

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:30 pm, Tuesday, 16 September 2008

Held at: Stocking Farm Youth Community and Healthy Living Centre

Who was there:

Councillor Harshad Bhavsar

Councillor Annette Byrne

Councillor Colin Marriott

10. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Harshad Bhavsar was elected as Chair for the meeting.

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor Marriott declared and prejudicial interested on the funding application for Stocking Farm Library, as his wife was a committee member of the Mowmacre Tenants and Residents who had submitted the bid. He agreed to leave the room during that item.

13. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Abbey Community Meeting dated 25 June 2008 were circulated and Members were asked to approve them as a correct record.

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Abbey Community Meeting held on 25 June 2008 at the Tudor Centre, be agreed as a correct record.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Adrian Russell, gave a presentation on the work that Environmental Services had carried out in the Abbey Ward between January and June 2008. A newsletter was also available, which provided supporting information to the presentation.

Adrian explained that Environmental Services were responsible for a variety of different services, which included the following:

Waste and Recycling – Leicester City achieved a waste composting and recycling rate of 33% and 9% recovered for use as fuel in 2007/08. It was noted that each household was entitled to have five bulky items collected for free and that missed bin collections in the City were at a 0.05% rate.

In response to questions Adrian explained;

- that Biffa had signed a 25 year waste and recycling contract. There was to be a 10 year review when the City Council and Biffa could discuss if any changes were needed.
- that the City Council were not transporting their waste to India, as indicated in the local press. The contract with Biffa had proscribed routes that did not include destinations abroad, this was checked by the Council's Auditor. As only 18% of the City's waste was from domestic use it was thought that the waste found in India had been transported through private contractors from trade waste.
- that when recycling had been hand sorted items could be donated to youth groups for educational activities, however this was not possible using the Ball Mill. Adrian suggested that young people could visit Biffa's recycling centre instead, as Biffa often carried out projects for young people.

Street Cleaning – This service dealt with various issues including fly tipping, abandoned vehicles, discarded needles, and graffiti removal. The Abbey Ward was below average on these occurrences. An incident of building material being fly tipped into the Grand Union Canal resulted in the culprit being fined £1,500. Adrian explained that a new service had been provided in removing graffiti from Cable Boxes, with financial assistance from Virgin Media who own the boxes.

In response to a question Adrian explained that it was not possible to have the street sweeping after the bin collection. This was because there was only 4 days a week that bin collection took place, which then could not be matched with the street sweeping timetable.

Pest Control Services – Adrian stated that statistics showed that in the period between January and June 2008, Abbey Ward mostly had fewer problems with pests, than elsewhere in the city.

Dog Control Orders – A range of new powers were being introduced. For example, dogs would be restricted from certain areas such as children's play areas and fines could be levied against irresponsible owners for not cleaning up mess.

In response to a question Adrian explained that this would be enforced through Dog, Park and City Wardens.

Noisy Neighbours – Information was presented on the services provided by the Noise Control Team, who supply a call-out service until 2.00am seven days a week.

SmileSafe Scheme – This was where businesses selling food and drink were inspected and given a rating of their hygiene. 29 businesses had been checked in the Abbey Ward, Adrian highlighted businesses which scored the best Crewey's Kitchen, 70 Burnham Drive, Wolsey House Primary School, Beaumont Leys Lane, Mowmacre Hill Primary School, Tedworth Green, Brucciani's Bakery Delivery Van, 1-7 Bath Lane, and Abbey Park Tea Rooms, Abbey Park Road, and that scored the worst, Golden Wok, 27 Holderness Road.

Licensing – The Licensing Team was responsible for the granting of alcohol and other licenses. New rules had recently been brought in to restrict food vans outside schools to prevent bad eating habits from developing. Adrian explained that there

was the provision for residents to bring premises to a hearing to review their alcohol license if there had been incidents breaching their license.

Building Control – Officers had been responsible for checking the safety of building projects, in Abbey this mainly related to house and retail premises extensions. Officers had also undertaken a great deal of work checking buildings in the aftermath of the earth tremor in February.

10,000 Trees Project – Adrian provided details of this project that intended to plant 10,000 trees in the city over the next three years. Residents were requested to put their suggestions forward for locations for the trees.

In response to questions Adrian explained;

- that there was an maintenance budget for existing trees and that any additional trees would be suitably positioned to limit maintenance.
- that grass boxes were no longer used when mowing due to the high cost.
- that the weed killers that were used were not residual, therefore they did not damage the environment.

Residents expressed concern over areas where vegetation was causing a problem. These where passed to the section concerned for action.

The Chair thanked Adrian for his presentation.

15. WARD PRIORITIES

Steve Letten referred to the main issues for the Abbey Ward that had been identified by residents in the priority card exercise at the first meeting and also subsequently handed in. A document giving a summary of these issues had been given to members of the public at the start of the meeting. The top five issues were:

- 1 Roads and pavements
- 2 Street cleaning/fly tipping
- 3 Traffic and parking
- 4 } Crime and Anti Social Behaviour
- 4 } Youth facilities
- 5 Trees

Residents agreed that highways was a key issue with a number of uneven pavements that needed attention. It was also felt that more money was needed within the Highways budget.

It was suggested that meetings take place with young people to obtain their views.

Steve reported that a final draft version on the ward priorities would be submitted to the next meeting, following consultation with a wider range of stakeholders.

16. COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGET

Steve Letten, Members Support Officer, gave the meeting a brief presentation on the budget available for the Community Meeting to spend in the local area.

There were three types of budget available:-

Ward Priority Fund £6,700 in 2008/09 (£10,000 in 2009/10) – to fund projects to support the Ward Action Plan being developed by the meeting.

Community Fund £3,300 in 2008/09 (£5,000 in 2009/10) – to fund projects to help the community at large or individual groups.

Community Cohesion Fund £2,000 in 2008/09 – to fund projects to; support or reinforce community integration; build links involving young people; and build confidence and a sense of belonging.

Funding Application - Stocking Farm Library Books

Having declared a prejudicial interest Councillor Marriott left the room for the consideration of this item

The Chair reported that there was an application submitted for books for Stocking Farm Library. A member of the Mowmacre Tenants & Residents association explained that the requested £2,500 was needed for books targeted at visually impaired people and children. Members felt that the application fitted the Community Fund criteria, however they did not want to allocate a large amount of the budget on one project at that early stage.

RESOLVED:

That it be agreed that £1,250 be granted to the library.

17. COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Steve Letten, Members Support Officer, reported that there were opportunities available for a member of the public to become a 'Community Partner' for the Community Meeting. That person would act as a link, be involved in ward action planning, sub groups, patchwalking and/ or help to publicise the meetings. Consideration would be given to invite a community partner to join the Members to assist with Abbey Ward Community Meetings and that person would need to be a member of a constituted group. Skills needed were, to be keen and genuinely interested, to work effectively in a team, to communicate effectively, to be able to chair and convene meetings, have problem solving skills and have available time.

INFORMATION FAIR

The following information stands were sited in the room. Members of the public visited the stands and were given an opportunity to meet Councillors and Council staff and to bring enquiries and raise issues.

TABLE 1 **Ward Councillors and General Information**

TABLE 2 **10,000 Trees**

An officer was available to answer question and mark on suggestions where trees could be planted.

TABLE 3 **Street Cleaning**

Details were provided of the street cleaning services that were available.

TABLE 4 **Special Olympics**

Information was available on volunteering for the Special Olympics.

TABLE 5 **School Attendance**

An officer was available to answer queries on school attendance.

18. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

