

Croydon Council

For General Release

REPORT TO:	COUNCIL 25 JANUARY 2016
AGENDA ITEM NO:	10
SUBJECT:	RESPONSES TO PETITIONS PRESENTED TO COUNCIL ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF CROYDON ON 7 DECEMBER 2015
LEAD OFFICER:	Julie Belvir, Director of Legal and Democratic Services
WARDS:	ALL
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT: This report is prepared in keeping with paragraph 3.22 of the Council Procedure Rules at Part 4A of the Constitution.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The Council is asked to note the responses to the petitions presented by Councillors at its last ordinary meeting as detailed in paragraph 4 of the report.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report details the Cabinet Member response to petitions presented to Council on 7TH December 2015. All Members have the opportunity to ask questions on the response to the petition.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Part 4A of the Constitution allows Councillors to present petitions to meetings of the Full Council.
- 3.2 The Constitution requires a response to that petition to be presented at this meeting.
- 3.3 A period of up to ten minutes is permitted for questions on the response to the petition.

4. RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

a) Petition presented by **Councillor Andrew Rendle** on behalf of residents living near Ashburton Park regarding the entry gate to Ashburton Park. "We the undersigned are very unhappy that large vehicles access the park via Tenterden Road as it causes disruption and damage to both Council and private property. We urge the council and its partners to upgrade the gates on the Lower Addiscombe Road so vehicles such as those operated by the fun fair can access the park."

Responses from Councillor Timothy Godfrey, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure & Sport

This petition highlights a long running situation which it is important to resolve for the long term benefit of residents and the active use of the park.

It is unacceptable to use Tenterden Road for articulated vehicles who use this access for large scale fairs and events.

The existing gates onto Lower Addiscombe Road are the logical entry point for special events. Works will be required to this entrance to ensure it is wide enough for modern articulated vehicles to access.

These works will need to be costed and planned over the next year, and the issue of access to all parks that hold events fits well with our current Parks Review.

A site meeting will be held with local councillors, residents, Friends of Ashburton Park and Council Officers to look at the practicalities and agree a time table.

b) Petition presented by **Councillor Paul Scott** on behalf of residents of South Norwood calling for proposed Thameslink service to stop at Norwood Junction station.

Response from Councillor Kathy Bee, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment.

The Petition is most welcome. Norwood Junction is one of the nation's busiest stations. In terms of passengers entering the station it is 115th out of 2537 stations, with just under 2million people entering the station in 2013-14. It is busier than Stansted Airport, Ashford International and Luton stations (the latter a major destination for Thameslink).

In terms of interchanging it is even more important, being the 42nd busiest station nationally (busier than York and Watford Junction stations) with just over £1.2million people changing trains in 2013-14.

The Thameslink service was introduced before the London Overground was conceived. With Thameslink not stopping at Norwood Junction (other than at West Hampstead) there is no interchange between London Overground and Thameslink services, both of which pass through Norwood Junction.

Prior to the introduction of London Overground, passengers travelling southward from stations to the north of Norwood junction could travel on a high frequency services to

East Croydon and interchange there for onward travel on Thameslink to Gatwick and Brighton etc. With the introduction of London Overground, the frequent service to East Croydon has disappeared. For example, Forest Hill station has only one train to East Croydon between 8.50 and 10.10am (a situation mirrored for the other stations between New Cross Gate and Norwood Junction). Norwood Junction appears to be expected to play (but without Thameslink cannot fulfil) the interchange role previously played by East Croydon. Norwood Junction should be a major hub on the Thameslink network providing interchange with the Overground and other networks mirroring the role played by West Hampstead station in North London.

