

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Monday, 2 August 2010

Held at: United Reformed Church, Evington Road

Who was there:

Councillor Iqbal Desai
Councillor Parmjit Singh Gill
Councillor Hussein Suleman

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 Talk to your local councillors or raise general queries	Police Issues Talk to your Local Police about issues or raise general queries.
Action Deafness To receive information on the the Action Deafness Project.	City Warden Obtain information on the services available including the ‘One Clean Leicester’ and ‘Anti-graffiti’ programmes
Smoking Reduction Find out about the latest campaign around smoking reduction	.

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.

12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Michael Davies, Community Partner.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Desai disclosed a personal and non prejudicial interest in Minute 18 (i) as a member of Highfields Area Forum, the applicant, and took no part in the discussion in the item.

14. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Stoneygate Community Meeting held on 14 June 2010 were approved as a correct record.

15. ACTION DEAFNESS

Sonia Sarpal, Development Officer, Action Deafness 'Hear Now Project', and based at The Peepul Centre, attended the meeting and gave a brief presentation. A copy of the presentation is appended.

Sonia stated that it was anticipated that over 3,000 people would be helped during the life of the 3 year funded project and at the end of the project it was intended to complete an appraisal of individuals and businesses that had benefitted from the project. Sonia stated that Black, Minority and Ethnic (BME) groups were the principle targets as well as local businesses. Statistics had shown that people of BME origins were more susceptible to hearing problems than other groups and this group also included people from Eastern Europe, the information had been sourced from the NHS, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and also work undertaken by the Shama Women's Centre.

Sonia stated that British Sign Language (BSL) Level 1 training would also be available, people who were interested were asked to 'e' mail Sonia with their details as several classes were due to be held at different stages.

Sonia was thanked for her presentation.

16. ROAD REPAIRS IN STONEYGATE

Jeff Miller, Director Regeneration, Transport and Highways and Martin Fletcher, Group Manager, Highway Maintenance attended the meeting and gave a presentation on road repairs in Stoneygate Ward. A copy of the presentation is appended.

In summary it was reported that some 77% of roads in the City required some work and the City Council had tried to identify additional funding and an additional £1 million had been confirmed the previous week. The funding available citywide was reported as follows: -

£700k	- Reactive repairs
£207.3k	- Winter damage emergency money
£540k	- LTP funding re-allocation
£525k	- Additional City Council funding

Within Stoneygate ward it was anticipated that £300k would be allocated to repair damaged roads. An inspection of all local streets had taken place and a suggested short-listed of streets to be repaired was reported as follows: -

Rowsley Street
Sawley Street
Glossop Street
Evington Road
Linton Street
Osmaston Road
Hazelwood Road
Kedleston Road
Evington Drive
St. Stephen's Road
Stoughton Drive North
Bartholomew Street
Highway Road

Officers were looking at the most cost-effective repair methods that could be used and it was stated that should funding be left over then some work could be undertaken on as many streets as was possible. The views of the public present were sought.

Questions

- i) A member of the public questioned why Kingston Road was not included on the short list of streets.

Martin stated that it was a case of prioritising the condition of streets from very bad to bad, also taking into account the streets from where most complaints had been received. It was hoped that some funding could be kept back to enable some patching work to be carried out on other streets in the area.

- ii) A member of the public stated that Kingston Road was in a bad condition and questioned when the next funding stream would become available to repair it.

Jeff stated that highway maintenance was currently funded by the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and the current LTP funding finished in March 2011. Negotiations were taking place with the current Government regarding the next LTP and it was expected that less funding would be made available,

hence fewer major schemes, although it was hoped that a similar amount would be made available for Highways Maintenance that also included the spend for footpaths and drains.

- iii) The Chair stated that people who had raised concerns expected timescales and it was felt that a better job could have been made of conveying information to the public, hence the frustrations.

This comment was noted.

- iv) A member of the public asked the following questions: -

- a) Leicester was trying to reduce the number of cars entering the City and also encourage the use of cycles. The potholes reported could be lethal for cyclists.

Jeff stated that there had been an increase in cycling in the City and the Council was anxious to encourage cycling. Repairs to make the roads safer for cyclists would be addressed.

- b) What options were there for reducing the costs of road repairs through the procurement process.

Martin stated that the City Council's Regeneration and Transport task Group were to look at the procurement process and officers were looking in detail at various costs and methods used to repair roads with a view to finding alternatives. Jeff stated that he would be happy to bring comparative figures, together with comparisons to the private sector, back to this meeting. The Chair stated that he would like to see such figures.

- v) It was questioned whether the 8 worst streets quoted at the meeting was the final selection for urgent attention.

Martin stated that the list represented the work that could be undertaken with the available funding. Within a couple of weeks more detailed costings would be available and it might be possible that additional streets could be tackled.

