Leader Listens Notes

St. Mary's C of E High School - 14th May 2008

In attendance
Councillor Mike Freer (C. MF) Leader of Barnet Council
Cheryl Powell (notes) Temp. Overview & Scrutiny Officer

Members of the public
27

Introduction
Cllr. Freer introduced the “Leader Listens” programme of events to members of the public in attendance by reporting:

The Leader Listens programme has been running for approximately 18 months. The intention of the events is to enable residents of the Borough an opportunity to discuss local issues with the Leader of the Council. The Leader Listens events also allow residents to contribute to Barnet’s Policy Making Process. For example the Council’s current Highways and Street Cleansing contract received additional budget provision as a reflection of the local resident’s views.

As an alternative to the Council’s Area Forums, the Leader Listens events also provide local residents the opportunity to discuss issues of local relevance, as well as providing residents the opportunity to engage with the Council.

Cllr. Freer informed members of the public that notes from this meeting will be distributed to residents within the invited polling district within 6 weeks. Any issues raised at this meeting will be forwarded to relevant officers / service area for action and comment. Cllr Freer stressed to those in attendance that a named contact will be provided where a comment or question has been raised in relation to the evening’s topics.

Cllr. Freer provided members of the public a brief synopsis of the Borough, stressing key points such as:

- Barnet is one of the largest borough’s in London and is the 20th most ethnically diverse and the 2nd most religiously diverse;
- Barnet has more roads and pavements than any other London Borough;
• Barnet is experiencing a period of growth due to an intensive house build programme along the A5 corridor;

• Barnet's age mix is also on the rise as there are more under 5's and over 85's within the Borough. The Council is challenged to provide services to meet the diverse needs of this demographic;

• Barnet employs over 9,000 people, 3,000 of those are within the education department including teachers;

• Barnet has a £1 billion turnover (on par with a FTSE 500 company); and

• Barnet spends just under £600 million on council services each year.

The meeting was then opened to local residents. Issues raised included;

• Controlled Parking Zones

• Anti Social Behaviour
  - Burglary
  - Muggings

• Traffic Calming Measures
  - Pedestrianised Areas
  - Speeding Restrictions
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<td>Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs)</td>
<td>Mr. W. informed C. MF of the way in which parents often park inconsiderately when taking and collecting their children from school. Mr. W. informed those present of the lack of enforcement of parking restrictions within this area.</td>
<td>C. MF reassured Mr. W. that parking enforcement in this area will be investigated.</td>
<td>Director of Environment &amp; Transport (Mike Freestone)</td>
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<td>Mr. J. discussed Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) in Glebe Crescent. Mr. J. felt that due to the parking restrictions people were being required to pay the Council £1,000.00 to pave their forecourts in order to guarantee a parking space.</td>
<td>C.MF assured Mr. A &amp; Mr. J. that the parking restrictions in both Glebe Crescent and this area would be considered.</td>
<td>Director of Environment &amp; Transport (Mike Freestone)</td>
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<td>Mr. J. also, mentioned motorists using Glebe Crescent as a “rat run”, often speeding. Mr. J enquired about the possibility of Glebe Crescent becoming a one way road.</td>
<td>Petition to be checked</td>
<td>Democratic Services Manager (Janet Rawlings)</td>
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<td>Mr. A. informed those present of the Pay and Display arrangements outside St. Georges Medical Centre as he felt this was the Council issuing a tax on the Boroughs sick residents. Mr. A. referred to his signing the “Sunnyfields Road” Petition as parking hours have been reduced form 10.00am – 5.00pm to 12midday – 3.00pm.</td>
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Mr. O. suggested the Council should be looking to review its policy on CPZs and Parking Enforcement Officers. Mr. O was issued a ticket 1 minute after the expiration time, despite the Council having a 5 minute grace period. C. MF stated he would take this up with Council Officers as it seems the 5 minute grace period is not being used properly. Mr. O. also made the point of residents being able to use business bays for parking, although the same cannot be said of business owners in the area.

