

WINCHMORE HILL WARD FORUM

Thursday 4 November 2021, 7.30pm

Online

Councillors: Maria Alexandrou, Ian Barnes, Dinah Barry

**MINUTES**

These minutes were sent to both Cllr. Alexandrou and Cllr. Barnes on 8 November.

Cllr. Alexandrou agreed them.

On 21 November, Cllr. Barnes requested changes and also to be told the time stamps on the recording to justify these minutes.

Both versions have been published because I cannot spare the time from my case work to do this.

Updates are noted in italics.

The meeting started late at 8.00pm due to IT difficulties. It ended at 10.30pm.

1. UPDATE FROM POLICE

The police gave details of the most recent data and said that there has been little change since last year. You can find the details here: <https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/metropolitan-police-service/winchmore-hill/?tab=CrimeMap>

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- **Q.** Residents are averse to reporting minor crimes. How do you encourage people to report crime?
A. It is important that people report crime and we encourage them to do so.
- **Q.** Concerns about people loitering and drug activity in the Firs lane area near and in the wetlands.
A. Police are aware. They will liaise with the PG and BHP forces whose wards also include parts of this area.
- **Q.** What are local police doing to ensure that all gun licence holders are compliant with the rules?
A. Police have no information - it would be carried out by other teams (licensing and firearms enquiry). Our police will try to find out and provide the information.
That information will be added once received. DB

2. 456 BUS. (Crews Hill to N. Middx. hospital via Winchmore Hill)

The issues in Farm Road were described by a resident:

- Loss of parking - of especial concern for those without the space for off-street parking. This will be exacerbated if the Local Plan proposal to build on Fords Grove car park goes ahead - see below.)
- Lack of even a narrow footpath by the little bridge making the area dangerous for pedestrians especially since the bus often mounts the footway to manoeuvre.
- Bus stops on Firs Lane are bringing the traffic to a standstill and reducing air quality.
Cllr. Barnes promised to look into this.
- Buses going over the speed bumps cause houses to shake.
- The consultation on the route was flawed, e.g. the times at which the bus runs were not those given on the consultation. Residents feel this was route was imposed on them.
- The bus is underused. TfL's site shows the usage to be only 5,627 journeys since it started in January. The route could be much more use if TfL had listened to the alternative routes proposed by residents which would have served nearby businesses and care homes.
This could also be because TfL has not set the stops up fully live on any of the "Live Bus Times/Departures" apps and websites so people cannot tell when a bus is coming and receive the incorrect information that "There Are No Forthcoming Departures From This Stop"
- This is all very disappointing and annoying - most residents think that a bus could be valuable - if only it had been well planned.

3. REARDON COURT

The council is developing a new care home at the end of Cosgrove Close next to the Recycling Centre, this will be much larger than the care home that used to be there.

Residents are unhappy because:

- Poor communication from the council - many were not aware of the plans until building work began and later emails have gone unanswered. Residents have had to resort to filing formal complaints.
- Demolition was badly managed and extremely noisy. It took some time for residents to persuade the council to visit. When an officer did visit the problems were recognised, changes were made and the noise reduced.
- In early spring a noise barrier that protected Cosgrove Close from noise and pollution from by the recycling centre was bulldozed flat.
Barrowell Green recycling centre is the only one in Enfield (despite the current administration's manifesto promise to open a second). Work goes on there for long hours every day so the noise is extremely disturbing; in the summer residents could not open their windows.
The council recognises this; the plans for the new care home include sound proofing measures.
Residents were promised that a temporary structure would be in place by July.
There is still no barrier.

- Residents want transparency and accountability: to know what will be built and when.

Since the meeting I have been told that a temporary barrier will be installed starting on 8 November. I have not yet been able to find out if this is expected to achieve the 33dB reduction in noise the council has identified as being needed.
DB

4. DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

Three issues affect Winchmore Hill very closely:

- **Proposal for a burial ground / crematorium on Firs Farm**

Cllr. Barnes reported that since cabinet had approved a burial ground at Sloemans farm in North Enfield, he considered it extremely unlikely that this proposal will be taken forward.

- **Proposal to build 299 houses on Sainsbury's site.**

The outline plan proposed by Sainsburys is for building on the car park and over the store.

The green space around the store must be retained for community use because that was a condition of the original planning permission granted but the Secretary of State. Cllr. Barnes is also encouraging residents to apply for it to be given Asset of Community Value status which would provide some additional protection.

Cllr. Barnes said that he believes nothing will happen immediately and that residents' best hope is to push for a compromise with Sainsburys. Although there are no firm plans, he could assure residents that Sainsburys will retain parking for blue badge holders.

