**Draft Minutes of The Kenley Residents’ Association Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 25th April 2023 at**

**Kenley Memorial Hall, Godstone Road, Kenley at 7.45 p.m**.

**Present: Christine Heal (CH); Tony Heal (TH); Angela Morrison (AM); Paul Keating (PK); Tony Avery (TA); Geoff James (GJ); Linda Richman (LR).**

**Councillors: Gayle Gander (GG) and Ola Kolade (OK). GLA Member for Sutton & Croydon - Neil Garrett and LBC Cabinet Member for Finance - Jason Cummings and 45 Members.**

**Apologies: John Davenport, Conor Campion, John Dawson and Mike Lott**

1. Chairman, Christine Heal welcomed everyone and said what a good turn-out it was and hoped everyone would enjoy the meeting with the special speakers Mr. Neil Garrett, GLA Member for Sutton and Croydon and Mr. Jason Cummings, LBC Cabinet Member for Finance.
2. **Address by Local Police**, Constable Robin Lambert-Singer, reported that Kenley is still a low level of crime ward, Kenley are fighting Sanderstead for the bottom slot. The main crimes are stealing vehicles and burglary. He asked that the public please report any number plate thefts, which are on the increase, to police who can then target hotspots. Dial 999 for major incidents and 101 for less important or go to the Metropolitan Police web page. We are still waiting for an increase of Sergeants and more PCSOs in the Ward. CH thanked him for giving us an update.
3. **Address by Neil Garrett** – Primarily what we cover at City Hall is Police, Transport and Fire Brigade. **Police** - The new Police Commissioner is working towards getting the Met back to what it should be. Three new superintendents now recruited to oversee ward policing. **Transport** – Neil Garrett said the ULEZ is due to expand in August 2023 to The expansion will move out from the current limits of the North and South Circular roadways to the outer reaches of Greater London. [Non-compliant vehicles](https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/check-your-vehicle/)  will be required to pay a daily £12.50 tariff to drive in the expanded zone. Councils of Bromley, Sutton and Bexley are taking the Mayor to court as reports show that ULEZ is not making very much difference to the air quality. He asked the Mayor if the area could be ring fenced and he replied it would be too difficult. He said there will be express buses West Croydon to Heathrow and from West Croydon to Bromley. They will stop in each town, but not very convenient from Kenley. **Buses** – Trying to get bus route over to top part of Kenley from Purley Cross. Number 434 bus being extended to Caterham. Not going to go up Higher Drive, Northwood Avenue and Oaks Road. CH asked if 439 not going up Higher Drive is due to not enough money? Neil Garrett said with a Council which is bankrupt and having to put up Council Tax by 15% to enable essential public services to continue it is proving difficult. PK said a bus from Purley up Higher Drive and across common to Caterham are where people have the most need. CH said it would be wonderful to organize a meeting with people who are in need of the bus route and get the experts in. Neil Garrett said the ULEZ and TFL website shows where Croydon meets Surrey, he also mentioned he had maps and could make arrangements for meeting. After questions and answers CH thanked Neil for attending the AGM.
4. **Address by Jason Cummings** – How did we end up in a bankrupt state over a period of 8 years, where bad decisions were made. He explained how a mixture of naivety, incompetence and recklessness ended in financial catastrophe for the borough and its residents. Unravelling an accumulated debt of £1.6 billion was no easy task. The books simply didn’t balance. Jason Cummings said £171 million was unaccounted for. He stressed that no money had disappeared; it just wasn’t where it should have been. There was the refurbishment of Fairfield Halls, the scandal of Brick by Brick and the buying and selling of a hotel at a loss of £5m. Auditors had not signed off accounts for several years. Things escalated during the COVID pandemic. Jason Perry became Democratically Elected Mayor in 2020 and since then has gone through the administration and found £161m worth of mistakes. We did not want to increase Council Tax by 15% but this will save many essential services being cut and an application was made to Government to write-off a proportion of the debt. This was gross incompetence by the previous administration and misconduct whilst in Public Office. Police are looking into the case and gathering evidence. People in professional bodies have said it is the worst case of Council Finances they have ever seen. Mike McConnell asked if this could happen again? Jason Cumming said he hoped not but measures have been put in place to stop anything like this happening. The many millions of pounds it is taking to pay off the loan could have been put to much better use.

Jason Cummings said that the Mayor is planning to visit Residents Associations in the Borough to answer questions. After some questions from the floor CH thank Jason for an interesting insight to the finances of Croydon and if anyone had further questions they could ask at the end of the meeting

1. **Q & A with Councillors Gayle Gander & Ola Kolade**

Dave Hooper (DH) asked about potholes, what was being done about them – GG said that the Council do investigate. DH said some were so bad you had to swerve to avoid which puts you in danger. GG said she would chase it up but also to take photo and send to Council. There was discussion over the closure of footbridges and closure of Church Road while water was being installed into new flats. Kenley Lane/Welcomes Road closure coming to an end with flood alleviation in place. Godstone Road/Hayes Lane to be closed while drains repaired. Discussion over closure of A22 from Purley to Whyteleafe in August 2023 took place.

1. **Minutes of Autumn General Meeting held on 25th October 2022**

The minutes of the Autumn 2022 meeting having been circulated were accepted and signed.

