

# Evington Community Meeting

**Your Community, Your Voice**

## **Record of Meeting and Actions**

**6:00 pm, Thursday, 23 June 2011**

**Held at: Leicester General Hospital Sports and Social Club,  
Gwendolen Road, Leicester LE5 4PW**

Who was there:

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| Councillor Deepak Bajaj |
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| Councillor Baljit Singh |
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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.

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|---|--|
| <b>Ward Councillors and General Information</b>   | <b>Police Issues</b>   |
| Members of the public could talk to their Ward Councillors and raise general queries.   | Local residents could talk to PCSO Andy Postlewhaite from the Spinney Hill Park Local Policing Unit.                     |
| <b>Summer Youth Activities</b>  | <b>City Warden Service</b>   |
| Abdul Gafar, Youth Worker was present to provide information on activities for children and young people during the Summer.             | Barbara Whitcombe, Team Manager, City Wardens was present to answer queries relating to street scene enforcement issues. |
| <b>Highways Matters</b>   |  |
| Members of the community could talk to John Dowson, Team Leader, Transport Strategy about highways matters and public transport 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.

## **1. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Councillor Baljit Singh was elected as Chair and welcomed everyone to the Evington Community Meeting.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Nicole Powell (City Warden), John Sloan (Chair of Evington Fete and Show Committee), Dr Logia and Mr Majid.

## **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors were asked to declare any interest they might have in the business on the agenda, and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

Councillor Singh declared that a member of his family worked for the Leicester City Council. He also declared that he held some management portfolios in various organisations.

## **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous Coleman and Evington Community Meeting held on 22 March 2011 were considered for approval. It was explained that neither Ward Councillors had been present at the meeting; Councillor Bajaj had submitted his apologies and the meeting had taken place prior to the May election when Councillor Singh was elected as Ward Councillor. Therefore members of the community who were present at the previous meeting were asked to agree the minutes as a correct record.

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Coleman and Evington Community Meeting held on 22 March 2011 be agreed as a correct record.

## **5. WARD COUNCILLORS' REPORT**

Councillor Singh explained that the Ward Councillors' Report had been included on the agenda as a means of providing an update on the work of the Councillors. He explained that they had been involved in a large number of inductions, training sessions and policy meetings.

The Councillors had also been involved with other issues as follows:

### **Petition for a Neighbourhood Centre in Evington**

A petition would be submitted at the full Council Meeting on 29 June 2011 asking for a Neighbourhood Centre for Evington. Councillor Singh explained that there were Neighbourhood Centres throughout the City, which offered a wide range of services,

but at present Evington did not have such a facility. He explained that the Neighbourhood Centre would provide a vital service for members of the community including the elderly and vulnerable and would enable members of the community to access services straightaway.

In response to a question, Councillor Singh explained that there would be a consultation with the community over the Neighbourhood Centre and its possible location.

A member of the public commented that people needed shops, a post office and improved public transport and suggested that the need for those facilities was greater than a need for a neighbourhood centre. The Chair agreed that the situation was a concern, but added that it did not detract from the need for Evington to have a Neighbourhood Centre.

### **Separate Ward meetings for Evington**

Councillor Singh added that previously the Evington and Coleman Wards had held joint Community Meetings, but in future, Evington would hold its own Community Meetings. Evington had its own identity, which could be better promoted if the Ward meetings were held independently from the Coleman Ward.

### **Leicestershire Constabulary – Budget Cuts**

Councillor Singh explained that the Leicestershire Constabulary was facing significant spending cuts over the next few years. He felt that there was a need to support this public service and at full Council he would be requesting that a motion be put to the Home Secretary to increase their funding.

### **Petitions: Footpath by Woodborough Road**

Councillor Bajaj announced that a petition had just been received for work to be carried out to clean up the footpath by Woodborough Road and also to provide adequate street lighting. Members of the community confirmed the need for action to be taken over this issue and stated that they had raised concerns before but the problem had yet to be resolved.

### **Petitions: Parking problems at Waterfield Close**

Councillor Bajaj announced that a further petition would be submitted relating to parking difficulties at Waterfield Close, as residents had requested the removal of the bollards there, which appeared to exacerbate the problem.

### **Councillors Surgeries**

The meeting heard that the Ward Councillors hoped to be able to offer regular ward surgeries every Friday.

