

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Monday, 28 March 2011

Held at: Thurnby Lodge Youth & Community Centre, Thurncourt Road, LE5 2NG

Councillors in Attendance

Councillor John Allen

Councillor Caroline Scuplak

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>Community Payback</p> <p>Representatives of the Probation Service were present to discuss about how this scheme worked</p>	<p>One Clean Leicester</p> <p>Officers from the City Warden service were present to advise residents of the One Clean Leicester programme</p>
<p>Police Issues</p> <p>Local Police Officers were present for people to discuss issues in the Ward or raise general queries</p>	<p>Community Meeting Budgets and Enquiries</p> <p>Officers were available to provide advice on Community Meeting Budgets and answer general enquiries</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.

40. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Scuplak was elected as Chair for the meeting.

41. ELECTIONS

In view of the forthcoming elections, Councillor Scuplak read out the following statement:-

“Please be aware that the meeting is taking place within the Council’s pre-election period, which commenced on 25th March.

There is no requirement to not hold meetings such as this during the pre-election period, but for those that do meet, under the Council’s Political Conventions, Councillors, officers and candidates are asked to take particular care to keep distance from party political matters, and officers should avoid the appearance of political bias.

We have always ensured that these are not political meetings, and it is important that officers and Councillors actively seek to uphold the political

conventions during the pre-election period to avoid complaints and allegations of unfairness or impropriety. As part of this, we ask that those present this evening do not express opinions or views that may be perceived as containing a party political dimension. If such issues do arise, myself as Chair may have to ask you make no further comment on the issue. We also ask those members of the public present to avoid asking questions or making statements of a political nature”.

Some concern was expressed that the new City Mayor could stop holding Community Meetings. It was explained that the City Mayor would have a lot of powers not currently held by the Lord Mayor, but it was not known at this stage whether Community Meetings would continue in their current form. However, the Council had included funding for Ward Community Meetings in its budget for 2011/12.

42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Kate Sharp (Digital TV Switchover) and Sue Holden (Alcohol Strategy Manager, Drug and Alcohol Action Team).

43. 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.

Councillor Scuplak declared a personal interest in the budget applications, as she was a member of the Community Association Management Committee.

Councillor Allen declared a personal interest in the budget applications, as he was Secretary of the Community Association Management Committee.

44. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2011 were agreed as a correct record.

45. HIGHWAYS ISSUES

The Ward Members advised the meeting that they had received a number of concerns and complaints about a range of highways issues in and around Colchester Road, including speeding traffic, parking on grass verges, the use of certain roads as “rat runs” and the maintenance of shrubs in the centre of the road. It also was noted that a request had been made for speed warning signs, to supplement the speed cameras, as these cameras did not operate all of the time.

The Chair reminded the meeting that a petition had been submitted by residents asking that action be taken about certain trees, as when they were in leaf they reduced visibility on the road. One solution could be to remove these trees. They had been planted to reduce noise experienced by residents, but many properties were now double-glazed and so did not need this noise reduction as much as they originally had done.

Mike Pears, (Team Leader – Highway Asset Management with Leicester City Council), advised that the shrubs at the junction of Colchester Road and Elmcroft Avenue had been inspected today and there had only been a small amount of growth so far this year. The Police had not identified these shrubs as a problem, but they should be maintained at a level that provided maximum visibility.

In reply to questions, it was noted that:-

- The City Council had been asked not to substantially alter the shrubs at the junction of Colchester Road and Elmcroft Avenue until the inquest in to the fatal accident there had been held. In the meantime, they were being maintained;
- Having a physical obstacle such as trees could, to some degree, slow down traffic turning at the junction, as it needed to reduce its speed to see if anything else was coming; and
- Investigations would be done to see what courses of action could be taken to improve the junction, (for example, if it would be feasible to put in road markings).

Steve Warrington, (Transport Development Officer with Leicester City Council), advised the meeting that approval to install vehicle activated speed reminder signs depended on the number of accidents there had been at a given location, as these signs were a remedial measure. However, the suggested site in Colchester Road could be added to the list, to see how it compared to others.

Members of the public reported that the access road to Croyland Green was being damaged by refuse collection vehicles. The lorry often had to drive on the grass verge to avoid parked cars, which had damaged both the verge and the pavement. Mike Pears undertook to look in to this to see what, if any, action could be taken to rectify the situation.

