

Evington Community Meeting

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Thursday, 8 December 2011

**Held at: St Joseph's Parish Pastoral Centre, 12 Goodwood Road,
Leicester LE5 6SG**

Who was there:

Councillor Deepak Bajaj
Councillor Baljit Singh

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	Police Issues
Members of the community will be able to talk to their local Councillors or raise general queries.	A representative from the Local Policing Unit will be present to offer advice or to take queries relating to policing issues
Home Energy	Trading Standards
Local residents will be able to find out information relating to Home Energy schemes. Geoff Hutchins from the Home Energy Office will be present.	Members of the public will be able to talk to an officer from the Trading Standards team.
Evington in Bloom	City Wardens
Helen Pettman, local resident will be present to provide information on the Evington in Bloom project.	Members of the community will be able to talk to Nicole Powell, the City Warden for the Evington Ward.

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.

29. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Singh was elected as Chair for the meeting.

30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

32. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous Evington Community Meeting, held on 13 September 2011, were agreed as a correct record.

33. WARD COUNCILLORS' REPORT

Councillors Deepak Bajaj and Baljit Singh provided an update on the issues they had been dealing with in the Evington Ward.

Councillor Bajaj stated that he was dealing with a number of petitions on behalf of constituents, including one which was currently being compiled following the recent road accident on Headland Road outside Linden Primary School.

Councillor Singh described some of the on-going work which he had undertaken in response to enquiries from constituents. He also informed the meeting that he had raised a number of questions in relation to the school places allocation policy and the Council's environmental services at a recent meeting of Full Council. He encouraged residents to view recent meetings of Full Council by visiting www.leicester.gov.uk.

The Ward Councillors also stated that they had attended several meetings as part of the organisation of Evington in Bloom.

34. EVINGTON WARD - COMMUNITY FACILITY

Following the receipt of a petition from residents requesting a community facility in Evington, Steve Goddard, Head of Community Services was in attendance to give a presentation to the Community Meeting.

Steve confirmed that there was currently no neighbourhood facilities within the Evington Ward. The closest such facility was located on Balderstone Close within the Coleman Ward and it was acknowledged that such facilities were desired for Evington.

It was reported that the delivery of new community services was especially difficult presently as a result of the difficult financial climate, but Steve stated that should residents of Evington hold a strong desire for their own community facilities, then a number of innovative options for doing so could be explored. Reference was made to the petition signed by 283 residents requesting the exploration of suitable options for community facilities within the ward.

Having accepted that there was significant demand for the establishment of community facilities, Steve explained that it was vital to identify the types of services and activities that people wished to access at a neighbourhood centre. In order to successfully deliver an effective facility, Steve stated that it was fundamental for a partnership approach to be formalised, and that such a facility would need to be available for a variety of purposes and for use by many different groups.

In terms of progressing this matter, Steve reported that a community association would need to be established. In order to receive funding towards a community facility, a properly constituted organisation would need to be formed. It was also vital to ensure that individuals were tasked with key roles such as opening and locking up the facility building. Steve encouraged anybody who was interested in becoming part of a steering group to contact him to discuss ways of developing the idea.

Councillor Singh was of the view that the development of a community facility was one of the major priorities in Evington and encouraged people to become part of the Evington Neighbourhood Centre Consultation Group.

It was agreed that an initial meeting with interested residents was required to identify ways of developing community facility for Evington. Steve agreed to facilitate this. In response to queries, it was confirmed that matters such as staffing and funding towards such a facility would be looked at in detail in due course. Residents were generally extremely supportive of developing this matter, but stated that it would be disappointing if it became clear that a facility could not be delivered which met the local demand.

RESOLVED:

That residents interested in joining the Evington Neighbourhood Centre Consultation Group contact either a Ward Councillor or Steve Goddard, Head of Community Services, Leicester City Council.

35. PRESENTATION ON THE TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE

Merybell Caberte-Smith from Leicester City Council Trading Standards will be present to talk about the work that the service provides.

