

Knighton Community Meeting

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:30 pm, Monday, 3 December 2012

Held at: 9th Leicester Scout Group Hut

Who was there:

Councillor Ross Grant

Councillor Inderjit Gugnani

Councillor Dr Lynn Moore

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Gugnani was elected as Chair and welcomed everybody to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Knighton Community Meeting held on 17 September 2012, be confirmed as a correct record.

5. STONEYGATE CHRISTMAS FOOD AND DRINK FESTIVAL

It was noted that the Stoneygate Christmas Food and Drink Festival event was to be held on Sunday 9th December between 11am and 5pm on Francis Street and Allendale Road. Entry is free.

6. HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC MATTERS

Jay Parmar, Team Leader (Traffic Engineering), was present to lead discussions on highways matters within Knighton.

It was acknowledged that residents had previously expressed concerns with regards to the Guildford Road/London Road junction, particularly in relation to exiting Guildford Road onto London Road. As a result, Highways Officers had been asked to look at improving the junction design.

Jay confirmed that during the evening peak hours, 2,500 vehicles travelled along London Road, with 364 passing down Guildford Road and 192 along Ratcliffe Road. In terms of accidents, it was confirmed that 10 had been reported during the past five years, which did not constitute classification as an accident black spot. Some residents present felt that there was an under-reporting of incidents at this junction, and that the true number was higher.

Jay explained that a complete design alteration to the Guildford Road/London Road junction would cost approximately £250,000. The alternative proposed suggestion

put forward by officers would cost £10,000 and would comprise of the creation of a yellow box on the highway, as well as some improvement works to the existing pedestrian crossing. It was hopeful that such work could be funded directly from existing City Council budgets.

In response to a request, Jay agreed to obtain statistics in relation to the junction usage for the morning school run period. In response to a further request from Councillor Grant, Jay agreed to investigate the possibility of altering the timing of the traffic signals to improve traffic flow.

Concern were raised with regards to the inability of cars to use the inside lane, as it was a bus lane, and the congestion consequently caused to the outer lane. Jay agreed to look into the feasibility of the removal of the bus lane, and report back to Ward Councillors.

Residents expressed a keenness for ensuring that any alterations to the highway were not to the detriment of cyclists.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That further information be obtained in relation to the Guildford Road/London Road junction usage.
- (2) That officers be asked to investigate the possibility of altering the timing of the traffic signals at the Guildford Road/London Road junction to improve traffic flow; and
- (3) That a further discussion in relation to improving the Guildford Road/London Road junction take place at a future meeting.

7. ALLENDALE ROAD AND FRANCIS STREET PARKING PLANS

The City Mayor was in attendance to lead on a discussion on the latest plans for parking provision along both Allendale Road and Francis Street.

The City Mayor confirmed that following the presentation of a petition relating to difficulties with customer parking in both Allendale Road and Francis Street, he had met with a group of traders. Two meetings had taken place in order to ascertain the principles, and as a result, it was proposed to commence an experimental parking scheme. It was made clear that such a scheme could be removed at any particular time.

The City Mayor explained that the idea of free parking for up to 20 minutes had been suggested to him, but that such a system was not suitable as it was open to potential abuse, and as such, would be introducing a nominal charge for short-term parking.

The City Mayor expected the proposed scheme to provide benefit to traders, and by including unrestricted parking for residents on Francis Street, would also be suitable for residents. The City Mayor offered to continue to meet with traders and residents over the coming months to monitor the effect of the scheme.

In response to a question, the City Mayor confirmed that the cost of installing the ticket machines was relatively cheap, and intended to use recyclable machines.

It was noted that other parking experiments in the areas had previously taken place. It was acknowledged that the response to these schemes had been mixed, though the City Mayor reported that traders had generally expressed support.

A number of residents were concerned about the inability to park outside or close to their homes. The City Mayor felt that it was vital for the City Wardens to play an active role in ensuring that penalty notices were issued to those who parked illegally in marked parking zones.

Councillor Grant confirmed that the Ward Councillors had previously provided cycle racks in the Francis Street and Allendale Road in an attempt to encourage an increase in cycling by customers. He agreed to consider further provision if deemed necessary.

In response to a further query, the City Mayor confirmed that there was no specific spaces for blue badge holders, but that such motorists could park in any of the marked parking areas.

