

Better Together Community Meeting – Blackheath and Greenwich
Greenwich West Community Centre, 10am – 12 noon, 14 May 2019

Notes

Services in attendance

- Children's Services
- Greenwich Inclusion Project (GrIP)
- Greenwich Local Labour & Business (GLLaB)
- Housing
- Housing
- Leisure Services
- Library Services
- NHS
- Parks and open spaces
- Public Health
- Waste and street services

Question and Answer session

Chair: Cllr Matt Morrow

Guest panel:

Children's Services - Royal Borough of Greenwich

Metro Gavs

Greenwich Local Labour and Business

Attendees: 25

Item	
1	The chair opened the meeting for questions.
2	<p>The first question was: Why is there a council tax and water rates increase? Had to cancel insurance policy to pay for council tax.</p> <p>The Council responded that Council services cost more because of less money from government, plus austerity measures means there has been an increase in council tax. The Council doesn't have control over water rates. There has been £150 million taken from the central government budget provision. We cannot overspend.</p>
3	<p>A resident then asked what the foster care criteria is. What is the financial assistance?</p> <p>The Council responded that financial assistance varies according to your needs. Information on fostering can be found on the website www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/fostering.</p>
4	<p>The next question was about the infrastructure levy:</p> <p>Knowledge about the fund isn't widely known. How do groups access it? Outreach of fund needs improving.</p> <p>A representative from Metro GAVS responded that they issue a weekly bulletin to over 1000 people. BME groups/disability groups are targeted. Applying for funding needs getting used to – there is support available via GAVS as it can be a daunting process.</p> <p>The Council responded that GLLaB can signpost people to help identify what's out there and that despite the perception funding isn't always given to the same groups of people, it goes to a broad range of organisations.</p> <p>The resident responded that the criteria is demanding – groups need status before they are eligible. Organisations aren't experienced enough and need support and mentoring. A review of process and criteria is needed to make it as open as possible.</p>

	<p>Metro GAVS agreed with the resident saying that they do alot of this work and offer support to make sure the money goes to the right people. Funders can't just give money to a great idea – there needs to be a criteria.</p> <p>The Council responded that we need to be accountable regarding spending, there are restrictions, but we can answer questions posed by funders. Ward budgets were also highlighted. The available amount in ward budgets varies. To find out more speak to ward councillors</p>
5	<p>The next question was:</p> <p>Is there any support for volunteering? There needs to be support from councils and possible workshops in children's centres for local people.</p> <p>The Council responded that our one stop shop – The Point has resources available. They offer and number of services. There are also volunteering opportunities across the borough. Volunteer Greenwich has job placements available – including older people, mental health and arts organisations.</p>
6	<p>The next resident commented that they believed GLL café food isn't healthy as there is too much sugar.</p> <p>The Council responded that there is a range options available and people have a choice of what to eat.</p>
7	<p>The next question was about what the Council is doing to support healthy eating for children.</p> <p>The Council responded it actively promoted healthy eating. There are workshops for healthy meals and there are also services linked to schools for healthy eating and exercise. We are always open to ideas on how to best tackle issues.</p> <p>The representative from Metro Gavs added that TFL has stopped advertising fatty food campaign, maybe this is something the Council could look into/adopt.</p>
8	<p>The chair thanked the attendees and panel and closed the meeting.</p>