Points raised by residents:

- ♦ This will be a loss to the community, especially those who need to use a car to shop - not everyone can cycle or walk there,
- ♦ shopping in person enables people to socialise,
- ♦ fewer staff will be employed - most will be doing pick and pack for home delivery,
- ♦ What will happen to the other businesses in the store: Timpsons, Starbucks etc?
- ♦ this Sainsburys is not the only supermarket in the Draft Local Plan where housing is proposed.
- ♦ Any housing built will not benefit Enfield - it will not be affordable for most Enfield residents.

- **Proposal to build 29 houses on Fords Grove car park**

Points raised by residents:

- ♦ This will increase car and pedestrian movement at this junction where the 456 is already causing difficulties

- ♦ Local residents and businesses rely heavily on this car park. It is essential for local businesses since parking was reduced on Green Lanes when the cycle lanes were built. It will also exacerbate the parking problem caused by the 456b bus for Farm Road residents.
- ♦ Any housing built will not benefit Enfield - it will not be affordable for most Enfield residents.

5. LOW TRAFFIC NEIGHBOURHOODS (LTNs)

Points raised by residents and responses from councillors. (Where necessary, these have been grouped and in some cases amalgamated):

Cllr. Barnes said that he would not deal with legal issues that a local group has brought to the council.

• Comments:

- ♦ Residents' lives are being made 'hell' by the noise and pollution being caused here by this 15 month long experiment. It is impacting on their physical and mental health.
- ♦ Residents' concerns seem to be falling on deaf ears at the council.
Why are the lives and health of residents on peripheral roads of less value than those on roads within the LTN?
Nitrogen oxides (NOx) and particulates have doubled.
- ♦ The traffic blocks driveways on Bourne Hill.
- ♦ This is an ill-considered, trendy idea that may work in inner cities where public transport is much better than in Enfield. Our roads are not suitable and need to be redesigned if this is to work.
- ♦ Quality of life is important, we should not be punished for driving.
- ♦ Traffic will increase if nothing is done.
- ♦ LTNs are unfair, divisive and harm communities. Roads should share the traffic burden fairly.
- ♦ A resident from within the LTN said that he was walking and cycling more and that A roads like Bourne Hill are designed for traffic.
- ♦ Council decisions are inconsistent:
 - ☐ Reardon Court is expected to generate 300 trips per day
 - ☐ Despite saying it wants to encourage walking, pedestrian crossings are unsafe: the Bourne Hill junction, outside Sainsburys and at the Station Road junction were given as examples where despite many complaints to the council, nothing had been done.
 - ☐ The council supports the Edmonton Incinerator which will release CO₂ and harmful micro-particulates.
- ♦ The world has focused on drivers, and cities need to evolve and change.
- ♦ The council should consider alternatives such as narrowing roads with rain gardens and planting trees to narrow junctions.
- ♦ The council is anti-car.
- ♦ More EV charging points are needed.
Cllr. Barnes said that he is intending to install more. He is also hoping to get a better offer for car sharing.

- ◆ Other boroughs have withdrawn similar schemes.
- ◆ FOI requests for information on: delays to buses and emergency vehicles have been refused by the council on the grounds that it is “not in the public interest” to release this information. It will be published in a report. The report has been postponed several times and is now expected in February. Cllr. Barnes said that data has been collected and will be released later but it needs to be put into context in the report.
- ◆ A resident described a journey to bring a sick friend home from the Middx hospital which was delayed because incidents near the PG triangle prevented access to Alderman’s Hill. Unforeseen consequences have not been considered in this plan.
- ◆ The LTNs are deserted in the evenings and pedestrians feel unsafe and vulnerable.
- ◆ Trucks cannot reverse in the LTN and reverse out onto the peripheral roads e.g. reversing from The Mall onto Cannon Hill.
- ◆ A resident from within the LTN said that he drives regularly and has not seen any problems.
- ◆ A fireman said that he is concerned about communication between the council and the emergency services and spoke of the difficulties of getting through the LTN. He said that there had not been effective communication over Reardon Court.
Cllr. Alexandrou said that she has had numerous messages reporting difficulties.
Cllr. Barnes said that he was going to speak with the Borough commander.
- ◆ All residents who spoke expressed concern for residents on peripheral roads.

