

# **Eyres Monsell Community Meeting**

**Your Community, Your Voice**

## **Record of Meeting and Actions**

**9:30 am, Wednesday, 15 December 2010**

**Held at: Magpie Youth Centre, Sturdee Road**

Councillors in Attendance

Councillor Virginia Cleaver
-----------------------------

Councillor Rory Palmer
------------------------

## 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.

<p><b>Ward Councillors and General Information</b></p> <p>Talk to your local councillors or raise general queries</p>	<p><b>Police Issues</b></p> <p>Talk to your Local Police about issues or raise general queries</p>
<p><b>Community News Team</b></p> <p>John Coster and Simon Parker want to hear from you and your community. They'll report your stories and get you on tape, video or sound</p>	<p><b>Meet the Housing Team</b></p> <p>Information on the new banding proposals for access to council homes</p>
<p><b>Meet the youth team</b></p> <p>News and information about activities for young people in the area</p>	<p><b>Health Through Warmth</b></p> <p>Advice about getting through the winter as safe and well as possible</p>
<p><b>City Warden</b></p> <p>Information about street issues such as fly tipping, graffiti and litter</p>	<p><b>Recycling</b></p> <p>An update o the pilot scheme for a new way of collecting recycling</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.

## **28. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Councillor Palmer was appointed as Chair for the meeting.

## **29. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Jean Dutfield, Julian Pirie and Jean Moxon.

## **30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors were asked to declare any interests they may have in the business on the agenda and/or declare if Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them. No such declarations were made.

## **31. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Eyres Monsell Community Meeting held on 15 September 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

In response to the minutes, an update on the recycling pilot was given. It was reported that the pilot was ongoing, but was proving very successful. The pilot would be evaluated and a decision made on whether to roll it out across the city.

## **32. COUNCILLORS' COMMUNITY REPORT**

### **COUNCIL BUDGET**

Councillor Palmer explained the current budget situation that faced the Council, stating that it would be a very difficult time. He explained that the government wanted to tackle the public sector deficit as quickly as possible over the next four years. There had been in-year cuts and would be further cuts over the next few years. An estimated £18million would be cut in the next financial year, amounting to £300 per citizen. The Council would be going through a process to work out its budget and tough decisions would have to be made which would affect all parts of the Council.

He explained that in the city, amongst other things, transport schemes had been affected and free swimming for under-16s had been stopped by government (although this had been continued by the Council over the last summer holidays.) He also stated that Leicester would be more affected than other areas, as it was not able to collect as much from Council tax due to the high number of low banded houses.

Residents asked whether sufficient efforts were made to collect Council Tax owing. Councillor Palmer replied that extra resources had been put into this and it had

vastly improved. However, Council Tax was only a small proportion of the Council's income.

#### **ELECTED MAYOR**

Councillor Palmer reported that the Council was proposing to have an elected mayor. A final decision would be made on 22 December, and, if agreed, the first mayor would be elected on 5 May 2011. The mayor would be directly elected by residents, giving every elector a say, which would give the mayor a clear mandate, rather than the current leader who was appointed by councillors. A mayor would be elected for a four year term and would have greater powers than a leader. Although the government's Localism Bill sought to hold referendums in large cities, Leicester was still required to follow current legislation and make a decision before the end of the year. It was noted that the Localism Bill also proposed significant changes to planning rules.

In response to residents' questions and concerns, Councillor Palmer stated that having an elected mayor would not increase costs, as the post replaced the leader, who currently received an allowance. A referendum would cost the Council. The mayor would choose his or her own Cabinet. It was not possible at this stage to confirm what the mayor's increased powers would be and whether they would take on the Chief Executive's role.

In response to concerns about the level of consultation, Councillor Palmer stated that there had been a much higher response rate than most other authorities. Councillors had proposed an elected mayor to increase democracy in the city. Concerns about potential celebrity candidates should not be used as a reason for not doing it.

Councillor Palmer offered to give a further update when more details were known, such as precise powers, role, costs and how it would affect the community. He also offered to have an update on developments with the Localism Bill.

