

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:30 pm, Tuesday, 7 April 2009

Held at:

Who was there:

Councillor Culdipp Singh Bhatti
Councillor Piara Singh Clair
Councillor Ross Willmott

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.

Table 1 **Ward Councillors**

Table 2 **Watermead Country Park**
Information on proposed works to Country Park

Table 3 **Friends of Watermead Park**
Information on this group

Table 4 **Police**
Information on local crime initiatives

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.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Bhatti was re-elected as Chair of Rushey Mead Community Meeting for the remainder of the year 2009/10.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Sue Taylor (Community Legal Advice).

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made at this time.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the Minutes of the Community Meeting held on 21st January 2009, as previously circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

5. BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE - RUSHEY MEAD SCHOOL

Helen Ryan, Service Director, Transforming the Learning Environment attended the meeting and gave an update on progress with the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme as it related to Rushey Mead School.

Helen opened with a brief update on the overall BSF programme across the City and stated that the funding received from the Government for the programme was being administered by the Partnership for Schools and the City Council was working closely with the Partnership to ensure that the most appropriate schools were built in the most appropriate locations.

Helen stated that the Business Case for the BSF programme in Leicester was in two parts, namely: -

- i) Identify what the City Council wanted to spend the funding on. This had been approved by the Government.
- ii) Identify how the proposals were to be achieved. This part of the Business Case was still being worked on.

Helen stated that there was currently a growth in the number of children in Leicester and therefore there was a need to ensure that the schools in place were of the correct size. Currently this large piece of work was being carried out in conjunction with the Partnership for Schools.

Rushey Mead School was within Phase 2 of the BSF programme and were currently working through a 'visioning' process to decide how they wanted to spend the funding allocated. Work was being carried out with designers to see what could be achieved for the money available. In addition to the BSF funding Rushey Mead School had put in a bid for £1 million for Environmental Sustainability Works to be included in the works, if successful this funding would then be added to the BSF funding.

A member of the public questioned that when the BSF works at Rushey Mead School had been completed what activities would be available for the community, and would they include swimming facilities. Helen stated that all BSF schools would have a range of community facilities open during the day but with an ability to zone off sections of the school at night to ensure that the rest of the school was secure, BSF funding would not cover swimming facilities.

A member of the public questioned whether a new building would improve educational standards. Helen stated that this was one of the fundamental challenges that the Council had to address. If 21st Century was to be delivered then we needed to know what this would look like, it was really a case of delivering the curriculum. The public asked when was it expected that educational levels would increase in this area. Helen stated that she expected that the results of the investment locally would show improvements within 5 years.

A member of the public stated that he was aware that the old Soar valley school was shortly to be demolished but he understood that there was asbestos in the building and questioned what the impact would be to the local community. Helen stated that she was aware of this situation and that a specialist team would be tackling the asbestos issues before the buildings were demolished. As soon as a plan of action had been finalised Helen stated that she would inform local people.

A member of the public stated that discussions around the new school buildings had been underway for some 18 months and local people had continually requested that leisure facilities were badly needed in the area. The Chair stated that in future schools would no longer close in the evening and would be available for community use. There were also proposals to expand facilities at Rushey Mead School to create additional sporting facilities, but this would be dependant of funding available.

Councillor Willmott informed those present that the City Council had just received a large amount of funding to develop football facilities in the City. Details would be made available at a later date when proposals had been drawn up.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Adrian Russell, Service Director, Environmental Services gave a brief presentation that provided an update on work in the area that had been undertaken by his staff. A copy of a newsletter was circulated at the meeting.

Adrian outlined the process of reporting incidences of graffiti in the area and of the fact that should the graffiti be of a racist nature then this would be removed within 1

hour of it being reported. The City Council's Graffiti Manager was keeping a record of 'tags' to help identify the perpetrators.

Adrian was thanked for his presentation.

7. WATERMEAD COUNTRY PARK

Stewart Doughty, Parks Manager attended the meeting as part of the wider consultation process regarding the works planned to the car park at Watermead Park.

Stewart stated that the Park comprised 50% of water and was very popular with day walkers and animal lovers. The current surface of the car park was made up of loose stone that had led to a number of problems and a series of complaints. There were currently some 108,500 visitors to the Park each year with an average number of 15-20 vehicles parked during the week, many more at weekends.

Proposals included the re-surfacing of the car park with tarmac, including drainage and kerbs surrounding the car park, and Pay and Display. By introducing Pay and Display it was expected that cars would be displaced to local streets and therefore parking restrictions were being looked at to reduce this potential problem.

