

BROMLEY LABOUR GROUP NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE LABOUR MEMBERS OF BROMLEY COUNCIL

**CRAY VALLEY WEST WARD
COLIN WILLETTS**

**PENGE & CATOR WARD
PETER FOOKES, JOHN GETGOOD, & KAREN ROBERTS**

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2006

This is a report of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 20 November 2006.

LANGLEY PARK BOYS SCHOOL TO BE REBUILT THANKS TO THE GOVERNMENT

At the November meeting of the Executive, the main decision making body of the council agreed to rebuild Langley Park Boys School in Beckenham. The sum of **£30 MILLION** is being made available by the Department for Education under the One School Pathfinder initiative. So much for the Tories moaning that we don't receive enough grant from government! Cator Park Girls, Kelsey Park Sports College, Kemnal Technology College, Ravenswood, and Newstead Wood School for Girls were all considered, but only one school could be chosen under the scheme. Proposals needed to be submitted by the end of November and the project should aim for completion and be ready for occupation by September 2009. The condition of the school was the main factor in deciding. It was built in the late 1960's and is increasingly showing its age. Langley is a popular and high performing school. Through this scheme it will be possible to increase provision for secondary aged pupils with Asperger's Syndrome or who have speech and language disorders. One other requirement of the scheme is the extended schools prospectus, i.e. the school will have to be open weekdays from 8.00am to 6.00pm all year round providing a range of activities for young people, including study support, family learning activities, and parenting support. Labour Leader, John Getgood has raised concerns re the lack of scrutiny of this decision which was made by Tory Portfolio holder for Children and Young People; Ernest Noad. Cator Park and Kelsey Park were unfortunate to lose out in the process but officers were concerned about the current general reduction in secondary pupil numbers and developments by neighbouring boroughs to improve their own schools which could lead to less demand for Bromley schools. There may well be further schemes to replace Cator Park/Kelsey Park and Kemnal in the future under the Government scheme for the period 2011-16. Of course if the Tories were that concerned with education, they don't need to rely on the government to fund education building programmes.

SEASONS GREETINGS FROM BROMLEY LABOUR GROUP

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you a merry Christmas and all the best for 2007.

COLIN WILLETTS TAKES UP PARKING ISSUES

Cray Valley West Councillor Colin Willetts has taken up a number of parking issues on behalf of residents in his neck of the woods, in particular around Spur Road, Leasons Hill, St Paul's Wood Hill and Midfield Way. The Tory Portfolio Holder for the Environment, Colin Smith is struggling with his brief after the Tories have failed to allocate enough resources to the maintenance of the boroughs road network.

NEW LOCAL ECONOMY PORTFOLIO HOLDER

The Portfolio Holder for the Local Economy, Councillor Colin Bloom (Bickley) has resigned from his post citing a conflict of interest with his day job as the Chief Executive of Mission Care. His post is to be taken by Councillor Michael Tickner, (Copers Cope) former Council Leader. This appointment was made by the current Council Leader; Stephen Carr. The Tories have still failed to appoint any women to cabinet positions. Major plans to improve Bromley, Orpington and Beckenham High Streets have been drawn up as the borough faces tough competition from Croydon and Bluewater following the loss of Alders and Army and Navy in the town centre.

EXTRA RESOURCES FOR BROMLEY POLICE

A recent announcement by Bromley Police will mean that next year, we will receive an extra 66 police community support officers in the borough. 18 of them will be attached to transport services to increase public protection on buses and trains in the borough. The Safer Neighbourhood teams are really making an impact in their communities and helping to drive crime down.

101 CENTRE UNDER THREAT

The 101 Centre in Parish Lane, Penge is under threat of closure from Bromley Tories. The large site with three halls, including a sports hall which was previously used as a youth centre, has major repair problems, mainly as a result of the council not maintaining the building. Various community groups are currently being asked by the council to relocate by the end of January. Councillors Peter Fookes and Karen Roberts have taken up the cause with a motion looking at rebuilding, possibly with the help of the private sector and a report is due to go to the Executive on 11 December 2006.

LIBRARY SERVICES BEING REVIEWED

A review of library services in Bromley is currently taking place. We know they are highly valued by borough residents but there are changes which need to be made to equip them for the 21st Century. More people are using libraries for internet access and less for book borrowing. There are 15 libraries in the borough, plus a mobile library which visits areas furthest from branches, and a home library service for housebound readers. Bromley libraries currently have over 230,000 members with 2 million visits made annually. There is a proposal to close Penge and Anerley Libraries and relocate them into a new community facility building in Penge High Street but as ever, the Tories can't find any money or location for the scheme. The idea would be to convert the Anerley building for community use. Should libraries be open more in the evenings and at weekends to meet the growing 24 hour lifestyle of today? Of course there would be resource implications for doing this but many libraries in the United States have cafes attached which presumably help to defray the costs.

CONTACTING BROMLEY LABOUR GROUP

We are always happy to take up issues that you raise with us and to keep the Tories in Bromley in check. One of the best ways of doing that is on e mail or through the council website - www.Bromley.gov.uk You can contact councillors by using the same format e.g. Peter.Fookes@Bromley.gov.uk This is the same for members and officers of the authority as well. We also have our own website which can be accessed at www.bromley-labour-group.co.uk. You can also write to us c/o Bromley Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley BR1 3UH.