

## **WALWORTH SOCIETY MEETING**

### **7.00pm – Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020 (Online)**

1. **Welcome and introductions.** The chair welcomed everybody to the Walworth Society Zoom meeting and went through the protocol for the meeting
2. **Apologies:** Sandy Newborn
3. **Attendance:** 62 online attendees including: Aaron Burton Crisostomo, Abby Burton Crisostomo, Ana Cebrian, Andrew Brisbane, Ashwin Shaw, Ben Brett, Bridget Bell, Celia Cronin, Cllr Darren Merrill, David Chenery, Diana Cochrane, Diana Czugler, Diane Williamson, Kevin Williamson, Eileen Fuller, Cllr Eleanor Kerslake, Elizabeth Sinclair, Guy Mannes-Abbott, Harriet Hill, James Aldworth, James Beedell, Cllr James Coldwell, Jason Leech, Jeremy Leach (chair), John Trevelyan, John Whelan, Cllr Johnson Situ (speaker), Julia Honess, Liba Hoskin, Lise Magnollay, Mali Tosti, Maria Murray, Cllr Martin Seaton, Matthew Wright, Neil Crossfield, Paul Newman, Peta Steel, Richard Galpin, Cllr Richard Livingstone (speaker), Robert Hadfield, Robert Zammit-Pace, Ryan Cox, Sarah Timewell, Scott Cain, Shelagh Kavanagh (minute taker), Stephen Passmore, Stuart Whatton, Susan Badman, Tracy Crossfield, Tyrone Landau, Vince Brown, Amanda Sewell, Steve, Charlie, Chloe, Frederic, Ian, Jakub, James , plus three others.
4. **Minutes of May general meeting and matters arising**
  - a. Minutes were agreed as a correct record.
  - b. Purcell report or presentation from last meeting has been circulated.
  - c. Bell public house at 51 East St – the current application has been withdrawn but a new one is expected.
  - d. Three Community Infrastructure Levy programs have been submitted by the Walworth Society.
5. **Walworth Healthy Streets** - changes to streets and roads around Walworth. Discussion with Cllr Richard Livingstone (Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and the Climate Emergency).
  - a. Cllr Livingstone outlined the proposed changes to Walworth traffic routes. These changes resulted from local consultations: Walworth Low Emissions Neighbourhood project and Walworth Healthy Streets (<https://ourhealthywalworthmap.commonplace.is/>).
  - b. The changes have been signed off by Cabinet earlier in the month as temporary, emergency measures intended to meet the health threat posed by likely increases in through traffic flow as COVID-19 lockdown restrictions are lifted – Walworth suffers disproportionality from respiratory illness due to pollution.
  - c. These measures will be in place for up to 18 months and closely monitored. Ongoing local consultation will closely influence what comes after.
  - d. Suggestions for changes should be put on the Commonplace website (<https://walworthstreetspace.commonplace.is> – this will open soon for comments but is open for registration now).

- e. The map exhibited to illustrate the changes will be made available by the Walworth Society (<https://www.walworthsociety.co.uk/post/walworth-healthy-streets-indicative-map-of-proposals>) and appears below.



## Questions and discussion

- There were a number of concerns raised to blocking Penton Place at the Manor Place end rather than Kennington Park Road.
- Problems of larger vehicles turning was raised.
- RL will discuss issues raised with Highways Team.
- It was requested that in advance of implementation adequate signage will be provided to indicate those streets that were now no-through roads.
- RL assured the meeting that there will be adequate signage.
- Residents of Salisbury Estate were concerned about volume of traffic that comes down Rodney Road when there are bus diversions from the Walworth Road.
- RL said he will go back to Highways team on this.
- Concerns were raised over the proposal to change Larcom St from one way to two-way street particularly as there are two blind corners and the street contains a school, church and community centre.
- RL replied that the Highways Team will closely monitor change in traffic behaviour in Larcom St.
- A concern was raised that as the Aylesbury development will mean new roads around Aylesbury Road, Merrow St and Dawes St, and, in particular, a new road between Thurlow St and Dawes St which will run east-west, there is a possibility of a rat-run being created and increased traffic in Aylesbury, Dawes, Wooler Streets.
- RL replied that these plans were made some years ago and he will discuss with the Regeneration team and Notting Hill Genesis ways avoiding increasing traffic or creating through routes in the area.
- Concerns were raised that by forcing traffic on to the main roads, the health of those living on these roads would suffer, and that any new road scheme should protect the health of all local residents.
- RL replied that the intention is that by removing through traffic there will be less cars on the streets and that will help promote walking and cycling. And that the new arrangements are also intended to discourage short local car journeys as the first five minutes of a car journey is the most polluting.
- Residents from John Ruskin St noted that they have raised their concerns over a number of years - including through the recent consultations, about the number and the speed of HGVs running the length of the street, but the current proposals have no mention of John Ruskin St.
- RL will feed back to officers and promised a full response later.
- Concerns were raised about access for emergency vehicles under the new proposal.

