

Stoneygate Community Meeting

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Tuesday, 3 December 2013

**Held at: St Philip's Parish Church, Evington Road, Leicester, LE2
1HN**

Who was there:

Councillor Lucy Chaplin

Councillor Iqbal Desai



26. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Chaplin was elected Chair for the meeting.

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Mustafa Kamal, Mr Woody Wood and Mr Michael Davis.

28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Chaplin disclosed an Other Disclosable Interest, as she had asked Jasmine Sore to make the cakes on sale at the meeting in aid of the Lord Mayor's chosen charity, MacMillan Cancer. Councillor Chaplin said she hoped to raise £20 from the evening sales towards the charity. The sale actually raised £85.00.

The Chair then read a letter from the Lord Mayor, Councillor Kamal thanking ward residents for support given to the charity.

The letter also contained the Lord Mayor's thanks to Mike Keen, Democratic Support Officer, for his valued support over the years, his work with the Stoneygate Ward Community Meetings, and best wishes for his retirement.

29. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Stoneygate Community Meeting held on 24th September 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

30. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- i) Minute 19 – Parking and Traffic Issues on Evington Road

Regulations meant that there was a five-minute observation time prior to issuing a penalty ticket. Councillors stated they would check if this was still the case or if they could now be issued immediately.

Residents said there was illegal parking on double yellow lines on Devana Road which were causing problems. Residents also reported problems with cars parking outside of primary schools. The Police had said more Traffic Enforcement Officers were required, and an informal discussion had taken place at the top of Evington Road, where drivers parked across pavements. The Chair said incidents should be reported formally to the police for action.

A resident asked if any observations had taken place outside Mayflower School and Evington Valley School. The Chair said all issues had been raised

with the City mayor, and would be looked at as part of the 20mph work taking place across the city.

Matters Raised Not Included In the Minutes

- i) The Chair informed the meeting that money had been agreed for a bench on Evington Road. She also noted that the bench outside the Co-Op was deteriorating and asked for information on whether it would be repaired or replaced with a new bench.

The Chair also informed the meeting that work on the installation of new bins in the area would soon start.

31. EVINGTON BROOK CLEAN UP PROJECT

The Chair agreed to hear the following agenda item next and also considered the budget application for the project.

Adrian Lane and Kim Hawksworth, Park Services Riverside Project were present at the meeting to discuss issues raised regarding Evington Brook, and the project on Willow Brook. Adrian said Kim had been recently recruited to the team.

Adrian explained that initially Groundwork were undertaking cleaning work in and around the brook, but the organisation were now bankrupt. He said Evington Brook connected with Willow Brook, and it was intended to tackle the clearing project all the way up Evington Brook. A minimum of three community events would be organised, and schools and youth groups would be visited to ask them to help with the project. He said the project was mainly litter clearing, but would also include vegetation managing and some schemes of planting.

Adrian said the identity of the brook should be raised, with a sign to say 'Evington Brook', which would start to make people think differently about it, and get people to value it. He added the Environment Agency should also be approached to look at Evington Brook.

Kim said a bid for Ward Funding had been made, but approaches for funding would also be made to other organisations, and through fundraising events.

Adrian explained that a lot of people had different responsibilities for watercourses, as follows:

- Chemicals / Pollution – Environment Agency
- Parts of River Soar – flood relief scheme.
- Brooks – Leicester City Council.

Adrian added that some householders had responsibility if their homes backed on to the Brook, up to the centre of the watercourse.

A resident asked where the responsibility lay for Ethel Brook, which ran through allotments and had flooded recently. Adrian responded there was nothing the Council could do as Ethel Road allotment site sat on a flood plain, which soaked up water and stopped houses from flooding, though it was acknowledged it was not good for allotment owners.

Adrian said the project outlined was for Willow Brook, but he would ask the Environment Agency to look at Bushby and Evington Brooks, and see if Ethel Brook could be included, though it was acknowledged that Kim had targets to reach. He added that the long-term aim was to move the project into other areas.

Adrian said he would report back at a future meeting details of community day events, and took on board a residents suggestion to circulate information through the Community Meeting publicity list.

