

CASTLE COMMUNITY MEETING

TUESDAY, 12 JULY 2016

St John the Baptist Church, Clarendon Park Road, Leicester LE2 3AD

NO	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>ACTION REQUESTED AT MEETING</u>
1.	INTRODUCTIONS	<p>Councillor Kitterick took the Chair and welcomed everyone present.</p> <p>In respect of the Councillors Code of Conduct, Councillor Senior declared an interest that and she lived in Clarendon Park and that a relative of hers owned a flat in the Cultural Quarter.</p>
2.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	<p>An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sangster.</p>
3.	ACTION LOG	<p>The Action Log of the Castle Community Meeting held on 15 March 2016 was agreed and noted.</p>
4.	CASTLE WARD SECURE HOMES SCHEME	<p>Daxa Pancholi (Head of Community Safety) gave a presentation, which advised of results following the implementation of the Castle Ward Burglary Reduction scheme Phase 1 during 2013/14. The presentation also provided details of the continuation of the scheme in 2015/16.</p> <p>It was reported that a multi-agency approach to reduce burglaries, which had included the Police, Community Safety Officer, City Wardens, Leicester Safer Partnership and volunteers had carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'Cocooning' works as part of a 'Target Hardening Scheme' provided by Leicester Safer Partnership, which involved the installation of alley gates, fencing and home security packages.• Door to door consultation and leaflets with information of the scheme for all residents.• Wider consultation undertaken by the Community Safety Officer with land owners to obtain consent for the installation of alley gates, fencing and railings.

In respect of the implementation it was reported that 62 properties had benefited from the scheme and that funding had been made available from the ward community budget, the JAG and the Community Safety Team.

The results and feedback following the scheme were reported as follows:

- Multi-Agency sharing data and working together to prevent further incidents of crime and ASB had been recognised and welcomed.
- Combined funding had provided for target hardening scheme.
- Properties had benefit from the increased security.
- Victims felt less vulnerable in their homes.

The presentation included details of the continued scheme to a wider area during 2015/16 and the streets identified for improvements in phases 2 and 3 were noted.

Daxa was thanked for her presentation.

In discussing the success of the scheme, residents raised questions concerning the installation of the alley gates, commenting that their effect relied on users keeping them locked. It was also reported that key replacements were often necessary when residents moved, and it was confirmed that keys could not be copied or reproduced at general hardware shops or ironmongers. In response to comments regarding the need to keep the gates locked, it was reported that this was considered to be an educational issue, and that options including self-closers had been abandoned due to public liability and health and safety concerns.

In response to a question concerning the closure of some alleyways, Councillors clarified that in the Castle Ward, and particularly the Clarendon Park area, it was not considered suitable to close public rights of way to deter burglars. It was considered preferable to combat the issue by the extension of the Burglary Reduction Scheme.

		<p>In conclusion it was noted that an application for ward community grant funding was expected at a future meeting.</p>
5.	VICTORIA PARK - UPDATE	<p>Councillors referred to the recent installation of play equipment in Victoria Park and invited comments from residents.</p> <p>It was suggested that the 'open' unfenced play area could cause dangerous situations for children having regard to the proximity of the adjacent walkways which were also frequently used by cyclists.</p> <p>It was suggested to the contrary that parents and families had enjoyed the open nature of the play equipment and had used the surrounding grassed areas while children played.</p> <p>Councillors thanked residents for their comments and advised that before making any decision they would monitor the situation over the summer and consider all comments or issues either to have fencing, or part fencing, or no fencing, and would discuss the matter again at the next ward meeting to be held on 15 November 2016.</p> <p>To support the monitoring process, they asked that any incidents/situations witnessed be recorded and forwarded to them.</p>
6.	POLICE UPDATE	<p>Police Insp Simon Preston reported on Police activities in the ward.</p> <p>He commented on the earlier presentation on the Burglary Reduction Scheme and advised that the Police fully supported the initiative and its continuation given its success. He advised that no burglaries had been recorded in the roads concerned since the introduction of phase 1 of the scheme.</p> <p>Insp Preston updated the meeting concerning Anti-social behaviour, Street drinking, and legal highs where problems were continuing. It was noted that the problems were relatively minor in isolation but that significant concerns remained due to the collective issues being experienced.</p> <p>In respect of legal highs it was reported that some</p>

