

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

5:30 pm, Tuesday, 19 February 2013

Held at: United Reform Church, Gooding Avenue

Who was there:

Councillor Michael Cooke

Councillor Anne Glover

Councillor Wayne Naylor

INFORMATION SHARING – ‘INFORMATION FAIR’ SESSION

Information on the following topics was available in the room:-

- Illegal Money Lending Unit
- Coping with Cancer in Leicestershire & Rutland
- Wear it Red Leicester Event
- City Warden Service
- Neighbourhood Police
- Ward Councillors and general enquiries

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.

47. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Cooke was elected as Chair for the meeting.

48. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Reverend Chris Burch, (as an applicant for grant funding under agenda item 9, "Ward Community Budget 2012/13").

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Naylor declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the application from K T Performing Arts to be considered under agenda item 9(c), "Ward Community Budget", (application 4), in that he was a volunteer with the group.

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, this interest was not considered so significant that it was likely to prejudice Councillor Naylor's judgement of the public interest. He therefore was not required to withdraw from the meeting during discussion of the item.

50. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED:

That the minutes of the Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields Community Meeting held on 18 December 2012 be confirmed as a correct record.

51. ILLEGAL MONEY LENDING UNIT

Steve Ward from Birmingham City Council's Illegal Money Lending Unit explained that:-

- Loan sharks were unlicensed money lenders, (they did not have a consumer credit license). They worked around the city and there was reason to believe they operated in the area covered by this Ward;
- Loan sharks preyed on vulnerable people with a poor credit history, who found it hard to get cheap credit;
- 90% of loan sharks were men, who came from a wide range of areas;
- It was not illegal to borrow money from a loan shark, but it was illegal for someone with no license to lend money, whatever the rate of interest;
- There was no documentation for these loans and there was no obligation to repay them. However, people often feared reprisals if they did not;

- Loans often were made on the basis that an agreed amount was repaid on a regular basis until the whole loan could be repaid as a lump sum. As people taking out these loans were unlikely to be able to save enough to repay the whole amount, they therefore continued to make payments for very long periods of time;
- A campaign to increase awareness of loan sharks would be held in the Braunstone Park and New Parks areas. Training days for representatives of agencies were being advertised through the Trading Standards service. Community advocate training could be provided if required. This was aimed at understanding people's rights and how to report loan sharks safely;
- 70% of the victims of this type of fraud were too afraid to report it, for fear of reprisals. These could include threats and intimidation and some people had been forced in to crime themselves in order to repay a debt. Victim support could be provided; and
- Proceeds of crime confiscated by the Police could not be repaid to the victims, so they were used for community projects.

The Ward Members reminded the meeting that the Council previously had run a campaign to raise awareness of "doorstep lenders" and a credit union now existed in the Ward. The licensed lender who previously had operated in the area appeared to have stopped doing so since the credit union had been established. However, there still appeared to be high levels of debt in the Ward.

AGREED:

That the Ward Councillors contact Trading Standards officers to enquire if community advocate training in relation to loan shark awareness could be provided in the Ward.

52. COPING WITH CANCER IN LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND

Sarah Thorp, Volunteer Co-ordinator with Coping with Cancer in Leicestershire and Rutland, introduced herself to the meeting. She advised that:-

- Coping with Cancer in Leicestershire and Rutland was an independent charity, based in Leicester;
- All of the services provided by the charity were free;
- The charity received some funding from the local Primary Care Trust, but approximately 60% of its income was through fundraising. The charity's choir also helped raised funds;
- The charity helped anyone affected by cancer, from diagnosis for as long as needed afterwards;

- Counselling was offered, along with over 50 complementary therapies. Various support groups also existed, which were tumour or person specific, and a befriending service was available. Headstrong helped people with hair loss;
- The charity only had one base, but had various outreach points. Some home visits also were made to people unable to leave their homes; and
- Access to the charity's services was by self-referral, although some people were directed there by health professionals; and
- There were only 13 paid members of staff, but over 150 volunteers. Other volunteers were always being sought. Roles included therapists, group supporters, drivers and telephone support.

53. WEAR IT RED EVENT IN LEICESTER

April Alcott, Exercise Referral Officer with Leicester City Council, explained that Active Lifestyles was run as a partnership between the NHS and the Council. Through this, GPs could refer people who were inactive, or had a condition where exercise could help, to a leisure centre for exercise. Some people with heart conditions also were referred by local hospitals. Twelve classes were held per week and there were approximately 2,000 heart patients across the city.

It was hoped to increase awareness of heart disease and raise money for the British Heart Foundation through an organised event on 23 February 2013 at which people could either walk, cycle, or jog over set courses. This was the 3rd Annual Walk/Jog/Ride to the City Centre. Participants would leave their local area and meet in the City centre. Everyone was encouraged to wear red and take banners publicising what they were doing. Children often wore fancy dress.

