

# **Your Community, Your Voice**

## **Record of Meeting and Actions**

**6:00 pm, Monday, 24 October 2011**

**Held at: Willowbrook Primary School, Roborough Green, Leicester  
LE5 2NA**

Councillors in Attendance

Councillor Luis Fonseca
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Councillor Barbara Potter
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## **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.

<b>Ward Councillors and General Information</b>	<b>Police Issues</b>
<b>Orange bags recycling scheme</b>	<b>Home Energy</b>
<b>Neighbourhood Watch</b>	<b>City Warden</b>

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.

## **15. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Councillor Potter, who was in attendance to support the meeting, was appointed as Chair for the meeting. However, her role was to be a facilitative one and she would not be voting on any matters at the meeting.

Concern was raised that Councillor Fonseca was not chairing, and that the meeting had been rearranged to accommodate Councillor Wann. It was reported that, although the date was chosen to fit with his schedule, civic duties had arisen since, and it should be recognised that his attendance at meetings was difficult to ascertain due to his role.

Residents also queried why the meeting was being held at Willowbrook School, as it was felt that this was not a convenient location. It was suggested that one of the user groups at the Ocean Road Centre would be willing to move on occasions so that a meeting could be held there.

## **16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Wann who was carrying out his civic duties as Lord Mayor.

## **17. 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 Fonseca declared a personal interest in respect of the Ward Community Budget as he was a member of the Thurnby Lodge Community Association.

## **18. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Discussion took place regarding the accuracy of Minute 5, Minutes of Previous Meeting in respect of comments made about Havencrest Drive yellow lines. A resident felt that it should state both sides, but officers stated that the project was only for the west side and residents on the east side would have to request it if they wished. The Member Support Officer stated that the £4250 that had been contributed to this project from the Community Meeting budget was to be recouped as the work was being funded centrally instead. Confirmation was awaited as to whether this money would be available to spend in the community meeting budget for the current year.

With regard to Minute 8, relating to fencing for Roborough Green, a resident asked if the same could be supplied on the opposite corner as well, as the area became very muddy in the winter.

Chrissie Field-Toon, Area Manager for Housing Services, gave an update on the proposals for the Housing Environmental Improvement Budget. She had discussed this with the ward councillors and agreed proposals. This had to be done quickly as the orders had to be placed soon. She summarised the schemes as follows:

- Large scheme at St Austell Road would go ahead. There were a lot of issues in the flats and surrounding areas.
- Fencing either side of 88 Compass Road, to improve privacy for the bungalows.
- Fencing on Wisden Close.
- 2 open pole gates on Rockingham Close.
- 2 seats for Willowbrook View area; residents to be consulted on the location; seats would be vandal proof recycled plastic, as metal seats were no longer available.
- 2 lots of railings on Kirminton Gardens and Sunbury Green.
- Further discussion needed about Roborough Green to ascertain whether it was the right thing to do.

Chrissie urged residents to think of any other projects, so that they could be ready for any potential funding that may be given next year.

Allan Gratrix reported that an application to improve the area outside the shops had fallen through, but it had been suggested that the area could be suitable for a Royal Horticultural Society Scheme application. It was suggested, therefore, that the benches could be kept aside to be included in this scheme.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2011 be confirmed as a correct record.

## **19. UPDATE ON POLICE ISSUES**

Inspector Danny Graham gave an update on policing issues in the Thurncourt Ward and informed the meeting about the different sections that had a role in local policing, consisting of the 999 response hub, serious crime team, local investigation unit and the neighbourhood team.

He reported particularly on an issue of antisocial behaviour that had emerged in the shopping area on Thurncourt Road and near the Willowbrook Activity Centre. A plan was put in place, containing a wide range of measures, to tackle the problem. There was also joint working to try to avoid the problem being displaced elsewhere. There had been a reduction in numbers of young people congregating and fewer calls to the police. Work was being done to get powers for a Section 30 dispersal zone to strengthen the police's powers.

He also reported on work that was being done to reduce problems at Halloween and Bonfire Night. Work that had been planned for speeding issues would be picked up again, as it had been slowed by the need to tackle the problems at the shops.

Councillor Potter thanked Inspector Graham and noted that the situation had improved through the hard work of the police. She asked why more responsibility could not be placed on the parents to control their children. Inspector Graham stated that this was a wider society issue, and it was right not to demonise all young people, some of whom were caught up by criminals. He recognised the positive aspects of the estate and the community spirit. Discussion took place with regard to the apparent inequality of sanctions on council tenants who could be evicted from their homes, whereas there were no such sanctions for private households.

A resident asked for work on tackling speeding to be addressed as a priority and Inspector Graham agreed that he would ensure that this would be done.

## **20. ORANGE BAG RECYCLING SCHEME**

Sophie Glover explained the new orange bags recycling scheme and gave an update on how the first week had gone.

A small number of properties had not received their bags and Sophie asked anyone in this situation to contact the team. She explained that nearly everything could be put in the bags and mechanical processes sorted the materials so none went to landfill. In the first week there had been a great response and very few bags had been rejected as contaminated.

In response to a question, Sophie stated that there was no limit to the number of bags that could be put out each week. As the materials were not sorted out kerbside any more, the bags were compacted in the vehicle and there was a reduction in the waste blowing into the street.

The Chair thanked Sophie for her presentation.

## **21. HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

Steve Warrington, Regeneration, Highways and Transportation, was present at the meeting to discuss the proposals for Havencrest Drive and the Parkway. A letter and comment form were to be sent to residents and a report would be produced for the Deputy City Mayor to decide how far the yellow lines should go. He asked residents who should receive the letters and it was suggested that it should be all the way to the top of Havencrest.

