

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Monday, 3 December 2012

Held at: St Matthews Sports Centre, Malabar Road, Leicester, LE1 2PD.

Who was there:

Councillor Aqbany
Councillor Dr Chowdhury
Councillor Dawood

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 and raise general queries	Police Issues Sgt. Chauhan was present to answer queries related to Policing issues in the Ward
Health Through Warmth Officers were available to provide more information on the scheme	Big Local Information was available on the Big Local project
Near Neighbours Information was available about available funding in Leicester	

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.

25. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Dawood was elected as Chair for the meeting.

26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

28. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillors were asked to agree the minutes of the previous Spinney Hills Community Meeting.

Councillor Chowdhury asked for an amendment to be made to the wording of his declaration of interest to read ‘.. that he worked *for* a voluntary community organisation ...’

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Spinney Hills Ward Community Meeting held on 17 September 2012 be confirmed as a correct record.

29. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute 17. Multi Access Centres in Spinney Hills Ward

The Chair stated that an update on the work of the MACs would be provided at a future Ward Community Meeting.

Minute 18. Benefits and Advice Service

The Chair stated he would seek advice from Leicester City Council, and would make the information available to residents.

Minute 19. Police Activity – Update

Vulcan Road had successfully acquired Section 30 Dispersal Zone status, due to an on-going problem of groups congregating in the area.

Minute 21. City Wardens – Update

The City Warden had issued Section 93 Notices, and had worked with businesses in the area to help them clean up the area. Work on this was on-going.

The Chair thanked the Police, Sgt. Chauhan and Nazira Vania (Community Safety Team) for the work done on the Section 30 Dispersal application. He also thanked the residents on Vulcan Road for their patience and perseverance.

30. COUNCIL TAX AND HOUSING BENEFITS

The agenda item was deferred to a future meeting.

31. ISSUES IN THE ST MATTHEWS AREA

A) HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC

Chris Middleton, Transport Development Officer, informed the meeting that from 21 January 2013, the one-way system would be extended to incorporate Chatsworth Street, Haddon Street, Bakewell Street and Buxton Street.

A 20 mph zone had been proposed for St Matthews. Feedback could be taken to officers, and there would be a period when objections could be made.

Chris asked the meeting if there were questions from residents regarding the opening up of Vulcan Road, which could be fed back to Transport officers. A resident asked if Bona Matturi, Senior Engineer, Transport would be available at a meeting scheduled to take place on 12 December 2012 at the Spinney Hill LPU. Chris informed the meeting that an officer would be present at the meeting. Residents were informed that an Action Plan would be put in place for when the Section 30 Dispersal Order lapsed, as they were concerned that issues would return to the area. The Chair responded information on the Action Plan would be taken to the meeting at Spinney Hill LPU.

Councillor Aqbany informed residents that road works had commenced on Diseworth Street on the reduction of road ramps and the removal of a chicane and bollards.

A resident asked why the waiting time on Dysart Way for pedestrians and cyclists was 45 seconds. It was suggested better designated crossings were put in place as pedestrians and cyclists had to wait at three sets of lights. Chris responded he would take the request back to officers, and would provide a response to a future Community Meeting.

A resident asked if Mere Road could be made one-way as there were problems with traffic. Chris responded it was a busy road that took traffic in both directions. He added there would be many people who would not want the road making one-way, as this would push traffic onto nearby streets, and would cause additional problems. A resident suggested using Park Vale Road as a one-way street. Chris responded that Park Vale Road was used by motorists to reach East Park Road. He added he would look at the current road system in the area and bring information back to a future meeting. He informed the meeting there were limited resources to make changes in the area.

B) CITY WARDEN

Darren Evans, City Warden for the Ward, reported on his current activities:

- Fly-tipping had decreased in the area.