• **Questions:**

- ◆ Are there any plans to improve life for residents on peripheral roads like Bourne Hill and the roads near Southgate circus and to improve traffic flows at the PG triangle?
Cllr. Barnes he must look at the evidence before considering how to improve conditions on peripheral roads - no ideas will be considered until then. Southgate circus is a problem and needs enforcement. He is looking into making it part of a red route and or redesigning the roundabout.
- ◆ What is the council doing to help pedestrians?
Cllr. Alexandrou said that more pedestrian crossings are needed to encourage walking, school street are working well and that a bike hire scheme is needed.
Cllr. Barnes said that he is trying to get money for more crossings and asked residents to write to him with suggestions for places where crossings are needed and that the council is looking to set up its own bike hire scheme.
- ◆ Cllr. Barry said the Sainsburys, Bourne Hill and Station Road have been known to be a problem for many years and that she has been trying to get changes made. TfL funding was promised for Sainsburys (which was made more dangerous when the cycle lanes were installed) but the promised funding was then removed to pay for Covid measures. Officers are concerned that if changes are made to the other junctions it will slow buses. Cllr. Barnes said he is working to get the Sainsburys crossing sorted out.

- ◆ Who will decide if the LTNs are made permanent?
Cllr. Barnes said he would decide with the Leader and the Cabinet.
He will need evidence - not anecdote.
- ◆ So far over 6.000 comments have been made on the consultation. 80% object to the LTN. Why has the consultation been reopened?
Cllr. Barnes said that this is because it is taking so long to process the considerable volume of data that he decided the consultation should remain open.
- ◆ Statutory requirements of Conway Road were not met.
Cllr. Barnes said that changes had been made in response to residents' concerns. Conway is now subject to a separate Emergency Traffic Order (ETO).
- ◆ What will the success criteria be for the LTN?
Cllr. Barnes listed:
 - ☐ Number of motor vehicle movements
 - ☐ Speed of motor vehicle movements
 - ☐ Air quality
 - ☐ Emergency Service vehicle times / delays. (A firefighter commented that current delays are far worse than any before.)
 - ☐ Bus times / delays
 - ☐ Experience of disabled people.

These measurements will be across a wider area than the LTN itself.

Cllr. Alexandrou said that measures to improve the situation for disabled people are needed immediately - they are suffering now and cannot wait.

Cllr. Barnes said that modelling would be used to assess air quality and that this was more accurate than using direct measurements.

A resident said that this was because there had been inadequate measurements taken before the LTN was installed.

Cllr. Barry asked for the research that supports the use of modelling rather than using direct measurements. Cllr. Barnes referred her to the Bowes LTN report.

Whilst Appendix 1 (pp.18-19) comments on the way modelling is used. Neither the Report nor the Appendix provide evidence that modelling is a more accurate way to assess air pollution. The report can be read at: <https://governance.enfield.gov.uk/documents/s87879/PL%2020.151%20C.pdf> And the appendix it refers to at: <https://governance.enfield.gov.uk/documents/s87883/Appendix%201.%20Bowes%20Primary%20Area%20QN%20-%20Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation%20Plan.pdf> DB

- ◆ What is the air quality benchmark?
- ◆ How is the council encouraging public transport?
Cllr. Barnes is pushing for more / a better bus service.
Bambos is working to get improvements to the train service.
- ◆ Cllr. Barnes said that LTNs are part of a cross party strategy to achieve net zero carbon emissions; this Labour council is working with the Conservative government.
Cllr. Barnes would like to see Road User Charging introduced.

- ♦ Cllr. Alexandrou emphasised the need for alternative ways to improve air quality, reduce carbon emissions and make roads safer and less congested, e.g. school streets and rain gardens as in Woodland Way. Other councils have remove LTNs and in Wandsworth that has improved air quality.
- ♦ Cllr. Barnes said that Wandsworth had only paused their programme and were installing more.
This I not mentioned on the council web site: <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/news/2020-news/september-2020/low-traffic-neighbourhoods-trial-update/> and the Healthy Streets Score Card site for 2021 says of Wandsworth: “Very disappointingly, it suspended seven Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) within weeks of implementing them in 2020” although it goes on to note, “In some good news, Wandsworth has introduced 20mph speed limits across 81% of borough roads, and has plans for the remaining roads. And it has introduced a number of School Streets...”
https://www.healthystreetsscorecard.london/your_borough/wandsworth/DB.
- ♦ Cllr. Barry asked for more consistent policies to help people to take action to improve our roads and reduce our impact on the climate, and for some joined-up thinking in the council. Even within one directorate we have a policy to introduce LTNs whilst supporting the Edmonton Incinerator and failing to make walking safer.

NEXT WARD FORUM: TO BE ARRANGED

This page is intentionally left blank