Those present were in general agreement that the experimental parking scheme should be introduced, and that the matter would be discussed at a future meeting to monitor its success. The City Mayor confirmed that the scheme was intended to run for 12 months, though the initial level of success would be recognised by the reaction from both traders and residents over the next three months. The City Mayor further confirmed that following this meeting, letters would be sent to all traders to inform them of the intention to commence an experimental parking scheme. It was likely that the parking machines would be installed by mid-February 2013, and that the experiment would commence at around this time.

Although there was general support to introduce the scheme as an experiment, a number of potential issues were raised, with some residents predicting a knock-on effect to those residing in neighbouring streets. Councillor Moore reminded those present that this proposal was an experiment in order to gain the views of residents, and encouraged feedback to be provided to the Ward Councillors.

RESOLVED:

That the experimental parking scheme should be introduced, and that the matter would be discussed at a Ward Meeting in Summer 2013 to monitor its success.

8. POLICE UPDATE

Officers from the local neighbourhood beat team were present to provide an update in relation to policing in Knighton. The following crime statistics for the past 60 days were provided:

- 17 dwelling break-ins
- 2 motor vehicle thefts
- 11 bicycle thefts
- 1 robbery

There were also reports of graffiti in the Craighill Road and Chapel Lane area and the Police were looking at CCTV footage in an attempt to identify offenders.

The meeting was informed that no particular police problem solving plan had been set up, as there was no particular crime pattern which required such a plan.

A member of the public reported incidents of vandalism to motor vehicles, in which cars had been damaged with graffiti. The Police Officer present confirmed that such incidents were crimes of criminal damage, and although he was not aware of any particular pattern of such crimes, encouraged any victims to contact the police in order to receive a crime number.

Details were provided of the recent speedwatch programme which had taken place in conjunction with Lancaster Boys School. This enabled pupils to benefit from working closely with Police Officers. It was noted that the operation of a speed-gun did not lead to the issuing of penalty notices, but was used to warn speeding motorists.

Reports were provided to the Police of problems with delivery lorries parking on pavements outside retail units on Aberdale Road. Such behaviour was said to result in damage to the pavement, and relevant officers were requested to talk to the outlets concerned in an attempt to mitigate the problem.

9. CITY WARDEN UPDATE

Chris Bromley-Brown, the City Warden for Knighton, was present to provide an overview of his recent work in the ward in tackling environmental issues.

Chris confirmed that he had embarked upon a graffiti removal project in the Shackerdale Road and Shanklin Drive area, following a request from Councillor Moore.

It was reported that the problems previously identified with bins on streets in the Sandown Road and Queens Road area had generally been rectified. Views were provided from some residents which suggested that the standards in Sandown Road raised initially, but had fallen in recent weeks, and it was further felt that the blue bins located at the rear of properties had not been emptied. Chris stated that he had been informed of problems with some of the assisted collections, and agreed to notify Biffa. In response to a request from the Ward Councillors and from residents, Chris agreed to monitor the situation in respect of bin collections and the success of bins on streets on a weekly basis.

Chris confirmed that the subsequent bins on streets project would take place in the Allendale Road/Francis Street area.

In response to reports of vandalism to motor vehicles, Chris agreed to talk further with residents affected.

10. BUDGET

The Knighton Councillors were asked to consider the following two budget applications:

1. Application for £496 received from 9th Leicester Scout Group – Scout 'T' Shirts for International Travel.

It was noted that the 9th Leicester Scout Group would be travelling to Kandegsteg International Scout Camp in Switzerland in July 2013. The trip was being organised by the 9th Leicester Scout Group in conjunction with Scout Groups in Markfield and Melton. At the camp, the scout would meet with international scouts as part of an international friendship programme. It was confirmed that 37 Scouts from the 9th Leicester group would be attending.

RESOLVED:

That the application be supported in full, and a sum of £496 be granted from the Ward Budget.

2. Application for £10,592 received from the Knighton Parochial Church Council for an upgrade to Knighton Parish Centre.

It was noted that the predominant element of this application was the re-surfacing of the church's car park. It was also proposed to replace all internal lighting within the main hall, to complete refurbishment of the kitchen, to fit new cupboards and work surfaces, and to hang new curtains in the main hall to replace curtains over 25 years in age.

RESOLVED:

That this application be deferred and considered further at the subsequent ward meeting. As part of this, the applicant invited the Ward Councillors to visit the church premises.

11. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7:55pm.

