

# Holloway Ward Partnership Meeting

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021, 7pm – 8.30pm  
Remotely held on Zoom, hosted by Islington Council

## Attendees

Councillors: Cllr Jason Jackson (Holloway Ward Councillor and Chair of Meeting)  
Cllr Diarmaid Ward (Holloway Ward Councillor)  
Cllr Rakhia Ismail (Holloway Ward Councillor)

Officers: Darshna Dhokia (Youth Employment & Apprenticeships Manager)  
Nicky Freeling (Head of iWork)  
Jacqueline Robinson (Community Development Manager)  
Spencer Reynolds (Business Manager, Environment & Regeneration)  
Billy Wells (Head of Neighbourhood Services)  
Elizabeth Petherick (Ward Partnership Co-ordinator)

Invited: Benjamin Bello (Head of Housing, Hyde Housing)

In total, 21 people attended the meeting.

## Item 1: Welcomes, Introductions and Housekeeping

Cllrs Jackson, Ward and Ismail introduced themselves, with Cllr Jackson outlining the agenda for the evening's meeting. Cllr Ismail noted that this meeting needed to be organised earlier in advance, with better communication between councillors, and this will be taken forward, with future meetings being organised further in advance and communications being sent out earlier.

## Item 2: Youth Employment and Summer Opportunities

Council officer Darshna Dhokia, Youth Employment and Apprenticeships Manager, outlined the current employment opportunities and support programmes for younger people in Islington:

- There is now an [Islington working portal](#) that residents are encouraged to register for, and there are coaches who are able to help with the application process for job roles.
- Summerversity will be held this year, which gives young people in Islington free activities and opportunities over the summer holidays, and more information can be found at [www.summerversity.co.uk](http://www.summerversity.co.uk). The main space for holding this will be Lift, however the employment team are open to delivering sessions in other parts of the borough.

**Cllr Jackson** – Can we host an event in Holloway?

**Darshna** – If a space has capacity, then this could be possible, but currently there are a lot of online opportunities that Holloway residents can access.

**Cllr Ismail** – Do we have any Holloway specific information, in terms of ward specific statistics about school leavers, job take-ups, retention etc.

**Darshna** – We do have data on the number of residents who do progress through the system and interact with opportunities, so it would be a case of extrapolating the data for Holloway residents, which is possible, and this can be done and passed on to the councillor.s

**Resident** – How do residents and young people get this information, as not many of the residents present were aware of all the opportunities presented?

**Darshna** – In schools, Islington delivers 100 hours World of Work where young people benefit from 100 hours' work experience by the age of 16. The employment team also has bulletins sent out to key stakeholders, head teachers, and local schools. The summerversity programme is sent to primary and secondary schools, and updates and opportunities are also put on Islington Life. The employment team is also in the process of creating a youth employment web page

**Action: Add school governors to the mailing lists**

A PowerPoint presentation was presented alongside this item. If anyone would like a copy of this PowerPoint, then please email either [elizabeth.petherick@islington.gov.uk](mailto:elizabeth.petherick@islington.gov.uk) or [partnerships@islington.gov.uk](mailto:partnerships@islington.gov.uk)

### **Item 3: How to Start a TRA**

Council officer Jacqueline Robinson, Community Development Manager, outlined the importance of TRAs, why they are started, and how to do so:

- People usually get involved in a TRA because there is an issue, or they want to change something on their estate, and TRAs allow for a community voice that the council has to listen to.
- TRAs are considered to be high level volunteers, as they are the eyes and ears of an estate, and 50% of estates are currently represented by TRAs.
- Support is required from multiple parties in order for a TRA to succeed, specifically support from residents. The communities team can help by gauging interest from residents and setting up a public meeting for an election.
- When setting up a TRA, there needs to be enough people involved for the division of labour. TRAs have to have a chair and a secretary as a minimum, and occasionally they have a co-chair. Occasionally a TRA will have someone who handles the finances, however the communities team are able to help with this if not.
- The communities team are dedicated to providing a first year of support to TRAs by helping to set up meetings, finding spaces for these, and encouraging community days
- There is a £250 start-up grant for TRAs, and an annual grant of £200 that has to be applied for.
- A TRA is not the only option, a task and finish group or a steering group could also be set up depending on need and individual profiles.