### **33. HEALTH THROUGH WARMTH PROJECT**

Lucy Birch from the Health Through Warmth Project explained the project to residents. She stated that the project was set up by N Power and implemented through the City Council. Its aim was to improve warmth and quality of life for vulnerable residents through insulation, grants for boiler repair and replacement, and radiator or storage heater replacement. It was for private households where one or more people were vulnerable to cold or damp. It was not means tested. A contribution was given towards work and for those who could not afford the rest, the team would apply to other sources to try to make up the shortfall.

She gave tips for staying warm, including eating regular hot meals and drinks, keeping moving, dressing in layers and wearing a hat or headscarf.

### **34. POLICE UPDATE**

Neighbourhood Sergeant, Andy Parsons, gave an update on current policing priorities, which were antisocial behaviour on Howden Road and Southfields Library. He said that the number of reported incidents on Howden Road had reduced significantly and he anticipated that this would cease to be a priority in the new year. The team was working with the Freeman team to address issues with Southfields Library and some offenders had been identified.

He explained that the police were working with the council to approach antisocial behaviour and offenders were given an opportunity to change their behaviour with warning letters, asbos and injunctions.

He reported that crime figures had reduced by 10% for the last quarter. He advised residents to be aware of home security at this time of year as burglaries increased.

He stated that work was to be done to tackle parking outside schools and promote road safety. In response to residents' questions, he stated that some off licences had been tackled regarding underage alcohol sales, although there was no trend in Eyres Monsell that indicated that this was a problem. He agreed to look at parking issues outside St John Boscoe Hall.

### **35. LOCAL ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

Nav Chauhan, Manager at the Magpie Centre, welcomed residents to the centre and gave an overview of the last 12 months. He reported that the centre had been relaunched after the refurbishment, which had involved a lot of the young people.

He gave a brief list of the facilities and sessions on offer, such as clubs, advice sessions, weekend clubs, and projects. He also explained the graffiti project that had been done on the outside of the building, which the community were positive about.

He reported that the motorbike project had run out of money, but it was hoped that more money could be obtained for a further 30 weeks.

Residents suggested that the centre should advertise in Monsell Mail. They welcomed the news that more girls were using the centre now. They raised concern about drinkers near the freerunning park and Nav agreed to raise this with the police.

### **36. BUDGET APPLICATION**

Two applications were considered and agreed as follows:

**Application 1** – Antisocial behaviour DVD project, Welford Road Neighbourhood Policing Team.

AGREED:

That the Community Meeting supports the funding of £500.

**Application 2** – Special Olympics Leicester Multi Sports Club - £1800, to establish a club for people with learning difficulties.

It was noted that this was an application to more than one community meeting to spread the funding across wards. It was felt that it was important to continue the momentum of the Special Olympics.

AGREED:

That the Community Meeting supports the funding of £1800

### **37. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Councillor Palmer asked residents whether they preferred day time or evening meetings. The majority expressed a preference for day time meetings. He stated that the time of the next meeting, on 9 March would be looked at to see if the time could be changed from 6pm.

### **38. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Palmer reminded residents of the upcoming Christmas event at the Community Centre.

He also gave an update on the situation with the Invincible site, stating that planning permission had been given, so development was free to commence. Residents would be supported throughout the process.

He stated that the community centre was undergoing a refurbishment and would include a new entrance, toilets, IT suite, meeting rooms and library suite. The Housing office would be based there and the police would also have a presence there. Residents stated that they needed a new tenants' association base, but Councillor Palmer said that the existing unit was unused as people did not want to be involved. He agreed that, if people wanted it, he would consider it. Work was being done by the council on how best to involve tenants, as it appeared that tenants' associations were not the best way. He suggested that this could be discussed at a future meeting.

Councillor Palmer informed residents that the Aylestone Boys Football Pavilion had been opened by Steve Walsh and Muzzy Issett. This was one of the 11 sites that were being created across the city. It was suggested that a future meeting could be held there.

Councillor Palmer announced the publication of the Accessible Leicester Guide which gave information of accessible businesses and facilities in the city.

A resident asked why pavements outside all bungalows were gritted apart from Rye Close. Councillor Palmer agreed to find out why it hadn't been gritted as it should have been.

A resident asked whether estate inspections would continue. It was reported that these would be reintroduced in the new year on a six month rota. Details would be published in the Monsell Mail.

### **39. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 11.48pm.