

Whitton and Heathfield Wards Community Conversation

Date: Thurs 16th May

Time: 6.30 – 9.00pm

Venue: Whitton Community Centre



Ward and cabinet members in attendance:

- Cllr John Coombs (Heathfield)
 - Cllr. Lesley Pollesche (Heathfield)
 - Cllr. Michael Wilson (Heathfield)
 - Cllr. Jo Humphreys (Whitton)
 - Cllr. Liz Jaegar (Whitton)
 - Cllr. Rob O’Carroll (Whitton)
- Chair: Graeme Wood – Chair of Whitton Business Association

Agenda Item One: Achievements

Headline Topic: Ward Achievements	
Cllr John Coombs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage to work with two sets of residents in Montrose Ave and Jubilee Ave in relation to CPZ’s, a letter has now gone out to all residents on the result of the consultation (Whitton South CPZ) • Formed Friends of Heathfield Rec group to support further improvements in the rec. • Working with council officials on two sites where planning consents were not carried through well: 310 Nelson Rd, 192 Waverly Ave – building works were started and left, but builders are now back on site and finishing developments. • Ensured more paving repairs, moving away from the previous administration’s bidding system. Now repaired as and when needed.
Cllr. Lesley Pollesche	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends of Heathfield Rec, new trees to be planted, more benches, 3-4 picnic benches near the play area. • Push forward traffic issues around Heathfield school, working on travel plan with the school – should be completed soon.
Cllr. Michael Wilson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus consultation on the H22 service which many residents responded to, but Hammersmith Bridge closure has affected bus consultation. Hammersmith Bridge to be closed for a number of years causing

	<p>a change of bus services, perhaps including the H22. The TFL Consultation responses included feedback from the last Community Conversations via the Councillors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turing House School: councillors engaged with residents and Hospital Bridge Rd Group.
Cllr. Jo Humphreys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus consultation results being analysed by TFL, expecting report early September. Potentially report will be put on hold whilst work commences on Hammersmith Bridge.
Cllr. Liz Jaegar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whitton library improvements, air conditioning, new community space in the library (the old rest room) . Official opening in June. Friends of Whitton Library running events. • Progressed with CPZ issues where majority have asked for them. Within the second CPZ opposite the rugby ground, Kendrey Gdns will be included in the North Twickenham CPZ. • Constance Rd pavements improved. • Murray Park Hall had a makeover. Further improvements needed for Murray Park Hall. • Electric Vehicle charging points, involved in consultation for location of charging points. • Community Fund used for SS Philip and James connecting hall to green space around the church.

Agenda Item Two – pre-submitted questions

Headline Topic: Cold calling signage (Susan Lee)	
Question 1	<p>Although I have raised this before I would still like to ask if we could have signs on the lampposts in Whitton, as they do in Ealing, to say "Cold Calling Is Not Permitted In This Area". I am not asking for it to be supported in any way, as I feel the signs alone are a deterrent. As we have an older population in Whitton and there has been more distraction doorstep crime in Whitton recently this could help prevent these incidents.</p> <p>While I understand Richmond Local Authority prefer fewer signs in the borough I do feel these are important.</p>
Response	<p>Cllr. Jaegar: this was also raised at the Police Liaison Group. The answer from the council officer is that street signage needs to be kept to a minimum. Police Liaison Group shared cold calling stickers for your window at their meetings or the Council Community Safety Team could provide stickers to residents, as can the Police.</p>
Supplementary comment	<p>Sgt Les Jackson is currently running a Scam seminar for local groups to help raise awareness.</p>

