

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

5:30 pm, Monday, 7 September 2009

**Held at: Holy Apostles Church Hall, 281 Fosse Road South,
Leicester, LE3 1AE**

Who was there:

Councillor Michael Cooke

Councillor Anne Glover

Councillor Wayne Naylor

INFORMATION SHARING – ‘CAROUSEL’ SESSION

The following information stands were sited in the room. Members of the public visited the stands and were given an opportunity to meet Councillors, Council staff and the local Police and to bring enquiries and raise and issues.

<p>Ward Councillors and General Information</p> <p>Members of the public were given an opportunity to talk to their local Councillors or raise general queries.</p>	<p>Anti-Social Behaviour</p> <p>Officers from the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and the Local Policing Unit were on hand to discuss Anti-Social Behaviour issues in the area.</p>
<p>Leicestershire Police</p> <p>Officers from the Local Policing Unit were present and members of the public could talk to them before and after the meeting.</p>	<p>Highways and Transport</p> <p>Officer from Highways and Transport were available during the Information Fair to respond to residents about any Highways and Transport related queries.</p>
<p>Environment Services</p> <p>Officers from Environmental Services were on hand to discuss issues relating to Street Cleaning, Wheelie Bins and Recycling.</p>	<p>Housing</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Housing Manager was on hand to discuss Housing issues in the area.</p>

At the conclusion of this informal session members of the public were invited to take their seats and take part in the formal session of the meeting.

55. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Cooke was elected as Chair for the meeting.

56. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

57. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests that they may have had in the business to be discussed and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

No declarations of interest were received.

58. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields Community Meeting, held on 16 June 2009 and as circulated, were approved as a correct record.

59. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION - AREA ACTION PLAN

Councillor Cooke briefly explained the issues raised previously in relation to Highways and Transport and explained that an action plan had been developed to address the matters raised. With support from Officers from the Highways and Transport section, Councillor Cooke also updated the meeting in relation to the following, with clarification on some matters by Councillors Glover and Naylor:

- Cost to replace grass with tarmac on Braunstone Lane;
- No grits bins available in the Braunstone Lane Area;
- The poor condition of pavements, inadequate number and location of dropped kerbs for disabled and buggy users;
- Flooding in the area and impact on highways and pavements;
- Traffic calming in Winstanley Drive and the impact on Caldicott Road and Overpark Avenue;
- Planned traffic calming measures for Hallam Crescent and the potential negative impact;
- Environment issues – graffiti, glass and litter; and
- Parking and traffic issues.

In response, residents raised concerns about the Rowley Fields bus route, and specifically that residents were not informed of the changes and wanted to know why they were not consulted in advance. In response Councillor Cooke explained that Arriva had changed the No 51 bus route without consulting local residents. The Council were notified of the changes in June, but unfortunately had not informed the local residents. Councillor Cooke also confirmed that he had written to Arriva asking why the residents had not been informed, the various Emergency Services to find

out their views on the new route, and to the Traffic Commissioners to find out exactly what authority or power they have. It was also confirmed that the Ward Councillors were considering arranging a public meeting on the matter, and that no applications had been received for new bus stops along the revised route.

60. EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES AND PLANS FOR THE AREA

Officers were on hand to discuss the educational challenges in the area and the plans for the future.

Margaret Libreri, Director – Learning Services, explained the City Council responsibilities in the area and specifically explained that the continued drift of pupils from City Council to County Council schools in the area had presented some significant educational sustainability issues in the area. The following key points were also made:

- Riverside Business and Enterprise College didn't have any natural feeder Primary Schools;
- There were no specific plans to make changes to the character or organisation of Primary Schools;
- Recent educational outcomes had seen significant improvements across all the Key Stages but that only one school in the area was above the citywide achievement average at the first stage of assessment;
- That some achievement figures were unacceptably low;
- That attendance statistics varied insignificantly from the citywide average therefore low achievement wasn't down to non attendance; and
- Rather, it was about the quality of teaching and experiences whilst at school and the support available outside.

In response, residents raised the following questions/concerns:

- Children couldn't do their times tables so we should move back to the old ways of teaching;
- School holidays are too long and the pupil forget information between terms;
- What are the pupil – teacher ratios across the city;
- Responsibility for the continued learning of children also comes from the home and the parents;

In response it was stated that some schools were above the national average in the city and it was therefore about getting the management, quality of teaching and support levels correct; that schools have to open for a specific number of days per year and the crucial question is what's provided in the summer holiday to complement learning; and that those children with English as a second or additional language, coming from impoverished backgrounds, or new to the country were more likely to have lower attainment.

