

Castle Community Meeting

**New Walk Musuem, New Walk
On Thursday, 20 January 2011
Starting at 6:30 pm**

The meeting will be in two parts

6:30pm – 7:00pm

Meet your Councillors and local service providers dealing with:-

- Police
- Home Energy Saving
- Community Safety
- Phoenix and Curve
- City Warden
- City Centre Car Parking Planning Guidance

7:00pm – 8:30pm

Get involved in your area and planning for the future. There will be presentations and discussions on:

- Playground Improvements at Mandela Park
- Draft City Centre Car Parking Supplementary Planning Guidance
- Feedback on Clarendon Park Christmas Fair
- Community Transport
- Community Meeting Budget

YOUR community. YOUR voice.

Your Ward Councillors are:

**Councillor Neil Clayton
Councillor Patrick Kitterick
Councillor Lynn Senior**



Making Meetings Accessible to All

WHEELCHAIR

Meetings are held in a variety of community venues. We will only hold meetings in venues where there is suitable access for wheelchairs. If you have any concerns about accessing a venue by wheelchair, please contact the Democratic Services Officer on the details provided.

BRAILLE / AUDIO TAPE – CD / TRANSLATION

If you require this agenda or a particular part of it to be translated or provided on audio tape, the Democratic Services Officer can organise this for you (production times will depend on equipment facility availability). In certain cases, subject to the agreement of the local Councillors, translation facilities can be provided at the meeting.

INDUCTION LOOPS – HEARING AT MEETINGS

We provide a loop system at every meeting for people with hearing aids. If you have a hearing aid, please speak to the Democratic Services Officer at the meeting for further assistance if you think you won't be able to hear what's being discussed. There is also a facility which can help people hear better if you don't have a hearing aid but are hard of hearing, again please speak to the Democratic Services Officer about this.

INFORMATION FAIR

PLEASE SEE BELOW FOR DETAILS OF SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES YOU CAN TALK TO AT THIS MEETING

You can raise matters of concern, give opinions and find out information which may be of use

<p>Ward Councillors and General Information</p> <p>Talk to your local councillors or raise general queries</p>	<p>Police Issues</p> <p>Talk to your Local Police about issues or raise general queries.</p>
<p>Home Energy Saving</p> <p>Find out about services and advice available for residents to reduce home energy use.</p>	<p>Curve and Phoenix</p> <p>Representatives from Curve and Phoenix will be present to promote their upcoming programmes.</p>
<p>City Warden</p> <p>Speak to your local City Warden about local environmental issues.</p>	<p>City Centre Car Parking Planning Guidance</p> <p>Find out about proposals to change the planning rules with regard to parking in the city centre.</p>

The first part of the agenda covers formal items which the Councillors need to deal with to ensure that regulations on holding meetings are kept to.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillors will elect a Chair for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The first main item on the agenda is Declarations of Interest where Councillors have to say if there is anything on the agenda they have a personal interest in. For example if a meeting was due to discuss a budget application put forward by a community group and one of the Councillors was a member of that group, they would not be able to take part in the decision on that budget application.

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

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

[Appendix J](#)

The minutes of the previous Castle Community Meeting, held on 9 September and joint meeting with Westcotes held on 27 October, are attached and Members are asked to confirm them as a correct record.

This next part of the agenda covers items where input from you on issues that affect your community is welcomed.

**5. PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS AT NELSON
MANDELA PARK**

Officers from the Parks Service will be in attendance to outline details of plans to make improvements to Nelson Mandela Park. Residents will be able to give feedback on the plans.

**6. DRAFT CITY CENTRE CAR PARKING
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

Residents will be able to give their views on proposals to develop planning

rules with regard to the provision of car parking in the city centre.

7. **COMMUNITY TRANSPORT**

Officers from the Council's Community Transport section will be present to give details of the services which are available for use by the public.

8. **FEEDBACK ON CLARENDON PARK CHRISTMAS FAIR**

The Community Meeting helped to fund the Clarendon Park Christmas Fair which took place in December. This will be a short item giving some feedback on how the event went.

9. **NEW EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS**

Details will be provided of proposals to change the executive arrangements for the Council to an elected Mayor.

