



ISLINGTON

Canonbury Ward Partnership

Dove Rooms, 25 Dove Road, London, N1 3FS

MINUTES FOR CANONBURY WARD PARTNERSHIP PUBLIC MEETING

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Date and time : 11/09/2019, 19:00-21:00

Councillors:

Cllr John Woolf
Cllr Clare Jeapes
Cllr Nick Wayne

Council Officers:

Alistair Gale, Deputy New Homes Development Programme Manager
Steve White, Community Development Officer

Attendees:

Staff from Lovell were also in attendance to discuss issues in relation to the construction work.

Agenda Items

1. 19:00 **Welcome & introductory remarks**
2. 19:10 **Updates from:**
 - New Homes Development Team (Islington Council)
 - Community Development (Islington Council)
 - Lovell's
3. 19:30 **Open floor questions and discussion**
4. 20:30 **Summary of discussion and concluding remarks**
5. 20:45 **Any Other Business**

1. Welcome and introductions

2-3 times a year, councillors as part of the Canonbury Ward Partnership will hold forums in the community to engage local stakeholders, residents, council officers and local service providers. We discuss the key issues and concerns in the ward and the ward partnerships are a useful mechanism to allow this to take place.

Alongside this we have developed a Community Plan which identifies key areas of improvement in Canonbury which we would like to see enacted through funding.

2. Update from Alistair Gale, Deputy New Homes Development Programme Manager

I have worked for a number of years on the Dover Court from pre-planning to the delivery of the scheme. The scheme is delivering 70 new homes of which 58 are for council rent. We have this new community space. We have new play areas. There has been lots of planting of new trees. There has been new lighting.

There have also been some issues which we have been open with residents about over the last 12-18 months.

The council issued an apology which was also signed by Lovell, in April/May.

We had our first engagement event with residents in this space in May as well.

We have had an ongoing dialogue with residents about things which haven't been going well as well as receiving some positive feedback.

There is now a new team from Lovell working with us and we are trying to learn the lessons and mistakes.

Phase 1 is nearing completion. 43 homes to be delivered in Phase 1. All apart from 2 of those have been accepted and handed over to the council. The first was New Romford House.

Woodford Mews to be occupied soon.

Most of the construction of Phase 1 is now complete.

Update from Lovell representative

Phase 2 is currently progressing to target, for completion in August next year. During March next year, that's when our office will be decanted and final works completed.

We would like to use this forum for questions and answers in order to be most helpful.

3. Questions & Discussion

Question: I live on this side of Ilford house and find the loud noise wakes me up. There is drilling which happens in the morning. Can it happen in the evening instead? It is really loud from 8am to 10am.

Lovell: It is ongoing during the day. It is the most productive time and the work is not allowed to start until 8 o'clock. We monitor the noise. Work hours are 8-6, the majority of work is finished by 4 and then staff are cleaning down.

Alistair: is there something you can say about the level of noise, related to this particular phase, and how it might change?

Lovell: you will see a reduction in noise once the work moves from external to internal work. The main noisy work is the brickwork and that will die down in the next month.

Question: I live on the 5th floor, there is dust as well as the noise. On my balcony/window there is a layer of dust. Will there be compensation? People's health and lungs are suffering.

Question: I live in Ongar house and my work has been surrounded from when the work started. One of the issues we were talking about is health and safety issues and we were told there would be dust control. I've been to the doctor with allergic reactions and lung issues and I'm having to use the inhaler. On one occasion a man stood with a hose pipe on one spot, not even the whole building. My health is suffering and there is a curtain of dust in the air. What is dust control?

Lovell: water in the atmosphere to take the dust to the ground. It's not reasonable to dampen the whole site, we damp the point of work down but it's not practical to damp the site. We will raise with our contractors again and happy to receive the photos/footage from residents.

Question: I have reported broken lights in the temporary staircase and torn material on the staircase.

Lovell: there is a Lovell helpline, number can be provided after the meeting. It is better to have it on record this way.

Question: I have moved from Old Romford House to New Romford House. I was scared about the move. Ever since the move things are okay in general. There is only one issue: security. The past few months, there have been 4 sightings who don't live in the block coming at 12 o'clock at night or afterwards. Once my neighbour saw people sitting in my garden chair in the early hours of the morning. Another occasion saw two young men.

Alistair: we have instructed Lovell to add an increased height panel above the relevant gate.

