

Castle Community Meeting

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:30 pm, Wednesday, 2 March 2011

Held at: The Watershed, Upperton Road

Who was there:

Councillor Neil Clayton

Councillor Patrick Kitterick

Councillor Lynn Senior



FORMAL SESSION

32. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Lynn Senior was Chair for the meeting.

33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors were asked to declare any interest that they may have in the business on the agenda, and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

There were no declarations of interest.

35. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Castle Community Meeting held on 20 January 2011 were confirmed as a correct record.

36. PROBATION SERVICE COMMUNITY PAYBACK SCHEME

Pamela Barber, Senior Probation Officer outlined details of the Community Payback Scheme. The scheme is organised and run by Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Service, working with other services and organisations. The scheme enabled the public to select projects of work suitable for teams of 6-8 supervised offenders ordered by the Courts to undertake unpaid work as part of their reparation. The range of projects included:

- Street clean-ups
- Ground clearance
- Litter picks
- Gardening
- Painting and decorating.

Nominated projects are assessed for their suitability and safety, and nominations can be made by individuals, groups or organisations that fit criteria, for example;

- Non-profit making organisations
- Elderly or disabled persons
- Charitable organisations
- Faith groups
- Community groups

Workers can be seen wearing orange high visibility jackets with the Community Payback logo on them. The high visibility jackets promoted confidence in the justice system and showed how the Probation Service was assisting individuals to undertake their reparation work. Several of the projects the Community Payback Teams had undertaken were discussed, including the cleaning up of overgrown land on Conduit Street, and painting on St Andrews estate.

In answer to resident's questions, Pamela informed the meeting that some individuals were scaffold trained and could undertake work at higher levels. A lot of litter picks were carried out. For health and safety reasons, this was usually after City Cleansing Teams had been into the area to remove syringes. Work was not usually carried out in individuals homes, only if the residents had moved out or were about to move in. Work for individuals was usually gardening.

37. ONE CLEAN LEICESTER

Barbara Whitcombe, City Warden Manager, gave a presentation on the One Clean Leicester Spring Clean, and information on how residents could report environmental problems or 'grot spots' throughout the 22 wards in Leicester. Reports can be made via the One Clean Leicester free downloadable App for smart phones, send information by email or text, or upload information on the website.

The One Clean Leicester App allows users of smart phones to take a photo, select the location of the problem through GPS, describe the problem, for example, dog fouling, fly tipping or graffiti, and forward the information to the One Clean Leicester Team. The information can also be sent as a text message or email, with LE1 in the subject field. A picture can be included with a description of the problem. People reporting problems would be contacted for further information if required. Problems can also be reported using the One Clean Leicester website, or by calling Customer Services. Reported problems, once checked for appropriateness are then published on the website, where a list of reported issues can be viewed. Received information is forwarded to the appropriate team to respond to.

Residents asked how they could report issues if they were not a user of any of the above methods. Councillors confirmed they could be called to assist residents.

In answer to resident's questions, Barbara stated that permission was required from either the landlord or land owner of private premises or land to gain access to these areas to clean them. If permissions was not gained, then the City Council have powers to access premises by default, and any costs incurred would be placed on the building itself, to be recouped when the property was sold at any time. Owners of property could usually be found through Land Registry. Graffiti on private land was treated in much the same way, with permission needed before access to the land could be gained, otherwise this would be seen as trespassing.

The meeting was informed of the 'Clean Up' operation on Nelson Mandela Park in Castle Ward on Sunday 13 March, between 10.00am and 12.00pm. Community Payback workers, City Wardens and Parks Services would be there. Residents were invited along and be involved on the day. Equipment would be provided, for

example, gloves and bags. Events in other wards would be advertised on the website, and notices placed on lampposts.

Residents complained about the condition and placement of commercial bins on the streets. Commercial bins were often left on the streets overnight after 5.00pm, for collection early morning the next day. It was suggested that pressure was needed on waste companies to collect in the evenings. This idea had the full backing of the Police, the City Centre Manager and City Centre Forum, as bins belonging to bars invariably held bottles, which in turn could be used as missiles or weapons.

