

Rushey Mead Community Meeting

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:30 pm, Thursday, 11 October 2012

**Held at: Mellor Primary School, Clarke Street, (the entrance is on
Checketts Road) Leicester LE4 7QN**

Who was there:

Councillor Culdipp Singh Bhatti MBE
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Councillor Piara Singh Clair MBE

INFORMATION SHARING – ‘INFORMATION FAIR’ SESSION

The following information stands were sited in the room. Members of the public visited the stands and were given an opportunity to meet Councillors, Council staff and service representatives.

Ward Councillors and General Information Members of the community could talk to their local councillors or raise general queries	Police Issues Members of the community could talk to Pc Rob Pountney from the Local Policing Unit and Shobhana Patel from Community Safety
Home Energy Milo Cereghino was present to offer advice on Home Energy initiatives.	Healthwatch Barbara Czyznikowska was present to answer queries relating to Health Watch (formerly LINK).

At the conclusion of this informal session members of the public were invited to take their seats and take part in the formal session of the meeting.

44. WELCOME

Councillor Culdip Bhatti as Chair, welcomed everyone to the Rushey Mead Community Meeting.

45. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Willmott.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

47. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous Rushey Mead Community Meeting held on 12 July 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

48. MELLOR PRIMARY SCHOOL: ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM

The Chair agreed that there could be a brief information item relating to Mellor Primary School as at the previous Rushey Mead Community Meeting, concerns had been raised over parking problems at the school. Mr Bhavesh Chauhan, the Site

Manager at Mellor was present and he was invited to address the meeting to provide an update on the situation.

Mr Chauhan made the following points:

- The school had been trying hard to deal with the parking problems outside the school. It was acknowledged that irresponsible parking posed dangers for the children.
- Notices appeared in the fortnightly school newsletter asking parents / carers to be more considerate when parking. They were also asked not to block driveways of neighbouring properties.
- School staff had been speaking to parents / carers. Some were receptive and co-operative, but some were not so helpful and staff had been verbally abused.
- The school had been in contact with the Police and Leicester City Council Traffic Management and asked for help to deal with the problems.

Mr Chauhan also provided an update on the new school building and explained that over the past year it had been difficult to hold any real community activities as there had been snagging issues and defects to deal with in relation to the new build. These had proved to be very time consuming. It had been hoped to hold a large community event, but this had to be scaled down because there had been limited access to the areas they had wanted to include. For example, the children had only been able to use part of the school field from the beginning of September because it was a newly seeded area.

A member of the public expressed concerns that there used to be good communication between the school and the local community, but this did not appear to be happening and there were no notices outside the school anymore. He felt that communications would be improved if there was an outside notice board. Mr Chauhan thanked the resident for the suggestion and explained that he would forward that suggestion onto the head teacher. He added that they had initially focussed on trying to ensure that everything inside the school was right for the children, but he thought that they would shortly be able to direct their focus onto the outside of the school.

49. LOCAL BUS SERVICES AND THE BUS USERS' PANEL

The Chair explained that at the previous Rushey Mead Community Meeting, concerns had been raised relating to the First Bus route number 21 and 21A which no longer served Peebles Way and the Troon Way area of Rushey Mead. Mr Steve Zanker, General Manager, East Midlands, First Group, and Julian Heubeck, Public Transport Co-ordinator had therefore been invited to the meeting to explain the current situation.

Steve Zanker explained that there had been a bus link from Rushey Mead to Gateway College, but this route had been serviced by Thurmaston Bus rather than First Bus. Thurmaston Bus was now no longer in operation. He was aware that there was a long standing query regarding the extension of the 21 bus to the Troon

Way area. This service was currently being reviewed because the extension to Hamilton was not attracting many passengers.

Members of the community raised concerns that there were a considerable number of Gateway students in the Troon Way area and those students now had to catch the number 22 bus to Barkby Road and then change to the number 21. There were also people in the Troon Way area who needed the 21 bus to visit the temple or health centre and people who wanted the 21 bus to serve the Peebles Way area too.