		<p>legislative changes had been introduced since the previous meeting and that Public Space Protection Orders were being considered to deal with the issue. A combined initiative to deal with legal highs and street drinking had seen some displacement from areas in the Ward, particularly around New Walk and its adjoining public open space.</p> <p>Recorded instances in vehicle crime had increased and a further publicity and promotional exercise was being undertaken to encourage drivers to ensure that vehicles and were secure and that valuables were not left in vehicles. A particular problem involving the targeting by thieves of city centre underground car park areas was referred to.</p> <p>In response to questions, Insp Preston provided details of an increase in hate crimes following the Referendum decision, including graffiti on Eid festival celebration posters and banners at Victoria Park. He advised that the Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable had responded confirming a 'no tolerance' approach and had committed additional resources to ensure that residents felt safe. Liaison with religious groups and the Council of Faiths was ongoing to ensure that the issues were tackled appropriately.</p> <p>In response to a further question concerning begging, it was confirmed that the Police encouraged the public to support homelessness charities and not to give to street beggars.</p>
7.	CITY WARDEN UPDATE	<p>Chris Bramley-Brown (City Warden) updated the meeting with environmental and enforcement activities in the Ward.</p> <p>He referred to the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses were being encouraged to ensure that waste was stored and disposed of properly. Multiple notices had been issued resulting in a high level of compliance. • A significant amount of illegal street trading had been dealt with during the LCFC celebrations. Unlicensed and poor quality goods were seized from sellers who did not hold street trading licences.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The clearance of areas of vacant land was being undertaken using new powers. • Work continued with landlords to advise them of their responsibilities and to ensure that waste and unwanted items were properly disposed of when tenants moved. • Cases concerning unlicensed scaffolding had proceeded to court with large fines being imposed on the offending companies. <p>In conclusion it was emphasised that any issues noticed by residents should be reported by phoning 0116 454 1001, by emailing customer services, or by using the loveleicester app.</p>
8.	COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGET	<p>Councillors referred to the purpose of the ward Community Budget and the criteria for applications were explained.</p> <p>a) applications for funding</p> <p>Applications were received and determined as follows:</p> <p>Clarendon Park Summer Arts & Craft Fair - Annual arts & crafts fair £3,750 Part Supported - £3,250</p> <p>Friends of Clarendon Park - Contribution towards nature trail for children £301 Supported in full.</p> <p>ArtReach Trust - Series of events for refugees £2,150 Not Supported.</p> <p>The Dawn Centre - Creative arts project £500 Supported in full</p> <p>Stonesby House Residents Associations - Purchase of secure gates £500</p>

		<p>Supported in full</p> <p>It was noted that 2 applications had been withdrawn.</p> <p>b) feedback from recipients of funding</p> <p>Feedback from previous recipients of ward community funding was received from the following organisations:</p> <p>Centre Project - Redecoration of the centre premises in Granby Street.</p> <p>ArtBeat - Promotion and publicity, equipment hire, and other support to the community arts event.</p>
9.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	<p>a) ST GEORGES CHURCHYARD PROPOSALS - CONSULTATION</p> <p>Louise Seymour and Rosie Dymond (Development Team) reported on the consultation exercise being undertaken in respect of the proposed improvements to St George's Churchyard.</p> <p>It was reported that the consultation would conclude on 3 August 2016.</p> <p>An exhibition at LCB Depot included details of proposed options for the area, and information panels from the exhibition were displayed for information.</p> <p>The consultation involved a questionnaire exercise, which could be completed online as part of the Council's consultation hub webpage, and manually by completing forms available at the exhibition.</p> <p>Councillors referred to the removal of tress as part of the proposals for each option and commented on the recent Centenary Walk works at Victoria Park where many objections to the removal of mature trees had been expressed. Councillors commented that the consultation and planning processes for the works had been properly undertaken, although at a significantly earlier period. It was considered that the total visual effect of the works had not been explicitly explained at that time and that this had led to the regrettable situation given the sudden impact of the</p>

works.

In this respect it was considered that a similar impact of works should be avoided at St George's Churchyard, it being noted that one option proposed the removal of 26 trees. A second option involved the removal of 9 of the trees.

Officers gave details of each of the options and confirmed that the removal of lime trees had been proposed to provide greater light and improved accessibility and connectivity through the churchyard. It was indicated that some of the trees were over-mature and that thinning out would not provide the long term improvements sought.

It was also reported that improved architectural feature lighting was proposed together with the relocation of the Mermaid artwork 'arches' from West Bridge. In this respect the original siting of the artwork as part of the former Wholesale Market was explained.

In concluding the presentation, it was confirmed that following the conclusion and results of the current consultation process any scheme would then require a planning application and through this process there would be a further opportunity for consultation and representations to be made.

In discussing the options it was considered by Councillors that there was likely to be an opposition to the removal of trees, following the reaction to the works at Victoria Park. It was noted that the Church supported the removal of trees to assist their site maintenance, due to the reduced problems of leaf litter affecting drainage and to increase security with an improved and more accessible and open churchyard.

The Police also commented that they would fully support the removal of trees as the area suffered from significant anti-social behaviour problems. The Police considered that the improved accessibility and pathway alignment would help to solve these problems. It was considered that the area would be used more frequently should it be made lighter and more accessible and that it was important for people to feel safe when walking through the churchyard.

		<p>The appropriateness of the outdoor gym proposal was questioned by some residents.</p> <p>In response to questions the process concerning trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) was clarified. It was reported that the majority of the trees in the churchyard were protected due to the Conservation Area status and therefore works or removal would require consent, which would be covered by any future planning application. It was confirmed that tree works were regularly undertaken to trees that were in Conservation Areas and that had TPOs.</p> <p>In discussing the publicity of the consultation, it was suggested that this be enhanced as the works to the churchyard affected the whole city. In view of this, Councillors expressed a wish for the exhibition to be continued and that it be advertised citywide.</p> <p>In conclusion, the public were asked to complete the questionnaire exercise, either online or by completing forms which were available at the meeting. The results of the consultation and details of a selected scheme would be reported to a future meeting.</p> <p>b) 20 MPH Zones</p> <p>In response to a question it was suggested that an update on 20 Mph zones be submitted to the next meeting.</p> <p>c) To let/For Sale Boards</p> <p>In response to a question it was suggested that an update on the policy concerning To-Let and For Sale signs be submitted to the next meeting.</p>
10.	CLOSE OF MEETING	The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.