

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

7:00 pm, Wednesday, 10 March 2010

Held at: Main Hall, East West Community Project, 10 Wilberforce Road

Who was there:

Councillor Sarah Russell

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 Residents could talk to one of their local Councillors or raise general queries	Police Issues Members of the public could talk to Police Constable Simon Alborn from the local neighbourhood team.
De Montfort University Volunteer Academy Members of the public could talk to Glen White from the De-Montfort University Volunteer Academy	Environmental Issues Barbara Whitcombe, Team Manager, City Wardens and Graham Smith, Street Scene Enforcement Officer were present to talk to members of the public about environmental issues.

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.

10. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Russell was elected as Chair for the meeting.

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Connolly who was in Bournemouth on business.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors were asked to declare any interests 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.

Councillor Russell stated that she lived in the Ward but had no declarations of interest.

13. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair invited residents to consider the minutes of the previous Westcotes Community Meeting held on 3 December 2009.

In respect of the residents' parking scheme the following questions were asked:

- *When will residents be informed of the outcome of the vote, as most people do not know the result?*

The Chair commented that that a newsletter would be produced and she would arrange for the outcome of the vote to be included within the newsletter.

- *How will the success of the residents' parking scheme be judged? Is there a baseline?*

The Chair commented that these questions would be looked into and added that any decision to revoke the order would be made by the Cabinet Lead and the Director, Regeneration, Transport and Highways.

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

14. DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY VOLUNTEER ACADEMY

Glen White, Volunteer Support Officer from De Montfort University (DMU) was introduced to the meeting and gave the following information about the DMU Volunteer Academy:

- The DMU Volunteer Academy was a new initiative that had started in March 2009.
- It was based at the Mill Lane Campus in the DMU Students Union.
- The Academy worked mainly with people who were not in employment to enable them to acquire new skills for the workplace. A range of opportunities were offered – and attempts were made to find suitable opportunities to match people's skills and interests.
- The Academy worked with about 140 employers from different areas including health, retail, marketing and with young people. The Academy contacted volunteers during their placement to see how they were getting on and volunteers were also sent a newsletter.
- Expenses were covered and the Academy would also carry out free checks with the Criminal Records Bureau.
- Information leaflets were available and in addition, information could also be downloaded from the website.

The following questions were asked:

- *Do volunteers get a certificate to show what they have achieved?*

Glen explained that a certificate was given, which was useful for people to show to new employers.

- *Are you looking for new employers as well as volunteers?*

Glen replied that the Academy was always looking for new opportunities for their volunteers. Some placements were for fixed periods and some were very flexible and offered on a longer- term basis.

- *Who funds the scheme?*

The meeting heard that funding came from the Working Neighbourhoods Fund, which was a government grant given to Local Authorities to help projects such as this one. The DMU Volunteer Academy had submitted a bid to the Leicester City Council for funding for the project.

Glen was thanked for coming to the Community Meeting and for his presentation on the Volunteer Academy.

15. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Barbara Whitcombe, Team Manager, City Wardens and Graham Smith, Street Scene Enforcement Officer gave a presentation to the Community Meeting on the role of the City Warden. As part of the presentation a DVD was shown which illustrated the work of the City Wardens and it was explained that their aim was to be pro-active in preventing problems such as street litter, graffiti and dog fouling.

Graham talked about some of the problems that he had been involved with in the Westcotes Ward, which included:

- Street fires in litter bins.
- A street litter project around Braunstone Gate, Hinckley Road and Narborough Road. It appeared that litter was originating from some of the Takeaway businesses and letters had been sent to them.
- Fly tipping on Narborough Road.
- Dog fouling – particularly on Great Central Way. Graham explained that people were bagging the dog waste, and then dropping the bag because there were no dog waste bins. A bid had been submitted to the Community Meeting for funding to provide a bin there.
- Working with the Police over the problem of graffiti.

The following comments were made:

- *I live on Tyndale Street and there is rubbish everywhere there. I have never seen a Warden – it would be helpful if you could make yourself more well known.*

The Chair commented that Graham was doing a considerable amount of education work in an effort to prevent litter and he went into schools and spoke at assemblies. The Chair added that she walked along Tyndale Street regularly and she acknowledged that there was a problem with litter there. Graham also explained that he had reported rubbish on Latimer Street, although residents responded that the rubbish had not been dealt with.

- *I have seen people from local businesses put their own rubbish in the street bins and pouring a can of oil down the drains.*

Barbara responded that Officers from the Council carried out checks to make sure that local businesses had waste disposal contracts in place to ensure that waste was disposed of correctly.

- *The refuse collectors tend to make more mess than they take. I saw someone take out items from the recycle bin and leave it on the footpath.*
- *There is a problem with litter on the Great Central Way by Bede Park.*

- *A stoutly designed litter bin is needed between Briton Street and Upperton Road.*
- *People leave out the green recycling boxes. On Latimer Street for example, they can be left on the pavements for months.*
- *There is a problem with graffiti on Latimer Street and this encourages people to fly tip because the area looks so dirty and untidy.*

The Chair explained that even where the Council paid to remove graffiti, some private landlords did not want graffiti removed from their premises. The meeting heard that there was going to be a new website when people could take pictures of graffiti and fly tipping; these would appear on the website and details would be given for when the problem had been removed. There would be a campaign to tackle graffiti and advice could also be given on measures that could be taken to avoid attracting graffiti. The Council was working with Connexions and youth organisations in an attempt to improve this problem.