10. **COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGET**

[Appendix J](#)

Councillors are reminded that they will need to declare any interest they may have in budget applications, and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applies to them.

The following budget applications will be considered:-

Application 1

Applicant: Addict Dance Studios

Amount: £4050

Proposal: Development of dance studio on Churchgate

Summary: Addict Dance is a non-profit making community dance company which is looking to develop a fixed base for the organisation which currently uses a space at Leicester College, but it is limited in the hours it can use the space. Those who attend the classes receive high quality tuition and a range of wider self development benefits. The group has a number of regular participants with disabilities and special needs.

The proposal is to develop dance studios on Churchgate to

provide a wide range of dance and other sorts (yoga, singing) of classes for all the community of Leicester. It is felt that these would promote community cohesion, develop confidence and help young people stay active and healthy.

The money would fund employing a specialist teacher / choreographer from London for a short term project, hiring a performance venue for the project, and the purchase of IT equipment for the project.

The classes would be open to all of Leicester's communities.

Application 2

Applicant: Friends of Welford Road Cemetery

Amount: £500

Proposal: Purchase of a laptop computer

Summary: Welford Road Cemetery is Leicester's oldest municipal cemetery, opened in 1849. It is home to a number of prominent historical characters who have helped shaped the history of Leicester.

The cemetery was the subject of a restoration project in 2005 that was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The grant enabled the creation of a new Visitor centre and various landscaping around the cemetery.

The Visitor Centre at the cemetery is staffed by the volunteers and members of the Friends of Welford Road Cemetery. The centre is open to the public for 3 days per week and receives visits and enquiries from the general public and people searching for relatives buried at the cemetery.

The Friends group have a number of historical records accessible on site, such as CD's from the Leicestershire & Rutland historical society, giving details of where people are buried on site. However the existing IT equipment is now becoming antiquated and unable to deal with the enquiries now being received by the Friends.

Our proposal is for to buy a new laptop that would be stored and used at the Visitor Centre. It would be used to search historic records for enquiries received, whilst the portable nature of the equipment would mean that visitors would be able to view records on screen at the front counter.

In conjunction with city council officers, the Friends are also exploring the possibility of an internet connection to the Visitor Centre. The current PC on site will not support the requirements for an internet connection, so new equipment is a necessity. Internet connection would enable records to be found online, such as those from the Commonwealth Grave commission and so forth.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Help us to make improvements!

Please help us to improve Community Meetings by filling in an **Evaluation sheet** to let us know what you thought of the meeting. Thank you.

For further information contact

Matthew Reeves, Democratic Services Officer or Francis Connolly, Members Support Officer, Resources Department, Leicester City Council, Town Hall, Town Hall Square, LEICESTER, LE1 9BG

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www.leicester.gov.uk/communitymeetings

Castle Community Meeting

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:30 pm, Thursday, 9 September 2010

Held at: Town Hall, Town Hall Square, City Centre

Who was there:

Councillor Neil Clayton

Councillor Patrick Kitterick

Councillor Lynn Senior

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.

Ward Councillors and General Information	Licensing Policy Consultation
City Wardens	Residents Parking Consultation

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.

FORMAL SESSION

13. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Kitterick was Chair for the meeting.

Councillor Neil Clayton was introduced to the meeting as it was his first Community Meeting as a Councillor for the Castle Ward.

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Senior declared a general personal interest because her partner worked in the Highways and Transport Division at the Council, this was in case any highways matters arose in the meeting.

Councillor Senior also declared a personal interest in budget application B1, Queens Road Traders Association, as her employer had a shop premises on Queens Road.

16. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Castle Community Meeting held on Thursday 22 July were agreed as a correct record.

17. REVIEW OF THE STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY CONSULTATION

Rachel Hall, Licensing Team Manager gave the meeting a presentation about the Council's current review of licensing policy. Her presentation covered the following areas:-

- What the licensing Policy covers – alcohol, entertainment, late night refreshment.
- Details of the Council's powers in relation to the 2003 Act.
- An outline of the four licensing objectives, (prevention of crime, public safety, prevention of nuisance and protecting children from harm) which were the basis of all policy rules and decisions taken in relation to the policy.
- Responsible authorities, who they were, (ie Police, Planning Authority) and their role.
- Interested Parties, who they were, (ie local residents & business owners) and their role.
- Some details about the licensing policy, how it could be altered and it's limits.
- The methods of consultation and what was being asked.