The increasing importance of Norwood Junction as an interchange station, only serves to highlight the need to make the station accessible. A letter will be sent to Steve Reed MP asking him to request a meeting with Claire Perry MP Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (with responsibility for rail) to set out the case for Thameslink to serve Norwood Junction (as part of the 2018 re-timetabling) and emphasise the urgent need to make the station accessible. Mike Brown, Transport Commissioner for London, Mark Carne, Chief Executive Network Rail and Charles Horton CEO and Dyan Crowther Chief Operating Officer, Govia Thameslink Railway Ltd, will all be similarly written to.

c) A petition presented by **Councillor Steve O'Connell** on behalf of the Chris Philip MP and residents of Coulsdon calling on the Council, 'asking them to plan properly for a new school in Coulsdon to cope with the influx of new families, rather than relying on the quick fix of expanding existing schools, which will compromise the quality of education and educational experience being provided for our children. Secondly we call on you to ask the council to improve the collaboration between their housing, education and other departments, so that the council does not keep on building more dwellings without providing the necessary facilities and infrastructure to cope.'

Response from Councillor Alisa Flemming Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning.

Introduction

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient pupil places in the borough and that the schools promote diversity and increase parental choice. There are a number of key elements to delivering sufficient school places for a growing pupil population across primary school provision.

Over the period of the next 3 years (2016/17 to 2018/19), we are forecasting an increase in the number of children requiring a primary school place, and a shortfall in available places.

An Education Estates Strategy report which includes the proposed 3 year programme for delivering additional primary school places has been presented to the Council's Cabinet Committee on 18 January. The proposed supply strategy sets out how many additional school places are required; and where – which part or parts of the Borough / planning areas – the additional places are required.

For the purpose of school place planning, the Borough is divided into 6 planning areas for the primary phase. Coulsdon is in the South West planning area.

South West Planning area – Available school places Vs forecast

The table below shows the available school places in the South West versus our projections for additional school places. The balance of places is assessed for the admissions entry points for primary (Year Reception) to help identify where there are pressures and where there are surplus places.

Academic Year	*Available places (Year Reception places)	**Forecast (Year Reception places)	Surplus/ Deficit of Year Reception places
2016/17	690	686	4
2017/18	690	670	20
2018/19	720	697	23
2019/20	720	722	2
2020/21	720	742	-22

**Available places includes planned projects as per the supply strategy*

***Forecasts include potential child yield from new housing development (Cane Hill) in Coulsdon. The mix of housing type will affect the number of new school places required.*

For the 2015/16 academic year, there are 630 available places, in the South West planning area. According to the Autumn (October) 2015 school census data there are only 7 vacancies in the South West Planning area. The methodology we use to project pupil numbers includes the anticipated pupil yield from new housing development alongside projected pressure from birth rate or pupils already within the school system. Our recent 5 year projection for school places in the South West planning area indicates that there will not be sufficient school places to meet demand.

The Council's Local Plan proposes new housing development in the Coulsdon - South West of the borough. We have included the potential child yield assumptions from the Cane Hill housing development in our projections which will further increase the pressure for primary school places in the South West planning area over the next four years.

Strategy for delivering additional school places in the South West

The strategy considered by Cabinet on 18 January 2016 for support to meet this additional demand in the South West is through the permanent expansion of the following schools by 1 form entry – an additional 30 reception pupils:

- Chipstead Valley Primary (Academy) from September 2016
- Woodcote Primary from September 2017
- Oasis Academy Byron by September 2017 (subject to Academy/Secretary of State)
- Smitham Primary by September 2018.

A viability study has been undertaken which shows that the proposed expansion projects is both feasible and affordable.

There are also benefits to be derived from the expanding an existing school, such as, better recruitment and retention of good teaching staff; wider curriculum offer; and

improved facilities. The school expansion proposals in the South West are at schools that have been judged by Ofsted as outstanding or good. The schools are popular and successful, with strong leadership and governance and highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs; and good in serving its pupils well. The strong leadership and teaching staff at the schools will ensure that the schools continue to be successful and popular.

There are a number of reasons for first considering the expansion of existing school sites rather than building a new school. These are:

- Changes in legislation make the establishment of new schools more difficult and take much of the decision making out of the Council's hands.
- Currently all funding from the latest financial settlement from central government have is committed to existing identified projects.
- Shortage of suitable Council sites
- High cost of other sites that could for educational use.
- Available sites not in area of demand for pupil places
- Building a new school takes a longer time to complete and might not be ready in time to meet the demand for pupil places.
- Therefore the expansion of existing successful school means that we have more certainty of high quality education.