Some concern was expressed that current budget restraints could lead to a reduction in staffing levels amongst highways officers and a consequent reduction in service. Mike Pears emphasised that the Council's focus would remain on retaining front line services, such as winter gritting or repairing potholes. Safety would not be affected by the cuts. However secondary services, such as roadside seats and street signs, could be affected and maintenance levels could reduce, (for example, with roads being patched rather than completely resurfaced). Agency staff would no longer be used.

Steve Warrington reminded the meeting that a bid for funding for the installation of a give-way sign at the junction of Havencrest Drive and The Parkway had been

endorsed by the Thurncourt Community Meeting. White lines would be painted there the next time the crews were in that area. The consultation period for the installation of yellow lines to restrict parking ended today and no objections had been received so far. When the Director's authority to proceed with these had been obtained, they would be advertised on site. It was hoped they could be painted in July.

It was asked what progress had been made by the owner of the flats in Havencrest Drive in installing a dropped kerb, as this had been required as part of the planning consent for the development. Mike Pears undertook to investigate this.

Severn Trent Water had been doing work on pipes in the area. It was asked if the reinstatement of pavements was checked after they had finished their work, as Severn Trent appeared to be leaving some pavements in a bad state of repair. Mike Pears asked that details of the locations affected be passed to him, so that the Traffic Operations team could look in to each case and report back to Ward Members.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
If applicable, a report to be made to the next meeting on what, if any, action could be taken to manage the foliage at the junction of Colchester Road and Elmcroft Avenue	Steve Warrington / Mike Pears	Next meeting if applicable, otherwise as soon as possible
The possibility of including Colchester Road in the list of sites for the installation of traffic activated speed warning signs be investigated	Steve Warrington / Mike Pears	Next meeting if applicable, otherwise as soon as possible
Consideration to be given to what, if any, action could be taken to rectify the damage being caused to the road and verge in Croyland Green	Mike Pears	As soon as possible
Progress made by the owner of the flats in Havencrest Drive in installing a dropped kerb to be investigated	Mike Pears	As soon as possible
Details of pavements not reinstated properly after works by Severn Trent to be passed to Mike Pears, Team Leader – Highway Asset Management	All	As soon as possible

46. COMMUNITY PAYBACK

Lee Johnson, of the Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Service, introduced himself to the meeting.

Community Payback previously had been known as Community Service. People could be sentenced by the courts to between 40 and 300 hours of unpaid Community Payback work, to make reparation to the community for their crime through the loss of liberty during the hours worked. It also had the advantage of promoting a work ethic for those involved and helping them to get into, or back into, a work routine.

Communities nominated the work to be done, which could be for any day of the week, including weekends. Suggestions for further work could be passed to Lee Johnson directly, or via City Wardens or housing officers. Placement staff then would make an assessment of the proposal, to see if it was suitable. The meeting suggested that Community Payback workers could be asked to do some cleaning work at the Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre.

When on site, all groups had a trained supervisor, who was responsible for 6 – 8 offenders. Each offender was risk-assessed. The standard of work expected was that of “good DIY”, so the work required could not be too sophisticated, or have significant health and safety requirements. Feedback on the work done was always requested. If the community was dissatisfied, the team would return and rectify the situation.

Various types of work could be done, such as street clean ups, ground clearance, building maintenance, cleaning/tidying of community buildings, painting and decorating. Work also could be done in partnership with community initiatives. An important criterion was that the organisation for which the work was being done had to be non-profit making.

The Ward Councillors reported that they had been very pleased with the work done to date and thanked all concerned. Lee Johnson thanked the Ward Members for this, but explained that, although high visibility vests were worn, the teams were not visible enough at times, so did not always get sufficient credit for the work they did.

In reply to questions, Lee Johnson explained that:-

- Private residents could ask for work such as gardening tasks to be done, but a commitment could not be given for how regularly this could be done;
- If work was being done on Council sites, the workers were covered by the Council's insurance; and
- Community Payback had its own scaffolding and trained users.

47. UPDATE ON POLICE ISSUES

Sergeant Shane O'Neill, Spinney Hill Park LPU Commander, introduced himself to the meeting, advising that he was present to talk about the situation regarding the murder committed in the area during the previous week.

He explained that it was very rare for someone to be killed in the community and the family concerned did not have strong links with the estate. The incident had been dealt with very quickly, both by the local Police team and by the Major Investigation Team. Three people were arrested within an hour, two of whom had been charged. The last Police presence had been removed from Flamborough Road today and there was no cause for concern to the public. Police officers had been visiting local schools to reassure pupils and give updates on what was happening.