Residents could get further involved in the consultation in the following ways:-

- Filling in the consultation form at www.leicester.gov.uk/consultations

- Contacting the licensing team on 0116 252 8555 or by email licensing@leicester.gov.uk
- Writing to Licensing
New Walk Centre
Welford Place
LE1 6ZG

Councillor Senior asked Rachel to explain the difference between the Licensing regime and the Planning regime.

Rachel explained that whilst they both dealt with the same issues, ie opening hours for a pub, they did it in different ways. Licensing focussed purely on the licensing objectives and Planning could look at wider issues ie the number of pubs in a street. There were separate enforcement procedures for both regimes. Rachel explained that it was a bit like driving a car, ie you need a driving license and road tax.

A resident enquired about enforcement powers in relation to opening hours.

Rachel explained that it wasn't possible to zone an area so that all establishments closed at a specific time, each application would need to be considered separately on its merits. Once an establishment had its license in place, enforcement action could be taken if it broke the terms of its license, but clear evidence would be needed.

Councillor Kitterick asked Rachel to explain the 'review' process.

Rachel said that this was where one of the responsible authorities or interested parties could ask that the Council review the licenses of a premises. It was then advertised for 28 days, that this would be taking place, and after about 6 weeks a Licensing Hearing would take place. At this meeting, Councillors could decide to either: do nothing; modify the license, suspend the license, remove the designated premises supervisor or licensable activities, or revoke the license.

A resident enquired whether licensing powers could be used to encourage different types of establishments in different areas, ie some areas becoming more 'café society', perhaps this could be through the Best Bar None scheme.

Rachel said that this was being looked at as part of the policy review, but it wasn't quite clear at the moment how it could be achieved. It was only possible to make suggestions or encouragement in the policy, there could be no specifying of what types of establishments opened in certain places. Each application would need to be considered on its own merits.

Queries were raised about the advertising of license applications. It was felt that they weren't often displayed or visible, therefore people didn't get an opportunity to comment on the application.

Rachel commented that a check was done to see that all applications were advertised in the Leicester Mercury, but it wouldn't be possible, due to resources, to check that every application was properly advertised on site. Rachel further

commented that she could look into the possibility of providing the public with email copies / or posting the weekly list of licensing applications on the internet. Rachel further commented that she would have some concerns about the Council putting the signs up themselves as it was done in Westminster. They faced legal difficulties when it wasn't done correctly on one occasion. A resident commented that the public were legally allowed to take photos of where they felt that signs were not being displayed or any other transgression was taking place.

Councillor Kitterick asked those present if they had any views on 'cumulative impact'; where the number of establishments in a given area had reached it's natural limit.

Rachel explained that where an area was considered to have reached 'saturation' point, it was still possible for a new premises to open, but the applicant would have to demonstrate that the premises would cause no further detrimental impacts.

The following areas were proposed as having reached saturation point:-

- Queens Road
- Clarendon Park Road (for off licenses)
- Belvoir Street – (this area, it was felt was suffering a public nuisance from a loss of retail units and crime problems in the evening)
- Granby Street / London Road (for off licenses) – The number of off licenses, it was felt was adding to problems with regard to street drinking.
- No objections were raised to Churchgate retaining it's current saturation status.

Rachel said that proper evidence would need to be provided to enable these areas to become saturation zones. She encouraged residents to provide clear evidence prior to the end of September to support the proposed areas. In response to a further question from Councillor Clayton, Rachel explained that a natural boundary containing all relevant premises would be considered where saturation zones were implemented.

Local resident, John Coster said that, as part of his journalist role, he had been out in the city with the Street Pastors until 3am one weekend. He was hoping to arrange another similar event with the Police coming along. Residents were welcome to come along to help develop some evidence. He was contactable at editor@citizenseye.org.

There were a number of comments about the debate between noise and vibrancy in the city centre.

