

City of York Council

Committee Minutes

MEETING	MICKLEGATE WARD COMMITTEE
DATE	13 JULY 2016
PRESENT	COUNCILLOR GUNNELL COUNCILLOR HAYES COUNCILLOR KRAMM (CHAIR)
IN ATTENDANCE	Jon Stonehouse – CYC Director of Children’s Services, Education and Skills Maxine Squire – CYC Asst Director Education and Skills Vicky Japes – CYC Public Health Team Edwin Thomas - Chair of the South Bank Multi Academy Trust Neil Gibson – CYC Community Involvement Officer Kay Bailey – CYC Neighbourhood Manager 110 RESIDENTS
APOLOGIES	NONE

1. 6.30PM-7PM DROP IN

Information about the Local Plan and York Central Community Forum were available in the drop in.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Cllr Lars Kramm introduced the new Community Involvement Officer for the Micklegate Ward, Neil Gibson. He wished to thank the previous Community Involvement Officer, Joe Ashton, for all of his work on behalf of the residents.

3. OUTDOOR SPACE CONSULTATION - SCARCROFT MUGA

Jon Stonehouse, Director of Children’s Services, introduced the consultation on the provision of school places and sites for play. He stated that Micklegate is the area with the highest rate of growth in pupil numbers in the city, and as a result there is a need to increase the number of primary school places within the area. In 2015 various

options about adding additional school places were discussed including to establish an annex of Scarcroft Primary School on the Millthorpe School site. These options were taken to an informal public consultation process in 2016 and following consultation it was agreed that the preferred option would be to make adjustments to Scarcroft Primary School to allow it to take an additional half form of entry. An increased number of children coming to Scarcroft will require increased outdoor play space. Options to resolve this include establishing a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) that could be used by Scarcroft Primary. The executive report has suggested three potential sites for the MUGA: Millthorpe School, Scarcroft Green and Little Knavesmire. This is to go to a formal consultation process. Joe Stonehouse thanked everyone who had put forward views on the matter. He referred to the current area of Scarcroft Green which had been fenced off for the use of Scarcroft Primary pupils and stated that discussion of how this might be used differently would be included in the evening's main body of discussion.

A resident stated that the academy was separate from the Local Education Authority and questioned why the council appeared to be favouring the academy over the community. Joe Stonehouse responded that the LA has a responsibility to analyse future demands for school places, and to work with any school regardless of its status in order to fulfil that duty.

Edwin Thomas introduced himself as the Chair of the South Bank Multi Academy Trust. He stated that the point of the consultation will be to outline the problem and its potential solutions, to listen to what the residents have to say and to make informed decisions with a very clear idea of what matters to the community.

Edwin Thomas outlined the need for more school places via a graph showing that Scarcroft was currently taking pupils beyond its capacity and that this is going to increase. An expansion of Scarcroft will accommodate extra pupils and there will inevitably be a problem of providing sufficient outdoor space for them. In order to take on an extra 95 pupils by 2022, the Department for Education must consider the school's plans and assess whether the Trust has done everything they can to satisfy the need for outside space. Currently the school is well below DfE guidelines for the amount of space required for a one and a half form entry school, being a little over half of what the school should have. He stated that the suggestion of it being a case of

what the school wants against what the residents want is a false distinction.

Edwin Thomas stated that four main elements had been identified as potential solutions, including converting some of the car park at Scarcroft Primary into a play area, building a MUGA nearby (Millthorpe and the Trust Board consider Millthorpe to be the best possible site for this), adding more parking space to Millthorpe to mitigate the car park loss at Scarcroft, and to move the fenced off area in Scarcroft Green closer to the school for use during school hours.

1. Car Park

Edwin Thomas outlined the pros of converting some of the school's parking space into a play area, stating that it causes no harm to the local community, uses available space, can be accessed for playtime and can have a MUGA surface. Cons would be the reduction of on-site parking for staff and for the outside groups from whom Scarcroft derives a lot of valuable income.

2. Scarcroft Green

Pros identified for using an annexed area of Scarcroft Green were that it would require no increase in the amount of space already used on Scarcroft Green and that it would still be publicly accessible outside of school hours. Cons would be concerns of about changes to Scarcroft Green, which have been voiced by representatives of the community.

3. MUGA

Edwin Thomas specified that this was not a finished proposal in any way, but there were ideas about where a MUGA might go, how big it would be, etc. Pros would be that it could be used for sports/fitness, that Millthorpe could use it as well, that it could be let out to community groups outside of school hours and that it would count double for DFE calculations. Cons would be that it would not be accessible for Scarcroft pupils at playtime, and that the use of floodlights might be disruptive to local residents. Edwin Thomas clarified that from the three options in the executive paper to place the MUGA, the Council and the MAT decided to put the only agreeable location at Millthorpe School out for consultation.

