

Aylestone Community Meeting

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Thursday, 12 January 2012

**Held at: GILMORTON COMMUNITY ROOMS, HOPYARD CLOSE,
LEICESTER LE2 9GY**

Who was there:

Councillor Adam Clarke

Councillor Nigel Porter

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 Members of the public could talk to their local councillors and raise general queries	Police Issues Ps Dave Partridge and PcsO Diane Stewart were present to answer queries relating to general Policing issues.
School Choice Advisor Members of the community could talk to Glenn Sutton from the Choice Advice Service	City Warden Service Stenroy Smith, the City Warden for Aylestone was present to answer queries relating to street scene enforcement issues.

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.

103. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Porter was elected as Chair and welcomed everyone to the Aylestone Community Meeting.

104. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Patrick Bowe, Herbert Eppel and Jonathan Dawson.

105. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor Clarke declared a personal interest in the funding application for Detached Youth Work – Street Sessions and Young People’s consultation on Gilmorton Estate, as he had been involved in the submission of the bid. Councillor Clarke undertook to leave the meeting for the consideration of this funding application. He also declared in respect of item 6, School Choice Advisor – School Catchment Area Review Consultation, that he was a school governor.

106. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Aylestone Community Meeting held on 9 November 2011 be confirmed as a correct record.

107. EURO PRINT DYERS LTD AND THE BURROWS CHIMNEY

The Chair introduced the item on the Euro Print Dyers and the Burrows Chimney and explained that there had been on-going issues with the company who were based on Saffron Lane. He introduced Adrian Russell, the Director of Environmental Services to the meeting and explained that Adrian had been invited to give an update on the current situation.

Adrian explained that he was familiar with the problems that arose as a result of the type of process carried out by Euro Print Dyers. The company intended to install a cone to the chimney which would speed up the fumes so that they could be dispersed higher. Planning permission would be needed for the chimney cone, but it was expected that this would be granted very shortly.

Adrian urged members of the community to contact the council if there were further problems, so that staff could investigate any complaints.

108. SCHOOL CHOICE ADVISOR - SCHOOL CATCHMENT AREA REVIEW CONSULTATION

The Chair explained that the council were carrying out a review of the school catchment areas and he introduced Glenn Sutton, the School Choice Advisor from Voluntary Action Leicester (VAL) to the meeting.

Glenn explained that the council were carrying out the catchment area review in order to make the school allocation system fairer. Where a school was over-subscribed, one of the criteria to be taken into account was whether the child lived within the school's priority area. Glenn made the following points:

- VAL were running sessions where people could have they say on the school catchment area review. People could call in to their office on Newarke Street where maps would be displayed.
- Granby Primary School was one of the feeder schools for the Samworth Academy, but parents had a choice as to where to send their child.
- The consultation was about the school catchment areas and not about the school allocation process.
- The consultation closed on 15 February 2012

The meeting heard that parents had three choices as to where to send their children and they were recommended to give all their three choices when completing the application form.

A member of the community questioned whether the city council would pay transport costs if parents were not given the school of their choice and the child was sent

outside the catchment area. Glenn responded that the council did sometimes pay travel costs and added that parents could appeal if they were not happy with the school that their child had been allocated. He added that help with appeals could be given and he asked people to contact him if this was the case. He would be happy to meet on a 1-1 basis.

109. CYCLE AND BUS SCHEMES

The Chair explained that members of the community would be asked for their views as to possibility of setting aside part of the community meeting budget to encourage greener transport. He explained that people who commuted into the city by car, might be encouraged to cycle if they were provided with a bicycle. They would be asked to keep a diary for a period so that their use of the car and bicycle could be logged and evidence collated.

A question was raised as to whether there were any other similar schemes in Leicester and was advised that there had been a similar scheme in the Westcotes Ward. There was a query as to whether congestion on the local roads was caused by Aylestone residents, or whether it was motorists from outside Aylestone, driving through the area who were causing the congestion. The Chair commented that he was keen for evidence to be collated which would provide this sort of detail.