One resident felt that Leicester was a quiet city and it would be detrimental to the city if people didn't come in to the city centre, there needed to be vibrancy about the place. Councillor Kitterick commented that in some areas such as the Cultural Quarter, there needed to be more bars / restaurants to give the place more life. Another resident however said that living on New Walk meant that he was regularly awoken by younger people screaming, shouting and fighting late at night. He felt that bars were breaking the terms of the Best Bar None scheme by still serving people who were drunk. Another resident felt that the city had structurally changed; retail

was now heavily focussed on the Highcross. Lots of professional companies were leaving the city, meaning that bars were filling the void or lower quality retail was moving in.

The meeting was also informed that the Police currently had an operation in place until the end of September, called Operation Lea, where people could report aggressive begging in the city centre. Incidents could be reported on 07979 045 4581. Some residents had commented that this had proved successful.

A resident commented further that case studies could be undertaken on other cities where people were encouraged to visit the city and a vibrant and family atmosphere had been achieved, including on Sundays.

Summing up

Rachel Hall encouraged people to make further comments either by sending them in, via email or the Council's website.

A resident noted that everybody in the room seemed to be in agreement on what the issues were.

Councillor Kitterick, in summary noted that there were issues to be taken forward with regard to saturation zones, putting the best practices of bars into the policy and issues with regard to the display of license application notices.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
Take forward the comments of the meeting and respond as part of the Licensing Policy Consultation.	Rachel Hall	October 2010

18. CITY WARDENS

Craig Bodsworth, City Warden for the Castle Ward gave the meeting a brief presentation on the activities he and his colleagues were getting involved in.

- He was now getting more assistance from his colleagues in Knighton as well as two city centre wardens.
- The Bins on Streets project had now started, focussing on a couple of streets and it would be rolled out after fresher's week.
- He was getting involved in numerous events such as a tidy up on 23 September on Guildhall Lane with staff from HSBC bank, a community event for students at the Christchurch Rooms on Clarendon Park Road on Friday 1st October, the launch of a county wide dog fouling campaign on 20 September and various fresher's week events.
- In the last 2 years in the Ward, the following fines or fixed penalty notices had been handed out – 1 for dog issues, 35 for bins on streets, 31 for flyers, 1 for duty of care, 5 for flyposting and 522 for litter.

Francis Connolly updated the meeting about the issue of barbecues on Victoria Park. Using them on the park was contrary to local bylaws and officers were aware of the problems. A proposal to set aside an area where they would be allowed was raised with the friends of the park and was generally not favoured. This was currently done at Watermead Park, a report was being prepared on the results of this initiative. Extra patrols and other measures had been undertaken to tackle the issue at Victoria Park.

A resident commented that she couldn't see the problem with bins on streets. It was often difficult to manoeuvre bins down narrow alleys between houses and it restricted the use of back yards. Craig explained that generally, public opinion was opposed to bins on streets, also that bins were a hazard to blind people. Further he commented that where bins were set alight, as often happened, they could be dangerously close to gas pipes. Senior City Warden Andrew Moyse said that City Warden's did try to help solve difficult issues wherever possible. Councillor Kitterick asked the resident to speak to Craig and Andrew to see if there were any workable solutions.

In response to a question Craig confirmed that commercial premises were also looked into where bins were left on streets.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
Liaise with resident with regard to difficulties with getting bin in and out of her garden.	Craig Bodsworth / Andrew Moyse	October 2010

19. BUDGET

Councillor Kitterick, referred to an application for an autumn fair which was approved at the last meeting. He informed the meeting that this would now be a Christmas fair, being held on 5 December.

Francis Connolly, Member Support Officer updated the meeting on the current position with regard to the budget. There was £17,000 at the beginning of the year, there was now £11,000 left. The following applications had previously been approved:-

- £2168 – Lighting in St. Georges
- £3000 – Queens Road Autumn Fair (now Christmas Fair)
- £1000 – towards the Highfields area plan

The following applications were considered at this meeting:-

Queens Road Traders Association – request for £3800 for the installation of Christmas trees and decorative lighting.

A resident commented that a similar request was received last year and she felt that the decorations should be retained from one year to the next.

RESOLVED:

that the application be supported and a sum of £3800 be allocated from the Ward Action Plan budget, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and Neighbourhoods and the Leader of the Council.