- *There is a bus stop outside Shree Jalaram on Narborough Road, which is sited by a hedge and people throw their rubbish into the hedge. A litter bin is needed there.*
- *There are a considerable number of rented properties in the area and if landlords are absent, it can be difficult to resolve issues around problem tenants and graffiti on private property. In addition, some of the rented properties are overcrowded.*

Barbara informed the meeting that there was a team that investigated issues relating to overcrowding and asked residents to report any concerns to the Council.

- *There are a number of different community groups in Westcotes, where people do not have English as their first language. Is it possible to advertise the meetings in their community centres? There is also a need for translation into different languages. People who are new to the area and who don't speak English may not always be aware of the system for recycling and the need to bring bins off the pavements etc.*

The Chair commented that it was difficult to reach everyone in the Ward, however, a bid had been submitted for a community notice board where information could be posted. It was also hoped to meet with the different faith groups so that they could also help to inform residents about community issues etc. Barbara also explained that a considerable amount of work was done with new students to the area, but it was difficult to get information to people who had English as a second language. The possibility of asking volunteers through the DeMontfort University Volunteer Academy to help with translation and perhaps put information on Facebook was also suggested.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
That the issues and concerns raised during the meeting be further considered by the Team Manager, City Wardens Officers and action taken when appropriate.	Barbara Whitcombe, Team Manager, City Wardens.	As soon as possible
Community Meeting publicity	Peter Cozens, Members' Support Officer	As soon as possible

16. POLICE ISSUES IN THE WESTCOTES WARD

Police Constable Simon Alborn, from the Neighbourhood Team for the Westcotes area gave a short update on policing issues. Simon made the following points:

- There were four Police Officers and 8 Police Community Support Officers in the area.
- Following a new Police consultation, the key issues that were identified were:
 - a. Parking obstruction – particularly on match days
 - b. Drunken behaviour – currently a considerable amount of work was being carried out on Braunstone Gate and an Officer was working with licensed premises there.
 - c. Anti social behaviour
- There had been a number of robberies on Bede Park, where students appeared to be targeted. Some arrests had been made.

Simon concluded by asking members of the public to please contact them if they witnessed anything suspicious or had any concerns.

17. WARD COMMUNITY BUDGET 2009/10

Councillor Russell explained that the following requests for funding from the Community meeting budgets had been received and asked residents to indicate whether or not they supported the bids.

RECYCLING IMPROVEMENT ON BEDE PARK

A funding application for £1103.45 had been received from Parks Services for recycling improvement on Bede Park. This application was attached to the agenda at Appendix B1.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be supported

DOG WASTE BINS ON GREAT CENTRAL WAY

A funding application for £1615 had been received from the City Warden for litter bins (for ordinary litter and dog mess) for the area of the Great Central Way that was in the Westcotes Ward. This application was attached to the agenda at Appendix B2.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be supported

REFURBISHMENT AND REDECORATION: NITE LITE COFFEE BAR

A funding application for £1500 had been received from the Nite-lite Coffee Bar at Robert Hall Baptist Church, Narborough Road for development and redecoration of the coffee bar entrance hall. This application was attached to the agenda at Appendix B3.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be supported

WESTCOTES STREET PASTORS

A funding application for £3703.38 had been received from the Westcotes Street Pastors for resources to develop their project. This application was attached to the agenda at Appendix B4.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be supported

NOTICE BOARDS

A funding application for £340 for two community notice boards to aid better communications in the Westcotes area had been received from the New Parks Neighbourhood Housing Office. Copies of the application were circulated at the meeting.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be supported

EXTRA LITTER BINS

Following on from comments made by residents earlier in the meeting, Councillor Russell suggested that there might be a need for two extra litter bins in the Fosse Road/Harrow Road area and on Narborough Road. Officers indicated that the cost of the bins would be approximately £448 each and residents indicated that they were in support of this proposal if the bins would be of benefit.

RESOLVED:

that funding for up to two extra litter bins be supported

STREET CLEAN UP

The meeting also heard that the Neighbourhood Housing Office were arranging a clean-up in the West Holme Street/Andrews Street/Norfolk Street/Norfolk Walk area and requested £150 for the provision of a skip.

Residents indicated their approval for this request.

RESOLVED:

that the funding request for £150 for a skip be supported

PROVISION OF BOLLARDS AND ADDITIONAL CYCLE RACKS

Councillor Russell also asked residents to indicate whether they supported funding the provision of additional bollards and cycle racks along the Narborough Road, using up the remaining funds in the community meeting budgets. Residents indicated their support for this.

RESOLVED:

that the provision of additional cycle racks and bollards along the Narborough Road be supported from the unspent community meeting budget.

FENCING AROUND PLAY AREA ON BEDE PARK

Councillor Russell explained that funding for green mesh fencing around the play area on Bede Park had been requested. The meeting heard that residents close to the play area were having their quality of life affected by noise nuisance because of people using the slide very late at night or in the early hours. The noise from people on the slide echoed causing distress to the residents and in addition, the slide had to be cleaned regularly from mess, such as vomit and urine. The fencing would allow the play area to be secured at night to deter anti social behaviour. It was suggested that it might be possible to share the cost of the fencing with the University and the Housing Association but Residents expressed concern that the fencing would still be very expensive. In addition they commented that it would spoil the look of the park and the problem of noise could be alleviated if all the nearby houses, which were owned by the Housing Association were double glazed. Residents were asked to vote to indicate their support of the project and as there was no consensus of opinion among the residents present, it was agreed that the funding request would be deferred to the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

that the request for funding for fencing round the play area in Bede Park be deferred to the next Westcotes Community Meeting.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
The budget applications that had been supported at the meeting be submitted to the Cabinet Lead for approval.	Peter Cozens, Members' Support Officer	As soon as possible

18. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 9.32 pm