## **6. HOUSING CAPITAL RECEIPTS INITIATIVE**

Chrissie Field, Area Manager, Housing Services addressed the meeting on the Capital Receipts Initiative. She explained that she was one of 6 area managers in Leicester and that she covered 6 wards in the city including the Evington Ward. Chrissie made the following points:

- Money had been allocated to the Capital Receipts budget from the sale of council housing stock.
- Within that budget, £200,000 had been allocated to the area covered by Chrissie, to assist tenants and to improve the area and environment that they lived in.
- Of that money, £26,000 had been allocated to the Evington Ward. This had been calculated on the amount of council stock within the Ward.
- Any spending on projects needed to be approved at the Community Meeting and by Ward Councillors.

Chrissie then presented the following projects as possible recipients of the capital receipts funding:

- **Gisborne Court:** to replace the old wooden safety rails with double metal rails. The wooden rails had splintered and had protruding nails and had already resulted in one successful claim for personal injury.  
Approximate cost: £8,500.
- **23-37 Cordery Road:** for approximately 60m rail metal fencing to the grass verges to prevent cars being driven illegally on the grass verges.  
Approximate cost: £5,500.
- **Ethel Road Flats:** internal and external painting of metal work, along with shed doors and the numbering of shed doors.  
Chrissie explained that costings were still awaited for this work and would be brought to a future Evington Community Meeting.

A member of the public stated that there was an urgent need for the fencing to be painted at the Ethel Road flats because they were rusting. She stated that there was a requirement for the work to be carried out every 5/7 years, but this had not been carried out for over 30 years. Chrissie explained that this kind of maintenance work could not be financed from capital receipts and separate funding would be needed.

Councillors indicated their support for the change from wooden to metal hand rails at Gisborne Court and for the fencing at Cordery Road. Jane Ushwell, Senior Parks Officer, stated that the maintenance officers would need access to be able to mow the grass and it was agreed that she would liaise with Chrissie.

#### RESOLVED

that the spending from the Capital Receipts budget to replace the old wooden handrails with double metal rails at Gisborne Court, and install the rail metal fencing to the grass verges of 23-37 Cordery Road be approved.

| Action to be taken   | Officer Identified                             | Deadline                                |
|--|--|---|
| For costings for the painting at the Ethel Road flats to be brought to a future Community Meeting. | Chrissie Field, Area Manager, Housing Services | In time for the next Community Meeting. |

## 7. LOCAL HIGHWAYS ISSUES

John Dowson, Team Leader, Transport Strategy was present at the meeting to lead a discussion on public transport and highways issues in Evington.

### Public Transport.

In relation to public transport, John made the following points:

- There had been changes to the levels of service provided by First Bus and Arriva and also to the levels of support provided by Leicester City Council for off-peak services.
- The Number 22 service had withdrawn its evening service.
- The City Council had had to find significant savings in the budget, which had resulted in the review of the support they could offer.
- The City Mayor had indicated that he wanted to work with the commercial bus companies in order to improve off peak services. He was encouraging the bus companies to do more, but it was known that less people were using buses and fuel prices had increased; factors which had resulted in an adverse effect on the bus companies' profits.
- In response to a question relating to the Number 81 bus service, the meeting heard that this commercial service was being withdrawn by the commercial operator and the Council were collecting data on order to consider potential options.

A member of the public also expressed concerns relating to the Number 36 bus and urgently requested information as to what was happening to it in the near future. John asked for the member of the public to give him her details at the end of the meeting.

Another member of the public also commented that it would be very useful if the Number 14 bus (formerly Number 54) could be re-routed to service the General Hospital as well.

### Downing Drive

John explained that concerns relating to road safety on Downing Drive had been raised, and as a result the road safety experts had been asked to meet there with the Evington Councillors. A survey had been carried out which had shown that out of 125 drivers, most drivers obeyed the speed limit but 6 of those surveyed had exceeded the speed limit significantly, some exceeding 40mph when the limit was 30

mph. Of the accidents which had taken place on Downing Drive, speed was a factor, so dealing with speed was important to safety. The Council would be looking at options to improve the situation.

A member of the public stated that there was also a problem in the Sycamore Estate because of speeding vehicles. There had been a significant increase in speeding and people were becoming afraid to cross the road. Because of the design of the estate, there were further concerns that a driver might lose control of a speeding vehicle and crash into one of the houses.

