

## **WALTHAMSTOW WEST COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of a meeting held at the Walthamstow Academy  
Billet Road, E17 5DP**

**On Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2007 at 7.30 pm**

### **PRESENT:**

#### **Councillor Chair:**

Patrick Smith

#### **Councillor Vice-Chair:**

Adam Gladstone

#### **Councillors:**

Bob Wheatley

Peter Woollcott

Sean Meiszner

John Macklin

Geraldine Reardon

Robert Carey

Johar Khan

Bob Belam

#### **Cabinet Champion**

Afzal Akram

#### **Community Chair:**

Philip Herlihy

#### **Community Vice-Chair:**

Faisal Raja

#### **Officers in Attendance:**

Stuart Petrie

Bill Nisbet

Mario Demetriou

Alan Campbell

Jamie Macfarlane

Brian Whiteley

Shirley Haynes

Penny Allier

Alessandra Awolowo

Head, Personnel Services

Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator

Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator

Environmental Services

Supervisor, Street Wardens

Community Council Lead Officer

Community Council Officer

Community Council Officer

Committee Manager

#### **Also Present:**

Insp. Denise Canderton

Sgt. Phil Steedman

Sgt Adam Maullin

Howard Bowman

Bob Yeo

Safer Neighbourhood Team

Safer Neighbourhood Team High Street

Safer Neighbourhood Team Higham Hill

Representative, DC Mediation

Ascham Homes, Representative

#### **Residents Present:**

There were approximately 52 residents present at the meeting.

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Item	Action
<p><b>1 WELCOME and INTRODUCTIONS</b> <b>P Herlihy (PH)</b> welcomed residents to the meeting and introduced ward Councillors, partner groups, speakers and presenters. He advised residents to use help forms, available at the reception, if they wanted to hand in questions and assured them that they will be minuted.</p>	
<p><b>2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST</b> There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
<p><b>3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / MEETING CONDUCT – GUIDELINES</b> No apologies were received</p>	
<p><b>4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b> This standing item is intended <u>only to confirm the accuracy of the Minutes of the last meeting</u> and any matters arising are discussed during the <i>Open Forum/Community Discussion</i>. The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair, with the following amendment(s) noted: <b>Page 5:</b> the list of ward Councillors present at the meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> September 2007 should have included <i>Cllr Macklin</i>.</p>	
<p><b>5 COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING</b> <b>Claire Witney (CW)</b> Head of Community Engagement, referred residents to the handout given out at reception outlining some of the changes to the Community Council meetings. These changes represented practical ways to resolve some of the issues highlighted by the Community Council review and the consultation process. She asked residents to put forward any question or concern regarding the information given.</p> <p>The presentation was followed by questions and answers on the outcomes of the review as outlined in the handout. Cllrs Macklin and Meiszner intervened during the discussion.</p> <p>The Community Chair asked residents to vote by a show of hands if they felt that they approved of the meeting scheduled end time at 9.30 pm: 13 people voted in favour of the change and 15 voted against it. Then he asked residents to vote if they would like an earlier start of the meeting: 9 voted in favour and 17 against. The Community Chair said that he would take on board the results but would try to follow the agenda as it was published. He suggested to residents to fill in Evaluation forms to give their opinion on how the meetings were run. He also gave guidelines to residents to criticise procedures, not individual officers when raising an issue.</p>	
<p><b>6 NEWS REPORT</b> <b>Brian Whiteley (BW)</b>, Community Councils Lead Officer, gave a brief summary of the item(s) on the (blue) response sheet included in the papers and news from the Council. The Community Vice Chair reported on news from the Community, including an update on the Anti-litter campaign and the local primary schools “Eco-Audits”, both funded by the Walthamstow West Community Council.</p>	

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**Action**

**7 COMMUNITY SATEFY BOARD**

**David Knight (DK)**, Administrator of the Community Safety Board (CSB) and **A Hussain** (Walthamstow West Community Council representative to the CSB) outlined the work and objectives of the Board, which replaced the Police Community Consultative Group (PCCG). They described the membership of the Board, made of representatives from statutory partners (i.e. Council, Waltham Forest Primary Care Trust, Safer Neighbourhood Teams, etc...) and representatives from the community. The Board met every two months to discuss priorities and provide a joint response to law and order problems at a Borough-wide level.

The Community Chair postponed any discussion on the issue to the Community Forum.