Sergeant O'Neill explained that this was the first opportunity there had been to test the communication system set up to ensure that as many people as possible in the community knew what was happening as soon as possible. However, some present at the meeting felt that communication with people living in the immediate area could have been better. Cases also were identified when members of the Key Individual Network did not receive the expected telephone call about the incident.

Sergeant O'Neill recognised that there were gaps in the communication process, but explained that it had been decided not to release any information initially, as the Police were limited in what they could say and limited information could cause more concern than none. He also asked any Key Individuals who had not received a call to speak to the Police to ensure that all contact details were correct.

The Chair reminded the meeting that it had been agreed at the last Community Meeting that the Ward Councillors would send a letter to the Chief Constable of Leicestershire Constabulary to say how valued neighbourhood policing was in communities. This had been done and a copy of the letter would be sent to Chief Superintendent Rob Nixon. The Chair read out the letter, a copy of which is attached at the end of these minutes for information.

The Police then gave an update on issues in Thurncourt Ward, drawing particular attention to the following matters:-

- Despite an overall reduction in crime, there had been an increase in thefts of copper piping and lead (for example, roof flashings). Of the 17 thefts reported, 15 were metal thefts. Two people had been arrested and released on bail;
- There had only been three burglaries in dwellings reported, but it was unclear if they were all burglaries, or whether they related to domestic incidents; and
- The Police were aware of new people moving on to the estate.

Members of the public raised concerns that no action could be taken over cars that appeared to have been abandoned on residential roads until the tax expired. The Police explained that they had no power to take any action if the vehicles were taxed and insured and were not parked illegally, or causing a dangerous obstruction. In cases such as this, members of the public could advise the Police that the vehicles appeared to have been abandoned, so that the Police could keep the situation under review and carry out the vehicle owner checks that were always made when a vehicle appeared to have been abandoned. Untaxed cars should be reported to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency.

Barbara Whitcombe, Leicester City Council's City Wardens Team Manager, confirmed that the Council did not have power to remove such vehicles either.

In response to a question, the Police confirmed that the CCTV cameras in the Ward were all working well. Some problems had been experienced with tree foliage obstructing the field of vision, but this was common in the summer months.

48. ONE CLEAN LEICESTER

Barbara Whitcombe, (Leicester City Council's City Wardens Team Manager), advised that a One Clean Leicester campaign had been running for the past month. This drew attention to a new, free application for iPhones or Blackberries to help report environmental problems to the City Council. Barbara Whitcombe gave a short presentation on this, a copy of which is attached at the end of these minutes for information.

It was noted that environmental problems could still be reported via the Council's website or by text. In both cases, it was useful if a photograph of the location could be included. In all cases, people reporting problems remained anonymous.

49. WARD COMMUNITY BUDGET 2010/11

Francis Connolly, (Members Support Officer with Leicester City Council), drew attention to the budget statement that had been circulated, advising that a grant of £500 had been approved to the Chit Chat Club, not £550 as shown. This meant that the total remaining balance was £1,949.

The following applications for grants were then considered:-

a) **Gulam Mohammed Lockhat – Outing for Young People who are part of As Salaam**

The Chair explained that insufficient funds remained in the budget to be able to support this application at this time.

AGREED:

that consideration of this application be deferred to the next meeting.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
Application to be resubmitted to the Community Meeting	Francis Connolly / Elaine Baker	Next meeting

b) **Gulam Mohammed Lockhat – As Salaam Women's Events**

The Chair explained that insufficient funds remained in the budget to be able to support it this application in full.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that funding of £249 be supported to the As Salaam organisation towards the planned women's events; and
- 2) that consideration be given at the next meeting to whether the balance of the funds requested can be granted.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
Application to be resubmitted to the Community Meeting	Francis Connolly / Elaine Baker	Next meeting

c) **Silver Threads Monday Club – Day Trip to a Place of Interest**

The Chair explained that insufficient funds remained in the budget to be able to support this application at this time.

AGREED:

that consideration of this application be deferred to the next meeting.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
Application to be resubmitted to the Community Meeting	Francis Connolly / Elaine Baker	Next meeting

d) **Highways Maintenance in conjunction with Thurncourt Ward Councillors – Installation of Six Grit Bins**

It was noted that this application had been made in accordance with the Community Meeting's Action Plan priority to address the condition of highways.