- Good results had been gained from the Section 93 Duty of Care project, through local businesses cleaning their properties and managing their rubbish, particularly around East Park Road and takeaways.
- The on-going regular work and patrols included St Matthews and issues regarding cars for sale.
- The whole of the City Warden Services was involved in trying to identify the source of the graffiti tag SO12, and were involved in the removal of the graffiti city-wide.
- A project would be undertaken on London Road which involved businesses in cleaning frontages of premises.
- City Wardens would work with businesses on Saffron Lane on 6th December 2012.
- A bulky collection service would be situated on Melbourne Street on 17th December 2012, which had been advertised in the area, and residents were informed they could call for a free collection.
- A resident informed Darren of a member of the public allowing his large dog, off lead, to foul the pavement near to the mosque on Vulcan Road. Darren stated he would take immediate action as a large dog should not be uncontrolled. Darren asked the resident to provide contact details. The Chair stated that City Wardens could also be contacted using Twitter.
- Graffiti cleaning kits would be taken to businesses in the Vulcan Road area to clean up premises.

C) POLICE ACTIVITY UPDATE

Sergeant Chauhan provided residents with an update:

- Operation Nutmeg (a Leicestershire Police Operation) had good results, and four known drug dealers in the area received prison sentences, which sent out a clear message to Leicester. Sgt Chauhan said the Police listened when people reported issues, but it took time to gather evidence, which had been overwhelming in the case above, and those arrested had pleaded guilty.
- A CCTV had been installed on Dronfield Street/ Mere Road to monitor anti-social behaviour. Feedback would be presented at the next Ward meeting.
- Between 30th November and 2nd December 2012, Leicester City Council and the Police ran a joint operation to tackle traffic offences, for example, road tax and insurance offences, mobile phone use while driving and the non-wearing of seat belts. Residents were informed that during the operation, 40 people were caught.
- Spinney Hill had not seen any increase in burglaries. Residents were told that dark houses without alarms, or an open window, would be usual targets for burglars. Residents were encouraged to use timer switches for lights, to ensure windows were closed, and to lock any Asian jewellery away safely.
- Information was provided on the Section 30 Dispersal Order on Vulcan Road. The Police had worked with the Youth Offending Team, and 14 children who were nuisance and repeat offenders had been spoken to and dealt with. The meeting was informed that the Section 30 was under review, and it was not known if it would continue. A meeting had been arranged for the 12th December 2012 at the Spinney Hill LPU, and Members and Community Safety Team were invited to attend.

- Gates had been installed at Melbourne Street, Keythorpe Street and Woodboy Street where houses were vulnerable to break-ins.
- Hedges on Park Vale Road at the side of the park were to be removed to reduce anti-social behaviour following consultation. Residents were in favour of removing the hedges.
- A resident raised concern regarding premises on Mount Road, where it was believed drug offences were taking place. Sgt. Chauhan responded the police were aware and were working on it.

Residents thanked the Police and Community Safety Team for their work, who were instrumental in the changes on Vulcan Road. Residents said their lives had been transformed and they were concerned problems would return when the Section 30 Dispersal Order expired. They added there was an issue regarding drug dealing, which was undertaken openly in broad daylight near to the mosque. Residents asked what contingency plan was in place when the Section 30 was removed.

Councillor Aqbany stated the residents of Vulcan Road and the side streets had been brave, and were an example of what could be done to confront people when working together. Councillor Chowdhury added it was a good example of partnership working and good use of other agencies.

Sgt. Chauhan said the Police, Leicester City Council and residents had invested too much money and time to ignore the situation, and the matter would be discussed at the arranged meeting on the 12th December. Naziria Vania, Community Safety Team, said Vulcan Road would continue to be monitored, and the Section 30 Dispersal Order was a short-term fix. She added work would continue to change the environment.

The Chair thanked the Police and Community Safety Team for their update and work.

The Chair then invited people present at the information fair to discuss their projects.