Concerns were also raised that there was no bus service on Catherine Street or to Rushey Mead after 7.30pm and Steve Zanker responded that it was challenging to provide evening bus services. In response to a question as to whether the bus companies worked with each other for the good of the community, the meeting heard that bus companies were not legally allowed to do this. He added that bus services were run commercially and although the local authority offered some subsidies, those subsidies had been affected by the local authority funding cuts.

Julian Heubeck then addressed the meeting and explained that bus services had been deregulated in the middle of the 1980s. This meant that the bus companies decided what service to deliver and the local authority no longer had any influence over their decisions. The council had supported some bus services where there was a defined need for them. This might be for example to support hourly bus services to small pockets of the city. The council had also supported some school services and Sunday services. The budget cuts had resulted in a review of the supported services as there was a need to reduce expenditure. This had led to a decision to maintain day time services as far as possible. There was however an on-going further review because of the need to reduce the amount the council spent on supporting bus services. The Deputy City Mayor was aware of the concerns of residents in respect of bus services to Peebles Way and evening and Sunday services. The council were aware that these services were valued but they tried support the services where they were most needed.

In relation to Gateway College, Julian explained that when the college opened, they were obliged to formulate a travel plan, and as a result of this, Thurmaston Bus had serviced the college from Rushey Mead. As this bus company were no longer operating, both Julian and Steve Zanker offered to look for options as to ways of progressing this issue.

Julian also explained that the Council had set up a Bus Users' Panel and it was hoped that the panel would be represented by people from every ward in the city. The aim was for the panel to meet every 2 to 3 months. The last meeting had been held at 5.30pm though a meeting had also been held in the afternoon. At the previous Bus Users' Panel, there had been Councillors and representatives from the bus companies, but the actual bus users had been under represented. People were invited to give their details to the community meeting officers if they were interested in joining the Bus Users' Panel.

Steve Zanker expressed his thanks for being invited to the community meeting and explained that he would be happy to attend a future meeting if invited.

50. UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE NEW SAINSBURY'S DEVELOPMENT, MELTON ROAD

The Chair provided an update of the progress of the planning application for the new Sainsbury's development on Melton Road. The meeting heard that further to the Planning Committee resolution to approve the Sainsbury's development, the Secretary of State had resolved not to call in the application. This allowed the City Council to continue to deal with the application itself. Negotiations were currently taking place in respect of the s106 legal agreement and it was hoped that these would be concluded by the end of November.

A member of the community queried what was happening in respect of the demolition of the Belgrave Road flyover. The meeting was advised that this issue had been discussed at the Belgrave and Latimer Community Meeting, the minutes of which were available to all members of the public and could be sent out on request.

51. RUSHEY MEAD BOWLING CLUB

Mr David Beck addressed the meeting and explained that he wished to talk to about the Rushey Mead Bowling Club. Mr Beck made the following points:

- The club had been in existence for 60 years, but lately there had been a reduction in the number of members.
- The club was situated on the Rushey Fields near the Harrison Road entrance.
- The club was friendly and had a mixed membership. Children and young people under the age of 16 needed to be accompanied by an adult.
- As well as outdoor bowling, there were facilities to bowl indoors. The next indoor bowling session would take place on 10 November 2012.
- The game was easy to play and members of the community were invited to come along to try out the game.

Mr Beck added that the club held open days and the Chair explained that in other wards, funding had been granted for bowling greens to hold open days, and he questioned as to whether the Rushey Mead Bowling Club might also wish to apply for funding from the community meeting budget for such an event in the future.

52. ADDITIONAL ITEM - UPDATE ON THE FEEDING OF GEESE ON WATERMEAD PARK

Paul Barker, Parks Officer gave an update in the form of a powerpoint presentation on the campaign to stop the feeding of geese on Watermead Park. The presentation is attached at the back of the minutes.

Paul explained that as a result of the campaign, the park was becoming a pleasanter place to visit. Ducks, geese and swans were also eating a healthier diet with more appropriate food. He added that it appeared that the campaign was proving to be a

success and a member of the community commented that she had noticed that as a result of the campaign, there were more swans on the river.