Barbara went on to inform the meeting that the Warden Service issues 100s of fines each month, which included littering. It is hoped that records of fines would be placed on the website in the future. On the 14 March 2011, City Wardens would be handing out to members of the public 'Stub Its', small pouches for people to extinguish and take away the remains of cigarettes.

38. BUDGET

Francis Connolly, Members Support Officer, introduced this item of business. He noted that there was £4,002 left in the budget prior to the meeting.

Members considered the following applications:

Centre for Indian Classical Dance – request for £500 to make a giant 'Hanuman' puppet as part of the Spark Children's Arts Festival 2011

Councillors were keen to support a proportion on this project on the condition that the Festival's organisers worked with Hazel Primary School to deliver the work.

RESOLVED:

that the application be supported and a sum of £300 be allocated from the Ward Community Cohesion budget, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and Neighbourhoods, the Cabinet Lead, Community Cohesion and Human Resources and the Leader of the Council.

Leicester Pride Festival – request for £1000 to cover the cost of sound monitoring, the provision of bins and clearing up following the event.

Councillors spoke of their support towards the festival, and proposed to fund the sound monitoring and clearing-up elements of the application.

RESOLVED:

that the application be partly supported and a sum of £625 be allocated from the Ward Community Fund and £75 be allocated from the Ward Community Cohesion budget, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and Neighbourhoods, the Cabinet Lead, Community Cohesion and Human Resources and the Leader of the Council.

Installation of a double alley-gate on St Leonards Road/Howard in Clarendon Park- request for £975 from residents in Clarendon Park via Leicestershire Police

It was made clear that this location had been identified as a burglary hot-spot, and that the installation of secure gates would lead to a reduction to crime and provide reassurance to local residents.

RESOLVED:

That the application be supported and a sum of £975 be allocated from the Ward Community Fund budget, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and the Leader of the Council.

Installation of two further alley-gates on Montague Road - request for £1,000 from residents in Clarendon Park via Leicestershire Police.

This application was targeted towards two further for location for alley-gates that had been identified by both residents and the Police as hot-spot areas.

RESOLVED:

That the application be supported and a sum of £975 be allocated from the Ward Community Fund budget, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and the Leader of the Council.

Replacement Concrete Bin, Howard Road – request for £400 for a replacement of the small plastic bin with a larger and sturdier bin from local residents in conjunction with Environmental Services.

RESOLVED:

That the application be supported and a sum of £400 be allocated from the Ward Community Fund budget, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and the Leader of the Council.

The Centre Project – request for £2,106 for a contribution towards the proviso of fresh ingredients for the project's lunch club and towards overheads.

RESOLVED:

That the application be partly supported and a sum of £600 be allocated from the Ward Community Cohesion Fund budget, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and Neighbourhoods, the Cabinet Lead, Community Cohesion and Human Resources and the Leader of the Council.

Following a number of queries from residents, Councillor Senior explained the process of how applications for grant money were dealt with by Community Meetings. She also went on to explain the difficulty Members for Castle ward had in filtering bids for projects based in the city centre that benefitted other wards in

Leicester. Members stated that they intended to ensure that such applications be dealt with by a separate mechanism in the new financial year, as well as continuing to look to see if there are other funds that could be used, for example, by the Joint Action Group Policing Fund. It was noted that the Police had been generous, but JAG money had run out for this financial year. One project JAG money had assisted with was to change the yellow lighting to white lighting on Victoria Park, which helped make the area safer.

39. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A resident asked if crime figures for Castle ward could be provided by the Police. It was suggested that the new Inspector Chris Cockerill, be invited to attend the Community Meeting in May, and he or one of his colleagues be asked to give a presentation on crime in the ward.

It was noted that there were some problems with residents parking schemes. Residents were informed that free visitor permits for people over 60 living in parking scheme areas. This would be brought in by the Council towards the end of March / early April and would allow up to three visitors to park.

40. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.03pm.