

# Thurncourt Community Meeting

**Your Community, Your Voice**

## **Record of Meeting and Actions**

**6:00 pm, Monday, 26 April 2010**

**Held at: Thurnby Lodge Community Centre, Thurncourt Road**

Councillors in Attendance

Councillor John Allen
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Councillor Caroline Scuplak
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## 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.

<b>Ward Councillors and General Information</b> Talk to your local councillors or raise general queries	<b>City Warden</b> Meet your City Warden and discuss environmental issues
<b>Recycling</b> Find out about waste management and recycling	<b>Clockwise Credit Union</b> Find out about the Credit Union's services
<b>LINK</b>	
Find out how you can be involved in scrutinising local health providers	

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.

### **37. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Councillor Scuplak was appointed as Chair for the meeting.

### **38. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Richard Harrold, Senior City Warden and Trevor Taylor.

### **39. 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 Scuplak declared a prejudicial interest in the budget application for the Thurnby Lodge Carnival, as she was Chair of the Thurnby Lodge Forum. She stated that she would not take part in the discussion, but, with the full agreement of attendees, that she would remain in the room.

### **40. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Thurncourt Community Meeting, held on 25 January 2010, were agreed as a correct record.

With regard to the item concerning housing issues, Neil Rouse, Neighbourhood Housing Manager, explained that work has started on carriageway widening at the top of Rosshill Crescent and would then move to Drumcliff Road.

### **41. RAVEN YOUTH CENTRE**

Callie Buchanan, Senior Youth Support Worker, explained the current programme and future plans for the Raven Youth Centre. He stated that there were three youth club nights, each with a different emphasis, such as a girls' drama group, basic cooking, or sports. Usage had increased recently. Callie also explained that a three-week summer programme was being prepared, and funding was being sought from the Positive Action for Young People fund. A summer football tournament was also being arranged with the Willowbrook Youth Activity Centre.

Initial behavioural problems were being overcome by the ground rules that had been established, and there had been a vast improvement. Issues with young people causing trouble from outside the ward were being dealt with by the police.

Members expressed concern about continuity of service at the Raven, and Callie said that a recent spell when the centre was closed was due to sickness.

Contingencies had been put in place so that it would not happen again. Members also asked what work had taken place to build links with the Willowbrook Activity Centre, and it was reported that discussions were taking place, but were hindered by funding issues. Graham Cornish from the Willowbrook Youth Activity Centre pointed out that they may have to close over the summer holiday due to funding, stating that it was not possible to bid for a 12-month programme.

The meeting discussed further issues, such as trips out, which would have to be heavily subsidised, use of the Outdoor Pursuits Centre, potential to reward good behaviour and respect, and the need for a new noticeboard to attract new users.

The Chair thanked Callie and offered an open invitation for him to take part in future meetings.

## **42. HIGHWAYS**

Steve James, Transport Development Officer, gave an update on highways issues that had been previously raised. The main issues covered were:

### **BOWHILL GROVE**

The Traffic Regulation Order for double yellow lines had been advertised, and would be followed by a three week objection period. Subject to no objections being received, the work could start at the end of May.

### **NURSERY ROAD TRAFFIC CALMING**

Developers' plans had not been acceptable according to the Council's traffic calming policy. However, a new product on the market was being considered for the whole road. Responses from the residents' consultation had been mixed. A report would now be prepared for the Director taking comments into account. This was an opportunity to have traffic calming installed at no cost to the Council, as it was to be funded from contributions from the developer.

Issues regarding the impact of existing speed bumps in the vicinity, and the location of the proposed new ones were discussed. Residents were assured that no work would take place that had not been consulted on.

### **REINSTATEMENT OF PAVEMENTS ON SCRAPTOFT LANE**

Inspection and reinstatement would be carried out when the works had finished. These works would be guaranteed for two years and any future problems could be reported to the Council who would pursue reinstatement with the utilities company concerned.

### **BUS SHELTERS**

A bus shelter on Thurncourt Road/Bowhill Grove had been removed due to vandalism. It was low on the priority list for a replacement. A new shelter was to be installed on Colchester Road at the end of May. Some objections had been received to the proposals.

It was agreed that an officer should attend the next meeting to discuss bus shelter issues in more detail, including the criteria used when prioritising the installation of bus shelters.

#### VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGNS

These had been piloted with a favourable impact. A report was to be submitted to Councillors recommending that they be rolled out city wide. Concerns about trees obscuring the signs on Scraptoft Lane would be reported and the trees would be trimmed. Otherwise, the signs were movable.

#### OTHER ISSUES

A resident asked whether the City Council had plans to reduce street lighting, as the County Council were already turning some lights off. It was confirmed that the City Council had no such plans.

