

# Harlesden Brent Connects Meeting

## Minutes and Action Log

**Date:** 09/01/2023

**Location:** Remote Meeting - Zoom

**Attendees:** Councillors: Councillor Ethapemi, Harlesden Brent Connects Chair and Councillor Chappell, Harlesden Brent Connects Co-Chair.

Speakers: Simon Egbor, ASB Nuisance & Crime Manager, Inspector Andy Le Geyt, Sargent David Sarney, Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team and Ravinder Jassar, Deputy Director of Finance.

Council Officers: Lorna Hughes, Director of Communities, Aman Jaswal, Community Engagement Officer, Vagnol Kediambiko, Community Engagement Officer, Ruby Werner, Community Engagement Assistant

Harlesden Residents: Approx. 21

| ID | Point of Record  |
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| 1  | <p data-bbox="129 1082 1464 1150"><b><u>Community Safety – Simon Egbor, ASB Nuisance &amp; Crime Manager<br/>Inspector Andy Le Geyt and Sargent David Sarney, Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team</u></b></p> <p data-bbox="129 1193 2103 1299">Simon Egbor presented an overview of work that the Community Safety Team was doing in partnership with the police in tackling crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in the Harlesden area through the use of Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO's), as well as the use of new CCTV equipment.</p> <p data-bbox="129 1342 2103 1409">Representatives from the Police then summarised measures which had been taken in Harlesden area in conjunction with the Council, as well as new initiatives focused on 'designing out crime' over the last eighteen months.</p> |

**Questions raised regarding presentation**

- In response to a question around Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) and Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) figures, it was clarified that these statistics were reflective of the whole borough, rather than just Harlesden. It was also updated that the police were using new policing tools, such as Nomad deployable CCTV cameras to reduce instances of Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Responding to a question around links between youth related violence and drug issues, the Police noted that a lot of the violence observed in the town centres was linked to drugs, and that they were seeking to make town centres more resourced in order to reduce violence and to deal with the specific issues around young people being engaged in crime. The police were also working with the Council and local businesses in order to provide opportunities for young people.
- It was asked how the police could stop issues in Harlesden from growing across the Borough; the Police answered that they have an idea of where certain groups and individuals had a tendency to congregate. Measures including closure orders could then be issued where necessary, in order to reduce Anti-Social Behaviour. This helped to prevent Town Centres becoming crowded and places where this kind of behaviour could fester.
- A resident raised that there could be benefit from more collaboration with residents, the Council and the Police, with a focus on prevention and intervention methods to stopping crime.
- A Councillor asked what the procedure was around resident disruption where mental health was a trigger, as this issue had been raised previously in Councillor's surgeries. The ASB Nuisance Manager responded that the first step in such cases would be to contact the Brent Community Safety Team, to look at the individual's case and whether they are already known to services. The approach focused on preventing issues from escalating.
- It was noted that the term 'aggressive begging' could be interpreted in several ways, and it was queried whether this would be covered by PSPOs. It was updated that this was treated in accordance with existing laws around ASB and nuisance.

**Actions**

- Community Engagement Team to share to share details of presentation to all attendants and those registered to attend the Harlesden Connects meeting.

| ID | Point of Record  |
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|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant questions from the chat to be passed on to the Community Safety and Crime Nuisance Teams.</li> </ul>   |
| 2  | <p><b><u>The Budget Plan – Ravinder Jassar, Deputy Director of Finance</u></b></p> <p>Ravinder Jassar presented the item, which detailed the financial forecast and draft budget plan for 2023/2024. A summary of the Council’s budget was provided, explaining that Central Government spending had gradually been reducing since 2010. To that end, it was highlighted that two thirds of the upcoming budget would be protected for spending around Adult Social Care and Children’s Services. It was then explained how the levelling up agenda was affecting funding for London councils.</p> <p>Participants were then invited to give their views in the budget consultation, which was open until 31 January.</p> <p><b><u>Questions raised regarding presentation</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was asked how much of the Council Tax contribution from residents was awarded to the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Mayor’s Office, and it was explained that the money that went to the GLA was separate to Council Tax, and that it was at their discretion how much the tax would be increased by. It was highlighted that the Council Tax Support Scheme was in place to help residents who were financially vulnerable or unemployed. Currently, this service was used by around 28,000 residents in Brent. Additionally, the Residents Support Fund was available to residents who found themselves in Council Tax arrears or difficulties.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Engagement Team to share details of presentation to all attendees</li> </ul> |
| 3  | <p><b><u>Soapbox – Chaired by Cllr Chappell</u></b></p> <p>Cllr Chappell introduced the Soap Box section of the meeting setting out the ground rules and time allocated for each speaker.</p> <p><b><u>Key points in section</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A resident queried when the Brent Picture Palace was scheduled to open; the Director of Communities stated that the design stage of the project had been completed and that currently the building was projected to open by late 2023. The building would run as a community centre, with Brent Council and 5 other organisations who would be the custodians of the building. The Picture Palace was planned to be a fully refurbished building, with co-working spaces, a kitchen, as well as a café and seating areas. It was clarified that the long term lease had not yet been agreed, though discussions were taking place.</li> </ul>  |

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|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regarding the reopening of the Harlesden Library, it was updated that this project was running late. It was also updated that information regarding the status of Heritage Action Zone buildings would be circulated in due course.</li> <li>• A resident raised concerns about a lack of trees and open spaces in the Roundwood Park and Church End area of the borough. A Council Officer stated that a tree planting scheme was in place, and that it would be investigated whether the areas raised by the resident were referenced in the plan.</li> <li>• Following this, a resident asked whether there could be more bike hangars installed in the Church End area. It was responded that these hangars were allocated on a demand basis. The Director of Communities suggested that officers attend a local meeting regarding the Church End Masterplan, so that questions around projects taking place in the Harlesden area could be answered fully.</li> <li>• A Council representative from Brent Health Matters discussed how health inequalities could be addressed in communities. It was updated that they aimed to take services into the community, in order to provide assistance to residents that they would normally be unable to reach.</li> <li>• A resident expressed concerns around cleanliness of Nicoll Road, including street drinking taking place during the night. Ashley Cumberbatch (Neighbourhood Manager) stated that this road was known to the street cleaning scheme where there was a special focus to keep areas clean and tidy. Due to staffing issues, the road had not been cleaned as regularly as usual, and that the leaves and debris on the street would be cleared. The Police updated that they would look into street drinking in the area, which could contribute to the accumulation of litter.</li> <li>• In response to a query asking whether Brent Connects meetings would remain as online meetings, it was stated that numbers had increased since the meetings had moved online during the Pandemic</li> <li>• A resident asked whether the increase of social housing being built in the borough was matched by the amount of school places available. The Director Communities noted that the Council was using data around future opopulations to ensure that there were enough school places to keep up with the rising numbers of people in the borough.</li> </ul> |