

# **Your Community, Your Voice**

## **Record of Meeting and Actions**

**6:00 pm, Wednesday, 24 March 2010**

**Held at: St Edward the Confessor Catholic Church Hall, 633  
Aylestone Lane, Leicester, LE2 8TF**

Who was there:

Councillor Barbara Chambers
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Councillor Nigel Porter
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## INFORMATION SHARING – ‘INFORMATION FAIR’ 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 service representatives.

<b>Ward Councillors and General Information</b> Members of the public were able to talk to their local Councillors or raise general queries	<b>Police Issues</b> The Local Police were present to address issues and answer general queries
<b>Traffic and Transport</b> Officers were available to discuss Traffic and/or Highways issues in the area	<b>Aylestone Local Action Group</b> Members of the public were able to find out about the work of this Group
<b>Spirit of Aylestone</b> Members of the public were invited to find out more about the work of the Spirit of Aylestone	

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.

#### **47. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Councillor Porter was elected as Chair for the meeting.

#### **48. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Adrian Edge, Play & Youth Development Officer with Leicester City Council.

#### **49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors were asked to declare any interest they had in the business on the agenda, and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

Councillor Porter declared a personal interest in the general business of the meeting, as he had been involved with the Aylestone Local Action Group, having been to meetings and having spoken to Council officers on the Group's behalf.

#### **50. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Aylestone Community Meeting held on 28 October 2009 were received.

A resident requested that reference be made in minute 6, "Planning Issues in the Aylestone Ward", to the concerns that had been raised at the meeting on 28 October 2009 about the floodlighting that would be used around the proposed artificial sports pitches on Aylestone Playing Fields.

The meeting noted that sequential tests would have to be carried out, to show that alternative sites had been considered for the football pitches and that none had been found to be suitable. Ward Members had been advised that these tests had been done.

#### **AGREED:**

that the minutes of the Aylestone Community Meeting held on 28 October 2009 be confirmed as a correct record, subject to the following bullet point being added at the end of the list of bullet points in minute 6, "Planning Issues in the Aylestone Ward":-

- "The proposed floodlighting would be intrusive for local residents and would frighten wildlife away from the area."

## 51. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Barbara Whitcombe, Team Manager (City Wardens) with Leicester City Council, introduced herself to the meeting. She explained that City Wardens had been introduced as a pilot scheme in October 2008. This had been very successful, so was being rolled out across the City, to enable every Ward to have a dedicated Warden.

Barbara Whitcombe explained the work of the City Wardens, highlighting the following areas:-

- The City Wardens did a lot of education and preventative work, such as promoting recycling and stopping littering and graffiti. They would be pleased to attend further events to increase awareness of the services they offered. Work also was done with the proprietors of food premises to ensure that they cleared up litter from their premises;
- City Wardens had powers to ensure that people cleared up after their dogs, kept their dogs on leads in certain areas and removed them from play areas;
- During the coming year, the City Wardens' main campaign would be on keeping streets clear of bins. This included domestic, commercial and industrial premises. A lot of areas in the City were No Cold Calling zones, so Wardens would leave a card to say they would be calling back to the property. If the bins had been removed when the Warden returned, no further action was taken. If the bins were still on the street, the Warden attempted to speak to the household / occupier concerned, but if they persisted in leaving bins on the street, they were issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice. The target of the campaign was to remove 10,000 bins from the streets during the year;
- Photographs were taken of graffiti and passed to the Council's Cleansing Team for action. If necessary, details also were passed to the police, (for example, if the graffiti was offensive or racist);
- The City Wardens had had a lot of success in stopping fly posting in the City Centre, with approximately 17,500 posters being removed by City Wardens in 2009. People found to be persistently fly posting were prosecuted;
- Any rubbish left that was over one black bag in size, but less than a lorry load, was considered to be fly tipping. The Wardens worked with the Council's environmental crime officers to search for evidence of who had done the fly tipping and had powers to pursue them;
- The City Wardens worked closely with communities on projects to clean up areas. For example, they had 90 adult and 90 child litter pick kits that could be borrowed;
- Anyone wanting to distribute free printed matter in the City needed a licence to do so and was required to clear up any leaflets left on the ground. The service

had done a lot of work to ensure that this was adhered to, which had made a big difference to the City Centre in particular; and

- Vehicles for sale parked on the road and vehicles on which work being done on the road were classified as nuisance vehicles, against which the City Wardens were able to take action.

Barbara Whitcombe advised the meeting that, from May 2010, members of the public would be able to contact the City Warden service through a new website, called One Clean Leicester. There also would be a MSN address through which the Wardens could be contacted. Photographs of problems could then be downloaded to the website, or sent by text to the team.

Residents reported that problems with dog fouling were being experienced in Cheshire Gardens and Aylestone Hall gardens. Barbara Whitcombe advised that the requirement for people to clear up after their dog was enforceable on any land open to the air, irrespective of who owned it. Surveillance could be undertaken to identify those responsible and a letter drop could be made to local residents, advising them of how they could notify the Council of any information they had regarding this.