Leicester Sikh Centre Lunch Club – request for £2000 to support the provision of lunches.

It was noted that the club was open to all sections of the community, but it would be South Asian food that was served.

A resident commented that other lunch clubs had been refused funding from the Council and as this lunch club had received funding, it was suggested that they receive £1000. Councillors considered this suggestion.

RESOLVED:

that the application be supported and a sum of £1000 be allocated from the Ward Community Fund budget, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and Neighbourhoods and the Leader of the Council.

The Centre Project – request for £3000 for building repairs, redecoration and improved facilities.

Eric Waneru from the project was at the meeting. He explained that the Centre project was a place where people who were isolated could get support, counselling and a hot meal.

Councillor Senior explained that the Councillors welcomed the work that the project did and felt that it was very worthwhile. They did however note that it was one of many worthwhile projects which were based in the ward, some of which had been turned down for funding. With projects such as this, it was often difficult to quantify how many residents from the ward were being supported by the project.

Councillors originally proposed to support the project at £400, but increased this to £500 and with a promise to consider a further application at the end of the financial year if there were remaining funds.

John Coster suggested that CitizensEye, the community news reporting website could put a message out to seek further funding for the project.

RESOLVED:

(1) that the application be supported and a sum of £500 be allocated from the Ward Community Fund budget, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and Neighbourhoods and the Leader of the Council; and

(2) that consideration will be given to a further application if there is funding available at the end of the financial year.

Holy Trinity Area

Some residents expressed a concern that plans for alley gates and guttering in the Holy Trinity area hadn't come forward. Councillor Kitterick commented that he had been speaking to an officer from the planning department about this, but she had now left the Council. He said that it wasn't possible for him to put in the application and that it would need someone to lead on the application. He said that Councillors were supportive of an application for alley gates. Francis Connolly, Member Support Officer agreed to speak to the residents to look into how the application could be taken forward.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
Speak to residents about progressing an application for alley gates in the Holy Trinity area.	Francis Connolly	September 2010

20. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

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Castle and Westcotes Community Meeting

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:30 pm, Wednesday, 27 October 2010
Held at: The Watershed, Upperton Road

Who was there:

Councillor Neil Clayton
Councillor Andy Connelly
Councillor Patrick Kitterick
Councillor Sarah Russell
Councillor Lynn Senior

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Russell was elected as Chair for the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests 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 Senior declared a personal interest in case any highways matters came up during the meeting due to the fact that her partner worked in the traffic section of Leicester City Council. Council Senior also declared a personal interest in the budget application for the cultural quarter because as she owned a property on Charles Street.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Joint Castle and Westcotes Community Meeting held on 18 November 2009 were agreed as a correct record.

4. BUDGET APPLICATIONS

There were three budget applications for consideration at the meeting. These related purely to the Castle Ward budget and only Castle Ward Councillors were able to give their formal view on them.

Application 1 – Request for rear alley-way gate on Lower Hastings Street at a cost of £500.

A resident commented that there was a definite need for these gates as alley ways were being used by drug takers and vagrants, causing anti social behaviour. The Police also supported their installation.

It was noted that all residents affected would need to agree to the installation of the gates.

It was also noted that other areas that wanted alley gates could apply for Community Meeting budget funding for them.

AGREED:

that the application be supported and a sum of £500 be allocated from the Ward Action Plan budget, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead

for Front Line Service Improvement and Neighbourhoods and the Leader of the Council.

Application 2 – Playground Improvements at the former Welford Road Recreation Ground

Francis Connolly, Member Support Officer informed the meeting that he had spoken with Parks Officers who had informed him that there was funding available from Section 106 monies. (These are where developers provide funding for facilities such as parks, schools or roads as part of planning approvals when they put up developments.) This could be available to fund improvements to the playground area and the recreation ground.

A resident spoke strongly in favour of the improvements, particularly as it would be good for children from the hospital and those visiting people in the prison.

AGREED:

that ideas for designs of improvements and amounts of funding available be brought to the next meeting of the Castle Community Meeting.

Application 3 – Cultural Quarter Christmas Switch On – funding of £2000 requested.

