

Scrutiny Review Panel 1 – 2013/2014: Governance
Additional Feedback on Ward Forums Received After Agenda Despatch

Name	Comments
<p>29 Sachdev Singh Seyan Ramgarhia Sports & Social Club</p>	<p>I write on behalf of the Ramgarhia Sports and Social Club (RSSC) offering our observations for the Scrutiny Review Panel in appreciation for the level of support we have received from both, Lady Margaret Wards and Greenford Broadway re: the re-development of the Durdans Park site in partnership with the London Borough of Ealing (LBE).</p> <p>Since the RSSC was appointed the preferred bidder status to develop this site, we have not only worked in good partnership with the LBE project team led by Jonathan Kirby and team but also the two Wards above. The Ward Neighbourhood Coordinators (Dennis Frost and Evelyn Gloyn) and the Ward Councillors (Mohinder Midha, Swaran Padda, Karam Mohan, Harbhajan Kaur-Dheer, Julian Bell and Tim Murtagh) have been very supportive in allowing us time to make presentations at their Ward meetings and enabling us to get information to and receive feedback from the local residents in the area. Overall the public has been very encouraged by this sports club development project. The Wards have proved a good forum for the Ward Councillors and Neighbourhood Officers to inform local residents of local projects being undertaken to allay the concerns of the residents and improve their localities. As we continue to make progress with our own project, we are looking forward to the Wards allocating a small amount from local budget to stage an open day as well, like they have done for other such initiatives.</p> <p>We would also like to inform the Panel that attendance at the Ward meetings by the local Metropolitan Police Officers and the LBE Parks Rangers is an extremely useful idea. This has helped us to work together with them as we progressed with our project development. Their feedback at the Ward meetings has proved extremely useful for us to feed information into the various applications for grant funding and once again, we are trying to organise a site visit on 4 December for another grant awarding body through the offices of various people at LBE.</p> <p>We take this opportunity to thank LBE for giving us the Wards through which Ward Councillors and the community can work together for making their Wards better and progressive.</p>
<p>30. Eric Leach Hanwell, London, W7 2DY</p>	<p>LBE's web site says of Ward Forums:</p> <p>'...give you a chance to have your say on the local issues that are important to you'.</p> <p>Ealing Ward Forums are the only regular geographic area public meetings organised and funded by the Local Authority. There are just three each year. The attendees seem to have an influence over how £37,500 can be spent annually in each of the 23 Wards.</p>

Scrutiny Review Panel 1 – 2013/2014: Governance
Additional Feedback on Ward Forums Received After Agenda Despatch

Name	Comments
	<p>The three elected Councillors for each Ward organise and run the meetings. They set the meeting agendas. So in fact citizens don't have a say on issues that are important to them unless the three Councillors share your view on what are 'important' issues.</p> <p>LBE provides administrative and secretarial support. Sometimes LBE Officers are invited to speak and sometimes they turn up to speak.</p> <p>Since Ward Forums arrived in 2008 to replace Area Committees approaches to planning issues in Ward Forums have been inconsistent. Under local Tory rule 2008 to 2010, Councillors were clearly under orders not to allow Local Development Framework (LDF) issues to be discussed at W5/W13 Ward Forums. Since then W5/W13 Ward Forum agendas have also not included LDF/Local Plan issues.</p> <p>Law and order issues are seemingly discussed at every Ward Forum meeting. However, equally important healthcare issues (e.g. closure of Ealing Hospital) and housing issues (e.g. too few social homes for rent) are rarely debated.</p> <p>This policy of not discussing the 15 year LBE spatial plans for Ealing was/is clearly absurd. For each Ward, the three elected Councillors have clear collective responsibility or duty to be the interpreters and communicators of the LPA spatial plans for the residents and businesses in that Ward.</p> <p>Major planning applications and large development projects in a Ward should be on Ward Forum agendas. For example in Ealing Broadway Ward, spatial planning issues such as Arcadia, Crossrail, the Cinema site, Ealing Broadway Centre and Dickens Yard should consistently be on Ward Forum agendas but bizarrely they are not.</p> <p>We have a major geographic problem in the centre of West Ealing where the High Street and its immediate environs are largely split between two Wards – Elthorne and Walpole. The dividing line is right down the centre of the Uxbridge Road. This is not helpful in holistic terms when attempting to improve the quality of life in our town centre.</p> <p>In planning terms another body – in fact a statutory body also called a Forum – is creating the 15 year spatial plan for the centre of West Ealing. That body is the Government designated West Ealing Centre Neighbourhood Forum</p>