Marybell stated that the fundamental role of the trading standards team was to protect and promote the rights of consumers. It was made clear that the size of the team had recently declined in size and operational capacity, and as a result, there was no longer a trading standards customer advice centre, and advice could instead be accessed via the customer advice phone line.

The service comprised of two distinguished teams. The first of which was the business advice team which advised local businesses to be compliant with the law, and primarily dealt with rogue traders. It was stated that there had been increasing concern with the level of counterfeiting goods; a problem which had previously rapidly declined.

The second team worked on tackling doorstep crime, which was seen as a serious crime whereby traders set out to exploit vulnerable people; often older women who lived alone. Marybell reported that some perpetrators conned victims out of sums which often totalled thousands. She stated that many such traders whom they had caught had consequently been jailed. As the Trading Standard team had no powers of arrest, they often aimed to cause disruption to deter victims from handing money to doorstep criminals. It was made clear that case referrals could be made to both the Police and Victim Support.

Councillor Singh reported that both he and Councillor Bajaj were part of a Scrutiny Task Group review of trading standards, which was reviewing the existing arrest policy and the prosecution process for rogue traders.

36. LIBRARY SERVICES IN EVINGTON

Ruksana Jagot, Senior Community Librarian, was present to provide an overview of services and activities which took place at Evington Library.

It was reported that the under 5 sessions held at the library attracted in the region of 30-40 parents and was particularly popular. Ruksana also stated that the summer scheme was extremely successful this year, with all activities receiving a high attendance.

Residents were informed that the library operated a minibus service to transport people to and from the library to access all services, including reading groups.

Ruksana invited officers from Trading Standards to conduct a short talk at the library to warn users against doorstep crime and rogue traders.

Councillor Singh commended the work undertaken by staff at Evington Library and paid thanks to all those involved

37. EVINGTON IN BLOOM

Helen Pettman gave a brief update on Evington in Bloom and explained how the project was progressing.

Helen stated that work had taken place around preparing a route for the Evington in Bloom judges to be taken around. She explained that a number of Evington in Bloom volunteer groups had been working in Evington Park, and several stakeholders were working alongside the organisers, and these included the leisure centre and local businesses as well as a number of pubs and shops.

It was reported that the organisers were now ensuring that a list of gardening projects was being completed within Evington ahead of the judges' visits. Helen stated that it was important to ensure that all projects not only contributed towards a successful competition but were also fun to be involved with.

As part of the preparation, work was being undertaken in respect of developing a number of sponsorship schemes, and Helen agreed to report further on this particular aspect at the next meeting.

Helen thanked the ward councillors for providing money to Evington in Bloom from the ward budget, and as part of this, 32,000 bulbs had been planted to date. Ward money had also allowed hand tools and fruit trees to be provided.

RESOLVED:

That a further update be provided at the next Community Meeting, with particular reference to potential sponsorship schemes.

38. POLICING ISSUES IN THE EVINGTON WARD

Sergeant Dan Eveleigh and PC Rob Evans from Leicestershire Constabulary were present to provide an update on policing issues in the Evington Ward.

Sergeant Eveleigh explained that a problem solving plan had been devised for each area of the City, and the plan in relation to Evington predominantly focused on problems on Gamel Walk. He informed attendees that there been a problem of anti-social behaviour, and as a result, the police had work closely with a number of partners in attempt to alleviate the issues. Furthermore, the Police and the Council's Community Safety team had submitted a joint bid for ward funding on behalf of affected residents on Gamel Walk. This application was to be considered at a later stage during this meeting and the particular proposal was to block-off the walkway on Gamel Walk with a timber fence and to build a fixed panel and opening gate at the front of the alleyway.

Sergeant Eveleigh felt that a greater degree of youth outreach work was required within local communities, and explained that the police had worked closely with schools in terms of teaching respect and good citizenship standards to school-children. It was also made clear that incidents of anti-social behaviour accounted for approximately 1% of policing time.

