

Beaumont Leys Community Meeting

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

3:30 pm, Wednesday, 2 March 2011

Held at: Christ the King Church, Beaumont Way (next to the shopping centre)

Who was there:

Councillor Vi Dempster

Councillor Keith Lloyd-Harris

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.

<p>Ward Councillors and General Information</p> <p>Local Councillors were present to talk to or raise general queries.</p>	<p>Police Issues</p> <p>Local Police were present to talk about issues or raise general queries.</p>
<p>City Warden</p> <p>The local City Warden was available to discuss issues affecting the local environment such as litter, graffiti and dog fouling.</p>	<p>Library</p> <p>Staff from the local library were available to give details of the services on offer.</p>
<p>Local Involvement Network (LINK)</p> <p>Details were available about how residents could get involved in presenting their views about local health services.</p>	<p>Multi Access Centre</p> <p>These centres provide advice and support for unemployed people, to help them find jobs.</p>

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.

36. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Dempster was elected Chair for the meeting.

An additional item on One Clean Leicester would be added to the agenda.

37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Paul Westley.

38. 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.

There were no declarations.

39. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous Beaumont Leys Community Meeting held on 12 January 2011 were agreed as a correct record.

40. POLICE UPDATE

Sergeant Rich Jackson updated the meeting about recent Police activities and successes. He noted that the main issues that the Police were tackling were drugs and drug dealing in Butterwick drive and anti-social behaviour in the Astill Lodge Road Area. With regard to the drugs issues, it was noted that 18 warrants had been issued and these efforts had been publicised in an article in the Leicester Mercury on 24 February. Convictions were expected from these warrants and details of this would be published on the 'Justice Seen, Justice Done' website. With regard to the anti social behaviour in Astill Lodge, officers were working closely with the youth club at the Community Association to tackle this. PC Martin Birch reported on the crime figures which were generally down and encouraging, but there had been an increase in the burglary from dwellings figures.

A resident referred to the anti social behaviour problems in the Astill Lodge area. He agreed that the young people in the area could be boisterous, but large numbers of them had been banned from the youth club and therefore had nothing to do. He felt that more should be done to give them distracting activities. He also felt that they were often unnecessarily stopped and searched. He further commented that they had made efforts to apologise which had been rejected. PC Birch responded to these points noting that the behaviour of the banned young people had been very

poor, and when they had gone to apologise they had been preventing access to parents of other children, shining laser pens and urinating. He felt that there needed to be a robust response to such behaviour. The Chair commented on this issue, noting that the youth club was run by volunteers and was limited to what it could do in terms of tackling anti-social behaviour. She undertook to ask Kim Thorrington, the local Detached Youth Worker to go to Astill Lodge to see what could be done in the area. Michelle Gamble from the UR Choice Youth project suggested that a meeting be set up with resident and his grandson to look into the issue.

Other residents complained of problems with laser pens. PC Birch encouraged people to report problems.

A further comment was raised about whether incidents which were reported to the Police were linked up and how they could be flagged as an emergency. PC Birch commented that incidents were linked up; this was done by the telephonist. Incidents were given a grading by the telephonist – he suggested where these calls related to a refuge, this should be made clear to ensure that they were picked up as an emergency.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
Detached Youth Work team to visit the Astill Lodge area.	Kim Thorrington	ASAP
A meeting to be arranged with the local resident and his grandson to look into the issues with regard to bored young people / anti social behaviour in the Astill Lodge area.	Michelle Gamble	ASAP

41. ONE CLEAN LEICESTER

Barbara Whitcombe, City Warden Manager, gave a presentation on the One Clean Leicester Spring Clean, and information on how residents could report environmental problems or ‘grot spots’ throughout the 22 wards in Leicester. Reports could be made via the One Clean Leicester free downloadable App for smart phones, by email or text, or by uploading information on the One Clean Leicester website.

The One Clean Leicester App allowed users of smart phones to take a photo, select the location of the problem, describe the problem, for example, dog fouling, fly tipping or graffiti, and forward the information to the One Clean Leicester Team. The information could also be sent as a text message or email, with LEI in the subject field. A picture could be included with a description of the problem. People reporting problems would be contacted for further information if required. Problems could also be reported using the One Clean Leicester website, or by calling Customer Services. Reported problems, once checked for appropriateness were then published on the

website, where a list of reported issues could be viewed. All received information would be forwarded to the appropriate team to respond to.

The Chair thanked Barbara for her presentation.

42. HOUSING SERVICE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

John Thomson, Housing Area Manager gave the meeting a presentation outlining the new process for allocating Council houses. The new system would be a banding system, where those in Band 1 would be of the highest priority for receiving a house. There were 6 bands in total, the bottom band being people who would not receive an offer. John outlined the kinds of criteria which determined which band a person was in. This was things like, number of children and appropriateness of current housing arrangements. The new scheme would replace the complicated points system and would now give more chances to people who had been on the register for a long period of time. This new system wouldn't however increase the number of houses available.