Scrutiny Review Panel 1 – 2013/2014: Governance
Additional Feedback on Ward Forums Received After Agenda Despatch

Name		Comments
		<p>(WECNF). In both its interim form and its designated form the WECNF has run 21 public meetings in West Ealing since April 2012.</p> <p>Strange protocols seem to exist with regards to the Minutes of Ward Forum meetings. Instead of being produced and distributed promptly they are produced weeks/months after each meeting. Why is this? When residents or community groups speak at the Forum meetings it might be noted in the Minutes but the identity of the speaker is never revealed. Why is this?</p>
31	Claire Moran Managing Director The Forge Public Relations W4 1AX	<p>I would just like to say that I think something much more democratic than the Ward Forums I have attended needs to be in place. I have attended Southfield Ward Forum several times, and every time, without exception, the Councillors have already decided how much money they are going to spend and on what. Objections to what many have seen as a total waste of money – lighting in Southfield Playing Fields, then more lighting when the park was already lit everywhere that one would want to cross at night – gym equipment that is never used, and they are proposing adding more – are ignored and not recorded in the Minutes. At a recent Forum when someone asked what was the point of turning up when our objections on how to spend the Ward money are ignored we were told that we had to have the meetings – with the implication that they are just something that has to happen, and our views will not be taken into account. In the meantime, suggestions for better ways to spend the money are ignored.</p> <p>The Ward Forums are undemocratic, seek only to promote the Councillors in their political ambitions, and the money the Councillors are given to spend within the Ward is wasted on silly vanity projects.</p> <p>We are told they have undertaken surveys to gauge opinion, and the results of those are not shared – I am sure because they would go against what the Councillors have already decided to do.</p> <p>You should remove the budgets from them and have a more democratic process of spending the money.</p> <p>Until the Forums are run more democratically, and a curb is in place on this silly use of precious funding, I will not be attending any more, it is a waste of my time as attendees have no influence whatsoever.</p>
32	Simon Ravenscroft Windmill Lane, Norwood Green	<p>I have resided in the Borough of Ealing since 1998 but have only been involved in Ward Forum matters since 2011/2. My involvement was triggered by the Council proposals to redevelop Warren Farm Sports Centre. The Norwood Green Ward Forum has served as a valuable "hub" for those involved in the proposals to engage with the</p>

Scrutiny Review Panel 1 – 2013/2014: Governance

Additional Feedback on Ward Forums Received After Agenda Despatch

Name	Comments
Middlesex	<p>local community to share plans and capture local sentiment and views concerning the proposals. My partner and I have attended most Ward Forums and have participated in discussions concerning Warren Farm with Council officers and subsequently QPR team members who have personally attended the meetings. This opportunity to discuss proposals could have been achieved at meetings in Council offices in Ealing, however the act of coming to the local community and engaging in discussion physically within the heart of that community serves to promote a positive and open relationship with the community. A relationship which is valued, especially if the views captured at such meetings are seen to be acted upon by those involved. This has been the case with Warren Farm where a number of points raised with Councillors by local residents at Ward Forums have been taken on board by the team and incorporated into the designs for Warren Farm, for example: the proposed cycle lane along Windmill Lane. Without the Ward Forums the proposals for Warren Farm may have not included those views and therefore would have been met with greater scepticism and local opposition. Those objecting to the plans have been provided with an opportunity to air those objections and hear other community members air their support for the plans in person. An open and well managed Ward Forum is a fantastic place for the community to enter into a dialogue with the Council and within the community. Gratitude goes to Dennis Frost who has managed the Norwood Green Forum in an expert manner. The Ward Forums have led to a number of "street meetings" whereby local residents and Council officers can visit a particular site in the Ward to see at first hand the matters and take appropriate actions away.</p> <p>Our involvement in Ward Forums has opened our eyes to activities within the Ward providing a window into a community in which we belong. Sometimes it's not a pleasant picture, but it's a picture that reflects the Ward and opens up opportunities for members to support each other within the community. The Ward serves to facilitate these activities and is a great example of how the Council can empower communities to take greater involvement in matters that directly impact them locally. The input to Ward budget expenditure is valued and should be encouraged further.</p> <p>When reviewing Ward Forums in the context of Local Governance, the Panel should consider the following four rationales as defined by Lowndes and Sullivan (2008). I have provided what I believe are specific examples where the Norwood Green Ward Forum has demonstrated these rationales:</p> <p><u>"the empowerment of citizens and communities" (the civic rationale)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Since attending the forums I personally have been empowered to participate in local residents' organisations and have established a website to share information about Warren Farm with fellow residents (wfig.org.uk).