There would be a short walk leaving Braunstone Leisure Centre on 23 February, which anyone was welcome to join.

The Ward Members reminded residents that the decision to move services for congenital heart disease from Glenfield Hospital had been referred to the Secretary of State. As a result, the process by which the decision was made would be reviewed on a national basis. It was anticipated that a decision on this review would be received in April or May 2013.

It was noted that a proposal to introduce a charge for older people visiting leisure centres had been amended to a suggested £5 per month. In addition, the proposal to charge older people full fare on buses before 9.30 am had been cancelled, as they often were going to work or leisure centres when travelling at that time.

54. CITY WARDEN UPDATE

Noel Cazley, City Warden with Leicester City Council, reported as follows:-

- A lot of work was being done to reduce dog fouling. One particular issue at present was that, as nights were long and dark in the winter, it was easier for dog fouling to go unnoticed. However, surveillance operations were being carried out and people were being caught;
- A “bins on streets” campaign was being held, focussing on the Winchester Avenue area. This had started in August 2012 and now only approximately 6 bins remained on the streets. Fixed Penalty Notices were being issued for those remaining;
- The first Section 93 Street Litter Control Notice had been issued to a fast food outlet on the estate. If waste from an outlet was not cleared up, a Notice could be imposed and the requirements of that Notice had to be met. (For example, an outlet could be required to provide bins and clear up rubbish.)

If the requirements of the Section 93 Notice were not met, a £100 Fixed Penalty Notice could be issued. If the problems continued after two Fixed Penalty Notices had been issued, the matter would be referred to the courts for resolution;

- A lot of bins had been stolen from parks and it was assumed they had been taken for the value of the metal. Plastic bins could not be put on the highway, so as bins were replaced in parks they were secured with chains and padlocks;
- When a waste bin was put on the highway, it became a public bin, so other people were entitled to put rubbish in it; and
- Pot holes in the roads could now be reported to the Council via a phone app.

AGREED:

That the Ward Councillors include the lack of bins in the Ward in the Ward Action Plan and liaise with highways engineers about this.

55. POLICE ISSUES UPDATE

Sergeant Guest of Leicestershire Police reported as follows:-

- There appeared to be a group in the area breaking car wing mirrors, so drivers were being advised to pull their mirrors in. Any information on the group would be welcomed. This could be reported via Crime Stoppers if preferred;
- There was concern that the drug Mephedrone (mkat) was being dealt in the area. Information on where this was occurring would be welcome;
- Donations from goods seized under the Proceeds of Crime Act were being given to support local groups, including Street Vibe and FoodShare;
- Targets for reducing crime and anti-social behaviour were being met; and

- Any suspicious activity should be reported to the Police, if possible with descriptions of the people doing it.

A resident reported that problems were being encountered in Hopefield Road with vehicles double-parking overnight, even when there were spaces available further down the road. Sergeant Guest asked that this be reported to the police when it happened, so that they could observe the situation. If the Police considered that it was unnecessary obstruction of the road, they could ticket the vehicles, although it was recognised that it could be difficult to locate the drivers.

56. WARD COMMUNITY BUDGET 2012/13

a) Budget Update

The Chair advised the meeting that from 1 April 2013 the Ward Members would be able to approve applications for grants up to the value of £500 themselves and not have to wait for them to be approved by the relevant Assistant Mayor, as at present.

b) Grant Applications already Approved

The Chair advised that the following applications had been approved under the Council's fast-track procedure:-

i) Braunstone Adventure Play Ground Graffiti / Art Project

NOTED:

That a grant of £500 had been approved under the Council's fast-track procedure to Braunstone Adventure Play Ground for a graffiti / art project.

ii) Anita Robinson – Braunstone History & Art Exhibition 2013

The meeting noted that this Exhibition was part of a programme of events taking place in the stable block museum at Braunstone Hall. Details of this are attached at the end of these minutes for information.

NOTED:

That a grant of £500 had been approved under the Council's fast-track procedure to Anita Robinson, (Parks Officer with Leicester City Council), towards the Braunstone History and Art Exhibition 2013.

c) Grant Applications

The following applications for grants were then considered:-

i) Rowley Fields Allotment Society – Green Barriers

AGREED:

That a grant of £862.50 to Rowley Fields Allotment Society for the purpose of creating green barriers to the site be supported.

ii) K T Performing Arts – Uniforms

The meeting noted that the premises used by K T Performing Arts were available for use by older people in the afternoon during the week, as the studios were only needed for the group's members in the evening.