A resident suggested that the church on Gamel Walk may wish to run a youth club similar to that which operated at other local churches. Sergeant Eveleigh agreed to explore this possibility.

PC Evans reported that during the previous 90 days, an average of three burglaries had been committed each week. As a result, a greater visible police presence had been established. PC Evans also reminded residents to ensure that their properties were secured at all times.

In response to a query from Councillor Bajaj in relation to a series of burglaries on Greenacre Way, police officers explained that it was hoped to enforce a number of

behavioural agreements in response to the problem. It was acknowledged that a greater level of work may be required in the future if these problems re-occurred.

In the last three months, it was reported that 16 vulnerable adult cases had been referred to the relevant agencies. On a further matter, Sergeant Eveleigh confirmed that an increasing number of dangerous dog complaints had been lodged, and encouraged residents to report any further cases in relation to dangerous dogs.

There had been reports of vandalism to the junction box outside the flats along Ethel Road. PC Evans confirmed he was not aware of this particular case, but encouraged residents to report such incidents to either themselves or the relevant tele-communications company.

In response to a request, it was agreed that statistics in relation to road traffic accidents in Evington would be reported to the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the possibility of establishing a youth club at the Church on Gamel Road be explored; and
- (2) That statistics in relation to road traffic accidents in the Evington ward be reported to the next meeting.

39. CITY WARDEN UPDATE

Nicole Powell, City Warden, was in attendance to provide an update on street scene enforcement issues in the Evington Ward.

Nicole stated that some of the main issues she had recently dealt with included fly-posting incidents and cases of illegal car sales. In terms of the latter, it was acknowledged that the frequency of cases had recently declined.

Nicole also stated that she had targeted problems of illegal parking of cars outside Linden Primary School, which had emerged as a priority following a recent traffic accident involving a six-year-old boy. A number of concerned residents along with family members of the boy involved in the accident were present at the meeting. It was strongly felt that traffic calming measures were required at this location in addition to a number of signs that warned motorists not to exceed the speed limit. One resident confirmed that she had taken a significant number of photographs of illegal parking outside Linden Primary School.

Councillor Singh stated that a full investigation of the accident was required to take place. It was also confirmed that a petition had been compiled, and Councillor Singh explained that the petition response report would be forwarded to the Council's relevant scrutiny commission in due course. It was felt that a collective approach to resolve this issue was required, and that input was needed from the Council, the Police and the local community. The Councillors agreed to bring an update in relation to the petition to the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That a progress report in relation to the petition requesting traffic calming measures on Headland Road be brought to the next Evington Community Meeting.

40. BUDGET

Francis Connolly, Member Support Officer to the Evington Community Meeting gave an update on the Community Meeting budget.

Francis explained that two funding applications had been received and had been included on the agenda. Councillors had considered the applications in detail prior to the meeting.

1) Gamel Road Gating Project

Amount requested: £985

The meeting was informed that this application was to block off the walkway with timber fence, erect a timber fence to the gardens of each property and to build a fixed panel and opening gate at the front of the alleyway

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be supported to the value of £985.

2) Increasing Awareness of Domestic Violence

Amount Requested: £250 from three separate wards – submitted from the Domestic Violence Integrated Response Project

It was reported that the Safer Leicester Partnership had identified three areas of the city with the lowest figures for domestic violence reports to Police. Public questionnaires across the city indicate that 40% of people may never tell anyone about domestic violence, suffering in silence. DVIRP are leading a campaign in these areas, to increase awareness amongst members of the public and to let people know of the local support services available to assist them. The campaign is in partnership with Crimestoppers, who are making contributions in kind, and many other local agencies including the Police, the City Council and Victim Support.

The proposal was to print a range of promotional material including 'Tell Someone About It' reporting leaflets, crimestopper stickers and posters. There would also be events held in each of the Neighbourhoods, and posters and leaflets will be available in local community venues such as libraries, GP surgeries, community centres, children centres and schools.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be supported to the value of £250.

41. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the next meeting would take place on Thursday 15 March 2012.

42. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8:15pm.

