

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Thursday, 22 March 2012

Held at: Leicestershire County Cricket Club, Charles Palmer Suite, Grace Road, Leicester LE2 8AD. Entrance is from Curzon Road, off Duncan Road.

Who was there:

Councillor Adam Clarke

Councillor Nigel Porter

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>Members of the community could talk to their local councillors or raise general queries</p>	<p>Police Issues</p> <p>Ps Andy Partridge (1045) was present to answer queries relating to policing issues.</p>
<p>Aylestone Local Action Group (ALAG)</p> <p>Members of the public could talk to Lauren Hicking about the work of ALAG within the community.</p>	<p>Spirit of Aylestone</p> <p>Members of the public could talk to Rev Tim Fergusson and representatives from the Spirit of Aylestone, and also hear about their planned Olympic Themed Fun Day.</p>
<p>Be Clear on Cancer – Cancer Awareness</p> <p>Members of the community could talk to Tahema Khilji from the NHS and find out about the signs and symptoms of cancer</p>	<p>City Warden Service</p> <p>Stenroy Smith, the City Warden was present to provide information on street scene enforcement.</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.

119. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Adam Clarke was elected as Chair and welcomed everyone to the Aylestone Community Meeting.

120. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Anna Parr, Youth Worker and Adrian Wills, Head of Libraries and Information Services.

121. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor Clarke declared that in respect of item 9, Traffic Safety Issues and Sharpland he had made representations and had approached various parties including the City Mayor and the local M.P. He had also made representations in respect of item 7, Changes in Library Provision. Councillor Clarke added that he had held discussions with various applicants concerning bids for community meeting funding, including the bid for Messy Church at the Gilmorton Community Rooms.

Councillor Porter declared that a relative of his trained at the Aylestone Cricket Club. He further declared that in respect of the community meeting budget, he had been involved in all of the funding bids. In respect of item 9, Traffic and Sharpland, he had previously been involved in that issue and in respect of item 7, Changes in Library Provision he had been involved with campaigning to keep the library open.

122. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillors were asked to agree the minutes of the previous Aylestone Community Meeting held on 12 January 2012.

Minute Item 114: It was reported that that the name of the Police officer in attendance at the meeting was Dave Robertson and not Dave Partridge.

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Aylestone Community Meeting held on 12 January 2012, subject to the above amendment, be agreed as a correct record.

123. TRAFFIC SAFETY ISSUES

The Chair explained that this item on the agenda was mainly to consider traffic problems on Sharpland, as the road was being used as a 'rat run'. He stated that this item would be taken as the first main item of business on the agenda in view of the number of members of the community who had come to the meeting especially for this issue.

David Poxon, Team Leader, Road Safety explained that two separate traffic counts had been carried out on Sharpland which had showed that the average speed of traffic on the road was approximately 24 mph, with a few cars travelling in excess of 40 mph. Members of the community strongly disagreed with that statement and Dave added that a new survey would be carried out as soon as the police had the necessary equipment available.

David advised that the emergency services had said that they were not prepared to have the roads blocked off because of access problems.

Members of the community made the following comments:

- Previously the box which recorded the traffic speeds had been situated in the wrong place. It needed to be located on the bend by the telephone box.
- People had witnessed vehicles tipped over and animals killed. The roads should be blocked off and residents will do this themselves if the situation is not satisfactorily resolved.
- Too much traffic was coming to Aylestone from the motorway. Routes were not signposted properly and all traffic appeared to be diverted to Leicester South.
- One of the previous traffic surveys was flawed because the box was only in its location for 3 days instead of 7. It had been attached to a lamp post and removed by a high sided vehicle. The Council had been informed of what had happened but they did not extend the survey time.

The Chair commented that the current situation was not acceptable and it was necessary to find a solution which was also acceptable to the emergency services. Councillor Porter explained that he was also very aware of the problem and that he sat on the Transport and Climate Change Scrutiny Commission where a review had been carried out on 20 mph zones and traffic calming.

The City Mayor addressed the meeting and stated that it was clear that a solution to the problems on Sharpland needed to be found as the suffering that residents were experiencing was unacceptable. He added that when the new traffic survey had been carried out, the results would be considered carefully and either he or the Deputy City Mayor would come to the next Aylestone Community meeting when it was held in approximately 3 months time. At that point they would announce what measures the Council would take.

A member of the community asked whether any interim steps could be taken and the City Mayor responded that he would hold an informal site meeting with officers and Ward Councillors within the next ten days.

Ps Andy Partridge (1045) advised that the long term solution would be traffic calming. In the meantime the Police would increase their patrols and issue tickets for speeding.