4. Millthorpe Car Park

A pro of adding more spaces to Millthorpe car park would be that it could replace lost parking. The cons would be that it could not accommodate all of the staff displaced from Scarcroft, negotiation

would be needed about how many places would be for Scarcroft staff, a loss of space for Millthorpe pupils and additional traffic.

Q & A Session

A statement was made by Penelope Worsley of Friends of Scarcroft Green. She stated that in her opinion the green is one of the most special places for the community to meet, inter-relate, share and support one another, and that it reduces isolation, shares problems, develops friendships, etc. She identified as something that was missing from villages, towns and cities elsewhere in the UK. She is concerned that the prospect of the large open space being cut up and reduced in size will destroy a large aspect of this community and completely change the nature and strength of the green. She stated that she had asked young people if they would use the blue fenced off area of the green to play in and was told that it is too close to the road and that they did not feel comfortable with it. She also stated that historically, it is a stray, and therefore public land, and questioned how the council could give away part of the public open space on the green to an academy trust, which is a private business. She also questioned the legality of the school being originally granted the fenced off area, saying that in spite of the supposed consultation, there is no evidence of any public consultation in this respect. She said that she understood the needs and pressures for the school in its development and future plans, but was not convinced that the Trust have fully exhausted all other options. She stated that Friends of Scarcroft Green would ask for a transport engineer to examine this and for this report to be made available to the public. She then called for Laura Outhard to comment further.

Friends of Scarcroft Green would like assurances that there is no question of commonly owned private land being handed over to a public entity. They would also like to know from the council what consultation there was for the blue fenced off area on the green.

A resident suggested that an opportunity had missed for a new school to be built as part of a recent development at South Bank. Jon Stonehouse replied that discussions had taken place with the developer in question that that they had not been interested. He also stated that the number of new places required at Scarcroft would not have generated enough for a new school. He confirmed that the developer had been asked for a contribution to assist with the new school plans.

A resident suggested that the figures presented in Edwin Thomas's graphs indicated that the school was not going to meet the amount of play space needed and suggested that the issue was being falsely represented as a "crisis" of play space against the wishes of the community. Edwin Thomas replied that the school numbers have crept up gradually and Scarcroft is currently in a worse situation than any other school in the city for play space. The Trust needs to make an application to the Department for Education in order to accept extra pupils, so it was an opportunity to say how they can get it closer to requirements.

A resident suggested that Scarcroft didn't have as much space due to the car park, pointing out that other schools had given up their car parking space. They asked how high the fencing was likely to be if an area of the green was to be used by the school, and if there was still the opportunity to comment on the executive report. Jon Stonehouse confirmed that the report was still publicly available online, and that the objective of the consultation to understand how the community felt about various issues, including fencing.

A resident asked what the Department for Education's view was of the proposal, and stated that from the diagrams shown it was unclear how the new car parking proposals could be used without a turning circle. Jon Stonehouse stated that DFE were aware of the proposal and it was going into a period of consultation, from which they would arrive at an agreement. Edwin Thomas stated that none of the parking space figures represented on the diagram were precise and that it needed to be assessed.

A resident stated that the area of Scarcroft Primary currently being used as a car park was originally a play space and suggested that it would be more appropriate to refer to it as a play space converted into a car park.

A resident asked if the surface of a MUGA was made up of AstroTurf and what would happen to the run-off water. They were also concerned about the possible light pollution caused by floodlights. Edwin Thomas stated that there was no question of the MUGA being built at Scarcroft and that it would be at Millthorpe. The type of surface would be determined by looking at what was needed by the schools and the community.

A resident asked if the proposed MUGA at Millthorpe would be used by the children at Scarcroft. Jon Stonehouse confirmed that it would be,

and that this would be determined in line with the school timetable. Another resident stated that they had been informed that it would be too far for Scarcroft pupils to walk, but the Head of Scarcroft, Mrs Cornhill, confirmed that it would only be used for sporting activities, not play. She stated that in terms of DFE, the space just needed to be usable, but that a MUGA at Millthorpe would not help with play space.

A resident stated that as a former ward councillor the Ward Committee approved a scheme to install a fenced off area to allow for a dog litter free zone.

A resident asked Edwin Thomas to clarify what alternative options there were for car parking. Edwin Thomas explained that the main suggestion was for more car parking space on Millthorpe but that it was still early days. Another suggestion had been for the staff to use the parking at Nunnery Lane. He stated that to turn the entire car park into a play space would help a bit, but not nearly as much as was needed.

Edwin Thomas stated that this was the start of the consultation and that it would be open until the end of August. The views of the community would form a vital part of this consultation. A resident stated that they would prefer to be round the table when it was discussed, not just consulted.

