

The Limes Stakeholder Meeting

Date: 21st February 2025

Venue: MS Teams

Services in Attendance
KCC, UAS Children's Service
KCC, Prevent
Kent Police
DBC, Councillor
DBC, Councillor
KCC, Councillor
DBC, Representative

Kent County Council (KCC) – Dartford Borough Council (DBC) - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UAS Children)

Introductions

Introductions were made and agenda shared.

Update

A KCC representative provided an update regarding the Reception Centre. Currently, there are three young people residing in the centre, and arrivals have been minimal due to adverse weather conditions.

A KCC representative addressed recent complaints. One complaint involved a centre vehicle parking in front of a resident's driveway. This issue arises occasionally when the gates are closed or when multiple vehicles attempt to enter simultaneously.

Additionally, a staff member was observed parking on East Hill. While staff are encouraged to use the designated car park, this incident occurred because a lorry was occupying the car park at the time.

There was also a complaint about a fast-food delivery being mistakenly sent to a resident instead of The Limes. There is clear signage for the centre, therefore this complaint is difficult to navigate. Staff have been instructed to provide precise delivery instructions and verify the delivery address for orders.

Another complaint involved a centre vehicle parked in front of a resident's driveway. This was the catering delivery truck that arrives on Mondays. The catering company is encouraged to use smaller vans, but sometimes the gate is obstructed by parked cars, necessitating parking further up the road. This recurring issue is challenging to resolve without addressing the parking situation on Brent Lane.

A DBC councillor representative suggested that the delivery driver may have missed the signage for The Limes, as it faces down Brent Lane, and drivers often proceed up the lane. They proposed seeking advice from the police regarding the parking issues.

A KCC representative expressed doubt that the police could assist with the parking situation and suggested implementing double yellow lines or 30-minute no parking signs to deter commuter parking.

The DBC councillor representative highlighted the difficulty of reaching a consensus within the community, as different neighbours have varying preferences.

A KCC councillor representative stated that if a significant community benefit is identified, KCC can decide if it outweighs minor objections.

The KCC representative assured that efforts are being made to secure a smaller vehicle for catering deliveries. They also inquired about the responsibility for repainting the Keep Clear sign.

A KCC councillor representative responded that Kent Highways Reports are responsible and will provide a link, though the timeframe is uncertain.

A DBC councillor representative reassured the KCC representative that they are kept informed via email. The KCC representative emphasised the importance of demonstrating collaboration with the public to resolve issues.

The KCC representative mentioned that Britain First showed up outside the gates of the centre again. However, it was only a short visit and not a demonstration. The visit has increased the centre's visibility in the community, with both positive and negative consequences. While agencies have reached out to offer integration opportunities for the young people, there was an incident where a member of the public shouted at a staff member from their car.

Regarding the building, the car park is being relined to potentially add another parking spot. Window restrictors have been installed on York Road, and a long-term solution is being developed to allow windows to open from the top instead of the bottom, addressing complaints. Discussions about the fence on the York Road boundary are ongoing.

A DBC councillor representative reported that they have been in contact with KCC about the fence and are reviewing letters sent to residents. They were unsure if residents were still in contact with the police.

A Kent Police representative confirmed that it is not an ongoing investigation.

Stakeholder Questions

A DBC councillor representative reported that a neighbour mentioned seeing four or five individuals taken to the doctor's surgery in Pilgrims Way with an interpreter. The

neighbour expressed concern about why these individuals could secure appointments easily while the neighbours could not.

A KCC representative clarified there could be multiple reasons why the young people attended the surgery. For example, the young people may have needed to be registered in person.

A Kent Police representative announced a Dartford Community Meeting aimed at bringing together different communities in Dartford to highlight the importance of community engagement. The representative invited all attendees of the Stakeholder Meeting, noting that it is not a politicised event but an opportunity for networking and for the police to explain their role in the area.

A DBC councillor representative inquired if they could attend, and the Kent Police representative confirmed they are welcome.

The Kent Police representative also wished a KCC representative success with their upcoming meeting with local Dartford sports clubs.

A KCC representative asked the stakeholders if there were any updates.

A KCC Prevent representative explained that they have the latest community tension online review, and there was nothing of note regarding The Limes.

A DBC representative advised that events are being held at Acacia Hall by Youth Unity, featuring various sports and activities.

A Kent Police representative requested to be informed about the details of the recent incident relating to a member of staff shouting towards staff from their car, as it is important for them to be aware of potential community tensions.

A KCC representative responded that they would send the information across and concluded the meeting.

AOB

None Raised.