This funding was requested to support the Cultural Quarter Christmas switch on event, to cover the cost of stilt walkers, craft workshops and stage entertainment.

Councillors commented that as there was only £5000 left in the budget, it was felt that £2000 would take too much of it at this time. It was proposed that £500 be given to support the event.

There was some discussion about the merits of Castle ward funding an event which was for people all around the city. It was however noted that there were large number of residents in the St. Georges area and the city centre.

AGREED:

that the application be supported and a sum of £500 be allocated from the Ward Community Fund budget and that this be directed towards craft workshops, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and Neighbourhoods and the Leader of the Council.

5. STUDENT ACCOMMODATION AND LOCAL HOUSING ISSUES / PLANNING ISSUES

Councillor Russell introduced the next item which was taking together to the two items on the agenda together as one, as there were strongly linked issues. She noted that the De Montfort University Vice Chancellor and Jamie Lewis, local property developer had been invited to the meeting, but were unable to attend. They had however been invited to the next Westcotes Community Meeting.

It was intended to cover the following areas in the discussion:-

- Rental properties being kept in order.
- Problems with 'To Let' signs.
- Future student developments – density? how much? appropriateness?
- Empty properties resulting from student developments.
- Issues relating to students and green space.
- Specific developments – DeMontfort University Leisure Centre, supermarket development off Braunstone Gate / New Park Street and a proposed block of student accommodation on Upperton Road.

It was queried how residents were able to find out about planned student developments.

Residents were able to put themselves on a weekly email list from the Planning Section at the Council, where they could be informed of all planning proposals. Residents could make representations on planning applications themselves or their Councillor could do it for them. Signs were also placed in the vicinity of planned developments.

A resident commented that his German friend was horrified at the idea that all student developments were located close to each other, near to a university – this would never happen in Germany. He also felt that the Council was too accepting of developments associated with the University and not enough in favour resident's point of view.

Councillor Kitterick pointed out that the Council didn't have the planning rules in place to be able to stop student accommodation developments going ahead or determine where they could be located. When an application on Tudor Road was opposed by the Council, a planning inspector overruled the decision and charged the Council costs awarded to the developer, in the region of £100,000.

Steve Brown, Team Leader in the Planning Section commented that the approach in Leicester had been to locate student accommodation as close as possible to Universities for sustainable reasons and it avoided disruption in residential areas. Current development policies maintained this approach, to avoid using mainstream housing for students. This had been the policy for some time, going back to the 1990s.

A resident raised a concern that Leicester University had cut off a right of way in Lancaster Place.

Councillor Kitterick said that he was aware of the issues and was looking into the matter.

A resident noted that the proposed policy in the Council's Local Development Framework, on the location of student accommodation talked of integrating the developments with existing local communities. He felt that this hadn't been

achieved. Further it was commented that it wasn't possible to have cohesion in an area where there were low number of permanent residents.

Councillor Kitterick commented that it was a dilemma with regard to the location of student accommodation. Students needed to stay somewhere, and there was a debate to be had whether purpose built accommodation where there was greater control on behaviour or within neighbourhoods where problems have been caused with noise etc.

There was further discussion about the issue of students living in residential areas in Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs), where groups of unrelated people lived together in residential properties. It was noted that rules put in place by the last government restricting, to some extent, residential houses changing to this HMO classification had been rescinded by the current government. However it was also noted that new rules were coming forward where it was likely to be possible that the Council would be able to remove 'permitted development rights' on certain streets. This could include restricting the right to turn a residential property into a HMO, but it still wouldn't be impossible.

It was further acknowledged that even with the rule changes outlined above, there was still a difficulty with regard to re-balancing streets and neighbourhoods which have largely been made up of HMOs back into family housing.

Councillor Connelly also made a comment that the Council and the Universities didn't support all student accommodation developments and some had been rejected, such as a proposal on Paton Street.

A resident commented further that students weren't always that well controlled in purpose built accommodation. There were issues with them causing problems around the area of the Filbert Village development.

A resident raised a question about what powers were available to ensure landlord's properties were maintained and dealing with empty properties.

Carole Thompson from the Council's Empty Homes Team explained to the meeting that her team were able to investigate empty houses and had been very successful in getting them back into use. It could be a lengthy process but it had proved successful in getting 1200 empty houses across the city back into use.