Ward Councillors had worked with officers to identify six key locations at which grit bins could be installed. The bins would cost £200 each and it was a condition of installing these bins that the City Council would adopt them for the purposes of maintaining and refilling them.

In reply to questions, it was noted that local residents would be responsible for spreading the grit. The grit contained sand, to discourage inappropriate use, as it would stain surfaces. The Council checked the bins and refilled them when needed.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that funding of £1,200 be supported for the installation of six grit bins in the following locations:-
 - Wintersdale Road (two bins)
 - Tuskar Road
 - Drumcliffe Road
 - Dudley Close
 - Lodge Farm Road; and

- 2) that signs be fixed to the bins showing that they had been provided through Community Meeting funding.

e) **Thurncourt Neighbourhood Police Team – Push Bike for Thurncourt Neighbourhood Beat Team**

The meeting asked if it would be helpful for four bicycles to be purchased, but it was noted that only two bikes would be used at any one time. The Police were not able to accept commercial sponsorship, so were unable to ask for financial support from local businesses.

RECOMMENDED:

that funding of £500 be supported to the Thurncourt Neighbourhood Police Team for the purchase of a push bike for use by the Thurncourt Neighbourhood Beat Team.

f) **Other Applications**

i) **Road Traffic Remedial Scheme – Junction of Havencrest Drive and The Parkway**

Members of the community reminded the meeting that £4,200 previously had been supported for a proposed road traffic accident remedial scheme at the junction of Havencrest Drive and The Parkway, if this scheme did not receive funding from Leicester’s third Local Transport Plan (LTP3). It was asked if LTP3 funding had been allocated yet.

As the funding had not yet been allocated, it was

AGREED:

that the position regarding funding for this scheme be reviewed at the next meeting.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
An update on this application to be given to the Community Meeting	Francis Connolly / Elaine Baker	Next meeting

ii) **Thurnby Lodge Tenants and Residents Association – Driver Assessments**

Francis Connolly reported that, since the agenda had been circulated, an application for funding had been received from the Thurnby Lodge Tenants and Residents Association (TARA). This was for £114, to enable two people to undertake the assessment needed to enable them to drive the City Council’s community transport.

It was planned that an advert would be placed on TARA notice boards and included in the next edition of the TARA newsletter, asking for volunteers to undertake this assessment. If, after one month, no-one had come forward, Voluntary Action

Leicester (VAL) would be asked if they could find someone to help. Asking TARA staff would be the last option and they only would be asked if VAL had been unable to find volunteers after one month.

It was intended that, once the volunteers had passed their assessment, all groups in the community would be given the chance to use the minibus. However, as TARA was organising this, it was proposed that TARA would decide where the first four visits should be made. This would have the added advantage of enabling TARA to become familiar with the hiring system.

AGREED:

that, if volunteers come forward before the next meeting, this application be approved through the Ward Members' delegated authority, but if no volunteers can be found in that time, the application be resubmitted to the next meeting.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
Application to be resubmitted to the Community Meeting if needed	Francis Connolly / Elaine Baker	Next meeting

iii) Community Wheelchairs

Representatives of the Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre advised the meeting that the Centre had bought two wheelchairs with a grant from the Community Meeting.

One would be kept at Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre and one would be kept at Ocean Road Community Centre, although it could be brought back to the Thurnby Lodge Centre if necessary.

Conditions of use had been drawn up and those borrowing the chairs would be required to leave a £10 deposit.

The Centre had been advised that Health and Safety issues could arise if untrained people used the wheelchairs. A doctor from the Hilltop Surgery therefore had been asked to come to Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre to provide some instruction in their use.

50. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Housing Allocations Policy

In response to a request from the meeting, it was

AGREED:

that Leicester City Council's housing allocations policy would be reported to the next Community Meeting.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
Housing Allocations Policy to be reported to the next meeting	Chrissie Field / Francis Connolly / Elaine Baker	Next meeting

b) East Midlands Congenital Heart Centre, Glenfield Hospital

The meeting was reminded that the NHS recently had launched a major consultation on the way in which children's congenital heart services should be provided in the future. The outcome of this would determine the future of the EMCHC, which was based at Glenfield Hospital. The meeting therefore was asked to support the retention of the Centre, which featured as Option A of the consultation, and to respond to the consultation to this effect.