### **Potholes**

John explained that the Council undertook safety inspections in order to repair potholes but the severe winter had impacted on their ability to carry out all the repairs. They were trying to prioritise the worse potholes first and staff were carrying out pothole repairs on a full time basis. Potholes on Ethel Road and Shady Lane had been repaired and also major footway repairs had been carried out on Downing Drive. Work was also scheduled for Uppingham Road and Davenport Road. Members of the public were asked to report potholes to the council by phoning 2527000 or by emailing [customer.services@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@leicester.gov.uk)

John was thanked for coming to the meeting.

## **8. POLICING ISSUES IN THE EVINGTON WARD**

PCSO Andy Postlewhaite from the Spinney Hill Park Local Policing Unit, was present at the meeting and gave an update on policing issues in Evington.

Andy made the following points:

- The community meeting were thanked for previously granting funding for a police bicycle. Andy had cycled to the meeting and members of the community were given an opportunity to view the bicycle. He stated that the bicycle helped officers travel round much quicker and the funding was very much appreciated.
- There had been anti-social behaviour on Gamel Road and Davenport Road which had resulted in a higher visibility Police presence.
- There had been recent reports of someone with a gun running around the hospital grounds, but this incident had been investigated and was proven to be a false alarm.

Members of the community made the following comments:

- There had been incidents of anti-social behaviour on the footpath by Woodborough Road. Children had been throwing stones and the paintwork of cars had also been scratched.
- There were anti-social problems in the Sycamore Estate, but they were not all being reported. If people witnessed anti-social behaviour or incidents they needed to report it so that the incident was logged.

- Incidents of anti-social behaviour had also occurred on Linden Drive, including unacceptable behaviour by people in parked cars.

| Action to be taken   | Office responsible                             | Deadline     |
|--|--|--------------|
| The comments made by members of the community to be formally reported to the Police responsible for the Evington Ward, | Julie Harget,<br>Democratic Support<br>Officer | 27 June 2011 |

## 9. CITY WARDEN UPDATE

Barbara Whitcombe, Team Manager, City Warden referred to the City Warden Ward Action Plan, which had been circulated to members of the public. Barbara asked for comments and explained that this was an opportunity to decide where Nicole, the City Warden for the Evington Ward, should be working.

Barbara explained that Nicole had received complaints relating to dog fouling and in response she had been out earlier in the morning and later in the evening in an attempt to catch the owners who were allowing their dogs to foul. There had also been increased signage as a deterrent.

There had also been complaints about cars showing for sale notices that were on the highway. Barbara explained that this was an offence, but it was recognised that people did not necessarily realise this and so the wardens were initially working to raise awareness and improve the situation.

Nicole had carried out duty of care visits to shops to ensure that waste was not being removed by rogue traders. Businesses, shops and schools that produced litter were also being monitored and fines would be issued to any that did not comply.

Barbara added that it was hoped that the orange bag recycling trial would continue and Cabinet would be making a decision on this in the near future.

Members of the community made the following comments:

- A mattress had been dumped in the water treatment works on Coleman Road.
- Residents had previously been told that the spinney on Coleman Road would be cleaned up, but this had not happened.

Barbara noted the comments made by members and the public and the Chair thanked her for coming to the meeting.

## 10. UPDATE ON THE EVINGTON PARK



Jane Ushwell, Senior Parks Officer gave a brief update on the Evington Park. Jane explained that she covered Evington Park and other green spaces and made the following points:

- Thanks were given for the funding from the community meeting budget for the Evington Park History Leaflets. Copies had been brought to the meeting and were available for people to look at.
- Thanks were also given for the funding for the crocus bulbs which had been planted in Evington. Members of the community commented that the flowers had looked very attractive.
- Summer flower beds had been planted on Evington Park.
- Pond plants had been planted. The habitats and species in the pond were looking positive. There was some pond weed but this could not be tackled at present because of the presence of amphibians
- CCTV had been installed around Evington House.
- The Friends of Evington Park had formed a gardening club; funding for tools had been supported from the community meeting budget.
- It was hoped to work with local schools to make a human sundial.

Jane also announced forthcoming events planned on the park, which included the following:

- A tree trail had already taken place, but another one was planned for Evington Park and also for the Arboretum.
- There would be a History Walk and Talk in the Arboretum on Thursday 28 July.
- A Kite making event would be held on Evington Park on Monday 25 July.

A member of the public praised the transformation of Evington Park. A resident from the Ethel Road flats commented that the grass at the flats, which was cut by Parks Services, was not cut short enough.