AGREED:

That a grant of £1,440 to K T Performing Arts for the purchase of uniforms be supported.

iii) Leicester Play Fair – Lame Duck Summer PGL Activity Camp

AGREED:

That a grant of £1,150 to Leicester Fair Play towards the provision of the Lame Duck Summer PGL Activity Camp be supported.

iv) Revd Chris Burch – Braunstone FoodShare

AGREED:

That a grant of £2,500 to Reverend Chris Burch towards the Braunstone FoodShare project be supported.

v) Adel Al-Salloum – “Shiny” Event

AGREED:

That a grant of £150 to Adel Al-Salloum towards the “Shiny” event being held as part of The Spark Festival in June 2013 be supported.

vi) Sanchez Allen-Coltman – Fitness Classes, Health Screening and Fitness Training

AGREED:

That consideration of this application be deferred to enable further information on the project to be obtained.

d) Budget Position

The Chair reported that, having supported the grant applications outlined above, approximately £2,000 remained in the Ward Community Budget for 2012/13.

The City Council recently had agreed that 10% of each Ward's annual Community Budget (£18,000) could be carried over to the 2013/14 financial year. However, as money remained in this Ward's budget, if applications for grants of up to £500 were received in time they still could be considered under the Council's fast-track procedure for payment in the current financial year.

57. COUNCILLOR UPDATES

a) **Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields Health Strategy**

An event would be held between 3.00 pm and 7.00 pm on Thursday 21 March 2013 to launch the Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields Health Strategy. Organisations had been invited to attend between 3.00 pm and 5.00 pm and the public after that.

It was hoped that the Strategy could be a vehicle to introduce funding in to the Ward and improve the co-ordination of resources.

b) **Braunstone Hall**

It was noted that there had been a delay in submitting the planning application for the proposed development of the Hall. The developer was required to undertake a survey of bats at the Hall, but this could not be done until May.

c) **Communication Boxes**

The meeting was reminded that a question had been asked at the last meeting about who was responsible for repairing communication boxes when they got damaged. It was noted that such damage could be reported to environmental health officers, who would pass on the details.

d) **Roman Mosaic under Highcross Centre**

The meeting was reminded that it had been asked at the last meeting if Highcross Centre had been built over a Roman mosaic.

No evidence of this had been found, but investigations in to the matter were continuing.

e) **Connecting Leicester**

Part of the Connecting Leicester programme included a proposal to link New Walk to De Montfort University and it was envisaged that, following the discovery of the skeleton of Richard III in that area, there would be more investment in this type of improvement.

f) **Cul de Sacs off Gooding Avenue**

It was noted that the roundabouts in the cul de sacs off Gooding Avenue were no longer attractive and caused blockages. The Council had provided £250,000 per year for environmental works and the Ward had been very successful in gaining £125,000 for three schemes to improve roundabouts.

Residents were invited to pass any ideas on how this could be used, or details of any issues, to the Ward Councillors.

58. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Alley Gates

Louise Lavelle, from the City Council's Community Safety team, reported that the alley gates that had been funded at the last meeting had now been installed in the alleys running from Gaddesby Avenue to Winton Avenue and Harlaxton Street. Pictures of these were circulated at the meeting.

It was noted that the problem of allowing access to the pathway via the thumb turn lock on the inside of the gates had now been resolved.

On behalf of the residents, Louise Lavelle thanked the Community Meeting for its help with funding these gates.

b) Next Meeting

5.30 pm on Tuesday 16 April 2013 at either the Oak Centre or the Health Centre.

59. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.13 pm

BRAUNSTONE PARK & ROWLEY FIELDS WARD

USE OF STABLE BLOCK MUSEUM (BRAUNSTONE HALL) IN 2013

STABLE BLOCK MUSEUM AREA

To be open from **10.00am – 12 noon** on the last 4 Tuesday for 4 months, on a trial basis as follows:

- **Tuesday 26 February**
- **Tuesday 26 March**
- **Tuesday 30 April**
- **Tuesday 28 May**

PRIMARY SCHOOLS YEAR 6 CLASSES

On the mornings of **Monday 17th June up to and including Thursday 20th June** the 4 local Primary Schools Year 6 classes will take it in turn to visit the stable block museum for a morning and learn about the history of their local community (Braunstone History Club) and also about horticulture in the walled garden (Parks Service grounds maintenance staff) :

- **Monday 17 June** - Caldecote
- **Tuesday 18 June** - Folville
- **Wednesday 19 June** - Queensmead
- **Thursday 20 June** – Braunstone Community

'THE BRAUNSTONE HISTORY & ART EXHIBITION'

The museum and art room will be opening up for '**The Braunstone History & Art Exhibition**' from **1.00pm – 4.00pm on Sunday 23rd June**, incorporating :

- History memorabilia from the Braunstone History Group – history of the hall, the park, Braunstone, the Winstanley family, American 82 Airbourn
- Art paintings from the Braunstone Art Club
- Hathern Brass Band from 2.00pm – 3.00pm will be playing in the Walled Garden

It is hoped that people will come along with a picnic and enjoy listening to the band and visit the exhibition – **FREE OF CHARGE**

For further information, please telephone 0116 254 8467

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