**8 BUDGET SPEND 2007/08**

The Community Vice Chair asked residents to look over the proposals for the 2007/2008 Community Council's spend and cast their votes as an indication to where the money should go, the decision would be ratified by the Councillors in item 9. The result of the voting was as follows:

Rank	No Votes	Description	Amount Requested
1	45	Mobile Youth Van – Worth Unlimited	£5,000
2	39	Youth Club Methodist Church Hall, Winchester Road	£1,742
2	39	Elmfield Road Garden Project	£1200
3	31	Carefree Kids	£500
4	30	Shopmobility – Live Ability WF	£3,000
5	27	Children Activity Day	£2,000
6	20	School Environmental Project	£3,000
7	17	“The Diselderly Conduct Group” – WF Disability Centre	£1,500
8	6	Benches in Town Square	£2,200
9	3	Lecterns	£800
10	0	Garden Competition	(TBC)

**9 FORMAL COUNCIL BUSINESS**

By unanimous voting, the Councillors formally agreed to award funding to the following:

Group	Activity / Action	Amount Received
Worth Unlimited for Waltham Forest	Mobile Youth Van	<b>£5,000</b>
Highams Park Forum	Youth Club, Methodist Church, Winchester Road, E4	<b>£1,742</b>
Elmfield Road Garden Project	Trees and dog waste bins	<b>£1,200</b>

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Item	Carefree Kids	Play therapy in primary schools	<b>£500</b>	<b>Action</b>
	Shopmobility – Live Ability WF	Shopping trips and social activities for elderly and disabled people.	<b>£1,500</b>	
	<b>Total:</b>		<b>£9,942</b>	

**10 COMMUNITY FORUM**

The Chairs agreed with P Spiro on investigating the possibility of a channel between the Community Council and Scrutiny Committees and obtaining clear information on the process.

**CE/Scrutiny**

The Community Chair suggested that any constitutional/procedural issues should be handed to Councillors so they can raise them at Scrutiny meetings.

**P Spiro** was concerned that most of the present catalogue at William Morris Gallery would not be entered into a database before the curator staff left. He believed this would lead to a possible loss of material from the collection. He asked how would the Service guarantee the security of the entirety of the WM collection?

**Culture Serv/ Cllr Reardon**

A **resident** asked what would be the plans for the Gallery building. He understood that it would incorporate a general idea for arts provision in the Borough. He asked if there was an intention to downgrade the collection.

**Culture Serv/ Cllr Reardon**

A **resident** said that in September there was a strategy document relating to the future of the WM Gallery posted on the LBWF website, but it seemed to have been lost since then. He wanted to know what happened after September – is there another strategy in place? If so what was the nature of it?

**Culture Serv/ Cllr Reardon**

**D Allen** (Lawrence Avenue) had concerns about the efficiency of mechanical street cleaners. He said that in Highams Hill, there the street cleaning was inadequate. He also said that in McEntee Avenue, there was a lot of fly tipping in the communal recycling area.

**Environment**

The external community bins in McEntee Lodge run by Ascham Homes attracted fly tipping, and although Ascham Homes were responsible for the garages, they were left in a state of disrepair.

**Ascham Homes**

A **resident** (Blackhorse Road) reported that the road was not cleaned regularly and there were traces of rotten food, bones, etc...

**Environment**

The Community Chair read out the following Help forms:

**P Spiro** (Somers Road): "The response from Mimi Konisberg and Louise Frayne refers to the appointment of the new Head of Libraries, Museum and Gallery, in April 2007, when Mrs L Lee was appointed to this post, after a formal presentation and an interview on 30 April 2007 (see C Morton's minuted reply to query 8 – in minutes p7). – As an assimilation procedure appointment under the Council's personnel procedure called 'Managing Change' ( a copy being made available at this evening's meeting).

**Culture Serv/ Cllr Reardon**

Mrs Lee's previous post of Head of Museum Gallery and Archives graded PO 7/8

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Item with a salary range of £40,782 - £45,048, having being deleted, she was, under the Management of Change Procedure appointed (see above) to the new post at PO 11 / 12 (with a salary range of £53,154 - £60,957 – see Mrs Lee's 'New staffing Structure' memorandum document 1.86 issued in June 2007.

However, the managing change policy statement clearly states (p11 – 9) Assimilating staff clause 5.2 that “Managers will not seek to assimilate staff where the grade differential between the old and the new job is more than one grade up or down and where the essential requirements of the old and new jobs are substantially different”.

**M Gold** (Bremer Mews): “How many books for lending and reference were in the central library before refurbishment? Where are the books now?”

**J Wright** (Chewton Road): 1) “Why is St James St Library on the list of assets for disposal when the council has still done no consultation with local people – we weren’t even told it was going to be closed!”

2) “Why has the council done nothing to remedy its failure to consult local people about St James St Library, despite being criticised for this by the Audit Commission? Why has no Disability or Equality Impact Assessment still been done? Why does the council still not consult local people about their library needs?”

3) “Approximately 250,000 books have gone missing from WF libraries in the past few years. Please account for all of these. Have any been destroyed? And specifically, where are the books removed from Central Library before refurbishment?”