Headline Topic: Public Toilets- Whitton library (Kevin Henschmen)	
Question 2	The toilets next to Whitton library (Gents) are always in a disgusting state. Could they be regularly inspected, soap dispensers & T paper provided, seats fixed, cleaned?
Response	Continental Landscapes responsible for opening/closing and cleaning the public toilets. At present locked up as drains are blocked. Council officer responsible for monitoring the contract.
Supplementary question	Would it make better sense to incorporate them into the library to prevent vandalism and allow for better maintenance?
Response	Cllr Coombs: Don't want library staff running public toilets. Library has the same issue with library toilet contractors. Library service unwilling at present as outside of the library build/supervision. Vandalised by residents using them. It would involve council spending to bring within the curtilage of library and the library budget is reducing each year. The idea has been resisted as library service will need funding to do it.
Headline Topic: Waste collection v parking (Michael Faulkner) - did not attend	
Question 3	We seem to be struggling to get our deliveries in or Biffa waste pick up deliveries to come and collect from us over the last month or so (Sainsbury's). I've noticed the same with 'This n That' deliveries also, due to people constantly parking in the loading bays as they know they can currently get away with it due to no traffic warden being around as of late. I appreciate that parking is tight and people just park in there for ease or laziness. The problem is that for ourselves our Biffa waste collection is a MUST due the fact we are a food business and because of hygiene. We have recently just had a month without waste being collected due to Biffa never being able to park anywhere outside the store especially the loading bay. It also doesn't help as of late that customers are moaning at us due to a delivery driver tooting their horn at them or parking very close to their car, which sadly my only reply can be is that it is a loading only bay, and I do need to get my stock in otherwise you cannot buy the things you need. Any chance a traffic warden could appear again?
Response	Chair: Loading bay outside Lidl marked on the road, but not on the post, regularly parked in.
	Cllr. Pollesche: need to get traffic wardens down there to enforce regulations
	Chair: parking issues for businesses causing businesses to close. Loading bays need to be for loading only.
Supplementary question	Why doesn't Whitton have traffic wardens in Whitton? Disable parking bays regularly parked with abled body drivers.
Response	Cllr. Wilson: An increase from 24 to 36 traffic wardens for the whole borough. CPZ will help situation. There needs to be enforcement of the new CPZ.
Supplementary question	Residents won't be able to park as CPZ will squeeze the parking spaces and make the High St parking even more difficult.
Response	Cllr. Wilson: CPZ was primarily to deal with commuter parking. We need to walk and cycle to the High St. These transport users are proven to use more local businesses.
Supplementary question	On Whitton High St when the loading bays are empty they look the same as a normal parking space. There needs to be a better differentiation on the road, rather than just the lamppost.
Response	Cllr Coombs: legally prescribed signage on highways, prescriptive legal necessities have to be fulfilled.

Headline Topic: Murray Hall improvements (Jon Evans)	
Question 6	<p>Could we please have an update on the alterations needed to provide the Whitton Safer Neighbourhood Team with a suitable Part-time Police Base at Murray Park Hall.</p> <p>Last October there was a great fanfare made by the Council in the local papers and on social media with photographs of the Mayor handing over the key of Murray Park Hall to PCSO Bill Smith.</p> <p>To date I have not been advised that the fairly minor alterations requested have been approved and the work set in motion</p>
Response	Cllr Pollesche: At the moment there are no plans for the Hall. Have already approached Safer Neighbourhood Board, but perhaps future Civic Pride grant application.
Headline Topic: Turing House update	
Muriel Sprott	Please may we have an update on the plans to relocate Turing House School to Whitton. Kneller Hall as a possible site?
Response	<p>Cllr Coombs: The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) is not interested in buying Kneller Hall, and they judge which land to buy. At present the London Mayor's department have questions about the application from the ESFA, and Council planning officers are writing answers to the London Mayor's queries.</p> <p>The Planning application should be heard in either June/July's planning committee on 12th June, 3rd July or 24th July. Likely to be late July meeting due to the amount of preparation. It will be a single-issue meeting due to the level of importance of the site. The Leader of the Council is of the opinion that it is wrong to be heard in school holidays, so may be delayed to September.</p> <p>The planning panel currently has many predetermined councillors, so may be a lack of members for the panel. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Committee disagree with the choice of site, so cannot participate in the meeting. The London Mayor can still make the final decision after Council planning committee decision.</p>
	Cllr Humphries: If Hospital Bridge Rd is a problem, Kneller Hall is no better. The catchment area and need for places in the Kneller Hall area is no less illogical than Hospital Bridge Rd. The Ministry of Defence has not been able to keep the building fit for purpose. A school could not afford to house itself in a grade 2 listed building. There is also Protected Metropolitan Open Land, protected trees like Heathfield. There will not be many parties interested in the site as there is a large repair bill. A state school couldn't afford the maintenance bill of a grade 2 listed building.
Supplementary Question	Could you give a more detailed explanation of the Turing House application.
	<p>Cllr. Coombs: The Mayor of London was dissatisfied that more sites were not looked into in Hounslow Borough. The amount of parking on site is against the London Plan and no public access to site was an issue. The developer has now answered these issues and the Council Planning Department is currently answering the Mayor's queries. Mayor has queried the application, but has not turned it down. The planning application is from the Education and Skills Funding Agency, it is not a council build.</p> <p>Cllr. Humphry: It is Metropolitan Open Land that is why Mayor of London is involved.</p>