- RL answered that Southwark have made emergency services aware of the proposed changes – those who replied are in agreement.
- Concern was raised about pollution from market traders' diesel van engines running on King & Queen St all day, and could that street can also be closed.
- RL said some roads on either side of East St are being closed which may have an impact. And he will talk to markets team about the idling.
- It was noted that, according to the Southwark Plan, 40% of all journeys are on foot - but many pavements are narrow and often blocked by wheelie bins. Some streets may need more zebra crossings if there are to be more cycling. And if more signs to go up can it be on existing lampposts.
- RL replied that Southwark are looking at more pavement widenings. As these current proposals are experimental and temporary traffic closures, he would like to look at pavement widening once permanent arrangements have been decided. RL suggested people may like to put pavement widening proposals on the Commonplace website (<https://walworthstreetspace.commonplace.is>). Same for new Zebra Crossings. And he promised that the Highways team will not want to create more pavement clutter with more posts.
- Concerns were raised that Carter St is to be made a no-through road, with no easy access to a main road, yet there has been no consultation with residents and there are concerns about access and deliveries.
- RL replied that he would discuss with the Highways Team concerns about access and go back and make sure all residents get a letter telling them what is happening.
- Concerns were raised about Manor Place/Pasley Estate residents' access to the Walworth Road, this will now require a right turn at the end of Penton Place, but there are no traffic lights here.
- Also, residents object to the southern part of Penton Place (south of Manor Place) becoming two-way traffic.
- RL replied that the points raised need to be thought through again by the Highways Team.
- A John Ruskin St resident objected that she hadn't been consulted about these changes, yet they would make her car journey to work in North London longer.
- One resident asked how Southwark will measure any change to pollution and numbers of walkers and cyclists. And whether the Southwark Commonplace website could be used to engage with local residents about the changes.
- RL replied that Southwark will be setting up page on the Commonplace website to let people know more about the proposals and how they are being implemented.
- Measuring change in pollution, walking and cycling is problematic as the COVID-19 crisis has affected these numbers, but Southwark will likely take the baseline as last February (2020).

- A local resident complained that they had not seen the earlier consultations and that there should be consultation on these specific proposals.
- RL noted that these changes had arisen out of the Walworth Low Emissions Neighbourhood consultation and the concerns which had been raised there, and that the current road changes are experimental and temporary, and that a 'live' consultation will be ongoing.
- There were a number of residents who raised the objection that speed bumps were ineffective in tackling excessive speed and caused pollution through the slowing down and speeding up of traffic.
- RL agreed that speed bumps were not always the best solution to speeding and a range of options needed to be looked at.

**Southwark Council Climate Change strategy.** Discussion with Cllr Richard Livingstone (Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and the Climate Emergency).

RL informed the meeting that Southwark council aim to reduce to net zero carbon by 2030. There will be extensive consultation throughout the rest of the year. There is a commonplace website that is available for comments (<https://southwarkclimateideas.commonplace.is/>)

Meanwhile the council will look at reducing their own levels of carbon emission, and a draft strategy will go to Cabinet in mid-July.

### **Questions and discussion**

- f. There ensued a wide-ranging discussion touching on reducing carbon emissions by stopping demolitions of buildings. Stopping the felling of mature trees and planting more trees. Street lighting, light pollution and energy use. Leaving alone native plant species in public spaces and parks.
- g. RL replied there is a trade off in conserving or replacing existing buildings; there is a Southwark Tree Plan and policy is to fell only trees reaching end of their lives; and Southwark is committed to converting to low energy lighting.

### **6. Walworth Town Hall redevelopment and other regeneration and planning issues.** Discussion with Cllr Johnson Situ (Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning).

- a. JS updated the meeting on the current state of play with General Project's plans to redevelop the Walworth Town Hall.
- b. The commitment remains that there is a dedicated space for local people, run by local people. There will be Cabinet report later which will look in more detail at the management structure, but the board will consist of representatives of the local community, General Projects, and Southwark Council.
- c. The management board will be able to appoint an operator and manage activities. There will be £50,000 pa grant made to the board for first three years.
- d. JS made clear that it is recognised that the management board needs to be set up well before the building is completed and this is likely to be some 12 months before.