1. **Chairman’s Review of 2022**

CH said last April we were able to hold our AGM in KMH for the first time since the COVID pandemic when we were able to view the impressive improvements to the building. We were looking forward to the Croydon Borough’s first DEMOC Election for an independent democratically elected Mayor rather than the Council controlled biggest party nominated candidate. For our Autumn Meeting we invited the chosen Mayor, Jason Perry to address our members. At that meeting we welcomed our new Ward Councillor Gayle Gander who joined re-elected Ola Kolade. Together they work as a team to represent Kenley and District Residents concerns and interests. During the last 12 months we have utilised KMH for our monthly meetings which I chair and which are sometimes challenging. Other roles that I have are (1) attending The East Surrey Transport Committee (ESTC) meetings where we have an informed speaker from either Network Rail or TFL. (2) being part of the Kenley Good Growth Fund Group. The improvements to KMH have been part of this but still being discussed are how we can improve our roads and pathways and the cleanliness and safety of our area. A small group of us with a LBC Roads Engineer walked the full length of Hayes Lane – from the station to the Airfield. We await the outcome but wish to assure you that we want to spend whatever monies available wisely. With your support we were able to raise subs to £5 per household per year. We hope what we offer is worth the £2 extra to bring about what improvements we can. Finally I would like to thank the other members of the committee for their contributions to the positive discussions we have and for the work they are always doing. Chairman Christine Heal made an appeal for more committee members, listing the vacancies on the committee which include a Vice Chairman, Health Officer, Conservation Officer, Social Organiser and Transport Officer. Do you know anyone who could fill either of these roles or provide Kendra with other expertise. CH said we were thinking of organising a fun day but with such few people on the Committee it would be difficult to achieve. Thank you.

1. **Treasurer’s Report –** AM had circulated the accounts for 2022. She said that we had a healthy balance of £24,000. One member questioned why KENDRA had such a large surplus and what plans were there for its use. The Treasurer said expenditure had been low during and following Covid, and funds had accumulated. She added the committee wanted members to suggest uses for the funds that would benefit members and the wider community, a call that the committee had made several times but had had no response. She wished to thank Jerry O’Connor the Independent Examiner for auditing the accounts and would like to re-elect him to continue to verify the 2023 accounts. Proposed by Mike McConnell and seconded by Andrew Patel and members unanimously voted to adopt the accounts.
2. **Election of Committee –** The Committee at present (names on list by the door) had agreed to continue with Christine Heal as Chairman. **This was voted unanimously for 2023/24**.

**Motions to be voted on – (a) Kendra Annual Subscription to be maintained at £5 per year per household for year commencing 1/1/2024.**

**(b) Committee expenditure limit to one supplier should be unchanged at £1500. (c) Production of Kendra Magazine to continue until the next AGM with an approved limit up to £5000, which may be to one supplier.**

**The members voted unanimously on all three motions.**

1. **Review of Current Issues**
2. **Kenley Good Growth Fund Update from Geoff James –** We now have a shiny new cycle-hub building built in Kenley Station car park. This will provide a security door entry system so that bikes can be left all day. Those with E-bikes will be able to charge their batteries. The long campaigned for, and over-due flood alleviation work was completed at the bottom of Welcomes Road (just in time for the water mains burst). This was to create a balancing pond under the road that avoids the recurrence of the regular surface flooding at the electricity sub-station The flood alleviation works were not strictly part of the Good Growth Fund, but the reinstatement of the road, pavement and verge is. You should have noticed the road is narrower as the pavement has been widened. This is to slow the car traffic and make it safer for pedestrians. We will soon also have a seating area with trees and planting. Currently there is no plan to implement one-way traffic on the Hayes Lane hill, or insert a pedestrian crossing on Hayes Lane close to the junction with Station Road. The proposal for planters outside Kenley Station ticket office is taking shape.
3. **Planning Issues – Geoff James, Kendra Planning Officer Reported**

We are grateful that under the new Mayor of Croydon the Croydon Design Guide has been discontinued. This was the guide that the previous administration used to support the gross overdevelopment in our area and the wider Croydon Area. The previous administration used it as a ‘weapon’ to overdevelop south of the Borough. With the changes we are now seeing the worst planning proposals being routinely refused. This is leading to a great many appeals. Developers are getting the message. We are seeing fewer applications for over development but the precedent has been set to replace a house with a block of flats. There are still several contentious applications – 2-4 Kenley Lane being the worst. This was refused in 2022 but the developer activated an appeal. So we hope that Bristol will be as decisive in dismissing the appeal.

Member Jane Highfield asked Geoff James to explain VIZ and MIZ. Jason Cummings stepped in and said Jason Perry announced the discontinuation of VIZ. Jason and Croydon Council are re-writing Croydon Intensification Plan. MIZ is part of the London Plan. Draft plan due out next year. CH thanked Geoff for his updates.

1. **Any Other Business**

There will be a Battle of Britain fly past on 20th August 2023, as usual depending on the weather.

CH thanked the guests, Neil Garrett and Jason Cummings for their interesting reports, Gayle Gander and Ola Kolade for always being on hand to try and sort out local issues and to the Committee and to you the members for attending.

CH mentioned the current problems with regards to Road Stewards needed in various areas i.e. Godstone Road from Co-op to Whyteleafe, also between Secom and Purley Bridge, middle section of Valley Road, parts of Hayes Lane and some side roads, most of Old Lodge Lane and many side roads, Oaks Road and Northwood Avenue.

Area Stewards needed for both lengths of Godstone Road, Central and west parts of Valley Road, Upper Kenley Lane, Church Road, Hermitage Road & Cumberlands, Firs Road area and Northwood Avenue area. CH said if anyone is interested in taking any of these areas to help distribute the magazine and collect subs please speak to one of the Committee. Thank you and good night.

The meeting ended at 21.50