

ERITH TOWN FORUM MEETING 27TH JULY 2017

Notes of the meeting of the **ERITH TOWN FORUM** held at Bexley College, Erith on Thursday 27th July 2017 at 7pm.

Present: Doreen Ives (Chair)
Joan Armitage (Bexley Civic Society), Chris Broadbent (Disabilities Group), Bill Brookes (Erith Playhouse Theatre), DJ (Erith Riverside Res. Assoc.), Alison Fisher (Erith Rowing Club), Dennis Roberts (Baptist Church, Erith), Councillor Joe Ferreira, Councillor Abena Oppong-Asare, Julie Clark (Minute/Admin officer)

Members of the Public:

C Wakeman, I Parkhurst, J McCarthy, J Baxter, G Smith, J Elsby, S Batten, PC Winch, M Scott, S Browne, K Mawson

Presentation by - S Cumming – Mind in Bexley, T Harris – Mind in Bexley

1.& 2. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND PRESENTATION – BREATHING SPACE

Forum Members Apologies: Councillor E Boateng, J Martin, Rev. R Radcliffe, A Tapper

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Mind in Bexley representatives Sue Cumming and Tanya Harris. They presented on a new initiative, Breathing Space, which is being funded by Orbit to provide early intervention to help residents with low level mental health issues. It is for those Bexley residents who may have anxiety, mild depression, feel socially & economically isolated and basically anything affecting a person's wellbeing. Referrals can be self-referrals or the housing team can refer them to Mind. Dennis Roberts asked if the GP can refer them, Sue Cumming said they had not had any yet but said would probably go that way. She said services within Mind can also refer. They spoke about how they go about their initiative which had been by door to door engagement, from which she said they had had two referrals, one of which was a real success. There were a few concerns from those at the meeting regarding just randomly having someone knocking at doors. Tanya and Sue said they would take those comments on board.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair welcomed Martin Scott and Sarah Browne from McDonalds as new members of the Forum, and informed the meeting that the company had funded a promotional Forum leaflet. The leaflet will be used to promote the Forum to new residents moving into the area. The Chair spoke about the Lighthouse Project and the Exchange Plans. She commented on the various activities arranged to encourage people to come to Erith. The Forum are hoping to work with the Exchange over the Christmas period. The Chair said she had circulated an email from Caroline Field from Orbit which talked about redevelopment of the Arthur Street area.. Orbit will work with Wates and have got about £10.4M. She said the first homes should be finished by 2022. The Chair said she had invited Caroline Field to the October meeting. The Chair informed members there would be a committee meeting on 28th September for new initiatives to be discussed.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Joan reported a balance of £1,671.82 with £49 spent last quarter. Bexley College now host the meetings free of charge so the only meeting expense now is for our secretarial work.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM APRIL MEETING

- a) **Lighthouse Project** – Ms Batten from the Exchange informed the meeting regarding the various activities going on at the pier – eg. pop-up restaurants with 17 different chefs, family activities, craft events etc. She spoke about artwork for the pier commission. She said there were 75 applicants which was judged by a panel and is now down to the final 4 artists. She said this is now a public vote and urged those who had not already done so, to do this at the end of the meeting (the four options were laid out in the meeting room).
- b) **Carnegie building** Restoration work is taking place, and more funding is being sought from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Visitors to the recent Fun Day were asked to say what they would like to see in the library. There is a Gossip page on the website to use to give more ideas for the building.

6. FORGE

Joan McCarthy reported difficulties caused by the hot weather and said they have had to replaced some plants that had died. FORGE are still struggling to get a water point. She said we are liaising with Thames Water and the Council on this. The Chair asked Councillor Ferreira to look into the issue of an existing hidden water point on the Gardens.. The Chair said we are very grateful to Forge for the work they do.

ACTION: Councillor FERREIRA

7. SHOPPING CENTRE UPDATE - No update.

8. POLICE PANEL UPDATE

PCSO Winch reported. He informed the meeting that at the ward panel meeting Lesney Park Road was voted a priority for the next four months. He said they had a warrant to go into one house. The Chair informed the meeting, for those who did not know, that there had been some suspicious activity in Lesney Park Road and continued to say there have been a huge number of nitrous oxide canisters in the area of old Mencap building. Councillor Joe Ferreira informed the meeting that there are development plans for the old Mencap site. The Chair said they had discussed the issue at the Management Meeting and the general feeling was that it was not related to the people in the building but others coming to the area to use these drugs because it is a quiet place.

9. CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP – Health issues update

Dennis Roberts reported that some routine drug provision will no longer be available free on prescription (a leaflet was handed out). He said that the LB Greenwich has withdrawn this and Bexley are thinking about it too. He said there are big discussions going on about this. He reported that the 8am-8 pm weekend facility is not used much on a Sunday and said if it is not used it will go. The Chair questioned whether the facility is publicized and the need for any new services to be promoted well, she asked Dennis to raise this at their next meeting. Dennis gave out leaflets about the 100 years Celebration Day for Queen Mary's Hospital on their site on Saturday 9th September. He said it would be in the form of a fun day/family day with stalls, refreshments etc and a tour of the new Cancer Unit and Kidney Centre.

10. ERITH FUN DAY

It was reported as an outstanding success with an estimated 4,000 attendance. It was a good day with a go kart track, charity and craft stalls and activities were quite cheap. The Chair said it was a good platform for Erith and if anyone wanted to volunteer to help please contact the Chair. The suggested date for 2018 was July 7th.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Removal of bus shelter and seat – Councillor Oppong-Asare said a report had been sent through to TFL on 12th July and that you have to wait 12 working days for a response and she would inform the Forum as soon as she hears or knows anything.

ACTION: CLLR OPPONG-ASARE

(Post meeting note: It has now been reinstated)

b) Pier Road premises illegal use – a member of the public informed the meeting of this problem regarding 33a Bexley Road and its illegal use. He said it is still ongoing despite continued logged complaints to the Police and the Council. He said it has been going on too long now. They have no planning permission and the Council fails to act. He said it is a recurring pattern of setting up a business and changing names. He informed the meeting of the continued problems with emails being ignored by the Council. Further discussion took place and the Chair commented that it was disturbing to see how long it had been going on and asked the Councillors what strategy could be adopted to get the Council to move/take action on this. Councillor Oppong-Asare said that in her experience of this in other areas the best way forward would be to do a petition. It was left that the Councillors would talk separately with those concerned in this at the end of the meeting or they would arrange a convenient time to discuss it. The Chair said if they need her to do anything in the name of the Forum she would need all the information but in the first instance it would be discussed with the Councillors.

ACTION: COUNCILLORS

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

26th October 2017 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.