

# Minutes of the Mildmay Ward Partnership Meeting Via Zoom on 14 October 2021

## Attendees

Cllr Angelo Weekes (Chair)

William Whiteside, LBI (questions and answers)

Tom Dobson, Public Works Architect (questions and answers)

Cllr Santiago Bell-Bradford

Cllr Jenny Kay

Timothy Evans (minutes)

+ 5 members of the public

## 1. Introduction And Welcome by Cllr Weekes

Cllr Weekes talked about how funding has recently become available to the local area to improve the library and the hope by all of the ward councillors to improve this resource for residents of all age groups.

Cllr Kay provided some background on the history of the Library. Mildmay Library has been in place since 1987, Islington Council have committed to not closing any libraries. Mildmay is a library in most need of improvement in the borough. It is the second least attended library. We are hoping to improve this for young people in the area.

Cllr Bell-Bradford grew up near the library and used it growing up. He compared it to the newer and larger library in Dalston and he is hoping to improve the youth service offering.

## 2. Mildmay Library Improvement Presentation by Tom Dobson

WW:

Idea is to refurbish and redesign the space to make it more functional and more useful. Hopefully this will become a destination for all age groups. We are also considering if more outreach services could be located within the site making this a wellbeing hub.

TD:

Plans on the Library are still yet to be finalised however the space available is large. This encompasses office space, a conservatory, and other spaces that are poorly utilised at present. We are looking to open up the space on the first floor to the public and make the office space a bank of hot desks on the ground floor. The recently completed Cat and Mouse Library also in the borough is of a similar size.

Currently people who use the Library do so as a study/ work space which can cause a conflict with children also needing to occupy the space. Other libraries deal with this by scheduling events for children throughout the day to minimise noise.

Other improvements would involve cleaning the façade and adding more impactful signage, creating a public amenity space or an informal playground in front of the building.

The library also has a large and under-used terrace which could be hired as an event space or enclosed to increase the first floor area.

All improvements would depend on what budget is made available.

### Questions raised

**Q1:** Is there a space within the building which is not quiet like a café/ social space?

**A1: The area marked out in pink is a meeting/ social space currently. There is not a café space but this is something that can be revisited.**

**Q2:** Can the Library remain open during the works?

**A2 This is possible but could increase the time taken for the project.**

**Q3:** Will there be a drop off car parking space?

**A3: Currently there is one space available.**

**Q4:** What consideration has been made to make the Library into a space that people will be interested in going to? Drawing classes for example. What about noisy events?

**A4: The events program would need to be decided by the council, In terms of noisy events the children's area will be enclosed by a glass screen which should provide noise blocking properties.**

**Q5:** Cllr Kay asks a member of the public what she thinks we can offer older residents in order to entice them into the library, especially considering its proximity to 'The Mildmays'.

**A5: We should create a space to explore, provide classes, some additional cultural activities and workshops. Ahead of the development ensure that there is publicity regarding the changes hopefully engage with local residents to encourage them to make more use of the building.**

**Q6:** Some residents may be retired and also socially isolated therefore any opportunities for meeting may be limited. It would be good to have a space that was not commercially owned where they could meet and socialise.

**A6: An informal seating area is included in the plans.**

**Q7:** Can we have more information about the Fairer Together project?

**A7: WW:** We are currently in the process of establishing what services could be offered potentially this could include a well being service, creating a hub where more face to face meetings can take place. There could be an opportunity for more resident engagement to find out what the requirement for this is.

### **3. AOB**

**Question:** Are there any updates regarding traffic organisation in the borough?

**Answer:** Traffic counts are currently being completed in the ward. We are expecting this to be completed in December/ January, these will form the basis for wider consultation. Cllr Weekes is involved in Mildmay East and Highbury New Park traffic plans. Cllr Kay pointed out that it is difficult to keep up with Hackney as they have acted fast with their traffic plans.

**Question:** Bikes are being stolen around Newington Green. Are there any statistics that could be provided for this?

**Answer:** Statistics on bike theft would be available from the Police. Cllr Kay indicated that we want to see more bike hangers installed in the ward but we are still in the process of deciding where to put these.

**Question:** Are there plans to utilise off road private space for communal cycle parking?

**Answer:** (Cllr Kay) Currently there are no plans to create cycle parking on private land. However we have been able to recycle old cycle storage that the council no longer needs by giving this to the private residents.

**Action Point:** Look into temporary parking provision around Mildmay Library.