Further comments were raised from the floor as follows:

- People had waited four years for the problem to be resolved, and had been very patient.
- A man had been seen to be shaving whilst driving along Sharpland.
- I am disabled; if speed humps are put on the road as a traffic calming measure, I will need to move to a new home because I will not be able to leave the house.

In response to a question from the City Mayor, the general consensus of the meeting was that the only solution to the problem was to block off Sharpland.

The City Mayor confirmed that he would hold an informal site visit within 10 days and then either he or the Deputy City Mayor would return to the next Aylestone Community Meeting to explain what the Council would do to resolve the problem of Shapland being used as a 'rat run'. Members of the community indicated that they were satisfied with that approach.

124. BE CLEAR ON CANCER

Members of the community received an update on the Be Clear on Cancer Awareness Project from Tahmena Khilji from the NHS.

- The Be Clear on Cancer Project had been set up in response to the high rates of breast, bowel and lung cancer in Leicester.
- Cancer awareness measures had been undertaken in New Parks, Braunstone Park and Beaumont Leys. The project had proved to be successful as more people had been visiting their G.P.s.
- As a result of that success, the project was being rolled out City-wide, and the area was being 'saturated' with information to raise awareness.
- It was important to be aware of the signs and symptoms of cancer and people were asked to take information and leaflets away with them.
- Further information was available on the internet at:

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/tag/be-clear-on-cancer/>

On behalf of the meeting, the Chair thanked Tahmena for her presentation.

125. MEET THE CITY MAYOR

The City Mayor addressed the meeting again and stated that he had been invited to explain a little about his role as the elected Mayor in Leicester. He explained that two of the big issues during the election campaign had been the school catchment area in relation to Belvoir Drive, and a review of school catchment areas was now in progress. The second big issue had been Aylestone Meadows and the City Mayor paid tribute to Councillor Nigel Porter for a very well organised and effective campaign. The City Mayor had been pleased to announce after the election, that the scheme had been abandoned.

The Council was now ten months into a new system of governance. The system was more transparent, and whereas in the past, the Council Leader was elected by the other Councillors, now the City Mayor was elected by members of the public. The City Mayor added that he was obliged by law to appoint a Deputy Mayor and he had chosen Councillor Rory Palmer, who also had responsibility for transport. In addition he had appointed Assistant Mayors and Councillor Sarah Russell, Assistant Mayor for Neighbourhoods was also present at the meeting to talk about changes in library provision. There were in total five Assistant Mayors, who were all Councillors who had their own specialisms.

Members of the community raised the following queries and comments:

- **This part of Aylestone is severely lacking in facilities for children; they need more play facilities.**

City Mayor: it is true that there are parts of Aylestone that are better served with facilities for children than others.

- **I live near the park. The younger children's facilities are good there but the equipment for older children is poor. We did want to put an a BMX park for them.**

Chair: there is a possibility that there will be S106 money from the Bloor Home development to provide amenities for children and young people. I have been speaking to Councillor Clair, the Assistant Mayor of the relevant portfolio.

Councillor Russell: funding is a very difficult issue at the moment because of the budget cuts. In Western Park, local residents worked together to build a BMX ramp in their park. I will work with the Aylestone Ward Councillors and Councillor Clair to find ways of linking up with other people who could help.

- **We have heard that your pay will be increased to £100,000**

City Mayor: this is not true and I don't expect to be paid £100,000 and I turned down the increase suggested by the Independent Remuneration Panel. I am currently paid £55,000 which is £10,000 less than a Member of Parliament. I think the rate for the role is about the same rate for an M.P.

- **Congratulations on the success of the Queen's Visit to Leicester. However, can the City afford to spend £4m on Jubilee Square? Where will the funding come from?**

City Mayor: the Council has two different kinds of budget; revenue and capital. The capital budget by law should be spent largely on capital projects and needed to be kept separate from the revenue budget. The Jubilee Square would connect that historic part of the City with the Highcross Centre.

- **There are insufficient cycle paths; cyclists should be able to cycle on pavements.**

City Mayor: I sympathise with you; however disability groups, and especially people who are visually impaired, are very concerned about people cycling on pavements. We do however have some very good cycle path schemes although they are limited in number.

- **I am a member of the Eyres Monsell Allotment Society. ECO House looks very run down and tired. Are there any plans to improve it?**

Councillor Russell: Groundworks have some very good plans to improve ECO House but money is a problem. They are working hard to seek funding.

- **Can Members of the Public still present petitions and ask questions at Council?**

City Mayor: yes – members of the public can still present petitions and ask questions in the Council Chamber. We also have monthly meetings of the City Mayor and Executive when people can ask questions and we have 'Meet the Mayor' events as well.