C. MF informed Mr. O. he would provide him with a breakdown of the amount of business, residents, mixed and free bays were available within Hendon against the amount permits issue.

Mr. A. mentioned the disbanding of his local Neighbourhood Watch scheme. Within his area, he had attended 2 or 3 meetings, although the Neighbourhood Watch has not met for some months, despite receiving notification of a murder taking place in his road.

Mr. H. informed those present that the Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) will not come to the Bellevue Estate despite his complaints to Barnet Homes about ASB such as burglary, muggings perpetrated by various individuals within the estate.

C. MF assured Mr. A. that these issues would be raised with the Borough Commander, the Cabinet Member for Community Services as well as the Chief Executive of Barnet Homes.

CCTV to be considered

Mr. A is known to the staff, but no complaints of any nature have been registered. Mr. A is also a member of the Sheltered Housing Panel.

Mr H. has registered a previous complaint about ASB from a neighbour. An Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) has been signed with the Safer Neighbourhood
Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) Team and the neighbour on 31 January 2008. There has been no record of any complaints since then. However there is a problem in that area and as a pilot project a neighbourhood warden service (Neighbourhood Solutions Ltd) has been in place to cover the general area of Belle Vue, Fosters Estate and Longford Court. The service provides Wardens in the area from 4pm till midnight every day to patrol, move on youths who are loitering and to provide professional witness to ASB or other crime. Neighbourhood Solutions Ltd also guarantee to respond to calls from a resident within 20 minutes. All residents in the area covered have been leafleted about this service. A management review of this project will be conducted at the end of June 2008.
C. MF informed members of the public in attendance that ASB such as Burglary is tasked to the Borough Commander. The London Borough of Barnet does not have any control of influence over the Police Force as they report directly to the Home Office. C. MF agreed with those present and said more Police should be provided but stated that if more Police were required this would mean an increase on Council Tax in order to fund more Police. C.MF indicated that as an alternative the Council can install CCTV and replace street lighting to improve street scene in an attempt to reduce the fear of crime and incidences of crime within the Borough.

Residents of the Glebe Estate mentioned the ASB issues from the adjoining Studio Mews. Residents are thought to believe Studio Mews to be a House in Multiple Occupation (HiMO) with numerous occupants.

C. MF assured the residents that occupancy levels within this property will be checked as well as the guidance on general rules of occupancy.

Interim Head of Housing & Environmental Health (Graham Cutts)

Studio Mews consists of twenty garages that have been converted into single person units. It does not fall under the statutory definition of a House in Multiple Occupation. The conversion complies with national planning and building control requirements. The units are mainly occupied by single men. When an Environmental Health Officer (EHO) visited earlier this year there was no evidence of overcrowding. Each unit has its own kitchen and bathroom facilities and fixed heating. There
is quite a high turn over of residents and general wear and tear on the units is high. The landlord deals with issues as they arise.

There has been a reoccurring problem with leaks to the flat roof. An Improvement Notice was served under Section 11 of the Housing Act 2004 on 5th March 2008. This stipulated the replacement of the flat roof. Although a start date has not been established, the works are due to be completed by the end of August. In terms of other environmental healthy issues, in 2007 a complaint was received regarding defective drains and rats. This matter was resolved. There have been no complaints made regarding noise nuisances since 2005.
### Traffic Calming Measures: Pedestrianised Areas

Mr. A. has lived in the Mill Hill area for over 25 years. Mr. A informed the Leader of the need to have a pedestrianised area on Parson Street, as there is only one pedestrian crossing at Teddington Grove. Mr. A. suggested that there would be a need to have a pedestrianised area near to Derby House as this would be an excellent way of safeguarding the elderly residents.

C.MF also stated a Pelican Crossing would not be a viable option in this instance due to cost implications. C. MF suggested an alternative to this in that the part funding from Transport for London (TfL) could be obtained if a bus stop was situated near to Derby House.

C. MF responded by stating that this stretch of Highway is owned by TfL, although the newly appointed TfL Head of Highways might relent on this issue. Logistically this would be difficult due to land issues also. C. MF stated that a bridge would sound like a feasible option but the Council would struggle to find space to accommodate this type of structure.

Another member of the public suggested constructing a temporary bridge at the flyover situated at Chiswick Roundabout. C. MF suggested a permanent solution would be preferable rather than a temporary bridge as suggested. The timescale for this type of programme would typically take at least 5 years to reach fruition. C. MF advised members of the public of the costs involved in the engineering and building a bridge of this type could be in the region of £3mn.

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<td>Traffic Calming Measures: Pedestrianised Areas</td>
<td>C. MF informed the group that this issue will be raised with the Council’s Highways Department</td>
<td>Director of Environment &amp; Transport (Mike Freestone)</td>
<td>Pedestrian crossing facility in the vicinity of Derby House, Parson Street</td>
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<td>Suggestion to be explored with TfL</td>
<td>Director of Environment &amp; Transport (Mike Freestone)</td>
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Traffic Calming

Measures: Pedestrianised Areas

Ms. H. lives in Bridge Lane, and informed all in attendance of the speed cars travel when using this route as a way to join the A1. Ms. H stated she and her husband had both sustained damage to their cars from motorists driving at high speeds. Ms. H enquired of the possibility of parking enforcement in her area in view of the numbers of motorists using Bridge Lane as a parking facility, leaving the residents little or no parking.

C. MF responded by suggesting the application of residents’ permits in that area. He informed the group that as long as a vehicle is taxed it is not illegal to park in a permitted area. In terms of the speeding issue, C. MF informed members of the public in attendance of the Council meeting and exceeding the Corporate Target set to reduce Road Traffic Accidents. In this instance to reduce speed various measures could be introduced:

- Provide a Pedestrian Refuge
- Conduct a road traffic needs survey

Speed surveys to be carried out.

Director of Environment & Transport (Mike Freestone)

Speed surveys are yet to be carried out due to prior commitments. It is hoped that these will take place by the week ending 11.07.08.

Director of Environment & Transport (Mike Freestone)
### Other Topics

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<td><strong>Hardstanding Policy</strong></td>
<td>C. MF also suggested a team of enforcement officers visit Glebe Crescent to assess the parking problems discussed as well as sending a copy of the Hard standing Policy</td>
<td>Director of Environment &amp; Transport (Mike Freestone)</td>
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<td>C. MF informed Mr. J. of the current policy in that all new hard standings need to be permeable and the Council also encourages all residents to re-instate appropriate foliage to soften the hard standing. C. MF also made mention of looking into the possibility of making Glebe Crescent a one way road</td>
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<td><strong>Area Forums</strong></td>
<td>CP to inform Democratic Services officer responsible for the co-ordination of Residents' Forums to add Ms. W. to the mailing list.</td>
<td>Democratic Services (Nazyer Choudhry)</td>
<td>Mrs. W has been added to the mailing list and information regarding her local resident's forum has been sent to her.</td>
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<td>Ms. W. asked for information of the Council's Residents' Forum initiative.</td>
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<td>Council Correspondence</td>
<td>Mr. A. also mentioned the Council's obligation to provide standard letters on a certain font to those who are visually impaired. Mr. A. informed the group he is able to receive all manner of correspondence from utility companies in a large font size if he requests this. He has requested the same from Barnet Homes on several occasions and this request has not been met. Mr. A. felt Barnet could do better and should be the trailblazer in this area amongst the London boroughs.</td>
<td>C. MF stated he would take advice from the Council's internal Communications Unit and the Disability Advisors about individual requests for larger type face on standard letters.</td>
<td>The council's style guide states: &quot;the council's corporate font is Arial for PC users and Helvetica for Mac users. The Council always attempts to use a minimum 12 pt, although a larger font when you are writing for people with visual impairment&quot;. Many of the Council's publications, including Barnet First (the Council's residents' magazine), include a reference to people wishing to receive the information in an alternative format. The Adult Social Services department provides information dependent on the level of visual impairment the person has. Some leaflets are produced in 20 point, others in 14 point. If a service user has made a request for info in large print, it will be provided Barnet Homes' policies are not controlled by the</td>
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<td>C. MF informed Mr. A and members of the public in attendance that the Council complies with a standard font / typeface (Arial 12) for all correspondence sent to all residents.</td>
<td>Director of Communication &amp; Consultation (Emer Coleman)</td>
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The meeting concluded at 8.47pm

