

Camden Together

King's Cross Ward Community Strategy Consultation Meeting

Notes of a meeting held on 8 November 2006 at 7.00pm

Camden Council councillors and officers present:

Cllr Abdul Hai
Cllr Jonathon Simpson
Maxine Jervis, Neighbourhood Partnerships
Rita Waligo, Neighbourhood Partnerships

Members of the public present:

Milena Nuti, local resident
Abdul Gofur, King's Cross Mosque
Rubel Ahmed, Camden Youth Connexions 78 Cromer Street
Monat Miah, SC Yap (Youth Connexions), Melleui Volunteer
Ricky Rahman, SC Yap (Youth Connexions), Melleui Volunteer
Zahid Mich, SC Yap (Youth Connexions), Melleui Volunteer
Shakin Mich, SC Yap (Youth Connexions), Melleui Volunteer
Akike Miah, SC Yap (Youth Connexions), Melleui Volunteer
Sonja Makley, local resident
Abdul Kashim, local resident
Ahmed Osman, local resident
Rumal Ahmed, local resident
Lynette Hamelton,
Mohammed
Mukid Ahmed
Houdaloth Ali
Jamil Khan
M.G Amon
Sala Uddin
Koyes Miah
Ruchi Khurana, Talent Recruitment Camden Working
Paul Keilthy, Camden New Journal
Ustar Uddin
S.Uallal, local resident
Corinne Moyes, Age Concern Camden
Emma Jones, Secondary School Campaign
M Amin, local resident
K.Huda, local resident
Amad Uddin, local resident
MD Yonmh, local resident
Jarip Miah, local resident
Rubel Ahmed, KCB (Kings Cross Brunswick)
Ruhel, KCB

Kayum, KCB
Sany KCB
Bokol KCB
Murinus KCB
Jonny KCB
Paula Lloyd, local resident
Julie Rumsay, New Calthorpe Estate TRA
Martin Jones, Holborn and St Pancras Secondary School Campaign
Harvey Bass, local resident
Revd Dr Tarjei Park, St Pancras Parish Office NW1 2DA
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Overall, the meeting prompted a lot of discussion / debate from local residents about the new community strategy. Local Councillors and Masood Lone (Head of Equalities and Social Inclusion) facilitated the meeting. Councillor Abdul Hai opened the meeting by outlining that the purpose of the consultation was to provide residents with the opportunity to raise the points that they would like to see covered in the new community strategy.

Cllr Abdul Hai provided an overview of the first theme – *Creating a Borough of Opportunity* – followed by asking for questions / comments from the floor.

Part 1: Creating a borough of Opportunity

Secondary School Provision

There was a lot of discussion particularly from local parents about the need to develop a new Secondary School in the area. It was expressed by residents that there is not a Secondary School within the King's Cross ward and as a result parents have to move out of the area for their children's secondary education.

New Calthorpe Estate TRA submitted a petition stressing the need to have a secondary school south of the Euston Road.

Local Youth Workers identified that there is a need to do work around cultural awareness in order to develop a more cohesive community. Having a local secondary school was identified as an ideal means to develop an understanding of cultures among young people and provide the opportunity to bring the community together.

Comments from the floor:

- There is a need to establish a new secondary school in South Camden providing one central place within the area to prevent people moving out of the area for schools. A strong community infrastructure needs to be in place before building more housing developments.
- New school is crucial to provide young people with education and training opportunities.

- Local school would provide the opportunity to promote cultural awareness and create a stronger sense of community.
- Not enough schools in Camden to meet local needs both now and in the future.
- Will need an additional Police Station and School in the new KX development to meet needs.
- New school will enable people and cultures to come together. New school will also lead to employment for young people through better education.

Youth Provision

- Local Youth Worker identified lack of volunteering opportunities to support young people into training and employment.
- Community secondary school, local training and voluntary opportunities are vital to support our local young people.

Local Young Persons Perspective

There are no opportunities for young people growing up in King's Cross. Need sport facilities. Can't play football as there is too much criminal activity taking place in local parks.

Training and Employment

- Approach Camden Council to support training opportunities for young people and adults by providing a volunteering scheme, whereby residents can get the opportunity to gain work experience within the different council departments.
- Residents from the Bangladesh community raised that it is difficult to access employment and there needs to be opportunities for ethnic groups to get into employment.

Part 2: Balancing growth with our environment

Cllr Jonathon Simpson provided an overview of this theme followed by opening the floor for questions. Councillor Abdul Hai translated for members representing the Bangladesh community.

Housing

- Housing system within Bengali culture is designed to care for family members particularly older people. It creates an important support network for families.
- Children moving out of the area for housing. Present housing system segregates the family.
- Children want to stay with family but are unable to do so.

- Family connections are very important. A child having to move out of the area for housing fragments the family.
- Children of parents should be re-housed in the same area. Parents rely upon their children for support.