Local people and Park users were being consulted on the proposals, together with the Forum for Older People and the Leicester Local Access Forum.

Consultation on the proposals would run until the end of April.

A member of the public questioned whether a Hindu area in the corner of the Park and it was stated that the Park was a public open space and that planning restrictions would apply, together with the fact that most of the site was on a flood plain. Stewart stated that there was a vacant Marina building in the Park but this was owned by the County Council.

A member of the public questioned the cost of re-surfacing and providing Pay and Display and suggested leaving the current loose surface. Stewart stated that the current loose surface cost £5,000 to maintain and Councillor Willmott stated that to leave the current surface was one option but it would also to borrow the money to fund the works and repay over 10 years.

A member of the public stated that although the Government were encouraging healthy living and it seemed that the City Council were dissuading people from visiting this Park. Rather than pay to park their cars a number of people would likely drive away elsewhere.

Stewart was thanked for his presentation.

8. COMMUNITY LEGAL ADVICE

It was stated that apologies had been received from the Community Legal Advice representatives.

9. LOCAL POLICING - UPDATE

The Police representatives that attended the meeting made reference to the Policing Pledge that had recently been advertised in the local media. There were 10 parts to the Pledge and it was about raising public confidence in the Police.

Public consultation was being carried out with Police Beat surgeries being held twice per month for local people to meet local Community Police.

On the local Police website it was now possible to click on Neighbourhood Policing and then click on a map to highlight crime in any particular area.

Current priorities were: -

- Road Safety outside Primary Schools
- Graffiti
- Anti-Social Behaviour – Rushey Fields area.

Local people were being encouraged to report incidents by phone to help ensure that areas can be patrolled at the correct times.

At Rushey Mead primary School it was recently 'Walk to School Week' and parents cars were ticketed outside the school, with one vehicle being towed away. Children at the school were given road safety talks. The Police were also liaising with the City Council about getting the yellow lines outside the school re-painted. The Council were working with the school to develop Travel Plans.

A member of the public stated that traffic on Braemar Drive travelled too fast and was mainly parents taking children to/from school. Drivers needed to be made aware of the potential consequences of their excess speeding. Councillor Willmott stated that there was a need to look at the road markings in the area of Braemar Drive and Braemar Close.

10. COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGETS

Steve Letten, Members Support Officer reported on the budgets available to the Community Meeting for 2009/10, and of the balances remaining from 2008/09 although a decision was awaited as to whether these would be transferred to 2009/10.

<u>Balances – 2008/09</u>	£
Ward Community Fund	2,033
Ward Action Plan	667
Community Cohesion Fund	-

2009/10 Budgets	£
Ward Community Fund	5,000
Ward Action Plan	10,000
Community Cohesion Fund	2,000

Application for Funding (Community Fund)

Steve Letten, Members Support Officer reported that an application for funding had been received, as set out below: -

Friends of Watermead	£1820
Funding to stage a Friends of Watermead Family Discovery Day – 22 nd August 2009.	

RESOLVED:

that the application for funding, as set out above, be **APPROVED**.

11. RUISHEY PARK - A COMMUNITY VISION

Mr Patel, a local resident, gave a presentation on 'A Community Vision for Rushey Park'.

Mr Patel stated that the proposals required the use of Council facilities at Rushey Park and to be able to build a new Pavilion and Changing facilities at the Park. No funding was required from the Council.

Mr Jansari, a local resident, stated that the proposals were very much a vision of what was felt to be needed in this area. Funding was being actively pursued by LEP for this community led project that ultimately aimed to build a Sports Village. A Public/Private sector partnership was being looked at.

It was stated that the proposals as presented at the meeting could be referred to City Council officers and Members to assess what level of support could be offered.

The Chair stated that the City Council would welcome the opportunity to at the proposals in greater detail to ascertain what was achievable and what would not be achievable.

Councillor Willmott stated that there were a number of areas of work that were coming into place that might make aspects of this vision achievable. A lot more work was required to assess what would work. Arrangements would be made for Mr.Patel to meet with City Council officers and Members.

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Suggested dates for meetings of the Community Meeting were reported as follows: -

2009

Thursday 9th July

Tuesday 20th October

2010

Tuesday 12th January

Wednesday 21st April

It was agreed that the dates would be firmed up later.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Fencing – Church of Our lady

It was stated that an application was being considered to erect a fence around this Church. Councillor Willmott stated that he was aware of correspondence relating to this matter and Steve Letten agreed to liaise.

14. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.31 pm.