For more information on this, and to request a guidebook on TRAs, then you can email Jacqueline at [Jacqueline.Robinson@islington.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqueline.Robinson@islington.gov.uk).

**Resident** – Is support offered to residents with other social landlords?

**Jacqueline** – The Communities team is able to help, however Housing Associations do have different regulations and processes.

**Resident** – Will the policies for TRAs be amended to allow for inauguration to take place online?

**Jacqueline** – Inaugural meetings will now be allowed in person from September, and these will take place in Loraine Estate Community Centre, so any TRAs started during lockdown will shortly be able to be inaugurated fully.

#### **Item 4: Housing Association Matters**

Benjamin Bello from Hyde Housing was present to answer any queries that attendees had:

- Hyde Housing is also looking at how to support TRAs and are keen to improve their relationships with them and work alongside local authorities in order to improve on best practice

**Cllr Ward** – There have been persistent issues with the caretaking of Ringcross Estate, and there have been no improvements on this over the past few months, what is being done here to improve the situation?

**Benjamin** – A deep cleaning exercise will be taking place on the estate in August in order to improve issues of cleanliness.

**Cllr Jackson** – Each estate has a property manager, however they are extremely difficult to contact directly as no contact information is given for them, can this be improved upon to allow for better communication between residents and the Housing Association?

**Benjamin** – Residents do have to go through the customer contact service centre so any issues can be logged before being passed on to the property manager, but it is acknowledged that it is difficult to reach someone directly. A resident survey on estates has just been concluded, and the results of this will be reviewed and responded to to hopefully improve resident experiences.

#### **Item 5: Biddestone Park and Pollard Close Update**

Council Officer Spencer Reynolds, Business Manager from Environment and Regeneration, provided an update on matters:

- The lighting work on Biddestone Park is progressing, and is due to be completed by the end of September. Ducting work will take place, which will be completed by the end of August, and then lighting installation will be finalised by the end of September.

- The park will be opened for 24 hours on a trial period of three months, if it is decided that the period will be extended, then it will have to go to consultation.
- There are two park guards funded until May 2022 who provide security for Pollard Close and the surrounding area (but not Pollard Close exclusively), and the community safety team are currently working alongside local businesses to improve safety
- CCTV will be installed in the lifts in Pollard Close, following a letter drop to residents, and will also be installed temporarily further around the estate.

**Resident** – The lights have to be installed before any trial period of opening the park for 24 hours, and can the park guards be in the park from 10pm to 6am if the hours of opening are to be extended?

**Cllr Ward** – We can try to vary the hours of the park guards, so they are on duty later and have them more focussed in the Biddestone Park area.

**Resident** – Why weren't the lights already in the park when it was opened in 2016, and why has it taken a year for the lights to be put in place? Could it also be noted that Pollard Close has not benefitted from the levy that introduced the park guards as they are not situated outside the entrance and exit of Pollard Close, they guard a large area outside of it as well.

**Cllr Ward** – It has taken too long for the lights to be installed, and he apologised on behalf of the council for this

**Resident** – There is still a constant amount of anti-social behaviour and drug dealing taking place outside Pollard Close that makes the residents feel unsafe in their own homes, and this has to change. The right of way through the estate should be closed, and the estate gated to allow for more safety.

**Cllr Ward** – If the trial with the park is successful, then this will allow for another passage that could be used instead of the right of way that runs through Pollard Close, but this would have to be assessed.

**Resident** – Will keeping Biddestone Park open 24/7 attract rough sleepers in the park?

**Cllr Ward** – At the last rough sleeper count throughout the borough, there were only 11 sleepers counted, and 8 of those were able to be placed in temporary accommodation, so hopefully this will not be a problem for the park. The park staying open later may attract more people, however hopefully having the park guards on later shifts will nip this in the bud.

**Resident** – Would like to see drawings of the park to see what is going to be happening where; where will the lights be situated, where will the guards be situated, would like a visual representation of the plans. The various steps of the plan really do need to be thought through.

## **Next Steps:**

Cllrs Jackson, Ward and Ismail will agree on a next date for a meeting, and it has been promised that this will be prepared long in advance to allow for communications to be sent

out in good time. It is likely that this meeting will take place in late September / early November once the lighting in the park has been installed.

There is currently a fun day being planned for the 11<sup>th</sup> of September, where local VCS organisations, community groups, and police officers will be present to meet with residents. Further information about this will be distributed once the details are concrete.