## **52. POLICE PRIORITIES AND CONSULTATIONS**

Sergeant Andy Partridge, Leicestershire Constabulary, introduced himself to the meeting as the Neighbourhood Sergeant for Aylestone.

Andy Partridge explained that the City's police beats had changed, with effect from 4 January 2010, to come in to line with the City Council's Wards. In Aylestone, there now would be one team leader, three police constables and three police community support officers. They would be supported by, and working in partnership with, partner agencies and groups.

The priorities for the neighbourhood would be set by the community. This would be done through people speaking to the police about their concerns and through issues identified by officers through normal day-to-day police activities.

Andy Partridge then drew attention to the following points:-

- Police work was done through a combination of enforcement, prevention, intelligence and consultation, (known as EPIC), which was key to good partnership working;
- Crime reduction initiatives included the police being more visible on the streets and giving crime prevention advice to residents;
- Burglaries in dwellings had reduced by approximately 50%, compared to the same time last year. Further crime statistics could be accessed through the police website;

- Everyone who reported anti-social behaviour to the police was contacted, however minor the offence, as this helped to identify “hot spot” areas; and
- The police also undertook work with young people. For example, free football was provided every Friday.

CIC David Budd of Leicestershire Constabulary reminded the meeting that a grant previously had been awarded to the police, from which 10 stand-alone Ward Burglar Alarm kits had been bought. Leicester City Council would fit these on the properties of people who were vulnerable to burglaries, or who had already been a victim of burglary.

David Budd also advised that a kit could be obtained that looked like a normal spy hole in a door, but was a camera. These cost approximately £90 each and 50 had been bought.

In response to a question, it was noted that the government had indicated that, if it was re-elected at the forthcoming general election, it would consider re-introducing the 101 telephone service, through which anti-social behaviour could be reported. The meeting welcomed this, as action had been taken more quickly on anti-social behaviour reported through this service than through the police and it the 101 service appeared to find it easier to make connections between incidents.

The police stated that they would support the reintroduction of the 101 service and recognised that problems existed in making linkages between incidents. They advised that work was ongoing to improve this, as repeats of incidents could be quite significant. At present, anyone wishing to report anything could either telephone 999, if the incident required an immediate response, or 0116 222 2222 for other incidents.

### **53. AYLESTONE LOCAL ACTION GROUP**

The Chair introduced the Aylestone Local Action Group, advising the meeting that this was a group of residents who were working together to try to improve the environment in Aylestone.

Lauren Hicking (Secretary) and Lyn Moss (Chairman) then introduced themselves to the meeting.

Lauren Hicking reminded the meeting that, at the last Community Meeting, she had shown photographs of the area, which highlighted its dull and unkempt appearance. Consideration therefore had been given to how the appearance of the area could be improved.

When the Action Group contacted the City Council about the condition of the junction of Aylestone Road with Lutterworth Road, a favourable response was received. This started a dialogue with the Council, as a result of which it had been agreed that block paving would be installed through the shopping centre, railings would be upgraded and seating would be provided.

In order not to lose the impetus created by this, it was decided to form the Aylestone Local Action Group. The Group met regularly at the Rutland Arms and anyone interested in its work was welcome to come to meetings.

The Group had submitted an application for funding towards planters for use in the village, (see minute 55(g), "Budget", below). Local shopkeepers also were being canvassed and they were very supportive of proposals to introduce more flowers to the area. It had not yet been decided if this would be achieved through entering Britain in Bloom, or whether a low key approach would be more appropriate.

In response to questions, Lauren Hicking advised the meeting that the planters initially would be positioned on the side of Lutterworth Road. Each one was one metre wide, by one metre deep, by 0.75 metres high and would be planted with evergreens and lavender, as this was low maintenance.

Some concern was expressed that, although lavender smelt very nice, it could look a dull. It also was suggested that shopkeepers could be encouraged to each have a hanging basket outside their premises, as had been done during previous participation in Britain in Bloom competitions.

Some concern was expressed that the railings at Wigston Lane / Lutterworth Road, and Middleton Street often were knocked down by lorries. In reply, Lauren Hicking explained that the Action Group had been working with the City Council's Highways officers, to ensure that the most appropriate railings were installed.

The meeting noted that the Action Group would be having a stall in Aylestone village on Saturday, 27 March, which it was hoped would increase awareness of the Group's work and encourage more people to become involved. Any groups or organisations interested in working with the Action Group also were invited to speak to any member of the Action Group.

#### **54. CHILDREN'S PLAY FACILITIES ON AYLESTONE PLAYING FIELDS**

As no officers were able to attend the meeting for this item, it was not discussed.

#### **55. BUDGET**

Jerry Connolly, Members Support Officer, gave an update on the latest position of the Community Meeting budget.

The following applications for grant funding were then considered.

##### **a) Speakeasy Theatre Company – Act Up Young People's Theatre Company – £1,436**

AGREED:

that this application be deferred for consideration in the 2010/11 financial year.

**b) Speakeasy Theatre Company – Act Up Young People’s Theatre Company – £866**

**RECOMMENDED:**

that funding of £724 from the Ward Community Cohesion Fund and £142 from the Ward Action Plan Budget be supported for the development of the Act Up Young People’s Theatre Company.