In relation to the secondary school provision in the area, the recent results and overall achievement of Riverside Business and Enterprise College was commended.

The concept of National Challenge Schools, i.e. those schools consistently performing significantly below average, was explained to residents. Specifically, the following points were made:

- That Riverside was a National Challenge School;
- That the Riverside suffered from the changing school population during the year;
- That children from 33 primary schools attended Riverside, which demonstrated the challenges faced;
- That attendance levels were on average about 90%, below the national target of 94%;
- That 22% of pupils were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) upon leaving therefore may not have received a curriculum that met their needs; and
- That Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 attainment levels were still below that required levels.

The future of Riverside was also discussed and it was confirmed that a consultation process was ongoing that addressed the position and needs of the school, including closure; that there was a planning restriction on the reuse of the playing fields should the school be closed meaning that the playing fields could not be redeveloped; and that the Ward Councillors were working with the Governors and the school to oppose closure. It was also confirmed that the final decision on the future of Riverside would be taken by Cabinet, and that all residents would be informed of the date of this in advance of the meeting.

In relation to Fulhurst Community College, it was confirmed that previously the school had been placed in special measures by Ofsted; that a new leadership team, including a new Executive Head, was in post; and that they were working in partnership with Rushey Mead School, which had been acknowledged as an outstanding school, in order to share learning and expertise. Finally, it was also confirmed that the concept of developing Academies in Leicester had been extensively considered, and that the Council was committed to local solutions rather than outsourcing education.

61. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Officers from the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and the Local Policing Unit were on hand to discuss Anti-Social Behaviour issues in the area. Neil Canham, Leicester Anti-Social Behaviour Unit Manager, explained that anti-social issues had been reported in the Holy Apostles Church Car Park, Winchester Avenue, and Western Park – particularly in relation to alcohol consumption. However, it was confirmed that no active investigations were ongoing in the area, but where they have occurred previously the interventions put in place had resolved the matters.

In relation to any ongoing matters, residents were urged to provide as much information as they could as Officers relied on any local intelligence provided. Councillor Glover and Councillor Naylor, in supporting this, stressed the need for residents to report any issues as required.

Residents raised concerns about anti-social behaviour in Winchester Avenue, particularly stating that the issues had been reported previously and it had become a beat priority for Westcotes but no action had been taken. Neil Canham, Leicester Anti-Social Behaviour Unit Manager, confirmed that he would take the matter up once again with the beat Sergeant.

It was also confirmed that Councillors Cooke, Glover and Naylor held a regular monthly meeting with the Inspector from Hinckley Road Local Policing Unit and that any crime or antisocial behaviour related matters could be taken up by them at the meeting.

62. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Officers were on hand to discuss environmental issues such as litter, graffiti and bins on streets. Due to the length of time spent on other matters Councillor Cooke confirmed that any specific issues could be directed to Officers at the end of the meeting.

In response to a query raised by Councillor Glover about the fact that the Street Cleansing service seem to visit some streets immediately before the bins are emptied, which leads seemed pointless, Officers confirmed that the shift pattern of Biffa Operatives could not be aligned with Cleansing Services staff as Biffa operated a four day working week. Finally, more dog fouling bins were requested in the area.

63. COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGET AND APPLICATIONS

The following funding applications were considered.

Funding application – Braunstone Community Bonfire and Fireworks Display (Appendix B1)

Councillors explained that they were unable to support the application in full, rather being minded to support a proportion of the cost. Residents were generally supportive of this.

RESOLVED:

that it be agreed that a total of £1500 be supported, with a total of £1000 from the Ward Community Fund and £500 from the Ward Community Cohesion fund.

Funding application – Citywide Achievement Project (Appendix B2)

Councillor Cooke proposed that, having received additional information in relation to this application it would that residents views would be sought and a recommendation be made by the Councillors once the additional information had been properly considered. Sally Davis, B-Active Manager provided some background to the meeting on the application. Residents were generally supportive of the application.

RESOLVED:

that the views of the meeting be noted, that the application, including the revised additional information, be considered in more detail following the meeting, and that Councillors Cooke, Glover and Naylor make a final funding recommendation to the Cabinet Lead.

Councillor Cooke also confirmed that a further funding application had been received for Community Fund Basketball Sessions from Carl Brown, Warriors Basketball Club on the day of the meeting and that this would be put forward to the next meeting for proper consideration, as a decision was not required immediately.

64. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Cooke confirmed that several additional patchwalks in the area were planned and outlined the dates to residents. It was also confirmed that further publicity about this would be circulated in advance.

65. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.57pm.