It was then stated that this issue was a major issue and it was suggested that a programme of patching works be drawn up in consultation with residents so that they felt that something was being done.

Martin stated that a certain amount of funding was 'ring fenced' to enable the urgent repairs to be tackled. It was anticipated that a 'Condition Survey' would be carried out on all highways in the City over the next 12 months so that an assessment could be made of how much it would cost to bring all roads up to a reasonable standard. Officers totally appreciated the condition of roads in the City and they were attempting to do something about it.

RESOLVED:

that the information be noted.

17. HIGHFIELDS RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEME

Jeff reported that following consultation it had been ascertained that the majority of residents in the area south of Biddulph Street were in favour of the Residents Parking proposals, whereas the majority of residents in streets north of Biddulph street were opposed to the proposals. Based on these outcomes it was proposed to remove the streets north of Biddulph Street from the scheme. An objectors meeting was due to be held on 16th August and a report would then be taken to Planning and Development Control Committee on 13th September and Cabinet for a final decision on 4 October.

It was stated that Parking Permits would be priced at £25 per resident per year, Blue Badge holders would receive free permits. Visitor tickets would be priced at £2 for 2 days and free permits would be available for 1 day.

A series of questions were asked and responses given, as set out below: -

- i) A member of the public questioned the levels of vehicle displacement, particularly in the Elmfield and Ashfield Road areas that were already fairly heavily congested. It was further questioned whether any consideration been given to the several Voluntary Sector projects based within the proposed residents Parking zone and what arrangements would be put in place for their members.

Jeff stated that the issue of displacement was a real problem and that officers would recommend that, following the implementation of the South Highfields scheme, schemes be implemented in those areas that displaced vehicles would be using.

Jeff stated that he was not aware of objections from any of the Voluntary Sector projects within the area of the scheme, but officers were happy to visit local residents meetings to give assurances.

- ii) A member of the public stated that Highfields Association of Residents and Tenants (HART) covered the whole of the proposed Residents Parking area and it was clear that most residents in the area identified wanted the scheme to remove commuter parking and on-street car sales. HART had leafleted virtually every house within the Phase 2 area and had been led to believe that they had until 23 August to feed back results to the City Council. HART urged the City Council to wait for the result of their survey as it was felt that it would represent a more definitive response.

The Chair stated that, during campaigning for the recent Parliamentary Election, he had received more objections to Residents Parking than any other issue. This scheme was a very contentious issue.

Further discussion took place and a number of concerns were raised around the proposed implementation of this particular Residents Parking Scheme. It was strongly stated that the streets referred to that were to be excluded from the scheme should in fact be included, and the number of actual objectors was questioned. It was also stated that Ward Councillors should have had a say as to whether the scheme was taken forward or not, rather than the Director and the Cabinet Lead member taking this decision, as had been previously notified to the Ward Councillors. It was suggested that a meeting be called to discuss how best to proceed with the scheme and involving the Ward Councillors, the Cabinet Lead member for Highways and Transportation and the relevant officers.

RESOLVED:

that a meeting be arranged involving the Ward Councillors, the Cabinet Lead member for Highways and Transportation and the relevant officers to discuss how best to proceed with the South Highfields Residents Parking Scheme.

18. BUDGET

Steve Letten, Members Support Officer, introduced the funding applications received since the last meeting and members gave them consideration: -

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| | £ |
| a) Highfields Area Plan | 8,000* |
- Request for joint funding from Spinney Hills, Stoneygate and Castle Community Meetings* to update the 2004 Plan and to circulate the revised document. The cost to include the cost of a consultant, office costs, venue hire and printing costs.

Members expressed concerns that, as had been discussed at a previous meeting, the cost of engaging consultants was too high and therefore they could not support funding.

RESOLVED:

that the application be refused for the reasons stated.

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| b) Leicester Interfaith Gardening Work Project | 3,820 |
|---|--------------|
- Request to provide funding to set up an Interfaith gardening project

Members were informed that further information on the project was being sought from the applicants.

RESOLVED:

that the application be deferred.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Local Policing

Sgt. Daniel Graham, Stoneygate and Thurncourt Neighbourhood Sergeant outlined the policing issues in the area.

Drugs and anti-social behaviour were a problem in the area and these were to be discussed at a problem solving meeting to be held on Wednesday 4th August.

August was to be regarded locally as an 'Action Month' with extra police and patrols, this follows a similar initiative operated in 2009.

Locally the Police were looking to provide cover and/or written reports to a wider range of local meetings than have been covered in the past.

Sgt. Graham was thanked for his presentation.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 11th October and that the venue would possibly be the Mayfield Centre.

21. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.22 pm.