The Chair then drew attention to the application for Ward Community funding from Parks Services. The bid was for £1,000 towards a total project cost of £10,000.

The Chair requested that the evaluation included a breakdown of costs, as Ward Community Funding could not be used to cover wages. Adrian said the funding would be used towards, signage, leaflets, and materials. He added that Kim's wages would be taken from the main budget for the river.

RESOLVED:

that the application be **supported in full for £1,000**, subject to the condition the funding was not to be used for salaries.

32. INFORMATION ON SETTING UP NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Roy Rudham, Chairman of Neighbourhood Watch, Sergeant Graham for Safer Neighbourhoods Stoneygate, and PCSO Sally Morgan, Safer Neighbourhoods, Western Park Ward, were present at the meeting to provide information on setting up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

Residents were told there were 23 Neighbourhood Watch schemes in Leicester, with 28 co-ordinators, and had been running for 20 years. The scheme was a good way to good way to get to know neighbours, and a good way for the police to get to know the community.

It was to the discretion of willing volunteers as to how actively involved they were and normally would enlist the help of other people. This person, as a coordinator, would be a point of contact for residents in the Neighbourhood Watch area. Activities for a co-ordinator included leaflet and newsletter posting, reporting crime to the Police, and sharing information with residents through social media and email A meeting would also be held every few months with the Police, to share information with residents, for example, raising awareness of increased burglaries.

Mr Rudham said it cost approximately £250 annually to support a co-ordinator. He added that ¾ million emails were sent each year across the region, for example,

police appeals for target areas or city-wide information. Details of useful contact numbers were also provided for residents. Mr Rudham added that Neighbourhood Watch did not receive statutory funding, but became involved with anything that affected the quality of life of residents. One example given was domestic abuse issues, when information would be posted to all houses, not just the household under question. He added that some household insurers also gave a discount on Home Insurance in Neighbourhood Watch areas.

Residents asked how the transient population of students in the area would be contacted. Mr Rudham said information would be given to all students on a database, which would be circulated via email. Sgt. Graham said students were four times more likely to be victims of crime, with many of them owning valuable equipment. He added the Police had liaised with university security staff, and offered a bespoke service to offer full security services at properties, but no students had taken up the offer. Sgt. Graham said the Police also had Special Constables who could convey information to Polish residents, and that the Police were looking to produce leaflets in that language.

The Police said that poor signs in an area were an invitation to burglars, and should be removed, or replaced if a scheme was still in place in the area. Mr Rudham also informed residents that statistics from the British Crime Survey suggested residents were four times less likely to be a victim if part of a registered scheme.

The Chair said if anyone was interested in setting up scheme, they could apply for Ward Community funding to assist them. Further information about neighbourhood watch schemes can be found by sending an email with your query to: info@neighbourhoodwatchleicester.net

RESOLVED:
that the information be noted.

33. PLAY STREET PROJECT

Residents from Knighton Ward informed the meeting of a project they carried out on Northcote Road. The road was closed for three hours in the evening to allow children to play out.

Details on the process following for closing the street were outlined. Leicester City Council Transport Department was contacted, and forms for completion were provided, including a form for insurance purposes. Insurance documents cost £50, and a road closure fee cost £150, and a risk assessment needs to be undertaken. Residents have to ensure that a BACs transfer reached the Council in plenty of time, and a survey of the street residents planned to close undertaken. The whole process usually takes around six weeks to complete. If residents did not have funds available they could apply for funding from the Ward Community Fund, and Leicester City Council would look at waiving the application fee if taken up as a city-wide event.

It was informed that you would need to petition each house to gain agreement for the road closure, as 2/3rds residents would have to agree the closure. Once a date of

road closure was agreed, the Council supplied notices on lampposts, and provided bollards and signage, and two residents would be expected to stand at the each end of the road in high visibility jackets. Residents were given plenty of notice to take their cars off the road onto driveways, and cars could still access the closed road, as long as they were escorted.

The Play Street Project was considered a successful event, and even people without children joined in, showcasing it was a good way to get the community talking to each other. There was concern that there would be irate drivers, but there were no issues and organisers were pleasantly surprised. There was no damage to any property. The closure of the road was the first event, but it was hoped to do it again in the summertime when the evenings were light.