Scrutiny Review Panel 1 – 2013/2014: Governance
Additional Feedback on Ward Forums Received After Agenda Despatch

Name	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I have a greater sense of community and have invested more time in community matters as a direct result of the Ward Forum meetings. <p><u>"partnership to take a holistic approach to an area" (social)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Ward Forum exposes the issues impacting all parts of the Ward. The local neighbourhood police representation at the forums shares the pain and helps to build a wider social response to issues that are shared by the whole community. Members attending the forums come away with a much greater understanding of local issues and are therefore more likely to support initiatives and take direct action themselves to encourage better social behaviour among fellow ward residents. - prejudices and ignorance exist in society. Ward Forums open people eyes to the experiences of others within their community thereby breaking down those traits and building empathy and greater understanding for fellow community members. <p><u>"government through new forms of representation and participation" (political)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proposals for the redevelopment of Warren Farm are a great example where the Council and QPR have reached out to the community to capture views and share plans. - Establishment of an Advisory Panel selecting participants from the Ward Forum. - The email distribution list associated with the Ward Forum has extended the reach of the Council and enabled participation such as this very email itself. <p><u>"management in terms of more effective local service delivery" (economic)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - community input into influencing where the Ward Budget is allocated and spent. - engaging in local charities and offering them an opportunity to publicise their work and receive supporting funds. <p>Ward Forums are a great way for the Council to engage in dialogue with local communities offering them opportunities to influence how local funds are distributed and to learn about and participate in the community they live in. Forums should be encouraged and supported. Greater use of technology should be employed to extend the reach of Ward Forums (mobile app?) to engage younger members of society and provide them with greater opportunities for involvement in local decision making.</p> <p>Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to participate in this process. I look forward to receiving the Minutes of the Panel meeting and to seeing how the review of Local Governance results in positive outcomes for local</p>

Scrutiny Review Panel 1 – 2013/2014: Governance
Additional Feedback on Ward Forums Received After Agenda Despatch

Name	Comments
	communities.
33.	<p data-bbox="271 368 577 499">Jon Parry Chair Northolt Village Residents Association</p> <p data-bbox="600 368 2098 432">I would, on behalf of the Northolt Village Resident Association, like to express our collective views in respect of current Ward Panel Committee meetings, in respect of our Ward – Northolt Mandeville.</p> <p data-bbox="600 469 2098 533">The current Ward Panel arrangements and system works very well for our Ward as opposed to previous Area Committee ward meetings. The current Ward Panel meetings are:</p> <ol data-bbox="600 569 2098 1075" style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More personalised 2. Smaller enabling more localised points being raised 3. Better engagement with Ward local Councillors 4. Convenience of local based meetings that residents are able to get to – to attend 5. Quality of localised points that matter to local Ward communities 6. Better communication with local Ward Councillors 7. Better access to local Ward Councillors 8. Issues that matter to OUR local Ward 9. Regular local Ward meetings that are attended by local residents - residents able to raise matters of concern or issues that are prevalent to OUR local Ward area 10. Local voice heard and acted upon 11. Control and share of OUR own local Ward budget – that helps to inspire OUR local community – money that we are able to spend on OUR local community 12. Local Ward committees as they are currently scheduled and delivered have much better appeal to OUR local communities that give a true sense of involvement and purpose of improvements made across the Ward. <p data-bbox="600 1112 2098 1208">The present Local Ward committees work very well, better than former Area Committee meetings which were too big, lasted too long, inconvenient meeting places to get to, travel to, not being able to get points across due to having to sit through all other Wards issues.</p> <p data-bbox="600 1244 2098 1340">It would be disastrous to remove the style and method of these smaller but highly effective Ward Panel committees, due to the close effectiveness they currently have with OUR local communities in getting many improvements over the years across OUR Ward that has benefited the same communities over the time they have been in operation.</p>

**Scrutiny Review Panel 1 – 2013/2014: Governance
Additional Feedback on Ward Forums Received After Agenda Despatch**

Name	Comments
	<p>We strongly urge the Scrutiny Panel to continue with the present style and operations of OUR local Ward Panels that give real benefits to the people and residents that matter across OUR Ward.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity in being able to engage within the review, we trust that the Scrutiny review will see the sense and realise what benefits and maximum effect these current Ward Panels have had in favour of our local communities that have been served very well over the past few years.</p>