4) “Why has the council removed fixed shelving from “refurbished” libraries and reopened them with far fewer books and shelves? Is the long-term plan to use buildings for other purposes as well as libraries? Is the same planned for the borough’s other libraries?”

Central Library now has no fixed shelving and very few shelves. The same seems to be happening at other libraries – they are being changed from dedicated libraries to multipurpose buildings. This is what the multimillion “investment” in libraries is being spent on. Please be honest and tell the electorate this is what the council is doing”.

5) “The Managing Change document reveals that a high level appointment (Lorna Lee’s promotion) has been made in breach of the council’s own policy – whether assimilation or redeployment the appointment fits neither. The council has broken its own rules. How does it remedy this?”

**A Schmidt** (Aubrey Road): “What is the value (in cover prices) of the books removed from Central Library during refurbishment?”

**S Dlabal** (Bishops Close): “Why does the council not advertise William Morris Gallery at Walthamstow Central tube station and more widely? Why does the council ignore 10,000 signatures on the petition?”

**Action**

**Culture  
Serv/ Cllr  
Reardon  
Culture  
Serv/ Cllr  
Reardon**

**Culture  
Serv/ Cllr  
Reardon**

**Culture  
Serv/ Cllr  
Reardon**

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**S Kinson** (Pretoria Ave): What research has the council conducted to suggest that a letterbox to return books, a single PC or a GP's receptionist supervising homework are adequate replacements for a library in a deprived area? These have been suggested as replacements for St James St Library".

**Action  
Culture  
Serv/ Cllr  
Reardon**

**M Adams** "(Upper Walthamstow Road): 1) a) How much have you spent on consultants for the William Morris Gallery and Vestry House Museum this year, 2006, 2005, 2004? Could the information be broken down into years.  
b) How much will you spend on consultants next year for the museum and gallery?  
c) What are the current consultants employed to do?"

**Culture  
Serv/ Cllr  
Reardon**

2) "Given the response of C Morton to the perceived problem of the "Art Trail" does the council see its job as to actively censor art and its display? And will the council veto the art works in next years Art Trail if it thinks they oppose the councils view".

3) "Why did the council make cuts to the museums to save £56,000, then create an additional management position (Head of Libraries, Museum & Galleries) with a salary in excess of £60,000 and consultants in excess of £10,000?"

4) "When do the council plan to start having wedding ceremonies at the William Morris Gallery? What days of the week will it be available for weddings and which rooms will be used? Will it be open to the public when weddings are taking place?"

**M Duncan-Jones** (James Lane): "How many qualified libraries were employed by LBWF in F/Year 2003 / 4, and how many now? How many in 2 years time? There are valid arguments for multi use of public building, but no substitute for qualified library staff!"

**Culture  
Serv/ Cllr  
Reardon**

**P Tan** (Morland Road): 1) "The council mentioned that plans were made to close St James Library 2 years ago. But they have not produced reports to that effect. Also MP, Neil Gerrard, had no idea of the intention of its closure in 2006".

**Culture  
Serv/ Cllr  
Reardon**

2) "After all these years, why has the council not put a notice-board to let the public be aware that the building is William Morris Gallery? The notice board will bring more publicity and income to the Gallery.

We should be proud of our heritage and save it rather than dispose of the special treasures. They take years to cultivate and enhance its value. Making the curator redundant in December is just unbelievable and employing 3 unqualified and inexperienced staff is just strange thinking! Peter should be reinstated and the other new staff deployed".

**R Kane** (Matcham Road): "Is it true that the council has raised the rent of Priory Court Community Centre from a nominal price to £16,000 pa?"

It is well known that people's mental (and physical) health is maintained and improved by social gatherings. Why then is the council killing off such gatherings in one of the most disadvantaged areas in the borough?"

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**D Hallsworth** (Douglas Avenue): 1) "The area of Penrhyn Crescent is disgusting. Each week there are bags of rubbish dumped next to the green electric box outside OPW and other rubbish stuffed behind the unit".

2) "Douglas Avenue used to be swept regularly by the council until last year but now we rarely see a street cleaner. With the amount of leaves (which cannot really be helped) and the general street rubbish, residents cannot see the dog mess underneath. This has been a great problem in the last six months".

**11 COMMUNITY CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR ELECTIONS**

Following their nomination, residents present at the Walthamstow West Community Council nominated Phil Herlihy and Faisal Raja as, respectively, Chair and Vice Chair for the Council year 2007/08.

**12 FUTURE MEETING**

The meeting is asked to note that the next Community council meeting will take place on:

**28<sup>th</sup> January 2007**

**Chapel End Junior School, Roberts Road, E17 4LS**

The meeting ended at 10.05 pm

Chairs Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

**Action  
Environm  
ent**