Lovell: it's being manufactured at the minute, it's about 1 ½ metres tall, will be installed shortly.

Lovell: the front door of New Romford House has been broken for some weeks. Currently being looked into with Alistair. We know people are struggling with the weight of the door.

Cllr Woolf: has there been other ASB apart from in New Romford House? The reason I ask is that as councillors we sit on the local Safer Neighbourhood Panel, so these issues can be raised and discussed with the Police and others helpfully.

Comment: we have people stealing the closers on the fire doors in Ilford House and it's taken the council 5 weeks to repair.

Comment: I've seen a few people attempting to steal cars on Wakeham street about 2 in the morning.

Comment: there was also a break in to one of the pram sheds on the Baxter road-side.

Question: how much parking can we have?

Cllr Wayne: that's less of an issue around the development – there are estate parking rules which apply across the board. There are two issues: firstly, what entitlement should households have to be able to apply to park; secondly, making sure there are appropriate numbers of resident parking spaces. It's an active policy of the council generally to prioritise other forms of transport and to make sure the right people are parking. If residents are applying for 3 parking permits and then selling on those parking permits, that is fraud. What I can do is look into the position, it's really for the Parking department and the Housing department to manage this. Are others experiencing difficulties being able to park closely to your homes? Does it seem to be that people not from the estate parking on the estate?

Comment: people seem to be coming from Mildmay over here to park. They'll come here, park, then take the bus back.

Cllr Wayne: I'll take back to the parking team that these concerns have been raised. What we want to make sure is that the parking here is for people on the estate.

Alistair: there is added pressure put on the parking availability as a result of the current works. We have taken what were a number of available bays out of actions during construction. It's a temporary measure and new bays will be put back there. Around 16 bays to be put back and that will relieve some of the pressure.

Comment: I've been applying to the council to move since October/November last year. I got a letter saying that they were going to give residents who've been here a long time priority. I've been at my house for 22 years and I love my flat, it's great, but I just need a lower place to live. I've gone to SHP who are assisting me with re-applying every 6 months.

Alistair: if I can get your details, I can follow it up with the relevant colleagues. There is a lettings policy where priority goes to existing residents. I don't know what the level of demand, shortlisting, etc. is.

Cllr Woolf: as your councillors we'd be happy to speak with you further about that.

Cllr Wayne: the way that our local lettings policy works is that we want to make sure that it is local people who benefit. There is a hierarchy which starts with estate residents, then those in the ward, then those more broadly on the waiting list. The points system still applies. Most importantly we are very keen to make sure our housing stock is used in a way in which resources are properly allocated. Speak to us after the meeting or see us in a surgery because we're really keen to support residents to move into suitable properties.

Question: in between New Romford and Warley House, why is there a barrier?

Alistair: we're keen to re-open it and it's not a permanent fixture. We wanted to make sure that some of the houses were occupied in order to give a sense of presence and prevent ASB. We have had an issue getting the lighting to work in that area. One of the houses is now occupied and we are one light short of having the lighting sorted in that area. Once it's safely lit, we'll take that fencing down. Hopefully if the lights are operating and it's safe to walk through. We're 7-10 days away from reopening it.

Question: and the access routes to Balls Pond Road?

Alistair: similar reasons and principles to the above and the route should be opened up in a similar timeframe. Until the lighting in the area is fully operational we're keen to give the appearance that the area is not fully accessible.

Question: what is the current schedule for overall completion of the project, given that it's overrun by over 12 months?

Lovell: it's scheduled for completion in August next year. There were issues in the ground which meant changing the foundation design.

Question: are there any plans to recompense residents given all the disruption?

Alistair: we have had some early discussion about legacy works. From a council perspective the programme hasn't been delivered the way we expected it to be.

Question: will the residents have a chance to input into the legacy ideas?

Cllr Wayne: we'd be very interested to hear about it. There's no point in there being legacy spending unless it benefits residents. The original timescales included: November 2016 – completion of new community centre in Threadgold house. Completion of a number of blocks in phase 1 – April 2017.

Whilst everyone recognises that slippage can happen, the costs have been to young people unable to use communal areas. Can we be assured that by next summer, all of the communal areas will be open from the beginning of summer for use by people?

Lovell: this can't be guaranteed because one of the last areas to be finished will be near these communal spaces.

Cllr Wayne: are we looking at another summer blighted by works for the residents? We can see what an improvement compared to where the estate used to be, but residents want to be able to enjoy the estate.