However the Council recognises that in the medium term it may be necessary to establish a new school in the Coulsdon area. The January 2018 Cabinet paper proposes that we work to seek to establish a free school in the South West planning area in 2020/21.

All relevant departments contribute to school place planning processes and these processes are well embedded in the Council.

d) A petition presented by **Councillor Mike Selva** on behalf of residents of Nova Road ask that the Councils traffic management committee urgently consider making our road one way and consider extending the hours of controlled parking so that residents can have a safer road as there is not enough space for two way traffic & be able to park in the evenings because of increased density of new housing in the vicinity.

Response from Councillor Kathy Bee, Cabinet Member for transport and Environment.

Officers have been asked to add the proposal to introduce one-way working on Nova Road to the list of future schemes to be included in a bid to Transport for London for funding within a future work programme. Unfortunately, with the high number of similar requests received over recent years, the 2016/17 work programme is already full, but it may be possible to progress the scheme design for Nova Road within the coming financial year, if resources and funding allows.

The Council is currently conducting a pilot parking study in nearby Fairholme Road and Midhurst Avenue where the previous parking controls of; 9am to 5pm, Mon to Sat, have been extended to; 8am to 8pm, Mon to Sun. This trial study began on Monday 7th December 2015 and was proposed following a similar petition from residents, which was considered at TMAC in December 2014.

Council officers are aiming to consult residents of Fairholme Road and Midhurst Avenue on the effectiveness of this pilot study after the scheme has been in operation for a minimum of 6 months. If this study proves successful, consideration could then be given to extending the parking control period to other roads in the North Permit Zone, including Nova Road. The petition from Nova Road will certainly help to support the proposal to extend the hours of operation into this area.

e) A petition presented by **Councillor Maddie Hanson** on behalf of residents 'Petition for Section s215 (s219) Notice: to require improvements to the appearance of untidy land of buildings'.

Response from Councillor Alison Butler, Cabinet Member for Homes, Regeneration and Planning.

The planning application (LBC Ref 14/04797/P) proposed the erection of a detached 1-bedroom bungalow. This was refused planning permission and dismissed on appeal, however it is incorrect to conclude that "the existing partly built structure in the rear garden of 110 The Glade has NOT got planning permission".

The building was subject to a planning enforcement investigation back in 2009 (LBC Ref 09/00948/C). The structure then under construction (within the rear garden of 110 The Glade) was reduced in height to not exceed 2.5m which brought the structure within the householder provisions for permitted development and so did not require a grant of planning permission from the Council.

The building constructed under permitted development was a lawful structure when it was within the rear garden of 110 The Glade. It remains a lawful structure now, even though the plot it was built upon has now been sold on, as the building has been in existence for more than 4 years and the structure is thus immune from planning enforcement action.

However, a S.215 Notice can be used to require land owners to address untidy land and buildings. This Notice would not normally require the demolition of a building rather it would require actions to restore, tidy, repair and paint. A S.215 Notice can also be challenged through the courts. Best practice is to seek to resolve issues of untidy land through landowner engagement before the serving of any formal notice. As such and following the sale of the rear part of the garden containing the building from the remainder of the 110 The Glade, officers contacted the land owner to inform her of public concerns around the appearance of her site and have asked her to confirm her future plans. If the landowners proposals are found to be unsatisfactory, a S.215 Notice could then be served.

It is appreciated that the building is not attractive in appearance but is not readily visible from publicly accessible land and the appearance of the building has remained in its present condition for some 6 years.

A further consideration is that the building is of similar appearance to another unfinished block-work outbuilding at the rear of the adjacent plot (112 The Glade). The

two have limited visibility in the wider area but if enforcement action is to be taken, both properties should be addressed together.

CONTACT OFFICER: Solomon Agutu, Head of Democratic Services and Scrutiny, x62920.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: