

RUSHEY MEAD COMMUNITY MEETING

TUESDAY, 19 JUNE 2018

St Theodore's Church, Sandfield Close, Leicester LE4 7RE

Councillor Rita Patel (Chair)
Councillor Piara Singh Clair
Councillor Ross Willmott

In attendance

The Rt Hon Keith Vaz, M.P.

NO	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>ACTION REQUESTED AT MEETING</u>
1.	INTRODUCTIONS	Councillor Rita Patel as Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were given. The Rt Hon Keith Vaz was present to provide an update on the Rushey Mead Library and Recreation Centre and asked people to note that he would have to leave early in order to get back to the House of Commons for an important debate.
2.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	There were no apologies for absence.
3.	ACTION LOG OF PREVIOUS MEETING	<p>Punum Patel, the Community Engagement Officer confirmed that the actions outlined in the action log of the previous meeting had been dealt with.</p> <p>Questions were raised as to why Councillor Clair had been absent from previous Rushey Mead Community Meetings. Councillor Clair responded that he had submitted his apologies where he could not attend and had either been in another meeting or on holiday. He was always ready to meet his constituents. Some attendees expressed a view that the ward meetings should be a priority.</p> <p>An attendee commented that he had previously raised concerns that the junction of Melton Road / Checketts Road / Marfitt Street was hazardous and it had been agreed to forward the concerns to highways, but nothing appeared to have happened. The traffic and the situation there was horrendous and he was concerned that there was going to a serious accident.</p> <p>Action: Punum Patel, the Community Engagement Officer to report concerns to Highways.</p>

The attendee further commented that there was numerous problems with litter and the Rushey Mead area was deteriorating.

Rushey Mead Library and Recreation Centre

The Rt Hon Keith Vaz addressed the meeting and explained that following a meeting he had attended with the City Mayor, Councillor Clair and local groups, the City Mayor had written to him. A copy of this letter was handed out to attendees and Mr Vaz said that he would arrange for the letter to be circulated to all Rushey Mead residents.

Mr Vaz stated that the three councillors for the ward had worked extremely hard on the issue relating to the closure of the library building and re-location to the recreation centre. He had heard criticisms directed at councillors, but he did not agree with any of them nor with comments about resignations. The councillors made representations but could not do everything and decisions such as the library were made by the City Mayor or the Executive. Where people were not happy with the elected representatives, there was the option to vote for other candidates at elections.

Mr Vaz had called the meeting with the City Mayor. Councillor Clair had been present and as the Deputy City Mayor, he had responsibilities beyond the ward. Mr Vaz thanked Councillor Willmott for his persistence with the issue but he gave credit to all three councillors for the campaign they had run.

Mr Vaz referred to the letter and stated that the City Mayor had agreed that the plans to close the library and merge the two facilities had been put on hold for the next three months.

Mr Vaz explained that the City Mayor had been impressed at what had been said at the recent meeting and wanted to see the residents' plan for the way forward. He added that this was a significant response from the City Mayor and victories such as this were rare. The council had incurred severe cuts in government funding and had had to review their facilities and assets. Facilities had been closed in all the other wards, though not in Rushey Mead.

		<p>Mr Vaz said that he agreed with a comment that a resident had made about deterioration in Rushey Mead adding that he thought areas of the ward looked tired and run down. Concerns included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area around the library needed tidying up • The grass on Troon Way needed cutting • The levels of traffic were an issue and he had serious concerns about highways issues at the junction around Marfitt Street . • Belgrave and Rushey Mead had some of the worst levels of diabetes and Mr Vaz wanted to see a health campaign in the two wards help with this. • Mr Vaz said he would like to see Diwali celebrations in Rushey Mead, not just in Belgrave. Belgrave received a lot of resources compared to Rushey Mead. He believed that Rushey Mead was a forgotten area. Further to this, more use could be made of Rushey Fields; a Mela could be held there which would raise income towards plans for the library and centre. • Mr Vaz said that S106 money received from Rushey Mead developments should be used in the ward. <p>Comments from attendees included a need for the community to be united on their preferred outcome, a suggestion for a referendum, continued need for the Councillors’ support and a strong desire that after three months, there would be a favourable outcome.</p> <p>It was agreed for a further meeting, to be arranged, preferably within three weeks, for Councillors to meet residents in order to come to a consensus for a proposal. Following that, for a further meeting to take place with a smaller group of residents, Councillors and officers to discuss funding and timescales.</p> <p>Action: Punum Patel, the Community Engagement Officer to forward request to the Transforming Neighbourhood Team.</p>
4.	WARD COUNCILLORS' FEEDBACK	Attendees were asked to note the issues that Ward Councillors had been working on. In addition to those relating to the library and recreation centre, meetings had been held with the Lanesborough Road Neighbourhood Watch Group but attempts to meet with the Bharat Football Club had so far been unsuccessful. The meeting heard that outdoor gym

		<p>equipment had been installed in parks around the City, including Rushey Mead and instructor led gym sessions were ongoing.</p> <p>In response to a concern about parking around Marfitt Street, Councillors explained that this was part of the Harrison Road / Marfitt Street residential parking scheme. Plans for the scheme would be shown at consultation meetings and residents were encouraged to attend.</p>
5.	LOCAL POLICING UPDATE	<p>Attendees were asked to note the Policing update from Police Sergeant Lindsay Booth. Points made included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents were urged to come forward and report any concerns. PS Booth acknowledged that there could be long delays when trying to phone 101, but the team worked at the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, they could be followed on twitter and messages could also be sent through their Facebook Page. • PS Booth asked residents where they would like Beat Surgeries to be held. In response to a question, attendees heard that the Police were very flexible and happy to hold the surgeries anywhere. • The crime statistics for the two months from 17th April 2018 compared to the same period in 2017, showed that the crime figures were down, though the Police were not complacent. Councillors suggested that an annual comparison would be useful. • The Police were working with Soar Valley College and Rushey Mead Academy in relation to incidents on Rushey Fields. Consideration was being given to the use of the football club as a Beat Office to provide more of a presence on the park. • Work was taking place with students, until the end of term, relating to drugs and knife crime. • The Police were working with the shop keepers on Lockerbie Avenue over concerns of anti-social behaviour. <p>A resident asked if a sign prohibiting drugs or the consumption of alcohol could be erected in Watermead Park as she had witnessed incidents of both. PS Booth explained that there was already a Public Space Protection Order there and the Police would take action if they caught anyone in</p>

		<p>possession.</p> <p>The Police noted the concerns from a resident relating to anti-social behaviour on Lyle Close. The meeting heard that there were increasing incidents taking place late at night.</p>
6.	CITY WARDEN UPDATE	<p>Attendees were asked to note an update from Mohammed Patel, City Warden on street scene enforcement issues. The update included the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mohammed had been carrying out joint patrols with the Police around the shopping area on Lockerbie Avenue. • The City Wardens were targeting other areas in Rushey Mead and Belgrave and were working to address fly tipping. They would be checking whether businesses had the correct contracts in place for waste disposal. • They had started a project to address problems with bins being left out on streets, commencing with the Melton Road / Flax Road area.
7.	HIGHWAYS UPDATE	<p>The Highways Officer could not be present at the meeting but had provided an update which Councillor Clair read out. Attendees were asked to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new Toucan crossing is to be constructed on Gleneagles Avenue near the junction of Peebles Way. The crossing was required as part of the Planning Application conditions due to the increase in pupil numbers at the school. The work is planned for mid-August 2018. • The Environment Agency is progressing well with works at Loughborough Road to install a new flood culvert to convey flood water. • Resurfacing work on Troon Way is planned for early August. • The red light camera at the junction of Melton Road and Watermead Way on the outbound carriageway of Melton Road has been upgraded and is now a digital camera. The camera will also catch speeding offences when the lights are on green. • The introduction of pay and display charges in Watermead Car Park had been advertised with no objections. Work is still being carried out on the new parking area and the areas where the Pay and

		<p>Display machines will be located.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double yellow lines will be extended in Cannon Street to address inconsiderate parking at the junction with Belgrave Road. <p>Comments made by attendees included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking charges in one of the Watermead Park car parks would result in an overflow in the other car park. • There had previously been an announcement that there would be extra Civil Enforcement Officers (traffic wardens) but they were not evident in Rushey Mead. It was questioned how many Civil Enforcement Officers worked in Rushey Mead, how much time they spent there and where the main parking issues were. Action: Punum Patel to forward the query to the Parking Enforcement Manager <p>Further to this, Councillor Clair explained that the Council were trying to recruit more Civil Enforcement Officers but it had proved difficult to recruit to that post. Their pay grade had subsequently been revised which had resulted in more applicants being appointed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns were expressed about overgrown grass by Sainsbury's on Melton Road. Mohammed explained that this was due to budget cuts and grass in some areas was being cut just once a year. In addition grass was being allowed to grow in some areas to encourage wildlife such as insects. The Chair stated that the Councillors received complaints about overgrown grass and they did report those concerns. • A request was made for improved lighting and CCTV in Silverstone Park, near to Sainsbury's. Concerns were expressed that there was not a proper pathway there. Councillors asked for this to be investigated. Action: Punum Patel to report concerns to appropriate Service Manager.
8.	COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGET	<p>Attendees were asked to note an update on the Rushey Mead Community Meeting budget.</p> <p>Six funding applications had been received since the previous community meeting. Decisions made were as follows:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lanesborough Road Neighbourhood Watch Scheme - application for £360 was supported. • An application from the Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (CRASBU) for £900 for security improvements on Lanesborough Road was supported. • An application for £600 (joint with the Troon Ward) for two benches at the bus stop on Trevino Drive was supported. • An application from the Milap Group had been received requesting funding for room hire and a trip. £1200 for room hire was supported and further information had been sought towards the trip element of the application. <p>Punum Patel, the Community Engagement Officer reminded attendees that applications needed to be submitted on-line and help with the process could be provided. The Community meeting helpline was 0116 454 1940 and their email address was: community.meetings@leicester.gov.uk</p> <p>The closing date for the receipt of the next round of funding applications was 30 September 2018.</p>
9.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	<p>Fatema Burani, from the Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (CRASBU) asked attendees to note that they could report concerns about anti-social behaviour by contacting the unit on 0116 454 0250.</p> <p>The Reverend Susan Leighton addressed the meeting and explained that she was working part-time as the Vicar of St Theodore's Church on Sandfield Avenue. Rev Susan said that if any of the groups would like to invite her to one of their sessions, she would be very pleased to attend.</p>
10.	CLOSE OF MEETING	The meeting closed at 8.30pm.