Lovell: to successfully deliver the properties, we need an office and a base. This is needed to service the site.

Alistair: something that hasn't gone unrecognised to the council, is that Phase 1 hasn't gone well. Phase 1 touched upon practically every area of the estate and that wasn't really the intention of the phasing and sequencing.

Cllr Woolf: one of the frustrations have been being given deadlines which haven't been met.

Question: is the slippage costing more the council? Are there penalties involved?

Alistair: to a certain extent there are extra costs to the council as a result of the delays. Yes there are penalties we will seek to recover from the contractor.

Lovell: it's costing Lovell a lot more than was intended to deliver the scheme.

Question: when are these rooms going to be open for use?

Steve, Community Development Officer: thank you for attending the first meeting here, today. Dove Rooms is more of a community space rather than a community centre. We had a meeting early last year and have already received some ideas from residents about what they would like to see.

We haven't got a formal opening date for the centre. What we will be doing is an opening event, which will be an opportunity for residents to use the space and possibly another opportunity to have ideas about what it can be used for. We are also looking at what we can do with other local community groups.

Question: will we be able to book the space, as a resident? How much will it cost?

Steve: the plan will be to have some kind of booking system in place, with an email and a calendar. There are currently different bandings depending on whether it is a private booking, etc.

Question: who will be facilitating the centre? Who will be cleaning it?

Steve: at the minute it will be me, which is not an ideal situation. We will have to look at what we're going to do managing the facility in the medium-longer term. We haven't yet looked at the cleaning. What we would like is ideas about what could be happening in this space.

Question: it would be great to have an opportunity to input. Is there a rough idea, after the opening event, when it might be available for use?

Cllr Wayne: what might more appropriate management arrangements be for this space? There has not been effective resident engagement or a Tenants and Residents Association (TRA) in some time to say what they want. Very often on an estate of this size, the community centre will be run by residents, often with a committee. The one thing we want to avoid is this space lying empty when there is a clear demand for services. What's your vision for how we get there?

Steve: the template we have for managing community spaces is that residents volunteer and manage them through committees. The demands which are put on residents in that model are increasingly difficult.

Cllr Wayne: we've known that these rooms are coming on stream for a considerable period of time. I am surprised that there doesn't seem to be a clear plan from the department about a vision, how to engage with residents. Especially now that they're nearly available and there is excitement. The work should start now in terms of speaking to people about what they want. The people who are likely to want to be involved are here tonight. What do the residents who are here want from this centre?

Comment: the past few months I have been going to some of the other centres. I have seen a variety of them, running to a slim budget or semi-financed by council or charity.

Comment: as a yoga teacher, we look for places all the time to have these classes. If there were a booking system to book this place, I would also discuss with my colleagues.

Comment: from my perspective, it feels like the priority is to get the booking system up and running. It might be worth thinking about the legacy funding and how this can contribute.

Comment: if this is already 2 years late, this should have been plenty of time to get things in place and prepare.

Comment: the need for chairperson, roles, etc. are the reasons why the previous TRA broke down.

Cllr Woolf: as local councillors dealing with TRAs, we feel the lack of a TRA on this estate. The council have done a big review into the operation of TRA and the council knows it's top down and too laborious. As a result of that review, there are now different models which can be explored. There are more informal models, almost "pop-up" TRAs. I'd like to see the adoption of a new type of TRA model and information can be shared about this.

Alistair: just to pick up on the legacy being part of this space. It seems an obvious place to start with being involved in this. If the ideas are forthcoming, then that conversation about the legacy piece can come to be to be in conversation with councillors and Lovell.

Cllr Wayne: if anyone here is interested in being part of a new-style TRA, get in touch with us and we can work together with the Community Development team.

Alistair: returning to the point about dust, I will follow this up myself to see what more rigorous monitoring checks we can put in place. The council will also arrange for an independent company to carry out air quality assessments around the estate.

5. Any Other Business

R: We had a break-in to the garage through the passageway – we need some engagement between Southern Housing and Islington. People were storing mopeds into a broken-in garage.

Cllr Wayne: please put that into an email to us so we can follow up more thoroughly.

Cllr Woolf: when we hold our ward partnerships, they are going to be more localised on specific issues such as this one.

For our next ward partnership on October 23rd, we have lots of local service providers who will come and share what they do and the services provided in the community. We would love to see people there.