Parks and Open Spaces

Facilities

- There are not enough local facilities. Existing facilities completely over used.
- Area needs more sport facilities. Local community needs to campaign for a sport centre.
- Not an ounce of green space. Not a fraction of what there used to be. Parks are unsafe in the evening.
- Clearly need sport facilities.
- No ball games allowed to be played in the court areas of flats. Young people are getting into trouble as there is nowhere for them to play games.
- No place for children to play football and other sports in the area – need more open spaces.

Anti-social Behaviour

- Noise and anti-social behaviour is a problem. People with health problems have difficulty in trying to sleep due to high levels of noise.
- Local residents have identified that there is a drug issue. No action is being taken and as a result the drug problem is growing.
- Local parks are not safe areas to go walking with toddlers.
- Smoking boards should be displayed in Parks.
- Drug problems in Argyle Square are not being addressed.

Transport

- Overcrowding on local buses is worse than tube.
- Bring old buses back into use.

- Bus fares very expensive for local people on low incomes.

Other Issues

- People on low incomes cannot afford new shops built at the Brunswick Centre.
- Need new purpose built mosque.
- Need better links with job agencies.
- No links with local businesses.
- People on low incomes being pushed out of the area. King's Cross development is not for local people.

Local Councillors reiterated that they would do their utmost for expressed views to go into the strategy document.

Part 3: Healthy and Connected Communities

This theme prompted a lot of discussion around young people and the importance of looking at ways to promote cultural awareness in order to create a more cohesive community.

Culture Awareness

- Growing young generation and diversity in cultures. Civil conflict and divisions within the youth community.
- Not a forum platform to engage with other cultures, more importantly the youth should be identifying issues affecting young people.
- There is a need to promote different cultures.
- Camden has a diverse community and the community would benefit from having a purpose built mosque.
- Committee of youth should be set up as people will be able to connect with Camden a lot better.

Role Models for Young People

- Local Councillors and the Council need to liaise directly with Young People. Council needs to go to young people.

- Where do the youth get their ideas? Role models in the community include drug dealers. Camden needs to look at the trends youths are setting.
- Not enough role models. Not enough local individuals coming to share their positive experiences with young people.

Youth Empowerment

- How do we utilise opportunities for young people to influence power. It is important for young people to feed into community strategy.
- Young people can help to find solutions. Systems need to be put in place to make young people employable. Lots of positive role models in the community.

Older People

- A lot of Older People live in isolation and suffer from depression and anxiety. Many don't want to leave homes and Kings Cross needs to look at setting up a neighbouring scheme.

Part 4: A safe and vibrant place at the heart of a world city.

Cllr Jonathon Simpson approached this theme by asking local residents to identify with one thing that will make Camden a safer place in 5 years.

Anti Social Behaviour & Community Safety

- Street Wardens provide a good service but need to work longer hours. Street Wardens working at night may prevent level of drug use.
- Street Wardens could do more to make area safer. Excellent service. Always available.
- Local residents should support and campaign for Street Wardens.

Culture Awareness

- Camden to look at taking a lead role to engage with the Muslim communities encouraging discussion and debate around what Muslim / Islam has to offer. Create open dialogue with different faiths. Camden can be a role model to other boroughs by tackling fears around terrorism.
- Need to recognise different cultures. Look at ways of working with Young People together rather than having segregated youth provision.
- Raise awareness of cultures.
- Events / cultural activities.

- Camden has the opportunity to be seen as the leading light to promote cultural awareness.
- We will not move forward until different communities / faith come together to discuss issues.
- Role models from the local community need to share experiences.
- Nationally terrorism effects everyone. Council needs to play leading role creating leadership for all different groups of people living together.
- Need cultural centre / new school and more youth projects.

School Provision

May residents expressed that the one thing they would like to see is a local secondary school.

- Building a new school reflects the needs of the local community. A new school should be designed for social and racial integration.
- More integration between housing and education policy. More talking to other Councillors.
- Draw together all strands of the community through a new school.

Recycling

- More information about recycling for the Bangladeshi community. Raise awareness among the Bangladesh community about recycling.

Young People

- There is no jobs or work experience opportunities for young people. Camden should be looking at volunteering opportunities for young people, i.e. work shadowing or work experience. By work shadowing young people can obtain work experience to enter into employment market. Lack of work experience creates a barrier for graduates trying to get work. Camden can assist in building a future for its own residents. Work shadowing can be a big bonus to young people.
- Age Concern support volunteers.

Social Capital

- Meeting has been very useful to bring people together.
- Look at informal opportunities for people to get together. Council supports more opportunities for informal discussion.

- Best meeting been to. Suggest quarterly meetings with local residents.

Meeting closed – 9.15pm. Local Councillors thanked everyone for their valuable contributions and taking the time to attend the meeting. Residents were reminded to complete and return comment cards to Camden Council by 30th November.