It was noted that the Leicester Local Involvement Network was running three separate events, to encourage members of the public to support the retention of the Centre at Glenfield Hospital. In addition, a formal consultation event would be held at the Walkers Stadium.

c) Digital Switchover

Anyone needing help to switch to digital television could telephone 0800 408 5900 for advice and support.

51. COUNCILLOR ALLEN

The meeting noted that this was Councillor Allen's last meeting before he retired from being a Councillor.

On behalf of the community, Allan Greatrix gave a vote of thanks to Councillor Allen, for the hard work he had put in to his role, and congratulating him on his exemplary record.

Councillor Allen thanked everyone for this. He had been a Councillor since 1983 and it had been a great pleasure to do so. He felt that the Thurnby Lodge estate had improved considerably in that time and he was pleased to see how the quality of life there had improved. Councillor Allen noted that he could still attend Community Meetings if he remained on the Community Association.

52. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.46 pm

Minute Item 47

Please ask for: Francis Connolly
Extension: (39) 8812 (Direct Line 229 8812)
Fax: (0116) 229 8819
E-mail: Francis.Connolly@leicester.gov.uk

Date: 2 March 2011

**SUPERINTENDENT ROB NIXON,
LEICESTERSHIRE CONSTABULARY**

Dear Superintendent Nixon,

COMMUNITY POLICING IN THE THURNCOURT WARD

At our last Thurncourt Community Meeting, Sergeant Danny Graham informed us of the recent reduction in the overall level of crime within the Ward. Some of the figures were particularly pleasing and clearly reflect the level of work undertaken by officers within the local community. We were also pleased to learn of some of his priorities for policing in Thurncourt, and will work closely with Sgt Graham and his team to help to deliver these.

We also learnt of the scale of budget cuts imposed on Leicestershire Constabulary for the next four years. We understand that presently, there are no plans to reduce the level of community policing in Leicester and we would ask you to ensure that this resource is not reduced in Thurncourt.

We would be extremely concerned that a reduction in community policing within our ward would lead to a surge in crime, and feel that this would largely negate the recent work of the Constabulary, which has not only significantly reduced crime but has allowed residents in Thurncourt to feel secure and protected.

We would urge you strongly to continue to commit to the current level of community policing in the Thurncourt Ward, which is essential in promoting safety and well-being within our communities.

Yours sincerely

Councillor John Allen
Thurncourt Ward Councillor

Councillor Caroline Scuplak
Thurncourt Ward Councillor

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ONE CLEAN LEICESTER



HOW IT WORKS

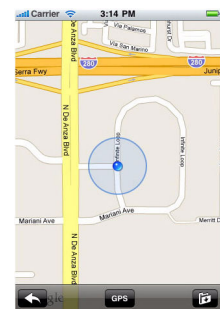
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- EMAIL
- TEXT
- VIA COMPUTER

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If you have a council Blackberry with a camera - you can download the app from here:

<http://bit.ly/oclbb6>



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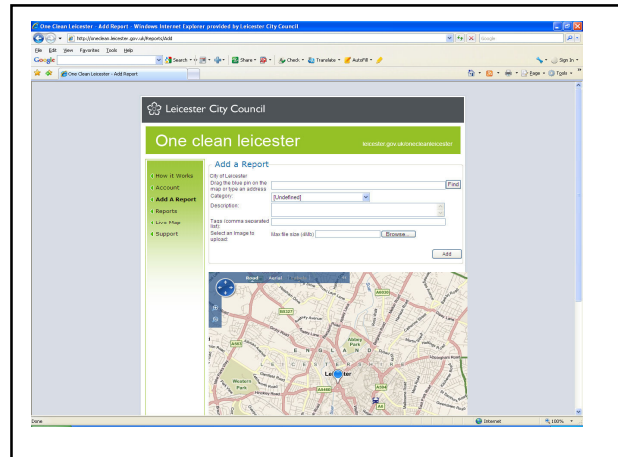
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CITY OF LEICESTER



ISSUES TO REPORT

- ABANDONED AND NUISANCE VEHICLES
- BINS ON STREET – COMMERCIAL
- BINS ON STREET- DOMESTIC
- COMMERCIAL WASTE/ RECYCLING
- DEAD ANIMALS
- DOG FOULING
- FLY POSTING
- FLY TIPPING
- GRAFFITI
- STREET CLEANSING – SWEEPING