received - 57237

Calls abandoned - 8754

Average delay in answer - 2min 17secs

General 3000 Jan - July 04

Call Received - 270,180

Calls abandoned - 15,760

General 3000 Jan - July 05

Call Received - 265,175

Calls abandoned - 49,094

5) **F Meyer** took up the issue of dog waste bins in the park at the back of the Town Hall, including by the Canteen, the allotment and at the entrance near to Spruce Hills Road, not being emptied for long periods of time. Dog owners could not use these full bins and at the last fireworks night one was blown up and had not been replaced correctly.

Response: Keith Weir Head of Street Services

Building Cleaning Services apologise for this service failure and have taken measures to ensure that it will not be repeated. The damaged bin has been replaced.

6) **K Lord** agreed with Mr Spiro on the Henry Boot issue, adding that he felt that the original tendering process had been flawed, in that the successful contractor was chosen over the opposing Osborne Group bid, which was favoured by the majority of the public. The original scheme was cancelled without recourse to further tender or new proposals and he believed the Council would therefore make concessions to the developer in the sale of the arcade site.

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Response: Steve Brickell Strategic Planning Manager

During the original selection process for a developer for the Arcade site local people gave their view that the Henry Boot scheme was only their second favourite in terms of appearance, with many people picking it as their least favourite. However, those attending an Environment Scrutiny Committee to consider amended proposals confirmed that although they marginally preferred the appearance of the Trevor Osborne scheme, when the layout of the proposed library and the mix of uses of each scheme were taken into account, the Henry Boot scheme was the most popular overall. Members took this into account in the selection process, as well as how well each scheme's proposed library was ranked by the library service, advice on their commercial deliverability, and the level of Council contribution required by each developer. With all these factors taken into consideration, the Henry Boot scheme was the clear overall winner.

Following the all-party decision in 2004 not to proceed with the scheme including a library but to sell the site for commercial and residential development, the Council both took Counsel's advice and consulted with the District Auditor on how best to dispose of the Arcade site. As a result of this advice Independent Property Valuers were appointed, who confirmed that in their view the level of offers received from Henry Boot for various options represented the best value that could reasonably be obtained for the Arcade site. This assessment was itself verified by an independent critical valuation review in accordance with RICS' professional code of practice, and in these circumstances Cabinet resolved to dispose of the freehold interest in the Arcade site to Henry Boot Developments, subject to contract and planning permission.

7) **K Lord** noted that the decision was taken to test the kiosks in the Town Square without proper consultation and as such it undermined the civil rights of residents for commercial ends. Despite the fact that it is on a small scale, it was still a key space in the Town Centre and he believed that the decision was made "behind the backs" of the public.

Response: Steve Brickell Strategic Planning Manager

Although the verbal response on this issue recorded in the minutes is correct, it should be noted that at present use of the area is being limited on health and safety grounds while practical issues to do with the positioning and administration of the refreshment kiosks are resolved.

8) **K Lord** requested action with regard to safety issues at the crossing in St James Street area where a woman was killed in February.

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**Response Keith Weir, Head of Street Services
St James Street E17 - Fatal Incident 3rd February 2005**

On 3rd February 2005 a pedestrian was killed crossing St James Street on the signal-controlled crossing. At the meeting of Full Council on 12th May 2005 a petition was handed to the Mayor calling for safety improvements to be made to this crossing. HM Coroner has presided over an inquest into this death and Officers have acquired a transcript of those proceedings.

Prior to this incident there has only been one recorded personal injury at this site in the last three years.

Every witness to the incident stated that the weather conditions were fine and dry and whilst it was overcast there was good visibility. The Police evidence stated that the road surface at the scene was level, dry and in good condition with no defects that would cause anyone to slip or skid. The Police also confirmed that the pedestrian crossing was checked and found to be working correctly.

The police carried out a thorough inspection of the vehicle involved and found it to have no defects that would have been considered contributory.

After hearing evidence from the witnesses, the driver of the tanker and police the Coroner said that this was a tragedy in which alcohol; a poorly maintained vehicle or excessive speed played no part. The incident occurred because the victim was hurrying and crossed before the safe crossing position and she and her shopping trolley were caught by the lorry as it went forward when the lights were green in its favour.

The Coroner stated that the only possible verdict that could be recorded is that the victim died as a result of an accident.

The design and installation of the puffin crossing in St James Street is in accordance with DfT guidance and was found to be working correctly by the police at the time of the accident. Therefore it played no part in the causation of the death of the victim.

The Coroner returned a verdict of accidental death because the victim decided to cross after the lights had turned green for traffic and at a point behind the driver's line of sight.

Given the previously good safety record of this crossing, it is not recommended that any alterations or works are necessary to either the crossing itself or the approach roads.

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