London Borough of Barnet, although all publications are produced in 12 point (except the new magazine which is 11 point). If a request is made all of Barnet Homes’ material is available on tape, in large print and Braille, as well as magnifying sheets. All letters / correspondence should be in no less than 12 point. However, anyone who requests this in larger font size will be accommodated.
**Issue Raised**

1. Petition from St George’s Medical Centre patients requesting that the Council change the timings of the Hendon HC2 Controlled Parking Zone to enable better mobility for a proportion of patients.

**Response**

An Officer has met with the St. Georges Practice Manager, who outlined the practice’s concerns and issues, including the times at which they are affected. The Council are looking at options to try and accommodate the practice and its visitors without undermining the basic reasons for introducing the CPZ restrictions in this area. It was agreed that there will be no immediate action taken, and the Practice Manager expressed his gratitude that the Council has taken his concerns on board and will try to help.

**Update**

No changes are proposed at this time as there are normally always short stay parking spaces available near to the medical centre. The situation will be monitored and considered as part of the review of the CPZ in 2009.

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**Parking Space provision in the Hendon CPZs**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>All Permit</th>
<th>Free</th>
<th>P&amp;D</th>
<th>P&amp;D/Res</th>
<th>P&amp;D/All Permits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HC1</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>HC2</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HC3</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
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The following is a breakdown of the current resident/business permits for the Hendon Central Zone:

Resident:  
HC1 = 349  
HC2 = 638  
HC3 = 44

Business:  
HC1 = 29  
HC2 = 63  
HC3 = 1
Amenity/Frontages
When considering the layout of a hardstanding and the position of a proposed crossover, any existing highway amenity such as a wide grass verge, hedgerow or flowerbeds should also be taken into account. All crossovers near a tree will be referred to the Arboricultural Officer for a decision to determine if any tree would be affected by the proposed crossover and, if so, whether it can be removed. It is unlikely that the Council will approve the removal of healthy, mature trees with high amenity value. If the tree removal is refused, the proposed crossover may not be able to be constructed.

In any case, where works may be approved or proposed by the Council which require removal and/or replacement of highway amenity, the cost of such works will be borne by the applicant.

The Council will consider applications for crossovers where the impact on the flowerbed is limited. Applications where the proposed crossover severs a flowerbed or has a major impact on its appearance will be rejected. Any costs of alterations to the flowerbed will be borne by the crossover applicant.

The space between the road and the buildings frontage is an important part of the environment which can change significantly by the increase in front garden parking area. As traditional front gardens are replaced by hard surfaces and vehicles, the harmony and continuity of the street frontage is interrupted and enjoyment of the buildings themselves, especially if listed or in a conservation area may suffer. This may also lead to a reduction in wildlife through lost habitats and permeable surfaces. If is therefore important that front garden parking, where permissible, should be constructed to cause minimum intrusion and harm. With care and attention, any visual impact of a parking space together with the adverse effect on wildlife can be reduced, whilst blending in with the neighbourhood. This is in line with the Councils Three Strands Approach to enhancing suburbia and information will be issued with every application approval, along similar lines to information issued as part of the development control planning process. The information will not be compulsory but will offer applicants on a range of design aspects including boundaries i.e. walls/fences/hedges, gates, planting and pervious surfaces. Bland hard standings with no planting and water running off into the public highway will not be permitted. Paving front gardens changes the greenness, attractiveness and character
of whole streets. Also hard paved areas contribute to rapid run-off of rainfall, which contributes to the pollution of waterways and flooding.