A resident stated that the previous executive report had indicated that the only issue to be consulted was the location of a large MUGA. Jon Stonehouse stated that the executive report did make reference to a large MUGA and a small MUGA.

A straw poll was then taken by Cllr Hayes among residents over the preferred location for the large MUGA. The vast majority of residents voted for it to be at Millthorpe. Alternative voting options had not been given. A second straw poll was initiated by Cllr Hayes among residents over the support for the conversion of the parking spaces into a play area. A majority of residents showed in favour but the poll was not completed due to interventions from the floor.

It was acknowledged that many residents view the blue fenced off area on Scarcroft Green as the thin end of the wedge. The Trust's response will be to look to the car park before considering use of the green. The proposal is to build a large MUGA on Millthorpe and to build a small MUGA with a soft surface upon a portion of the car park at Scarcroft. A

resident expressed concern that if children used the green there was the possibility of this becoming a quagmire in the rain.

A resident stated that the proposed location of the new car parking space at Millthorpe would put the cars above the wall level of the back of the adjacent houses.

A resident stated that, speaking as a parent with pupils at Scarcroft School, they wanted to support the teachers but could not imagine any teachers making decisions about where to work upon the basis of car parking space and questioned if there was any evidence to support this? They also asked if a new MUGA was needed, stating that there was lots of local sports ground available, and asked why the current green space set aside for the school was not being used. They also referred to a new free school that had recently been announced, and asked if the school places had been factored in with this in mind.

Ms Cornhill stated that the fenced off area was the result of a consultation with Parks and Gardens, and that, as a result of the school becoming an academy on 1st April, they were told that they were not allowed to use it until a formal agreement was signed. She stated that she was not concerned so much about the teachers being put off by the loss of car parking space as she was the lower-waged staff. Jon Stonehouse stated that the blue fenced off area would be looked into very quickly. He said that the ongoing discussion with DFE upon the free school had been significant and that they know from previous discussions that it will not be built here due to a lack of land. None of the three ward councillors knew that the school's use of the fenced off area had to be formalised as they were not shown any papers.

A resident asked if there would be free parking for the school staff at Nunnery Lane. Jon Stonehouse stated that this would set a huge precedent. For the academy to pay would be a different proposition.

A resident stated that the idea behind the fenced off area had been to provide an area that could be protected from dog fouling, litter, etc. It had not been located closer to the school because the main triangle area of the green is more popular among residents. It remains a public open space, but the school was to have priority during school hours. It was not known why the area had been padlocked. Another resident stated that the number of times the fenced off area had been used made it unjustifiable and that questions about legality needed to be answered.

Jon Stonehouse stated that the formal consultation period would last until 26th August, and that people had given a very clear indication of their views.

A resident asked for confirmation that no changes were being proposed for little Knavesmire. Jon Stonehouse stated that there were none, in his view, but that it was under the jurisdiction of the executive member to make that decision. He stated that the ward councillors would make sure that the community's voices were heard.

To respond further to the consultation, residents were advised to email education@york.gov.uk or to write to West Offices, Station Rise, York, YO1 6GA. The deadline for responding will be 26th August 2016

The next ward committee meeting is expected to take place in September. Friends of Scarcroft Green have requested being given plenty of notice before the next public consultation.

4. WARD BUDGETS 2016-17

Cllr Kramm gave an update on the ward budget, stating that grounds maintenance was to be devolved from the central city budget into the wards. For information on everything relating to green spaces, street cleaning, etc, residents were advised to contact their local councillors. Community groups have the opportunity to apply for ward grants; residents were advised that grant application forms were available tonight.

5. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE AND OTHER WARD RELATED BUSINESS

Everybody within the ward is due to receive a letter about becoming a member of the Neighbourhood Plan Forum. Micklegate will be the first urban ward in York to have formed one. The purpose of this forum is to discuss aspects of the ward, eg: green spaces, transport and planning for the future. It requires a minimum number of 21 people who feel that they have something to contribute and can act as representative of the ward. The first meeting will be in September, when the forum is formed.

Selection of Micklegate Planning Panel

The Micklegate Planning Panel meets regularly to discuss planning applications. The panel is there to be involved very early on in the planning process and to be aware of which planning applications are happening in the area. No formal expertise is required and training will be provided. Commitment depends upon the amount of planning applications, and it is a very good opportunity to see what is going on at a local level. Residents were advised to contact their Community Involvement Officer for information about joining the panel. It was advised that the current list of panel members requires updating.

York Central Community Forum

It was announced that a major development will be coming up for York Central affecting this ward. The first level of consultation will be discussed within a Community Forum and representation is currently being sought from residents. Residents were advised that applications for the community forum were also available tonight in the library. The deadline for applications is the 15th August 2016.

6. HAVE YOUR SAY!

There were no items under this topic.

CLLR KRAMM, Chair

[The meeting started at 19:00 and finished at 21:00].