Francis Connolly, Member Support Officer read out a statement from Mike Pears, who was unable to attend the meeting which gave an update on issues previously raised at the community meeting:

- Croyland Green / Homestone Gardens, suggested for inclusion in a future Local Environment Works programme to install parking laybys into the grass area. This proposal would have to be assessed against the numerous other proposals.
- Severn Trent reinstatements, this had been looked into by the Traffic Operations Team and a response had been sent to Councillor Fonseca.

- Bowhill Grove, repairs had been carried out on some of the concrete bays.
- Gervas Road outside 61, temporary repair carried out around concrete bay, planning to reconstruct bay next financial year.
- Colchester Road shrubs on central reservation, court case had been adjourned again possibly until next year. Shrub growth since last cut was minimal.

The Chair thanked officers for the information.

## **22. HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

Kanwaljit Basra, Housing Strategy Options, gave a presentation on the new housing allocations policy. He explained that the Council had moved to a banding system rather than points. There were 5 bands, 1 being the highest priority. The Council decided on the weighting for each aspect of housing need. If a household had more than one priority need, the main circumstance would be taken into account in their banding. Overcrowding was the most common need to be rehoused, and this had been increased in priority under the new policy.

He stated that the Home Choice Scheme was still in operation and people could bid for homes when they were eligible. However, due to the severe difference between demand and availability of homes, people were only realistically likely to receive a home if they fell into bands 1 or 2. Most people in Band 1 were likely to receive an offer quite quickly, except for those with medical need, as there were very few suitable homes available.

The Chair thanked Baz for the presentation.

## **23. CITY WARDEN SERVICE**

Darren Evans, City Warden, gave an update on his work on the Thurncourt Ward.

He reported that the issues with dog fouling raised at the last meeting had improved. He also reported that there were issues regarding this year's bonfire, following last year's problems. He reported that graffiti had been dealt with excellently, but was disappointed to see some severe graffiti in the Willowbrook park area. This had been reported so that it could be sorted out quickly. With regard to the shop area, the shops had been working closely with him. A meet and greet was held in August and Darren thanked everyone involved.

Darren informed the meeting that he had been moved to Spinney Hills for 4 days a week which would affect daily patrolling. This was due to constraints on the service city-wide. He reiterated his commitment to the ward and had managed to secure one day a week in the ward. Residents were still encouraged to report any problems to him and colleagues would cover work in his absence.

Discussion took place about whether the ward required a full time warden. Residents expressed their strong dissatisfaction at the loss of Darren 4 days a week, stating

that they expected to have a full time warden due to the excellent work that had been done in the ward and the improvements that had been seen. The Chair expressed her concern about the loss of cover and undertook to speak to the relevant Assistant City Mayor about the issue. She thanked Darren for his hard work and dedication.

Residents asked that the brook be cleared as it posed a flooding danger. Darren agreed to speak to colleagues about how this could be done. He invited people to join him on a patch walk of the area around the brook and the Willowbrook Activity Centre.

RESOLVED:

That the Thurncourt Community Meeting strongly expresses its concern at the loss of full time City Warden support to the ward and asks the Council to speedily resolve this to reinstate the service.

## **24. WARD COMMUNITY BUDGET 2011/12**

Francis Connolly, Members' Support Officer, gave an update on funding applications that had been received. He stated that an additional £2000 for the year had been given to the ward, as part of the Community Cohesion fund. He also reported that work was being done to find out about the reimbursement of the funding allocated for Havencrest yellow lines, as discussed under Minutes of Previous Meeting.

The applications that had been submitted prior to the agenda despatch were considered as follows:

### **1) Taxi support scheme: £2000 Thurnby Lodge & District Community Association**

Allan Gratrix stated that the fund covered a one-way trip. There was some confusion about whether it covered trips outside the ward, such as to hospitals. It was noted that this was a Councillor decision to make and that if the application was supported, the criteria could be clarified.

AGREED: that the application be supported and that the criteria be clarified by the ward councillors outside the meeting.

### **2) Royal Horticultural Society Improvement Project: £500 for a planter seat**

Allan reported that the proposal had slightly changed as the site for the planter seat was on gravel, which was being spread around. Different planters without a seat would be preferable.

AGREED: that the application be supported.

Francis reported that other applications had been received after the deadline. One application for a cinema club was for £2,000 and it was agreed that this application should not be considered until further work had been done on it.

Other applications were under the £500 threshold for bids that could be considered as "fast track" outside the meeting, by the ward councillors. In the interests of transparency, Councillors decided to consider them "in principle."

**3) Angling Trip – Willowbrook Activity Centre - £300**

Graham Cornish reported that this was to provide equipment for a trip. Match funding had been provided from the Thurnby Lodge Community Forum.

AGREED: that the application be supported in principle, subject to further checks by the Members' Support Officer.

**4) Football goal for Thurnby Lodge Boys Football Training: £129.95**

It was reported that the old goal was broken and posed a safety risk.

AGREED: that the application be supported in principle, subject to further checks by the Members' Support Officer.

A further application was mentioned to Francis before the meeting, but he had not seen an application for it. It was for painting of Ocean Road Community Centre and would be for under £500, so could be fast tracked by councillors outside the meeting. Residents stated that the work was not likely to start for some time, so it was not an urgent application.

It was noted that Councillor Wann had been informally consulted on all the bids except the Ocean Road painting application and supported the approach as taken at the meeting.

## **25. FORUM FOR OLDER PEOPLE**

The Chair informed the meeting of the Forum for Older People, which was a meeting held at the Town Hall for elderly city residents or people who worked with older people. Eligible residents were invited to attend future meetings, the next one being on 17 January 2012.

## **26. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was reported that the next meeting date had been omitted from the agenda and was to be held on 24 January 2012. Efforts would be made to hold it at Ocean Road.

## **27. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8.05pm.