

FREEMEN COMMUNITY MEETING

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

1:30 pm, Monday, 18 January 2010

Held at: Wheatsheaf Theatre, Knighton Fields Road East

Councillors in attendance:

Councillor Dale Keeling

Councillor Bill Shelton

INFORMATION FAIR

PLEASE SEE BELOW FOR DETAILS OF SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES YOU CAN TALK TO AT THIS MEETING

You can raise matters of concern, give opinions and find out information
which may be of use

Ward Councillors and General Information Talk to your local councillors or raise general queries	Police and Community Safety Talk to your Local Police about issues or raise general queries
Planning Proposals for Velodrome Site Find out about the plans for development of the site	Saffron Resource Centre Information about the services provided by the centre
Stop Smoking Campaign Information and advice on quitting smoking	Housing and Future Jobs fund Discuss housing issues and find out about the initiative to help people get back into work
City Warden Information about environmental services issues	Home Energy Office Advice and resources for saving energy
Sport in the Community Information about sport in the community	LINK Find out how to get involved in scrutinising local health services
Highways and Transport Discuss highways issues	Waste Management Information about waste management
NHS Leicester City Consulting on NHS services	

24. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Keeling was elected as Chair for the meeting.

25. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Brian Muddimer.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor Keeling declared that he had received correspondence regarding the budget application for the Empress Roller Skating Club and felt that he should not vote on the matter. He also declared that he had received an email regarding the dog waste bins application.

27. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A resident raised an objection to Minute 22, Any Other Business: Housing Issues, as she had been told that no reference had been made to the planning process, as described in the minute. No residents who were at the previous meeting were able to recollect whether this was correct. It was agreed that approval of the minutes be deferred to the next meeting in order for the notes to be consulted.

28. HEALTHY EXERCISE DEMONSTRATION

Benita Shepherd, Sport on the Road Officer, gave a demonstration of armchair exercises that were suitable for all ages and abilities. She also stated that she could provide information on sport and fitness opportunities for everyone.

29. UNDER AGE DRINKING AND ALCOHOL SALES

Neil Canham, Antisocial Behaviour Unit Manager, explained what the Council and Police were doing to tackle the issue of underage sales of alcohol. PC Paul Archer and Barbara Whitcombe, City Warden Manager, were also present to offer advice. Work included test purchases by a young person at off licences and pubs and identifying problem premises. Schemes had also been introduced to help tackle the problem. "Challenge 21" required sellers to ask for ID of anyone who looked under 21 years old. "Bottle Watch" was a scheme that involved off licences labelling all alcohol they sold, so that the City Warden or Police could identify where young people were getting their drink.

Neil explained that two shops in the Saffron area had failed test purchases, and one had been banned from selling alcohol for a month. He explained that his team and the Neighbourhood Policing Team would work on prevention and education. He asked residents to let him or the Police know of any problems, so that resources

could be targeted at the area. Various sections were involved in the issue, including City Wardens and the Licensing Team. Barbara and PC Archer both stressed the importance of reporting problems. Residents could call the Council call centre on 2527000 or the Police on 2222222.

Councillor Keeling thanked the officers for their work and encouraged residents to report any issues.

30. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Kathy Bourassa, Housing Development Officer, gave an update on current and upcoming housing schemes in the ward. Specific schemes were reported and discussed as follows:

Heather Road

Planning permission had been granted for family homes and work was to start on site in March. Concern was raised about how the planning process had been carried out, and Councillor Keeling received a letter addressed to the Council's Standards Committee. Councillor Shelton offered to answer any specific queries, as he was Vice-Chair of the Planning & Development Control Committee. Issues of traffic/loss of parking area were raised, and Kathy agreed to report these concerns.

Knighton Lane East

There were proposals for 6 one-bed self contained units for people with learning disabilities on the former scout hut site. Work would start in March, subject to planning permission being granted and land disposal being agreed. Kathy explained that there was a great need for homes for people with learning disabilities, as their needs had to be addressed more appropriately.

Knighton Fields Road West

Planning permission had been granted for 10 one-bed units for people with learning disabilities. Residents raised concerns that they weren't consulted about the type of build, and they were informed that there had been opportunity to raise views as part of the planning process.

Saffron Depot

A bid for funding had been submitted to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), but this had been unsuccessful. Future proposals would be reported to the meeting.

Whittier Road

It was proposed that affordable housing be built on part of the site prior to marketing the rest of the land. Kathy explained that an extension to the deadline for starting work had been granted by HCA, so that the scheme could meet the needs of all involved. Further proposals would be brought to the Community Meeting. It would also go through the full planning process so people could have a say. A representative of Aylestone Allotments & Leisure Gardens Society asked that they be involved in any proposals, as they wished to help get the development right. Councillor Shelton stated that he had been assured that the development would not affect the allotments. Concerns about access could be addressed at the Planning Committee stage.