The Near Neighbours Grant Fund in Leicester

John McCallum and Safraz Khan were present from the Near Neighbours Grant Fund Programme in Leicester. John informed the meeting the Near Neighbours fund was a small grant fund targeted at creating new relationships in local communities across boundaries of faith and ethnicity, and was funded by government. Award amounts ranged from £250-£5,000 and it was possible to be awarded more than one grant. The aim of the fund was to encourage stronger communities in areas that were multi-religious and multi-ethnic, and was intended to bring together people of different or no faith to transform local communities for the better.

The meeting was informed that the application process was simple, and a decision would usually be made within four weeks. Assistance was also available for completion of the application from on request.

Safraz said there were exceptions to people applying for grant fund monies, which included organisations with over £150,000, and statutory groups. She added statutory agencies could point groups in the direction of Near Neighbours.

Councillor Chowdhury asked if Leicester City Council could put in a small application for the benefit of the community. John responded that the funding application would have to come from the groups, as the funding was not there to replace statutory money.

Councillor Dawood asked if residents associations could apply. John said they could, and they had already approved an application from Saffron Residents Association.

Safraz informed the meeting that an area in Bradford had experienced similar antisocial behaviour problems to Vulcan Road. A group there had applied for funding to involve the children in creating a garden. She said residents in the Vulcan Road area could attempt a similar project to turn a negative situation into a positive one.

Councillor Dawood thanked John and Safraz for their update.

Councillor Dawood left the meeting at this point.

Councillor Aqbany took the Chair.

Local Trust / Big Local

Tim Moreton, Big Local Project, was present to inform the meeting of the £1million lottery funding awarded to St Matthews over the next 10 years. Tim said local people needed to identify individuals to sit on a steering group and put in a long-term plan on what to spend the £1million. Groups and individuals would be invited to participate at a planning meeting in February 2013, during half-term week. Tim also informed the meeting of the organisation Star People (www.UnLtd.org.uk/starpeople) who helped people in Big Local areas to launch projects, and had a separate set of grants to assist projects.

Councillor Aqbany stated it was important the people on St Matthews participated. Councillor Chowdhury added that the time was right for people to be involved and help to shape the project, which was an important investment in the community.

Tim advised that it was key the money should be used rather than spent, for example loans, match funding, which would help to strengthen the community.

Councillor Aqbany thanked Tim for the information.

32. BUDGET

Anita Patel, Member Support Officer, presented the Community Meeting Budget and submitted the following applications for consideration:

Application 1:

Upwards UK Ltd – Caribbean Fast Food

Amount requested: £500

RESOLVED:

that the application not be supported.

Application 2:

St Matthews Tenants Association – Malabar Road fruit and vegetable garden and island garden near shops

Amount requested: £300

RESOLVED:

that the application be fully supported to the sum of £300.

Application 3:

African Caribbean Centre – Island Meltdown

Amount requested: £500

RESOLVED:

that the application not be supported.

Application 4:

Leicester Organisation for Sickle Cell Anaemia Research – Health Awareness Day working jointly with NHS

Amount requested: £812.25

The applicant was present and reported that a good turnout of people were present at a previous event. Feedback from the event was excellent. Councillor Chowdhury asked the organisation to provide a report on what did or didn't work on the day. He also suggested the organisation try other charities and sources of money to sustain the research.

RESOLVED:

that the application be supported to the sum of £500.

Application 5:

Matwad Volleyball Club – Volleyball Club

Amount requested: £1000

RESOLVED:

that the application be supported to the sum of £800.

Late Application

NDI IGBO LEICESTERSHIRE (Nigerian Community Association) – Christmas Gala Night / Get Together

Amount requested: £300

Members were informed the late application had been submitted to several wards. Councillors requested further information before they would consider the application. The applicant was present at the meeting, and was informed he would be written to.

33. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (i) The meeting was informed of the Sure Start Open Day on 6th December 2012, 9.00am – 12.00pm, in centres around the city as part of a showcase week.
- (ii) Councillor Aqbany reported that Taylor Road School on St Matthews had received good results. Councillor Chowdhury stated it was commendable considering the demographic of the school. He added people in the area valued education and the congratulated the school staff, student and parents for their achievement.

34. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.50pm.