Headline Topic: Junction of Tranmere Road and High Street	
Muriel Sprott	Please may we have a 'Keep Clear' box at the junction of Tranmere Road and High Street, Whitton. This would make it easier for residents to turn right into the High Street
Response	Cllr. Jaegar: Can exceptionally consider yellow box, but looked at the area and it is already busy with road markings. 'Keep clear' could be looked into, though not enforceable. Not many residents have asked for this, so try and get other neighbours to support the idea and then approach Council.
Supplementary question	No loading markings on the pavements, 'no waiting' lines by Barclays and Tranmere Rd. after upgrade of pavements. Council needs to repaint lines on new paving.
Headline Topic: Cycling improvements in Whitton	
Joan Gibson	Could we have some details on what cycling improvements are planned for Whitton. Lowest cycling ward in the borough. High st changes made cycling very difficult. Road changes do not accommodate cyclist. Wider pavements for pedestrians, but no cycling provision. Long term plan. 20mph will help, but congestion still problematic for cycling.
Response	Cllr O' Carroll: Hospital Bridge Rd and Percy Rd are very difficult to cross especially for students going to Twickenham School and the college. The Kneller Hall site may be a possible location for a cycling route instead of the tight Kneller Rd. Link with cycle lanes of Hounslow Borough. The width of pavements on the High St. could accommodate cycle lanes to the station storage area. Cycling Champion in the council aims to improve cycling. Cycle lanes have disappeared, and no clear signage of existing cycle lanes.
ACTION	Cllr. Carroll: to follow up with cycling champion.
	Chair: Studs on the pavement show shop frontage boundary, so that area is not available for bikes
	Cllr Wilson: Residents can highlight areas where you would like to see cycle improvements and councillors can take the ideas forward. The previous dockless bike scheme in Richmond and Hounslow is currently being consulted on by the Council.
Supplementary question	Danger of cyclist, cycle proficiency training needed, so they are not cycling on the pavement.
	Cllr O'Carroll: Twickenham School Head has carried out proactive action against this problem with her students. Will talk to the college principal. After school and weekends it tends to be young adults, rather than teenagers. Cycle proficiency courses are provided by the council. Cllr Humphries: young people are flouting the rules. Need to improve cycling infrastructure and make roads safer to encourage more people to cycle on the roads. Cllr. Coombs: elderly also cycle on the pavement, as unsafe on the road.
Supplementary comment	Residents ride bikes on the pavement, yet don't know it is illegal.
Headline Topic: Idling campaign rollout	
Joan Gibson	Considering the pollution and congestion in the Whitton area could you let us know how the council will rollout the stop idling message to residents, schools and businesses.
Response	Cllr Humphries: Talk to Member for Schools and Education to raise through headteachers meetings. Cllr. Wilson: Traffic Enforcement Officers can now fine drivers if engine idling. Outside schools, have written to schools to encourage message. Message to children in the schools so tell parents. Welcome ideas to get the message out.

	<p>Cllr. Jaegar: At red lights you do not need to turn off your engine. Anti-idling is not for traffic lights, but at railway crossings and outside schools.</p> <p>Cllr. Wilson: Parents sitting in cars with engine running, at railway crossings and waiting outside shops.</p>
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Agenda item three: Open Questions from the floor