Steve Brown commented that from a planning perspective, there was little that could be done with regard to requiring owners of properties to keep them maintained. It would need to be a serious health hazard before action could be taken.

Further issues were to be discussed under the waste and recycling item.

The issue of Section 106 monies was raised – It was queried how people could find out what money there was and how it was spent or was intended to be spent.

Section 106 monies were where developers, as part of their planning approval were required to pay funding towards local facilities and services which were affected as a result of the development. This often meant funds were provided for schools, parks and roads.

It was agreed to discuss this issue in greater detail at the next meeting the Westcotes Community Meeting, when details would be provided of what funding was available.

Councillors commented that it was important that the public were made aware of this money as it could be useful to make improvements such as those planned for the Nelson Mandela park playground. It was also felt that there was significant money available for improvements.

To Let signs were also raised as a problem. A large number of those present felt that they blighted the area, were often unnecessary and were an advert for burglars.

Steve Brown commented that there were difficulties associated with tackling these signs. There was a legal right for these signs to be displayed. He noted that there was a power to remove permitted development rights for these signs, but this was generally only used in conservation areas. He said that Planning Officers were contacting letting agents about these signs, but they often weren't very helpful. Councillor Kitterick commented that even if restrictions could be achieved in conservation areas it could tackle problems on Stretton Road and Lower Hastings Street.

It was agreed to set up a small group containing residents and relevant local agencies to discuss particular problem areas with signs and build up a body of evidence that could support action to tackle the problem with to let signs.

It was requested that local developer Jamie Lewis be sent the minutes of this meeting.

Comments were invited on the following planning applications.

Residents could make their own comments on the design or other aspects of the planning applications, by contacting the Council on 252 7000.

De Montfort University Leisure Centre Planning Application.

Residents noted that a previous application, some time ago for the football club had required public access to gym facilities, but this ended up with a cost of £1000 per year. It was therefore requested that public access be granted on a reasonable basis with regard to cost and times.

It was generally agreed that a representation on the application be made that public access to the leisure centre should cost the same as a Council facility.

Supermarket on the MFI site - Planning Application

Councillor Russell said that a large number of representations were expected on this application. She and Councillor Connelly would be undertaking their own shopping habits survey with residents.

Comments were made with regard to parking. It was felt that this application should be subject to the same rules as other businesses in the area. It was also commented that some of the parking spaces should be made available for general shoppers to Braunstone Gate. Steve Brown commented that this provision was put in place when MFI developed the site and he felt there was a strong case for the same to happen on this application.

It was also commented that measures needed to be put in place to avoid shopping trolleys blighting the area.

It was requested that the supermarket design be of a high quality. It was felt that the design proposed on the plans was not of architectural merit.

It was suggested that representations be made to retain the trees / green space which ran alongside Narborough Road.

More generally residents felt that a supermarket would lead to worsening traffic problems. Steve Brown commented that a travel plan was included in the planning application.

Steve Brown also informed the meeting that a financial appraisal was included in the planning application, as part of which the developer claimed that due to the unusual costs associated with the development, they would not be able to afford any Section 106 costs.

Student accommodation development on Upperton Road

A planning application had been submitted for a 14 story block of student accommodation of Upperton Road, on a strip of land alongside the Great Central Way.

The initial reaction of residents was one of great opposition and concern; it was felt that such a development was wholly inappropriate for such a location and was a step too far in an area which already had too much student accommodation.

Councillors commented that this application came as a surprise as it was thought that the land would be owned by Barratts, the developer of the Freemans Meadow site.

Residents were advised to keep an eye out for the proposals when they were published on the Council's website.

There was some debate about the likelihood of such a proposal being approved on this site, noting that it was some distance away from other high rise developments.

Although one resident felt that it wasn't that far away from the planned 22 storey tower as part of a development on Eastern Boulevard.

Doubts were also raised about access to the site and whether adjacent site owners would be happy with such a development.

Other Developments – Eastern Boulevard

There was further discussion about the approved student accommodation development on Eastern Boulevard which included a 22 storey tower. A resident commented that they felt that this proposal was probably worse for residents than that proposed on Upperton Road. She also pointed out that she had requested details of the affect on residents during the build, where any crane would be located and where materials would be stored. It was agreed to raise this concern with Building Control to establish what measures could be put in place to protect residents' amenity.