The problem of parking was raised and Paul explained that it was acknowledged that parking could be difficult at the park and in response to this there were plans for an overflow car park for when the weather was good.

In response to a question, Paul also explained that officers were investigating the possibility of installing a machine at the park to dispense bird food. This would enable and encourage members of the public to feed the birds with appropriate food.

53. UPDATE ON SECURITY ISSUES: SILVERSTONE DRIVE / BADMINTON ROAD

Paul Barker, Parks Officer provided an update on the open space on Troon Way around Silverstone Drive and Badminton Road. He explained travellers had gained access through Nagle Grove by breaking the lock on the gate and had remained there for a few days, arriving on a Friday and leaving the following Tuesday. Once they had left, ground staff had moved in straight away to clear the ground and fit a new lock. The area had been made as secure as possible.

PC Pountney added that he had spoken to the travellers the night that they had arrived. A travellers' liaison officer had worked with them and made sure that the children attended school.

Paul added that at the previous Rushey Mead Community Meeting concerns had been expressed over rusty railings on the Rushey Mead Park, but he was pleased to report that these had now been painted.

54. THE CITY WARDEN'S UPDATE

Bharat Patel, the City Warden for Rushey Mead and Belgrave gave an update on the issues that he had been dealing with in the Rushey Mead Ward. These included the following:

- Patrolling in Watermead Park and checking on the feeding of the geese etc.
- Working with the Community Payback Team.
- Dealing with dog fouling problems – this was an on-going project; advising people and giving out bags for dog waste.

Pc Rob Pountney reported that there was generally a litter problem in the Lockerbie Walk alley way. The alley way was used by school children and he suggested that it would be useful if the City Warden could carry out checks in that particular area.

A member of the community asked for parking wardens to patrol in the evenings in the area around the Jungle Club, including Mortoft Road. Additionally problems were being created because cars were parked in the layby on Checketts Road which

prevented buses from pulling in at the bus stop. It was also reported that there were cars for sale parked on the road in that vicinity.

The Chair advised that some of the issues raised related to the Belgrave Ward and would therefore be forwarded on.

A further problem was reported relating to overgrown bushes on Woodbridge Road; these were causing problems as the bushes obstructed the pavement.

55. POLICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE

Pc Rob Pountney gave an update on local policing issues to the community meeting. The following points were made:

- The staffing of the 2012 Olympics had presented difficulties for the Police as a number of Police Officers had been assigned to support the event elsewhere in the country. This meant that the Leicester Police had been very short staffed all summer.
- During this time there had been an increase in crime. Assaults had increased from 8 to 17 cases and the number of burglaries had increased from 5 – 8 cases.
- There had been one robbery in September and a few 'drive offs' from petrol stations.
- There was however a relatively low level of crime in Rushey Mead which was a very safe part of Leicester. There were a number of Police operations currently taking place in the city, but none of these were in Rushey Mead.
- The problems in Thurnby Lodge had resulted in a need for additional staffing and 4 officers from Rushey Mead had been posted there

Members of community raised strong concerns over a rumour that the police station on Melton Road might be closing. They felt that this would have a detrimental effect on the local community as the nearest police station would then be in Hamilton. Views were expressed that the local Police officers were a valued part of the community and they had good relationships with local people. Members of the community added that they wanted a proper consultation on this issue. A petition was being submitted to the Leicestershire Police Authority but in addition a meeting with the Police was requested in order to find out all the facts.

Councillors suggested that the petition should be sent to the Police Headquarters in Enderby and also that a copy should be sent to the City Mayor.

Shobhana Patel, Community Safety addressed the meeting and explained that over the next few weeks, with the approach of Diwali and Bonfire Night, the Community Safety team would be working with the Police and the Fire Service. Safety posters would also be sent out; these were part of the safety bid which had been funded through the Community Meeting budget.

Members of the community were warned that there had been incidences of jewellery snatching and they were asked to be vigilant when they were out and about.

56. COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGET

The Chair explained that three funding applications had been submitted as follows:

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY RESIDENTS

**Submitted by the North Neighbourhood Sure Start Children's Centres.
Amount requested: £2888 per Ward (funding also requested from Belgrave and Latimer Ward and Spinney Hill Ward.**

The Chair added that a decision was being deferred on this application as further information was sought to ascertain whether this course was already being offered elsewhere.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application for a Personal Development Course for local community residents be deferred pending further information.

ARCHER CLOSE GRASS VERGE PROTECTION

**Submitted by: Mike Pears Team Leader Highway Asset Management, Leicester City Council
Amount requested: £4,000**

Funding was requested for the repair of the grass verge outside 9 Archer Close and for the installation of knee rails around grass verges outside 5 & 7, 9 & 11 and 13 Archer Close.

The Chair explained that Councillors had agreed to defer this application as a request had been submitted to the City Council to fund this work from the central budget.

RESOLVED:

that the application be deferred to ascertain whether the work could be funded from the City Council's central budget.

GOLDEN MILE SHOPPING FESTIVAL 2012

**Submitted by the Belgrave Business Association
Amount requested: £500**

Funding was requested towards brochures to support the Golden Mile Shopping Festival which was planned to take place in November. The festival would bring existing sweet / grocery shops, jewellery shops etc substantial exposure attracting new and wider audiences to the Golden Mile. It was hoped to help increase and

establish the Golden Mile Shopping Festival as a highlight of the City's event calendar.

The Chair explained that the Ward Councillors would not support this funding application as they agreed that Ward Community Meeting funding should not be used for this purpose.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be unsupported.

57. QUESTIONS FOR COUNCILLORS

There were no further questions for the Ward Councillors.

58. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members of the community were asked to note that the next Rushey Mead Community Meeting would be held on Thursday 10 January at 6.30pm at the Soar Valley Community College, Gleneagles Avenue, Leicester

59. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Geese at Watermead Country Park (South)



Campaign 2012

Problem, what problem?



Unhealthy Birds Health Hazard
Overpopulation Discouraging visitors
Other wildlife forced out Damage to the Park
Rats Aggressive geese
Pollution on land and in the water

What are they all doing there?



Waiting to be fed

What food and how much?

Healthy natural food for a goose is

- Grass
- Soft plants
- Seeds
- All of which they can find for themselves

Often what people bring is not good for them



What should I feed?

✓

- Duck and swan pellets
- Mixed corn
- Uncooked plain porridge oats
- Plain uncooked Seeds or maize

✗


Bread

Bread is the Junk food of the bird world.
Birds will eat it but it contains little goodness for them

Anything cooked

Cooked food has salt in it which is poisonous for birds

How much should I feed?



Bread + Bread + ... = Bread
Bread + Bread + ... = Bread

Too much food and too many birds

Bird dung and food in the water creates Blue Green Algae which makes the water toxic and a danger to people, dogs and birds.

The birds loose their fear of people and get aggressive

Goose dung creates a health hazard which is also very slippery

Rats eat what the birds don't

The result of this is:-

We have a flock of idle messy hooligan geese hanging around on the car park waiting for their next hand out of junk food

What have we done about it?

We have installed pre planted coir roll and fencing on the edge of the water to discourage geese leaving the water

Educational campaign
Staff were on site for 8 weeks during the summer to educate users about appropriate feeding of the geese

Four £80 Fines have been issued for unsuitable feeding

New information boards have been installed

Educational campaign

During the campaign we approached people and asked them to help improve the way the birds are fed on the park

We asked people to:-

- Let the geese find their own food
- Feed small amounts
- Feed bird food
- Avoid feeding bread
- Don't feed on the car park
- Don't feed cooked food

To encourage good feeding we swapped bread and other unsuitable food for bird pellets

1500kg = 1 fully grown Hippopotamus

1500kg = 1 Ford Mondeo

1500kg = 1763 standard loaves of bread

During the campaign we collected 1500kg of unsuitable food

What have been the results?

No bird overcrowding

Reduced pollution and health hazards

The park is becoming nicer place to visit

The number of Geese on the lake has reduced by around 60%

There will be long term benefits for the wildlife on the park

The ducks, geese and swans are feeding much more healthily



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