

DRAFT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL BOARDS

Notes of a meeting of DARTFORD LOCAL BOARD

Date: Wednesday, 18 March 2009

Venue: Dartford Methodist Church, 43 Spital Street, Dartford, DA1 2DR

Present: Local Board Members: Bertie Bassam (Chairman), Ann Allen, Christine Angell, Ivor Jones, DL, Tom Maddison and John Muckle

KCC Officers: Kayley Phillips (Community Liaison Manager)

A1. Welcome to the meeting – Mr B Bassam, Chairman

A2. Notes of Local Board meeting held on 13th November 2008

Notes from the previous meeting were agreed and are accurate.

Members of the Local Board asked for it to be minuted that this would be Mr Bassam and Mr Jones last Local Board meeting. They were both thanked for all their hard work and support.

A3. Children's Centre

Lyndsey Howden, Children's Centre Team Leader, Oakfields Children's Centre gave a presentation.

It was explained that there are two local SureStart programmes in Dartford.

The need was based on a consultation with the local community's and on social indices data.

A bottom up approach/structure exists – there are seven centres in Dartford, some are open while others are waiting to be built. Temple Hill was one of the first to open.

LH talked through some of the services available at the centres:

- SureTalk – a service for mothers/women – vulnerable parents attend
- Melody group – specialises on speech development
- JumpStart – children with additional needs – includes home contacts

LH also explained a number of the other services available

An explanation of the management structures, and the fit with local priorities, Kent Children's Plan and other local strategies was given.

Questions to LH

CA commented that there is currently no Children's Centre in Brent – the money appears to have gone to the YMCA?

DRAFT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

LH explained that £220,000 has been invested in a children's team but there is no building in Brent. The team is based at YMCA and are happy to come out to schools.

CA stressed how important it is to have a building.

LH spoke about the centres that do exist. Where no centre exists there are drop-ins and outreach services. Families can sign up with one but have access to them all.

TM stated that there are no centres in West Dartford and asked how can people work through schools to reach the 900 under 4's in the area.

LH clarified that Dartford West Health Centre offered services/use venues

TM agreed to speak to Nick Fenton regarding the work in schools.

AA asked how would mums gain access to services and would grandparents be allowed to have access?

LH confirmed that all family members have access. How – midwifery services are in a process of change – community midwives undertake assessment/register/works in a team at the centres.

BB understood that the criteria for a centre to be built was originally based on pram walk journey time as well as the social indices. He understood that a centre is planned for New Ash Green.

LH confirmed that the Darenth New Build would be based in Green Street Green.

A4. Home Improvement Agency Service

Presentation by Jo Pannell, Community Liaison Manager.

JP gave an explanation of services available and stated that this was a relatively new organisation. It was stated that In Touch is an excellent service. Its vision is for people to live independently.

JP explained who is eligible she described groups and individuals – allows people/children to live at home rather than going into care.

What they look for – dangers/outside and in, housing options/adaptations/paperwork/general support is given. Technical issues – builders' will provide quotes and after checks as part of the service

JP gave some examples of the works and repairs e.g. wet rooms/central heating/ramps/extensions. Other services include handy person service – odd jobs, home security, garden maintenance service.

A home maintenance guide and Home Improvement Agency leaflet was available for people to take home.

DRAFT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Questions to JP

Was there a fee to access service? JP confirmed that there wasn't only when work needs to start.

A5. Libraries

Christine Matthews and Amanda Turnbull introduced themselves. An overview of what libraries have to offer to provided - which includes:

- IT/web wizards/silver surfers, availability to hire books/spoken word CDs/cassettes, DVDs/music service, Local history books – 1911 census/parish records/maps/photos, family history days – 1 hour booking research family access to ancestry of free, information provider – online – Ask a Kent librarian, Online chat services – conversation online 24 hours a day, Who's Who – Kent.gov.uk, Events – author visits (free events), Adult Education, children's characters visits, gallery space available to hire, mobile library – rural areas – housebound services deliver books/volunteers – taking service out to the community, parents/children – Rhyme times/BookStart, reading groups – hope to start soon at Dartford for all ages including visually impaired – all going well, young people – selection of books x 4 class visits in a week. Teenage section includes graphic novels
- A Homework Club is yet to start at Dartford
- Events – Library in the Park starts 7 July, Tuesday and Thursdays. Found that they has more success as people will use the informal setting rather going into the library.
- Community events – all free
- Silver surfer sessions starts 15th May
- Easter event on 9th April

Questions

Q. Can people hire equipment if they are doing talks to community groups?
CM explained that there is some equipment that can be hired, however, it was suggested that an application for Members Community Grant was made to purchase some equipment.

Q. Reading Groups – details were taken to inform people when starts.

Q. Toilet facilities – Temple Hill closing, where are the nearest toilets?
The staff toilet can be used if an emergency

Q. How many librarians part time/full time?
Dartford Central – 2 full time and other staff are part time. A review is taking

DRAFT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

place as the library is opening longer needs so need more staff

Q. Access to Dartford library – can't afford bus fare can services be spread out?

Central venue is still best option, there will be a Library in the Park at a SureStart Centre. The Library staff would like to go out more but staffing is the issue again

BB – quoted that he feels that we have one of the finest library services in the country.

A6. Questions

Questions were taken after each presentation.

A7. Members Community Grant

Mr Bassam declared a personal interest in the Members Community Grant received from Longfield and New Barn Parish Council - £5,000 for planters.

The Board were in agreement to support his recommendation to the sum of £5,000.

A8. Question Time

Q. Closure of the toilet (Temple Hill) – People were very unhappy and were advised to write to the District Council about this as this was a DBC matter not a KCC decision.

JM had also objected to the closure at the last Council meeting – emphasised that the public need to write to the DBC – everyone uses the public toilets.

Q. Public toilet adjacent to the museum in Market Street - DBC proposing to close if they can – trying to get local shops to provide toilets – JM stated that these are unlikely to close

Kent Highways – asked to be noted that not enough money spent – is this the time to invest more money?

JM – answered that roads had been neglected in the past but not the case in the past 2 years, £millions needed to cover backlog of maintenance. To give KCC Highways credit – giving level best considering demands

Q. Lorries – noise through Kent why so much? – JM answered that due to our location Kent is the pathway to the continent. Agreed behaviour of lorry drivers unacceptable Explained that 3 car parks part of Operation Stack proposed. KCC aware of problem but cannot overcome volume

Q. Developing a second crossing help problem? Yes, proposal Dartford – Sheerness. Dartford suffers more than any other area in Kent
AA stated that leader of KCC looking at charging for use of roads – the European law states this is illegal but looking at other initiatives

DRAFT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

A9. Any Other Business

IJ thanked Kayley for all her help and assistance as a CLM over the past 4 years.

CA wanted it formally minuted her thanks to Kayley for her hard work

CA asked if more people came in the day or the evening. Over $\frac{3}{4}$ said they would come to a day meeting. The Board agreed to consider having more meetings in the daytime.

Meeting closed at 12.15 pm