John Dowson, Team manager in the Transport Strategy Section was then introduced to the meeting. He made the following comments:

- He believed that the idea was workable and a similar project had been successful in the Westcotes Ward.
- As part of the package in Westcotes cycle training and support had been offered including training with cycle maintenance. The scheme had worked well.
- A log of the participants' activities had been kept, to show the reduction in the use of the motor car and the resulting increase in health benefits.
- From Aylestone, it could take approximately 20 minutes to cycle into town which was long enough to provide good exercise for the heart and lungs.
- The journey between the city centre and Aylestone along the Great Central Way was also an enjoyable route for cyclists.
- It was suggested that the cost of a new cycle would be £250 but the council could offer refurbished cycles at a very reasonable price.

The following comments were raised:

- Could there be more parking facilities/cycle racks provided for cyclists?
- Where training was provided for cyclists, could the council ensure that the staff who delivered the training wore cycle helmets? There had been a situation where in a school, where the children were expected to wear a helmet although the trainer did not.

John responded that their council trainers must wear helmets and he asked for further details of this particular incident.

- How often was a clean up carried out on the Great Central Way because there was broken glass there?

John asked that members of the public reported broken glass so that the problem could be dealt with.

- Were people generally aware that a cycle permit was need to people to cycle along the Great Central Way?

John confirmed that a permit was required. It was free and could be downloaded from the Waterways website on the internet.

- Would it be possible to offer bicycles on load for a period of 3 month. After that, if people enjoyed cycling they could purchase their own.

Councillors commented that this was a good idea.

John also referred to buses and explained that bus companies were private companies and the council had very limited authority over them. However a Bus User Panel was being set up, with the aim of opening up a better dialogue with the bus companies. A representative from the Aylestone Ward would be welcome to participate on the panel. Councillors explained that in the budget for the new financial year there was a proposed cut in bus subsidies which would affect the local bus as it was non-profit making. Members of the community were asked to talk to the councillors if they thought they would be affected by the proposed cut in subsidies.

Members of the public were asked to indicate whether they were in favour of setting aside £3000 of the Community Meeting budget for a project to encourage greener and more environment friendly transport. Once a decision had been made to ring-fence money for this purpose, a separate meeting could be held to discuss the next steps. Members of the public proposed and seconded the ring-fencing of £3000 of the Aylestone Community Meeting budget for this purpose and other members of the public indicated by a show of hands that they were in favour of this proposal.

Julie Harget, Democratic Support Officer explained that if all the pending funding applications were supported, this would leave a balance of £8883. If £3000 was set aside for Greener Transport initiatives, approximately £5,883 would be left in the budget. Julie stated that it would be advisable to assume that there would be no carry forward of unspent monies to the new financial year.

Action to be taken	Officer identified	Deadline
The request to ring-fence £3,000 for the setting up of a project for greener transport initiatives, but submitted to the Cabinet Lead for approval.	Nichola Pell, Member Support Officer	By 31 January 2012

110. GILMORTON COMMUNITY ROOMS

Steve Goddard, Head of Community Services addressed the meeting on the subject of the Gilmorton Community Rooms. Steve explained that the council were looking to encourage more residents to become involved in the running of the rooms. However it was no longer possible to maintain the presence of staff whilst community groups were in the rooms and it was hoped to introduce a new door entry system, which would not entail the use of keys.

The meeting heard that community groups would be given a key fob, but there would be a central control system so that if someone who held the key fob for a particular group was unable to attend the meeting, someone else with a password could still gain access to the building. They would need to telephone an officer at a central control desk, give a pre-arranged password, and the officer would then press a button so that the member of the community group access into the rooms. The system would be installed by BT.

The meeting heard that at present the rooms were used by a youth group, but there was also a successful community event held before Christmas. Mr Alan Potter explained that at one time, tea and cake events had been held in the community rooms, where people donated home made cakes for sale. This had also generated a little income. It was hoped to encourage more community groups to use the rooms. The cost for groups to hire the rooms was £3.50 per hour and Steve added that they were looking to arrange a reasonable rate for individuals so that the rooms could be hired for birthday parties etc.

111. YOUTH AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Chair explained that Gary Fox , the Project Manager from the Saffron Young People's Project was going to present this item but he had submitted his apologies because he was unwell.

112. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

The Chair explained that Ian Stapleton, who was going to present this item, had had to leave the meeting early, but Councillors had asked him to draw up plans to clean up Gees Lock Close. It had been estimated that it would cost between £10,000 and £12,000 to make the improvements, but there was money, from tenant's rents, in the housing budget for the work. It was also hoped as part of the improvements to plant some trees as well.

113. CITY WARDEN

Stenroy Smith, the City Warden for the Aylestone Community Ward explained that he had been carrying out some patrols, dressed in plain clothes, to tackle dog fouling

and littering. He was also working to reduce the number of bins that were left out on streets and to deal with people who threw rubbish out of their car windows. He asked members of the community to keep him informed of any street scene enforcement problems.

Members of the community raised the following problems:

- Chewing gum on the new block paving on Aylestone Road.

It was suggested that any remaining monies in the Aylestone Community Meeting budget might be used to clean this up, as it had been previously stated that there was no money in the central budget to do this.

- Dog mess on the Great Central Way and Aylestone Meadows.

Dog mess was being left in bags because there was no designated bin for dog mess.

Stenroy explained that the bins had been set on fire, but he would talk to the Park Ranger about this. There was a general view that there were insufficient bins in general and the meeting was reminded by the Chair that in the past the Community Meeting budget had funded additional waste bins. People indicated that they were generally in favour of funding additional waste bins but sought reassurances that they would be regularly emptied. Councillors stated that they thought that dual bins might be the best option and said that they would need to look into this to find the best way forward.

- Problems with graffiti and tags.

Stenroy commented that where graffiti was offensive it would be cleaned up, but otherwise there was a cost implication to graffiti removal.

- Problems with litter outside schools.

Stenroy responded that this problem was due to be targeted in February.

- Re-siting of waste bins

There were two waste bins that were tucked away in a corner near to St Andrew's Church and they were hardly used because people did not know that they were there. It was questioned whether it would be possible to re-site the bins to a more prominent position.

Stenroy responded that he knew where the bins were and he would look into this.

- Litter left behind after the collection of the orange bags.

Stenroy responded that monitoring of the orange bag collection had been carried out on 4 January 2012 and a report submitted to Waste Management.

It was considered that the problems had been exacerbated by the high winds. There had also been problems with the orange bags splitting, which Biffa were aware of.

Action to be taken	Officer identified	deadline
To investigate the best option for the provision of waste bins (to include dog waste) on the Great Central Way	Councillors / Nichola Pell, Member Support Officer	As soon as possible
To investigate the possibility of re-siting of two bins near St Andrew's Church	Stenroy Smith	As soon as possible

114. POLICING ISSUES IN AYLESTONE

Ps Dave Partridge addressed the community meeting on policing issues in the Aylestone Ward and made the following points:

- The only reported incident of anti-social behaviour in the Gilmorton area was by a group of youths who had been verbally abusive. Residents were urged to call the Police if they had any further problems.
- In the Gilmorton area there had been one cycle theft during the previous 90 days, and one burglary. The burglary had taken place at 6pm when someone had left their door open and a handbag was stolen.
- In the wider Aylestone area there had been more burglaries where people had targeted insecure rear doors. Ps Partridge asked members of the community to lock their doors at all times as dwellings were being burgled during the day time.
- The Police had been working to deal with speeding vehicles. It appeared that in some cases the drivers were not technically speeding, but driving rather too fast for the general conditions.
- The Police were looking to restrict parking outside Montrose Primary School by increasing the length of the zig-zag road markings.

A member of the community questioned whether there had been any metal thefts in the area and Ps Partridge responded that he thought that there had been, but the thefts were not generally being reported. Some local metal dealers took items that were left out in the front and rear gardens, because they assumed that if they were left out, they were there with the intention that they would be taken. He asked members of the public to let the Police know if they saw this happening.

A further concern was raised about parking on the zig-zag road markings outside Granby Primary School and Ps Partridge commented that parking on zig-zag road markings was a fixed penalty offence and that this endangered the lives of children.

115. COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGET

The following budget applications had been received and were considered:

Memorial Garden:

Submitted by: Friends of Aylestone Hall Gardens

Amount requested £500.

There was a general view from members of the community present at the meeting that they would like more information on the funding application as they were unclear as to exactly how project scheme would be administered. A member of the public also suggested that residents should be consulted on the project. The Chair explained that in view of the comments raised, the application would be deferred for further discussions with the applicant.

RESOLVED:

that the funding bid be deferred to enable further discussions with the applicant.

Councillor Clarke left the meeting for the consideration of the following budget application:

Detached Youth Work – Street sessions and Young People’s consultation on Gilmorton Estate.

Submitted by: Saffron Young People’s Project.

Amount requested: £404.

The Chair explained that Gary Fox, the Project Manager from Saffron Young People’s Project was unable to attend the meeting, although Anna Parr, Youth Services was present.

Anna stated that she supported the funding bid, but felt that the consultation should not be carried out in isolation, and asked to be kept informed. Anna also expressed concern that the hopes of young people might be raised unrealistically and that they might believe they were being offered something that in reality could not be delivered.

Members of the public indicated that they were in support of the project and a suggestion was made that the bid should be supported with a stipulation that the project liaised with Anna Parr and also that the young people should not be given unrealistic expectations.

RESOLVED.

that the funding bid be supported to the value of £404, with the condition that the project liaises with Anna Parr, Youth Services and that in addition the consultation endeavours not to raise the expectations of the young people concerned.

Councillor Clarke returned to the meeting at this point.

Replacement Roller Shutter Door

Submitted by: St Andrews Football Club

Amount Requested: £700

Mr Barry Daniell, Treasurer, St Andrew’s Football Club explained that there had been two break-ins at the club which had proved to be financially disastrous. They were therefore trying to improve the security at the premises and were fund raising to install CCTV and a new alarm. In response to a question from a member of the public, he advised that the cost of installing CCTV was approximately £1500.

Councillor Clarke suggested that the football club should also approach the Joint Action Group (JAG) for financial assistance for the security improvements.

Members of the community indicated that they were in favour of the funding application being supported.

RESOLVED:

that the funding bid be supported to the value of £700.

Action to be taken	Officer identified	Deadline
That the funding applications for the Detached Youth Work and the Replacement Roller Shutter Door that had been supported in the meeting be submitted to the Cabinet Lead for approval.	Nichola Pell, Member Support Officer.	By 31 January 2012
That further discussions expressing the views and concerns raised at the meeting relating to the funding application for the Memorial Garden be held with the applicant.	Nichola Pell and / Ward Councillors	As soon as possible

Budget Consultation

The Chair announced that a budget consultation was currently taking place in respect of the Leicester City Council's Budget 2012 – 2015. He added that his feeling was that the council could use its resources to avoid any increase in council tax and in that way, the council would also obtain additional funding from the government. Councillor Clarke commented that there was a view that council tax would double in 2013/14 if it was not raised in 2012/13.

Members of the community were informed that people were invited to give their views on the budget proposals, which they could do 'on line' or at community buildings and libraries.

Councillors added that the budget proposals would be fully debated at council.

The Chair informed the meeting that a petition was being raised to try to save the Aylestone Library on Richmond Road, as there was a proposal to move the library to the leisure centre. In response to a question, Councillors explained that if the library was moved, the building could be sold or rented with the money being put back into the council portfolio. Concern was expressed by residents; they said that the library had been re-furbished and was well used. Councillors explained that although the Aylestone Library was located in the Freeman Ward, it was a service that Aylestone residents used.

A member of the public suggested that as well as the paper version of the petition, there should also be an e-petition raised on-line.

116. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair announced that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 22 March at 6.00pm in the Charles Palmer Suite at the Leicestershire Country Cricket Club. Members of the community were asked to note that the entrance to the cricket club for the Charles Palmer suite was from Curzon Road.

117. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Ms Lauren Hicking from the Aylestone Local Action Group informed the meeting that she had a petition in respect of the design for the new health centre that was to be built on the site of the old Rutland Inn. She asked people to see her if they were interested in signing the petition.

118. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.59 pm.