The meeting discussed how the Council was dealing with pot holes. It was noted that some funding had been received from the Government and the Council had postponed some major schemes in order to pay for the unprecedented number of pot holes that needed repair after the cold winter. Residents could report them to the Council's main number, 252 7000, and they would be repaired quickly. In response to concerns, it was confirmed that money for pavement repairs was not being redirected to pot holes.

### **43. CLOCKWISE CREDIT UNION**

George Puszczynski, from Clockwise Credit Union, explained the services on offer, stating that it was a community-based savings and loans co-operative, run by and for the community. It encouraged regular saving and offered small, affordable loans to people, including those who had been excluded by banks. By doing this, they allowed people to overcome problems caused by high interest short-term loans and loan sharks. Savings were rewarded by dividends, rather than interest.

Members welcomed the work of the Credit Union, recognising how they had assisted people in debt. They also noted that, due to the way people were advised, there was a very low level of write-off of bad debts. In response to public questions, George advised that, if there were sufficient volunteers in the community, a branch could be set up in Thurncourt.

The Chair thanked George for the information.

### **44. CITY WARDEN**

Barbara Whitcombe, City Wardens Manager, gave an update on the work of City Wardens in Leicester. She introduced Darren Evans, the new City Warden for Thurncourt.

Barbara outlined current issues. These included the availability of litter pick kits for use on community tidy up days, and a new initiative for texting or emailing pictures of

problems to the Council's website for them to be dealt with. This website would also allow for "before and after" photos. If people did not have access to a PC, they could still call 252 7001 to report problems, or use PCs at libraries or the Thurnby Lodge Community Centre. Work was being done on a six-month action plan and Councillors would comment on this when it was available.

Residents asked if action would be taken on dog fouling, and it was reported that there was to be a summer campaign to tackle the issue. Wheelie bins on streets would also be targeted. Darren was also asked to contribute to the TARA newsletter and attend the next TARA meeting, Darren agreed to this.

Barbara encouraged people to report any environmental issues they came across so that they could be dealt with.

#### **45. POLICE UPDATE**

As no police officers were present at the meeting, this item was deferred.

#### **46. WARD ACTION PLAN**

Francis Connolly, Member Support Officer, introduced an updated Ward Action Plan following discussions at the last meeting.

Four priorities had been identified which reflected recent issues raised at meetings and changing needs in the ward.

- Highways and Transportation, including parking, poor pavements and other highways issues
- Crime and disorder
- Environmental improvements including litter and grass cutting
- Youth services, and employment and training

Francis explained that the plan would be updated for each meeting, and Councillors were keen to get more public input into the plan. Francis asked people to fill in surveys and to pass them on to people who may be interested in contributing to the action plan. These were to be sent out to local centres and the TARA. Any information submitted on each of the priorities would be taken into account.

#### **47. COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGET**

Francis Connolly, Member Support Officer, explained that £17,000 in total was now available, consisting of £10,000 for the Ward Action Plan, £5,000 for the Community Fund and £2,000 for the Community Cohesion Fund.

*Councillor Scuplak did not take part in the following discussion.*

Francis introduced an application for £2,025 for the Carnival Day. The meeting discussed the costs for stewards and it was reported that this was good value, and an appropriate number of stewards. It was noted that each carnival had been

organised by a different community group, which had shown how active they were in the ward. Everyone present supported the application.

AGREED: that the application for £2,025 from the Community Fund be supported.

#### **48. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The meeting was informed of a planning application for 15 dwellings on the garage and taxi firm site on Thurncourt Road. It was felt that this would be an enhancement of the area. It was reported that recently, documents had been found, outlining proposals from the 1970s for a sports hall on the ball court behind the Community Centre. The Community Association had expressed an interest in resurrecting the proposals, and asked for the possibility of Section 106 funding from the new development to be considered.

The meeting discussed the Willowbrook Park, and suggested that the park should receive official status, and the wetland be restored.

Concern was raised that grass was not being properly cut around recently-installed railings on Stornoway Road. Neil Rouse stated that these areas should be cut and strimmed. He agreed to raise the issue to get it done properly.

Mebis Bachoo from Sports Services reported that funding was available from Sport Unlimited for 12-19 year-olds' sports activities. Sports Services hoped to get involved with the Raven Centre. Mebis was invited to discuss this at the next meeting.

Residents raised further issues as follows:

- A flood information pack was available in the foyer of the Community Centre, which gave advice on how to deal with flooding.
- More grit bins were needed before next winter.
- The Community Centre hall needed to be refurbished to bring it up to date.
- Double decker buses that weren't accessible had started appearing on the 53 route. Arriva should be told to put accessible buses on.

#### **49. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8.08pm.