Saffron Lane Velodrome

Neil Evans, Strategic Asset Management, Michelle Walker, Leicester Housing Association and Matthew Branton, Franklin Ellis Architects, explained proposals for the site. It was proposed that one third of the site be developed for affordable housing, and the rest sold when the market improved. It was reported that planning permission would be needed, so residents' feedback was welcomed before more specific plans were produced. The meeting discussed the siting of all affordable housing in one area, but it was noted that this was necessary in order to bring forward development of affordable homes during the current recession/economic downturn as developers were showing little interest in acquiring land for speculative development at the present time. It was also noted that development of 30% affordable housing would not only contribute to meeting current housing needs within the City but would also provide local employment and training opportunities. They also discussed affordable housing schemes, such as social renting, shared ownership and Try Before You Buy. Further comments on issues such as school places, build quality, the need for adaptable or social care housing and room size were noted. The meeting was informed that the proposals were also to be presented at a public meeting that night at Aylestone Leisure Centre.

Concern was raised about accessibility to the Saffron Neighbourhood Housing Office, at which the proposals had previously been publicised. It was reported that disabled facilities were available on request.

31. CITY WARDEN

Barbara Whitcombe, City Wardens Manager, and Scott Clarke, City Warden, gave an update on the work in the ward. It was reported that, following the successful pilot scheme, city wardens were to be introduced across the city in April.

Residents were asked to identify problems and areas to be targeted. Dog fouling was highlighted as a problem on Sheridan Street and Cavendish Road. Scott said that signs had been put up on Cavendish Road. Cracked pavements were mentioned, and Barbara said that they would refer this issue to Highways. Residents also reported litter problems on the Kirby Estate. Parking on the pavement on The Fairway was also a problem, and Barbara stated that this should be reported to the police.

Scott explained the work he had been doing inspecting business waste permits, ensuring waste was being disposed of properly. Barbara gave an update on the campaign to remove bins left on streets, which caused a danger and nuisance. Following advice and warnings, some residents had been fined. This included green boxes. There had been a big improvement in the area. A resident thanked them for the work done on Sheridan Street. Concerns were raised about people who were physically unable to move their bins. The "Assist List" was not thought to be effective. Barbara said that these concerns would be referred to Biffa.

Publicity of the service was discussed, and residents were given information cards. Barbara reported that they were available to meet with groups and had an education

programme. It was suggested that the service could be advertised in community newsletters.

ACTION	OFFICER IDENTIFIED	WHEN BY
Notify Highways about cracked pavements	Barbara Whitcombe	ASAP
Report Problems with the Assist List to Biffa	Barbara Whitcombe	ASAP

32. POLICING UPDATE

David Budd, Community Initiatives Co-Ordinator and members of the Neighbourhood Policing Team gave an update on policing issues in the ward.

PCSO Jim Muddimer gave a presentation, stating that the police beats had been changed to match the wards. Work was being done with partner agencies to tackle issues. Priorities had been identified by members of the community One priority, tackling underage drinking and vehicle damage on Southfields Drive, was being dealt with in January. Residents would be consulted for the next round of priorities.

PC Archer stated that it would take time for the new beats to familiarise themselves with issues in the area and asked residents to let them know of any concerns.

David Budd introduced a request for funding from the Neighbourhood Action Team for £500 towards a non-police fleet car for use by volunteers. These volunteers supported the police by gathering evidence for referral to field intelligence, officers and magistrates and obtaining warrants and searching premises. An officer showed the meeting the protective clothing and equipment worn for this. The team had contributed to 134 arrests in Freeman, Aylestone, Eyres Monsell and Knighton. The vehicle would enable them to work more effectively and safely. It was noted that, as the request was for £500, Councillors could agree it outside the meeting.

33. COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGETS

Jerry Connolly, Member Support Officer, gave an update on the current position of the Community Meeting budgets and introduced applications that had been received. The applications were discussed as follows:

Empress Roller Skating Club – uniforms for skating group

Councillor Keeling declared that he had received correspondence about this application and felt that he should not vote on the matter.

AGREED: that Councillor Shelton and residents express support for funding £400 from the Community Cohesion fund.

Community Fund Basketball Sessions

It was noted that basketball sessions were already provided at Aylestone Leisure Centre, and it was recommended that the meeting not support the application.

AGREED: that the application not be supported.

Aylestone Allotment & Leisure Garden Society, purchase of a shredder chipper

It was noted that the chipper would reduce waste and potentially reduce the number of bonfires, apart from for diseased plants. The chipper would not cause a noise nuisance.

AGREED: that the meeting supports the allocation of £300 from the Community Cohesion Fund and £1190 from the Ward Action Plan.

Lighthouse Learning, Let's Talk

It was noted that this application had been withdrawn, as it would be referred to the Extended Services Programme instead.

Dog waste bins

Councillors agreed to defer consideration of this application for further work to be done. A special meeting would be held before the end of the financial year to consider it further.

Police Neighbourhood Action Team Transport

This application was submitted at the meeting and had been discussed earlier as part of the policing update item. As the application had been submitted after the agenda was despatched, the meeting was asked for its opinion on the application, so that a decision could be made by Councillors outside the meeting.

AGREED: that the meeting expresses its support for the funding of £500 from the Community Fund.

34. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 3.50pm.