A resident commented that he had noticed that there were large numbers of boarded up houses in the Beaumont Leys area. John commented in response that he was surprised at this because voids (homes without a tenant) were at an all time low. The turnaround time was 25 days and there would always be some houses in between tenants.

A resident commented further about the fact that more housing was needed and that it was disappointing that it only seemed to be student accommodation that was being built in the city. John responded by saying that when there was the opportunity under the last government, the Council did build about 200 houses. Whether more new houses could be built depended on whether the government would allow it. Bids for funding to build new houses were currently being rejected, so the focus was on improving existing houses.

A resident enquired about tenants who could afford to buy their own house. John commented that new government legislation was being brought in which would create shorter tenancies, but currently there were no plans to force people to buy a house where they could afford it.

The manager of local refuge, Kirton Lodge raised a number of comments about the short amount of time in which they have to place people in houses once they become available and the poor condition of them when they are let. John commented that a fast turnaround time was a target that was worked towards. He was surprised to hear of Council properties being let which were in a poor condition. The Chair asked that John discuss the issues further with the manager.

43. COUNCIL BUDGET

The Chair reported back on the recent Council budget following the discussion at the previous meeting. The budget was approved in late February. She noted that

currently services had been protected in key areas like Children's Centres, Youth Services where management savings had been reinvested, sports facilities and community centres. It was however a one year budget, to which information from the Government was received late. There couldn't be any guarantees about saving services in the future. There would be no rise in Council Tax.

A resident enquired about whether Leisure Services had been cut – The Chair confirmed that they had not.

The Chair further commented that a lot of the focus of future savings would be about making the best use of buildings and providing a range of services from one building.

A resident further enquired about funding for pensioners bus passes. The Chair commented that the current system had been protected, unlike in the County Council area.

44. COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGET

Councillors were requested to consider the following budget applications.

It was noted that there was approximately £700 left in the budget. This would not cover all the available applications. It was proposed to cover those applications which were affordable and to take an 'in-principle' decision to fund those which weren't affordable. It was also noted that some applications could wait to be approved without affecting them. It was felt that all the applications were good ones, and some of them tackled ward priorities relating to health.

Application 1 – Love Hoops Foundation

This was an application for £250 to support the setting up of a new basketball club which would be based in the ward. Targeting specifically, disadvantaged women.

RESOLVED:

that the application be supported and £250 be allocated from the Ward Community Fund, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and Neighbourhoods and the Leader of the Council.

Application 2 – Val Kindred (Leicestershire County Netball)

This was an application for £745 to support a 10 week course to encourage women to get back into netball.

Val Kindred was in attendance at the meeting. She commented on the application, noting that it was a scheme designed to attract females back to netball. The scheme would be run in connection with the Council, in particular the 3x30 exercise pledge scheme. This scheme would be run in a number of wards across the city and a tournament would be held when it finished.

RESOLVED:

that the application be supported in principle, subject to final confirmation when further funding becomes available in the new financial year.

Application 3 – Friends of Astill Lodge Park

This was an application for £461 to erect a notice board and to obtain materials for path improvements.

A representative from the friends of Astill Lodge Park was in attendance at the meeting. He commented that these proposals had been put together by the friends group, but the work would be undertaken by Parks Officers. The aim of the proposals was to tidy up the Park and to make it more welcoming for the community.

RESOLVED:

that the application be supported and £461 be allocated from the Ward Community Fund, subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and Neighbourhoods and the Leader of the Council.

Application 4 – Heathley Park Residents Association

This was an application for £380 for funding towards the Heathley Park 7th Annual Gathering.

RESOLVED:

that the application be supported in principle, subject to final confirmation when further funding becomes available in the new financial year.

45. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Community Payback

A resident commented that people on the community payback scheme had done a great job of making improvements at Bennion Pools.

The Number 55 Bus

A resident complained that requests for information that he had submitted to the Council about the future of the Number 55 bus had gone unanswered. He further felt that the Council generally didn't take on board people's comments when they suggested improvements to bus services, such as better advertising. He also felt that the Council should take a tougher line with the bus companies due to the subsidy that they received. The Chair commented that she would ask the Director of Regeneration, Transport and Highways to respond to the resident's concerns. She also proposed that there be an item of business on this issue at the next meeting.

Local MP

It was suggested that the local MP be invited to a future Community Meeting. The Chair commented that she was happy to invite the local MP, but she was often only available on Fridays due to being in London the rest of the week.

Actions

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
That the Director of Regeneration, Transport and Highways respond to concerns about the number 55 bus.	Director of Regeneration, Transport and Highways	As soon as possible.
That there be an item of business at the next meeting on the number 55 bus.	Director of Regeneration, Transport and Highways	June 2011
Invite the local MP to a future Community Meeting.	Member Support Officer	When the MP is available.

46. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 5.25pm.