Whilst it was acknowledged that the Parks Services were responsible for cutting the grass at the flats, Barbara explained that the Council provided a 'Handyperson Service' who could help with a variety of tasks around the home. The Chair requested that the Service should be put on the agenda at the next Community Meeting.

Jane was thanked for coming to the meeting.

| Action to be taken   | Officer Identified                        | Deadline  |
|--|---|---|
| That Tom Smith, Supervisor in the Handyperson Service be contacted to arrange attendance at the next Evington Community Meeting. | Francis Connolly, Member Support Officer. | As soon as a date for the next meeting has been agreed. |

## 11. BUDGET

Francis Connolly, Member Support Officer to the Evington Community Meeting gave an update on the Community Meeting budget.

Francis explained that it was likely that the budget for the financial year 2011/12 would be £15,000, but this had not yet been confirmed.

There was one budget application as follows:

### **Beacon Site for Tennis: Leicester City Council Sports Regeneration on behalf of Leicester City Tennis Development Group**

#### **Amount requested: £500**

£300 had been requested for tennis coaching and £200 requested for flyers to publicise the event. The event would be held on Evington Park.

It was explained that this application had been deferred from a previous community meeting. The Chair announced that the application would be re-negotiated and would be progressed within the next few weeks. Jane Ushwell, Senior Parks Officer stated that she was not aware of the funding application, and the Chair and Francis responded that she would be included in the further discussion of the bid.

#### RESOLVED:

that the funding application be re-negotiated and progressed outside of the meeting and then submitted to the Cabinet Lead for approval.

A representative from the Evington Boys' Club queried whether funding could be given for the general upkeep and overheads of the club. She stated that funding had been previously granted for activities but there was also a need for help with general building overheads.

The Chair responded that the community meeting would support projects to improve people's lives. He suggested that a funding application should be submitted, which would be subject to detailed scrutiny.

The Chair asked members of the public to inform people in the community that if they had a viable community project, they should submit a funding application.

| Action to be taken  | Officer identified  | Deadline             |
|---|---|----------------------|
| For the Beacon Site for Tennis funding application be re-negotiated and then submitted to the Cabinet Lead for approval | Francis Connolly in conjunction with the Ward Councillors | As soon as possible. |

## 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair announced that there would be two items of urgent business.

### **Olympic Torch**

The Chair announced that in 2012 the Olympic Torch would come to Leicester and a large number of people would be given an opportunity to carry the torch. People were invited to put in nominations for someone who they believed should have the honour of carrying the torch. The Chair added that he hoped that the people of Evington would be part of this.

### **Evington in Bloom**

Helen Pettman, Friends of Evington Park and Village Green, explained that during the past three years, the 'Friends' had taken part in a horticultural project called 'It's Your Neighbourhood'. The judges in the project had suggested that the group should move up to the next category – 'Evington in Bloom' but to do this, the group would need support and help. Interest had already been shown by the Judgemeadow Community College EMAS Group, the Youth Club, the Junior Youth Club and the Judgemeadow Toddler Group and it was hoped to encourage other groups to get involved to improve their environment.

Helen stated that the aim was to set up 'Evington in Bloom' which would be a sub-committee of the Friends of Evington Park and Village Green and it was important that Councillors gave a lead in order to give prominence and support for the project and for future improvements in the village.

In order to progress the project, Helen suggested a number of actions, including the following:

- A patch walk around Evington with Councillors and people who go to Ward Meetings to highlight future improvements and to look at possible projects.
- To add 'Evington in Bloom' as a main agenda item for all subsequent Ward meetings up to July 2012, when the judging would take place.
- To provide assistance to recruit an administrator and also financial support to pay some administration expenses and possibly an honorarium.
- For Ward Councillors to be part of 'Evington in Bloom', to attend meetings and presentations (where possible) and to meet the judges.
- For Ward Councillors to support if possible, any funding bids in respect of the project.

The Chair praised the proposals and stated that the project would be supported. Officers in Parks and Green Spaces would be contacted with a request for help to co-ordinate the project. He added that he would like also to see a celebration of Gujarat in Evington, perhaps with a focus on food and drink. It was agreed that 'Evington in Bloom' would be added to the agenda at the next Community Meeting.

| Action to be taken      | Officer identified | Deadline             |
|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| For 'Evington in Bloom' | Julie Harget,      | In time for the next |

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| to be added to the agenda for the next Evington Community Meeting. | Democratic Support Officer | meeting. |
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### **13. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8.16 pm.