**c) STARS Freestyle Dance Academy – Dance Tracksuits – £480**

**AGREED:**

that this application be deferred for further information on whether this is a commercial organisation.

**d) Sgt Leon Gamble and CIC David Budd – Police Neighbourhood Action Team Transport – £500**

CIC David Budd introduced a request for funding from the Neighbourhood Action Team for £500 towards hiring a non-police fleet vehicle for one year. He explained that the Neighbourhood Action Team consisted of a sergeant and five constables, who had volunteered to be trained and equipped to work on specific projects. The Team spent a lot of time in plain clothes, going in to the community to gather evidence to enable the members to, amongst other things, obtain warrants to enter premises. An officer showed the meeting the protective clothing and equipment worn for this.

It was questioned why a vehicle could not be provided by the Police, as it appeared to be an operational necessity. David Budd explained that vehicles previously had been paid for through grants and sponsorship, but these were no longer available. In addition, Leicestershire Constabulary was having to make significant financial cuts. The meeting stressed that it supported this request, but was very concerned that the Police were having to make such an application.

**RECOMMENDED:**

that funding of £500 from the Ward Action Plan Budget be supported towards the hire of non-police vehicles for use by the Neighbourhood Action Team.

**e) Eyres Monsell Allotment & Garden Society – Portable Diesel Generator for Allotment Maintenance – £495**

The meeting noted that the Eyres Monsell Allotment and Garden Society was based in Aylestone.

**RECOMMENDED:**

that funding of £495 from the Ward Action Plan Budget be approved for the provision of a portable diesel generator for allotment maintenance.



**f) Aylestone Local Action Group – Start Up Fund – £160**

NOTED:

that funding of £160 from the Ward Community Fund had been approved for printing and other miscellaneous expenses.

**g) Aylestone Local Action Group – Two Decorative Planters in Aylestone Shopping Area – £1,500**

The meeting noted that funding of £1,400 from the Ward Action Plan Budget previously had been ring-fenced for allocation to the Act Up Young People's Theatre Company, but consideration of the application to which this related had been deferred to the 2010/11 financial year. This therefore released funds for use in the current financial year that could be allocated to this project.

RECOMMENDED:

that funding of £2,900 be approved from the Ward Action Plan Budget for the provision of planters for trees and other facilities and the development of an Aylestone in Bloom project.

**h) Leicester City Council, Parks Service, Riverside Team – Addressing Public Requests for Bins on Aylestone Meadows – £2,683**

RECOMMENDED:

that funding of £2,500 be approved from the Ward Community Fund for the provision of rubbish bins on Aylestone Meadows.

**i) Leicester City Council, Parks Service, Riverside Team – Cleaning Brooks of Litter and Flotsam – £1,300**

AGREED:

that, subject to the agreement of the applicant, this application be referred to the Justice Seen Justice Done programme for implementation in consultation with the City Council's City Warden Service.

**j) Leicester City Council, Parks Service, Riverside Team – Support of Volunteer Workers on Aylestone Meadows – £3,388**

The meeting noted that the siting of the proposed storage shed would be agreed with the Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society and the Police.

RECOMMENDED:

that funding of £3,388 from the Ward Action Plan Budget be approved for the provision of a secure steel storage shed and storage racking.

**k) Leicester City Council, Parks Service, Riverside Team – Volunteering Support for Community Working – £776**

RECOMMENDED:

that funding of £776 from the Community Cohesion Fund be approved for the provision of potable toilet facilities, hand cleaning materials, and water carriers and boilers.

## **56. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **a) Gilmorton Ball Court**

Stacey Hewitt, Team Leader (Neighbourhood Housing) with Leicester City Council, reminded the meeting that a grant application for funding towards a multi-purpose ball court had been endorsed by a previous meeting.

Construction of the ball court had been completed on 18 March 2010 and it would be opened officially on 19 May 2010 with a scheme for young people.

### **b) Spirit of Aylestone**

Tim Fergus, a minister at Aylestone Baptist Church, advised the meeting that:-

- A husting had been arranged for the forthcoming general election. On the assumption that the election would be called for Thursday, 6 May 2010, the husting would be held on Wednesday, 28 April 2010 at St Andrew's Parish Hall. All were welcome to attend and to submit questions for the politicians in advance of the husting;
- Leaflets had been distributed at this meeting, setting out the church services that were being held in Aylestone over the Easter period; and
- The Spirit of Aylestone Group supported the idea of having a magazine for Aylestone and a volunteer was needed to take the project forward. It was recognised that this would be a big commitment, but some interest already had been expressed in the area about having a magazine.

### **c) Friends of Aylestone Hall Gardens**

It was noted that a meeting of the Friends of Aylestone Hall Gardens would be held at 7.00 pm on Wednesday, 31 March 2010, in the Bowls Pavilion. Anyone was welcome to attend.

Attention was drawn to the notice board in the Aylestone Hall Gardens, on which all events hosted by the Friends were advertised.

## **57. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The Chair thanked all present for attending and closed the meeting at 7.55 pm