It was also noted by the meeting that no date had at present been indicated as to when the development would be started.

Other Developments – Car Park on Filbert Street

It was noted that consent for this car park had been discussed at the Council's Planning and Development Control Committee on the night prior to this meeting, where it had been given temporary approval for a year from the date of the Committee. Councillor Kitterick informed the meeting that he had vigorously opposed the application at the Committee, but when the vote took place, the Committee agreed with the officers' view that upon appeal, the Council would be likely to lose. Restrictions had been imposed on the car park which restricted the number of cars that could be parked there and the operating hours. He also commented that he had been assured that when the approval was up for renewal in a years' time, there would be sufficient evidence in place for it to be refused on a permanent basis.

Residents raised an issue with regard to the dusty unfinished nature of the car park surface. Councillor Kitterick commented that to ask them to tarmac it would almost be an invitation to make the car park permanent.

Some residents expressed concern about whether there was a willingness to take residents concerns into account in planning decisions. Councillors commented that they fully respected the professional opinion of planning officers, and that they were never given cause to doubt them in providing the correct guidance, taking all relevant planning rules into account. Officers would be working to produce planning rules which could successfully defeat unwanted planning applications.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
A small group of residents and relevant agencies meet to discuss problems with To Let signs.	Councillor Russell / Member Support Officer	ongoing

That the minutes of the meeting be sent to Jamie Lewis	Matthew Reeves	November
A representation to be made on the De Montfort University Leisure Centre application stating that public access to the Leisure centre should cost the same as a Council facility	Westcotes Ward Councillors	At the relevant Planning and Development Control Committee
That the issues regarding the construction of the student accommodation on Eastern Boulevard be raised with building control to see what mitigating measures can be put in place to protect residents' amenity.	Member Support Officer	November

6. BURGLARY

Kelvin Bates, Community Safety Team Leader introduced this item.

- His role was to ensure that the Council took issues around crime into consideration in everything that the Council did.
- He also mentioned details about the Safer Leicester Partnership, which involved all key public and voluntary sector agencies in the city who came together to consider crime and the wider issues around it.
- On burglary he explained that due to a range of efforts, the rate in the city as a whole was down 17% compared to the previous year. It was a 33% reduction for Westcotes and 25% for Castle.
- One of the methods to reduce burglary was 'target hardening', which was where measures such as extra door locks, window locks, kick boards and bars across louver windows were installed. Smart water, a liquid which could only be seen under ultra violet light was also used and could identify which house the item of property came from.
- Work was also undertaken with offenders, to get them off drugs and to get them into employment or training, this had proven successful in getting prolific offenders out of a life of crime.

A resident enquired how areas were chosen to be target hardened. Kelvin explained that this was based on burglary statistics.

A further query was raised about where smart water could be obtained. It was indicated that this was available at either Hinckley Road Local Police Unit or at Mansfield House in the city centre.

A comment was made that speed bumps were useful in stopping burglaries. Police representatives felt that this wasn't the case.

7. WASTE AND RECYLCING

Due to lengthy discussions on planning / housing issues, this item was not considered, however residents were invited to put their names down to receive further information about waste and recycling schemes in the area.

8. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Castle Budget – Position Statement – January 2011

Application	Ward Community Fund	Community Cohesion Fund	Ward action Plan fund
TOTAL OPENING BALANCE (£17,000)	£5,000	£2,000	£10,000
Upgrading of street lighting in the St Georges Area			£2,168
Highfields Area Forum – Highfields Area Plan		£1,000	
Queens Road Autumn Fair			£3,000
Queens Road Christmas Decorations			£3,800
Leicester Sikh Centre Lunch-Club	£1,000		
The Centre Project – Building Improvements	£500		
Holy Trinity Alley Gate			£500
Cultural Quarter Christmas Switch On	£500		
Balance Remaining	£3,000	£,1000	£532
New Applications to be considered			
Friends of Welford Road Cemetery			£500
Addict Dance	£3,000	£1,050	
TOTAL	£0	-£50	£2

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