

Evington Community Meeting

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Tuesday, 13 September 2011

Held at: Judgemeanow Community College, Cafe Area, Marydene Drive, Leicester LE5 6HP

Who was there:

Councillor Deepak Bajaj

Councillor Baljit Singh

14. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Deepak Bajaj was elected as Chair and welcomed everyone to the Evington Community Meeting.

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor Bajaj declared that in respect of the Community Meeting Budget and the application for the Champion Boxing Club, he used to box for the club approximately 15 years ago.

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.

17. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Evington Community Meeting held on 23 June 2011 be agreed as a correct record.

18. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute Item 6: Housing Capital Receipts Initiative.

Councillor Singh explained that at the previous meeting, under the Capital Receipts Programme a number of projects to assist tenants and to improve their area and local environment had been identified. One of these had been internal and external painting at the Ethel Road flats, but at the time, no costings had been available. Chrissie Field, the Area Manager for Housing Services had now received an estimate for the work, and the meeting was informed that this would be just in excess of £12,000, which was slightly over the remaining balance of the budget. Councillors explained that residents had requested that the work should be carried out and they were satisfied that the work was necessary.

A resident of the Ethel Road flats commented that the painting had not been carried out for 34 years and she hoped that if the work exceeded the existing budget, this would not impact on Chrissie in any detrimental way.

19. WARD COUNCILLORS' COMMUNITY REPORT

Councillor Singh announced that there was a meeting of Full Council on Thursday 15 September at 5.00 pm. The meeting was open to the public and everyone was welcome. At council he would be asking questions in relation to £6.5m which had been obtained from the European Regional Development Fund. He added that one of the pledges he had made at the election was that the Council should be able to give more financial assistance for projects to help people.

Councillor Singh stated that he would also raise a question in relation to the allocation of school places in Leicester as every year at this time there were large numbers of children who wanted to attend local schools and were not allocated a place.

Councillor Bajaj also informed the meeting that he would be presenting a petition on behalf of residents relating to a proposal to install a bus stop in Wakerley Road, in what they felt would be an unsuitable position.

20. THE ORANGE BAG RECYCLING SCHEME

Kimberley Stones, Waste Management, Environment Services explained that a new Orange Bag Recycling Scheme would shortly be introduced to the whole of the Evington Ward. Some residents in Leicester including parts of Evington had been trialling the Orange Bag scheme for the previous few months and the scheme had proved to be very successful.

Kimberley made the following points:

- A roll of 50 orange bags would be delivered to households during the first two weeks in October. Waste for recycling would be placed in the bags rather than the current green boxes.
- The new scheme meant that a significantly wider range of products could be recycled than previously with the green box scheme.
- It was important that items that were recycled were clean and people were asked to rinse bottles and cans etc with soapy water.
- Food waste, nappies, broken glass, some polystyrene, cat litter and general waste could not be recycled and should continue to be placed in the wheelie bins.
- Waste and the recycling bags would still be collected on the same day and weekly collections would continue.
- Light bulbs with mercury could not be recycled in the orange bags, nor should they put in the wheelie bin. Instead people were asked to take them to the recycling centre at their next visit.
- People could keep their green recycling boxes if they wished to put them to an alternate use.
- The next stage of the process would be to introduce the scheme at flats; it may be that a special bin would be used there rather than orange bags.

- A leaflet was available for everyone to take home with further details of the scheme.

A member of the community queried the type of polystyrene that could be recycled and Kimberley explained that there were two different types. For example, polystyrene food trays could be recycled in the orange bags but expanded polystyrene (which was used to wrap kitchen appliances etc) could not be recycled.

Kimberley was thanked for her presentation.

Further details on the Orange Bag recycling scheme may be obtained from the Council website at www.leicester.gov.uk/orangebags or by phoning 0116 252 7002.

21. HIGHWAY MATTERS

John Dowson, Team Leader from Regeneration, Highways and Transport gave an update on the highways and public transport issues that were raised at the previous Evington meeting on 23 June 2011.

John made the following points:

Bus issues:

- The 22 bus route: there had previously been a request that the 22 bus route should be changed to alternate its route between Ethel Road and Evington village. This request had been passed onto the bus company; however they had responded that they felt that this route would be less commercially viable.
- The 54 bus route – this service was withdrawn due to insufficient usage.
- The 36 bus route – this bus route was on a list to be withdrawn in October. It was however now under review and no decision on its future had yet been taken.

John added that the City Council wished to be able to help improve public transport and the City Mayor had stated that he wanted to support the bus service.

Highways Issues:

- Downing Drive – there had been complaints relating to speeding on Downing Drive and a survey had shown that a small number of vehicles exceeded the speed limit by a considerable amount. However it was considered that there was not a strong enough case to implement traffic calming. John added however, that officers believed that a speed indicator device would hopefully reduce the number of speeding drivers. Members of the community confirmed that there was a problem with speeding vehicles on Downing Drive and heard that the speed signs had already been ordered.

