

Camden Together

Camden Town with Primrose Hill Ward Community Strategy Consultation Meeting

Notes of a meeting held 15 November 2006 at 7.00pm in Primrose Hill Community Centre

Camden Council councillors and officers present:

Cllr Patricia Callaghan (chair),
Cllr. Libby Campbell
Cllr Chris Naylor
Dean Stokes, Head of Strategy and Policy, Culture and Environment
Halima Khan, Policy Manager, Camden Strategy Unit.

Members of the public present:

Eddie Chatterton (Stables Market)
Judy Cunnington (PH CAAC)
Anna-Helza Houox
Roisin Gadelrab (Camden New Journal)
Rosie Hunt (PH CAAC)
Philip Jones
Charles Marquand (Parent of children at local school)
Ruairi McAleese
Roi Mengelgrein (Stables Market)
Jeremy Noble
Abdul Quadir (CHEA)
Adrian Richardson (PH CAAC)
Myra Schehtman
Richard Simpson (Primrose Hill CAAC)
Herman Tribelnig (ESAA/local resident)
Pam White (PH CAAC)
Mary Wylie (long-term resident)

These notes focus exclusively on points raised by residents at the meeting. Responses given by councillors are not recorded here. This is because these notes are feeding directly into the consultation for the community strategy rather than being a full set of minutes for the meeting.

Discussion

Where does the 10% increase in population come from in the consultation document? Does it take account of natural growth?

It's a good document but it shouldn't just be about listening but about enabling people to do something. Camden Council is very constrained, especially in

planning – there is too little scrutiny of planning decisions. We shouldn't be criminalising our children. We are all interested in our environment and central government should not take away decision-making power from local government.

It's a real shame the Council no longer advertises planning decisions in the local paper.

Our teenagers are the worst in Europe according to a recent study. We used to have dedicated children's teams, libraries, youth clubs etc. It's much more difficult for people to access services now. Also, people need the skills to work with young people and children – we should not just use volunteers, but properly trained workers e.g. detached youth workers. We need more things for young people to do – not more casinos!

We do have extended schools but they are not uniform across the borough.

Like the document but would quibble with how it deals with training and skills. Yes, King's Cross, Camden Town and Hampstead are unique, but Hampstead can take care of itself. There are shocking statistics in the document e.g. 45% children on free school meals. The document should focus more on this poverty and inequality. People need assistance to find work. People also need good childcare.

We should pressure the parents of kids doing ASB in Camden Town more. They should be forced to make their kids attend school.

I have doubts about Sure Start. A similar project in France involves older people and I think our Sure Start is missing a trick by not doing this. Also, why don't we use school buildings more e.g. in the holidays. These kind of resources (e.g. schools, youth clubs) should be accessible to the wider community and used more.

The drugs culture in Camden needs to come out much more in the document. It worries me. My son was offered drugs 20 times when he walked up Camden Town high street – that's appalling. The police are trying but do the councillors have any comments? Has it improved?

They burgle houses to fund their drug habit.

There is a massive drugs problem. It should be seen as a priority in CT. What about the [ASB] review? Are the same resources going into ASBOs? We need a much heavier police presence in CT and 24 hrs a day, like in New York. At the moment, they know they can get away with it. Street wardens are really good – can we get any more in CT?

Can we get proper lighting in Carole Street?

Can the Council work closer with TfL to make sure CT tube is staffed properly?

If private security works then why not use it?

If it's another person in uniform, why not? If it's successful then we might need less police. But is this something residents and businesses should be paying extra for? The police should do it.

I don't want large scale developments that exclude small local businesses. The regulation of local businesses should be "friendly" e.g. Council shouldn't always charge the maximum rent if there are other benefits like keeping an independent shop. The Council should look at other boroughs where the council is acting as a responsible landlord e.g. Marylebone High Street.

I'm not sure lower rents will help here. It will just encourage more tat.

We need to avoid US-style shopping malls.

Does Camden have the power to charge different rents? Or different business rates?

Pavements are a mess e.g. flat metal on the bridge that can be slippery.

There is a lot of waste, such as Chalk Farm Town Centre project, that is not needed and is misguided e.g. stupid kiosks and barriers.

I support listed buildings and gardens. It is also important to think about ecology and climate change. The council needs to work together to integrate these issues into everything it does e.g. buildings.

Estate agents should be sued for all the magazines they send out.

Should have local jobs for local people.

We need further education facilities for vocational training – this is very important for social inclusion.

People can't afford to go to further education classes – prices have gone up too much. And it's not possible to do general classes in further education any more, which is a shame.

There are design errors at Swiss Cottage baths e.g. who is the café for? There is not enough seating. It's impossible to watch your own kids learn to swim because there is not seating there. People need more input pre-planning, not after the design has already been done.

Planning site inspectors are inefficient because they do site visits in the order they get them. This means they come back to the same small area time and time again, when they could just do all the Primrose Hill visits at once and save time and money.

The photos in the document are not reflective of the population of Camden.
There are not enough people from BME's represented.

Why has the Council decided against a school in the south of the borough?

Why is the Council cutting youth services?