Headline Topic CPZ	
Question 1	In Montrose Avenue every house has room for 2 cars on their drive, some people put council cones on the pavement, claiming street parking. Many houses haven't got dropped pavements, but parking in their front gardens.
Response	<p>Cllr. Coombs: Council is looking at illegal access to property where there is not a dropped kerb. Approach those without dropped kerbs to pay for dropped kerb with a fee (£1k). It is illegal to go across the pavement with no dropped kerb, but driver has to be observed crossing the pavement.</p> <p>Montrose Avenue residents approached council to have CPZ, petition supported CPZ. The CPZ is designed to stop commuter parking. Residents of those roads complained about commuter parking. Wanted to have fair parking.</p> <p>Cllr. Wilson: Petition form residents, consultation and traffic surveys for the area. Clear from residents that the issue of getting in and out of driveways was difficult. Whitton Station does not have CPZ, but is one of the few stations in this position. Review of new CPZ will happen after 6 months.</p>
Supplementary Question	Whitton Gardens resident: Implementation of CPZ from consultation should be based on 50% support from residents. In fact only 44% responded from the road, not 50%. Not been a democratic consultation. Raising indirect taxation. Gerrymandering.
Response	Montrose Ave Resident: Started the petition 2 years ago as not helped by the previous administration. Easy access to Gatwick from Whitton, drivers park for 2-3 weeks, to the point where I couldn't get out of driveway. Holiday parking, commuter parking. Lots of houses don't have driveways.
Response	Cllr Humphries: petition put together, personally seen over 51% wanted CPZ. The petition includes personal data so cannot publish the results. Extremely democratic process, those streets that do not want to be part of the CPZ are not part of the CPZ. As for it being a money making scheme, it is a long process to get a CPZ, 2-3 years of petitioning, so it is not a quick win for councils.
Supplementary comment	When petition was sent out there was only 1 per household. People can't be bothered to fill in the form. Chase Gardens proposed for Electric Vehicle (EV) bays yet no electric vehicles in the road. Spaces taken by charging cars.
	Cllr Humphries: There are about 6 possible EV charging point sites for Heathfield and Whitton currently being consulted on, to see whether sites are appropriate or not. We need the infrastructure to encourage residents to buy electric cars, to encourage drivers to reduce air pollution.
Headline Topic GLA Carbon Offset Fund	
Question 2	GLA Carbon Offset Fund for Whitton and Heathfield. Where is the money that was generated from this fund?
Response	<p>Cllr Coombs: Currently trying to find out how much money the council has got from this fund. Report to be prepared by officers.</p> <p>Resident: can you circulate that information?</p>

	Cllr. Coombs: Will find ways to advertise results.
Headline Topic: Utility Companies and damage to pavements/roads	
Question 3	Whitton High St contractors ripped up York stone. Conway need to do job properly. Filled with asphalt.
Response	Cllr Jaegar: Contacted the Council at the time as little care was taken of York Stone pavings. It was an emergency gas leak that had caused the works which had a greater priority to be dealt with than the York Stone paving. The utility company is obliged to fix the road. Needs to be reinstated as it was previously. Cllr. O'Carroll: Contacted officers regularly to follow up repairs, councillors are very aware of the situation.
Supplementary question	Reported the situation on line. 24 hour response from officer. But utility company has 6 months to do repairs, before council can pursue costs. If on shop front area, is it the council who pursues it or the business?
Response	Cllr Wilson: The Council is pursuing payment.
ACTION	Cllr. Wilson to check if businesses are responsible to pursue repairs on their shop frontage part of the pavement.
Headline Topic Ward Based Budgets	
Question 4	Cllr Wilson: Ward based Budgets will encourage the ability for ward residents to say how we spend a pot of money. Perhaps Whitton and Heathfield could come together to spend on improvements. There will be £5-10K per ward to start with. Over time more influence on decisions in each area from residents. Would like to know what things you would want to spend on? Whether to keep wards separate or not? Feedback from residents is very welcome.
Headline Topic: Any other business	
	Chair: Ed Harris's History of Kneller Hall in Tribes Furnishings (£6) in Whitton High St.
	Cllr Pollesche: On Fridays 9.30-12.30 community café, with no charge, at Whitton community centre
	Cllr Jaegar: Public event on Kneller Hall at the library on Saturday morning 9-1pm.
	Cllr. Humphries: Monthly surgery last Saturday of every month at Whitton Youth zone on Britannia Lane. Specific issues can be discussed there.
Headline Topic: Repairs of paving around Whitton Community Centre	
Question	Paving collapsed outside fire exits in Whitton community centre and in parking area, needs repairs.