A resident brought to the meeting's attention that following a fall of rain, there was a problem with an excess of water on the pavement outside the Boys' Club. She stated that the water lay on the pedestrian side of the pavement and pedestrians were splashed with water when vehicles drove by. The water was deep, at times above the level of people's shoes, and it appeared that the drains were not taking the water away. The meeting heard that the problem had been reported to the Council before but it had taken two weeks before anyone had been to address the issue.

John responded that he had already reported the problem, but he would do so again as there appeared to be a safety issue there. Councillors asked John to copy them in, when he sent the email to the relevant officer.

22. THE HANDY PERSON SERVICE

Tariq Latif from Housing Strategy Options gave a brief presentation on the Handy Person Service that was offered to residents in Leicester City. Tariq made the following points:

- The Handy Person Service carried out a variety of small maintenance jobs, such as plumbing and electrical work, minor brickwork and plastering, glazing and woodwork.
- They could also offer advice and help improve home security.
- The service was available for the disabled, people over 60 years of age, single parents and low income families.
- The cost of the service varied according to the type of benefit the recipient received and the labour costs were subsidised for people who received means tested benefits:

£11.75 per hour (including VAT) for people on means tested benefits (excluding Working Tax Credit).

£18.00 per hour (including VAT) for people in receipt of Working Tax Credit).

£25.00 per hour (including VAT) for people who were not on means test benefits.

- In addition there was a charge for the materials used.
- Free estimates could be given.

Tariq explained that leaflets on the Handy Person Service were available and interested residents could contact the service on 0116 221 1313, 221 1344 or 221 1397.

23. THE CITY WARDEN SERVICE

Nicole Powell, City Warden for the Evington Ward was present at the meeting and members of the public were invited to raise issues or ask questions relating to street scene enforcement.

In response to a question about litter picks in the area, Nicole responded that the litter picks were still on-going and approximately 35 people attended the previous event. It was planned that the next litter pick would take place in the vicinity of Sedgebrook Road. A member of the community asked Nicole to remind schools again because she thought that pupils were responsible for a considerable amount of the litter in the area.

A further concern was raised that the litter bins by the shops on Downing Drive tended to get over full and a resident questioned whether they could be emptied more frequently. Councillor Bajaj suggested that it might also be useful to fund an additional bin from the Community Meeting budget.

A member of the community explained that she would like to suggest that there was a carol singing event on the village green at Christmas. She was aware that Evington had a very diverse community and she thought that it would be wonderful to bring the community together with singing, a brass band, a drink and mince pies. The resident asked people at the meeting if they would be in favour of such an event.

A member of the public responded that carol singing at the Cedars and the Dove public house took place in 2010. Funding had also been provided for trees and Christmas lights. She asked for the member of the community who had made the suggestion to talk to her outside the meeting so that they could exchange contact details.

24. POLICING UPDATE

Police Inspector Bill Knopp addressed the community meeting and referred to the concerns that had been expressed earlier in the meeting about speeding vehicles. Inspector Knopp confirmed that there were similar problems in the Thurnby Lodge area.

A member of the community expressed concern over groups of youths who were congregating on Gamel Road and Davenport Road. She said that although the young people did not challenge residents and passers-by, they nevertheless intimidated people. She thought at the moment, the young people were from Evington but she was worried that the group would attract more young people from outside the area.

Inspector Knopp responded that they were aware of this particular issue and extra police patrols were being carried out. He said that some of the young people were there because they had nowhere else to go, and the Police were working with other agencies and exploring other options for them.

A member of the public stated that there had been a number of incidents of arson in Humberstone Park and Evington Park, and questioned what steps the Police were

taking in connection with these incidents. Inspector Knopp responded that the Fire Service had reported that the fires were secondary fires and they tended to deal with such fires by educating members of the public. A resident expressed concerns that the fires could have spread to the Pilgrim Homes if the wind had changed direction. Inspector Knopp added that the Police and Fire Service met on a monthly basis where such issues were discussed. He asked members of the public to report any similar concerns to the Fire Brigade.

Councillor Bajaj reported that there were concerns over anti-social behaviour on Greenacre Drive and Police Constable Clare Jackson responded that they were also aware of problems there and the Police patrolled there as much as possible.