- e. On a connected matter JS reported that work continues on the new Library and Heritage Centre with the expectation that it will be completed by end of the year.

## **7. Questions and discussion**

- a. It was suggested that the consultation regarding the public space had been limited and the range of people invited to be part of the discussion narrow, in particular provision should be made for young people.
- b. Concerns were also raised about the effectiveness of the guarantees about the extent and use of the public space.
  - i. JS replied that the Southwark Young Advisors had been encouraged to become involved in the discussions, and youth involvement and provision was a priority.
  - ii. JS assured the meeting that the lease would not be signed until the building had been completed, and that further consultation was required by the planning process. During this statutory consultation, which is just about to start, Southwark will insist that developers go further than they have in the past in consulting the public.
  - iii. Moreover, JS reassured the meeting that a covenant will form part of the lease guaranteeing a public space of 240 sq. metre. Further, the nature of the various public uses will be specified and written into the section 106 agreement at planning, which would mean that the only way that that could be changed would be if General Projects applied for a change of use through the planning system, and that would be under public scrutiny.
- iv. JS also assured the meeting that the lease was for 150 not 250 years, and this applied to the whole building not just the community space. All guarantees provided by planning and the lease would continue even if the lease was passed on to new hands.
- v. JS noted that the management board will have community reps, that there is flexibility in what this will mean in practice, and JS would be happy to talk further with the Walworth Society about how we can achieve effective community representation.
- c. It was suggested, given the concerns many had about the robustness of the guarantees around the public space, Southwark should publish in full the wording they have in place in the lease and in the section 106 agreement, so that people could take advice on whether the guarantees were adequate.
  - i. JS said that both the wording in the lease and in the section 106 agreement had already been made publicly available, but that it would be a good idea to bring that wording together for the Walworth Society, and would be happy to do that
- d. JS was asked if the One Stop Shop that had been in the old Town Hall could be brought back locally.
  - i. JS replied that he thought that unlikely it would be brought back into the Walworth Town Hall, but the council is always looking at how people can access services better.

- e. Concerns were raised about what would happen after the three £50,000 pa grants ended, would Southwark provide further money, or would the burden fall wholly on the management board to fund raise.
- i. JS replied that the situation would be reviewed in three years, this did not mean that more money would not be available, but the expectation is that the management board would look to fund raise and raise money through events.
- f. It was objected that an undertaking had been given in the consultation meetings that the £50,000 paid by the Leaseholder, General Projects, to Southwark each year would be passed on to the management board of the public space so that events could be held free of charge. If that money was withdrawn, the likelihood was that far more events would have to be charged than made free to local people.
- i. JS replied that he would take that on board.

## **8. Southwark Stands Together** Discussion with Cllr Johnson Situ (Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning).

- a. JS spoke about 'Southwark Stands Together' which has been inspired by the 'Black Lives Matter' movement, and aims to tackle racial inequality across the borough.
- b. JS noted that all in Southwark had been under considerable stress during the COVID-19 crisis, but that the BAME community had been disproportionately affected. This begs questions about the wider issue of structural inequality in our society and Southwark will be consulting on this over the next eight weeks.
- c. In the discussion it was suggested that the Walworth Society could play a part in Southwark Stands Together by taking up the positive stories of the Walworth BAME communities as part of its longstanding work in collecting local stories and local histories.
- d. The chair noted that this suggestion would fit well with our current Virtually Walworth project, and JS offered to help as Southwark Stands Together is about promoting our diversity.

## **9. Virtually Walworth.**

- a. The chair thanked Diana and Julia for all the work they have done so far.
- b. DC reported that the first phase of the project, Walworth Grows had received great feedback. They will take that model and launch Walworth Shops next week – history talks and a socially distanced event at end of July. This will be followed by Walworth Stories.
- c. People can find out more about the events on the Walworth Society Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/TheWalworthSociety](https://www.facebook.com/TheWalworthSociety)) and on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/WalworthSociety>).

## **10. Planning matters**

- i. The Rising Sun PH Harper Road. David Chenery – publican of Rising Sun pub, spoke about the proposed redevelopment. He welcomed the Walworth Society objections sent to planning and was happy to work with the society in a campaign to save the Rising Sun. It was agreed we would contact David to discuss further.

## **11. Date of next meeting: 7pm, Thursday 16th July Meeting ended**