It was suggested that if an area of 5-6 streets wanted to close a road, then the best road of the five should be picked. Northcote Road was wide and straight, and both ends could be seen.

The Chair said the event was worth trying elsewhere in Stoneygate Ward, and the Police could advise whether a street was suitable or not.

34. CITY WARDEN UPDATE

Darren Evans, City Warden, informed the meeting that he was now only the Warden for Stoneygate Ward and not any others, allowing him more time to focus on issues relating within the ward.

Darren informed the meeting of the Council's current consultation on providing city wardens with powers to distribute Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) of £80 to people spitting on land open to air and would be enforced like littering. Questionnaire cards were circulated at the meeting for completion by residents.

Darren reported on some of the activities undertaken in the ward for the three months prior to the meeting, as follows:

- 100+ flytips reported. Warning letters and education work had been completed.
- 15 illegal skips, scaffolding and deposits were reported.
- 200 new blue 'Love Leicester' bin stickers had been applied, and 12 abandoned bins were reported
- 4 FPNs were issued for littering.

Darren said blue bin stickers would sometimes be placed on bins where residents could not use alleyways because of blockages. He said every resident connected to an inaccessible alleyway would be given a letter to clear the alleyway within 14 days. If not cleared, the Council would undertake the task and the cost would be broken between residents. He added that blue stickers on bins would be monitored. The next steps would be red stickers, and finally a legal notice, and court if the fine was not paid.

A HART representative said information had been sent to City Wardens daily, and reported that dog fouling problem on Guthlaxton Street appeared to be solved.

A resident raised a concern regarding commercial vehicles parking on residential streets. They were informed that if the vehicle was taxed, it could park in the highway.

RESOLVED:

that the information be noted.

35. WARD COMMUNITY BUDGET

- i) **Exotics 60 Plus Group** **£3,000**
Application received to part fund the renovation of a building on the Ajani Centre site to provide groups and users with meeting, event and general use space.

RESOLVED:

that the application be **supported** for the full amount of **£3,000**

- ii) **Cleansing Services, Leicester City Council** **£1,840**
Application received to install 4 litter bins in Evington Ward.

RESOLVED:

that the application be **supported** for the full amount of **£1,840**

- iii) **Parks Services, Leicester City Council** **£1,000**
Application received to carry out community clean-ups/environmental enhancements/action days on the Evington Brook.

RESOLVED:

this application was discussed under the agenda item regarding Evington Brook, and was **supported** for the full amount of **£1,000** subject to the condition the funding was not to be used for salaries

The following applications were tabled at the meeting:

- iv) **Leicester Malawi Association – Integration Event for the Malawi Community with the Wider Community** **£200**
(Joint bid with Abbey and Beaumont Leys Wards – Total £600)
Application received to fund an event of sharing food, music and arts with the wider community.

RESOLVED:

that the application be **deferred** to enable further information to be obtained from the applicant around the actual use of the funding applied for.

- v) **HART – South Highfields Street Party** **£800**
Application received to fund the organisation of a street party, following the success of a previously held event.

RESOLVED:

that the application be **supported** for the full amount of **£800**.

- vi) **HART – Subsidised Coach Trips for Ward Residents** **£240**
Application received to fund the provision of an 83 seat coach for a seaside trip.

RESOLVED:

that the application be **supported** for the full amount of **£240**.

- vi) **Earth Guardians – Urban Greening Project on Sacred Spaces Area on Evington Road** **£500**
Application received to fund the development of a planting area in the Ward.

RESOLVED:

that the application be **deferred** as the land belonged to the Council, and required approval in writing to use the land.

36. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. Councillor Desai suggested the meeting invite a retired GP who would deliver a talk on dementia. Residents agreed this would be a good way of highlighting issues some people faced, and also tied in with information from the health Scrutiny at Leicester City Council. An invitation would also be sent to the Deputy City Mayor to deliver a talk on health issues in the city.
2. The Chair said that in 2014, Members would focus on outcomes in the ward, and asked residents to inform them of ideas of items they wished to see at the meeting.

37. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.