25. EVINGTON IN BLOOM

Helen Pettman addressed the meeting on the Evington in Bloom project and made the following points:

- The Evington in Bloom Project provided an opportunity to showcase Evington.
- Judges from the Horticultural Society and Britain in Bloom would be invited to come along.
- The event would improve community cohesion and there was an aim to encourage everyone to participate and improve the local area.
- It was also aimed at the same time to promote a litter free and sustainable environment.
- Evington in Bloom would also promote pride in the local community.
- The judges would have a two hour tour of Evington, on a pre-arranged route and even if people did not live on the route, they could still get involved.
- There was a meeting at Evington Park House at 6.00 pm on 14 September and an invitation was extended to people to come along.

The following comments or queries were raised by members of the community:

- Could we take photographs to show what Evington was like before the Evington in Bloom preparations; this would show the improvement that had been made?

Helen responded that the judges would make their decision on what they saw during the visit, however, photographs could be taken and added to a portfolio that would be kept.

- Evington in Bloom should not just affect Evington village. It would be very nice if some work could be carried out at the Ethel Road flats and if the tenants could be encouraged to participate as well.

Councillor Singh asked people to come to the meeting at the Evington Park House and to bring their friends. He added that this would empower people in general and the project would showcase Evington.

- What about funding for the project?

Helen explained that different groups would need to try to find their own funding, but the Evington in Bloom Committee would try to help with this.

26. BUDGET

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

Francis reported that the budget for the year was £17,000 and £300 had been previously agreed for the Beacon Site for Tennis funding application.

Francis explained that five funding applications had been received and had been included on the agenda. Councillors had considered the applications in detail prior to the meeting.

1) 9 / 11 FOOTBALL MATCH – Community Football Academy (CFA)

Amount requested: £740 between the Evington, Spinney Hill and Coleman Wards.

The meeting was informed that the football match had already taken place and that the funding bid had been supported by the Spinney Hill Community Meeting. Evington Councillors also agreed to partly support the project.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be supported to the value of £150.

2) CHAMPION BOXING CLUB – Champion Boxing Club, Mazhar Ali Boxing Tutor.

Amount requested: £2240 between Spinney Hills and Evington Wards.

The meeting heard that the Spinney Hills Ward had partly supported the funding application. Francis explained that the Evington Councillors had decided to defer the application as they wished to ascertain the project's benefit to the Evington Community. They had therefore requested further information on the numbers of members or users of the club who actually lived in the Evington Ward.

RESOLVED:

that the application be deferred and information be requested on the numbers of club members or users who actually lived in the Evington Ward.

3) TO RESTORE THE BOWLING GREEN SURROUND: Evington Park Bowling Club.

Amount requested: £721

Mr Newbold was present from the Evington Park Bowling Club and explained that the funding application had been submitted to replace a 60 year old hedge that had been burned down. It was hoped that the replacement would encourage more people to play in peaceful surroundings. Approximately 3000 people played on the Bowling Green each season and there were numerous visitors to the club. The Bowling Club had previously received £500 from the Evington Ward Community Meeting budget. Councillors agreed to partly support the funding application and suggested that Parks Services should be approached to ascertain if they might be able to provide any assistance for the project.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be supported to the value of £300.

4) CROCUS BULBS IN EVINGTON PARK AND ALONG GOODWOOD ROAD, MIXED BULBS ON EVINGTON VILLAGE GREEN – Friends of Evington Park and Village Green.

Amount requested: £1000

Francis explained that Councillors had agreed to partly support the funding application.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be supported to the value of £400.

5) SPRING COLOUR IN EVINGTON FOR EVINGTON IN BLOOM – Friends of Evington Park and Village Green – Helen Pettman for Evington in Bloom.

Amount requested: £400

Francis informed the meeting that Councillors had agreed to support the funding bid in full.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be supported in full, to the value of £400.

A Member of the public informed the meeting that last year, Parks Services staff had dug up the bulbs after they had finished flowering and they had been left on one side and eventually rotted. She questioned whether they bulbs could be given out and reused by members of the community. The meeting heard that crocus bulbs were small and could remain in the ground but larger bulbs needed to be removed. Councillors responded that the possibility of re-using the bulbs by the local community would be raised with Parks Services.

Action to be taken	Officer identified	Deadline

That the funding applications that Councillors had supported, be submitted to the Cabinet Lead for approval.	Francis Connolly Member Support Officer	By the end of September
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27. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Free Sports Coaching for Women

Mehboob Bachoo, Sports Regeneration Officer, Sports Services informed the meeting of the 'b-active' women project that offered free sports coaching sessions. The sessions were aimed at city residents who live in deprived communities, or who were the primary carers for children under the age of 16.

The project was designed to give Leicester residents access to a range of sports and classes in badminton, athletics, swimming and cycling had already been launched.

Councillors asked Mehboob to come to the next meeting to give a more detailed presentation on the project.

Notices and General Information

A resident from the Ethel Road flats requested that when information and notices were circulated in Evington, people should include the Ethel Road flats in the distribution as in the past the tenants there had been forgotten.

28. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm.