- **There was an article in the local newspaper about the budget and the level of reserves that the Council held. What will the Council do with the reserves?**

City Mayor: Reserves are not spent; there has to be some money put aside in case the unexpected happens. It is sensible to keep some money aside and the Council must not operate as a deficit.

126. POLICE UPDATE

Councillor Porter gave a brief policing update on behalf of Ps Andy Partridge who had to leave the meeting early. Councillor explained that:

- The Police had been targeting Aylestone Meadows. They had been aware of recent arson attacks there.
- The Police were also working to resolve difficulties at the children's home on Aylestone Lane. They were working with the home and with local residents.
- There had been a general reduction in criminal damage, damage to property and a general fall in crime.
- There was also a national campaign to combat metal thefts.

127. CHANGES IN LIBRARY PROVISION

Councillor Sarah Russell (Assistant Mayor for Neighbourhood Services) addressed the meeting on the changes in library provision.

Councillor Russell made the following points:

- The Council had had to agree a very difficult budget.
- It was recognised that the libraries were a very important service and that they made a difference to people of all ages.
- Many people had been very concerned at proposals to amalgamate the reference and the lending library, but the venture had proved to be very successful and had resulted in savings of £1/2m.
- It was now necessary to look again and see where further savings could be made.
- The three libraries with the lowest usage were Fosse, St Matthews and Aylestone.
- It was hoped to close the Aylestone Library and move it to the Leisure Centre.
- The Council were aware that people did not want a self-service library. A consultation had been carried out which had shown that people wanted their library to be staffed.
- The library therefore will move to the Leisure Centre and will have staff at specific times and will still offer the toddler time activities.
- The consultation also showed that people wanted to keep the building open and in response, the Council could continue to take responsibility for the building and keep it open for community groups by the use of a key fob system.
- The Council were also working on the possibility of a satellite system where a small library provision could be made available around Aylestone village.

128. AYLESTONE BIG SPRING CLEAN

Lauren Hicking from the Aylestone Local Action Group (ALAG) and Anne Hayto (Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society) provided an overview of the plans for the Big Spring Clean as well as a general update.

- The Big Spring Clean would be happening all over the city and the county. It would take place in Aylestone on 21 April 2012.

- The need for the Spring Clean had arisen from observations around Aylestone; for example the new block paving had been stained with discarded chewing gum.
- The Ward Councillors and Roy, the City Warden would be present, and it was hoped that many members of the community would also join in.
- It was hoped that children would help to clean the gardens at Aylestone Hall.
- People were asked, that if they had any spare plants they wished to donate, to bring them on 21 April.

Lauren also explained that ALAG now had a notice board which would be erected at the Co-operative Store on Russell Street. Anne added that 30 new waste bins were being placed on Aylestone Meadows, and it was hoped that more people would be encouraged to use them.

Councillor Russell commented that the effort that was being put into the Big Spring Clean was fantastic and to back up the event, there would be gloves, litter pickers, rolls of bags for dog waste and stubbies for cigarette ends available.

The Chair asked members of the community to encourage people to get involved in the event.

129. BUDGET

The Chair presented the Community Meeting budget and explained that a number of new funding applications had been received since the previous meeting, which if supported would exceed the balance remaining in the budget by approximately £1800. It had previously been agreed to ring-fence £3000 of the budget for Greener Transport Initiatives, because any unspent community meeting monies would not be carried forward to the new financial year. The Chair suggested that funding to meet the new bids could be taken from the £3000 that had been previously set aside. Members of the public indicated that they supported this suggestion.

Application for stationery/insurance and plant baskets: Aylestone Local Action Group

Amount requested: £500

Councillor Clarke explained that funding bids for £500 or less could be fast tracked for payment by the Ward Councillors, and did not need to be brought to Ward Meetings. This application had been approved under the fast track system.

Application to ensure the continuation and maintenance of improvements to Aylestone Village: Aylestone Local Action Group (1353).

Amount requested: £498

The proposal was for the purchase of robust step ladders, display boards, stationery, photographic printing costs, card etc. Also funding for plants for winter baskets and troughs.

RESOLVED:

that the application from Aylestone Local Action Group for the continuation and maintenance of improvements to Aylestone Village be supported in full.

Mr Alan Potter, local resident from the Gilmorton Development Group gave a brief outline of the following two funding applications.

Gilmorton Gazette: Gilmorton Development Group (1340)

Amount requested £486

Funding was requested to create a pilot magazine by and for the Gilmorton estate. To be produced by local residents in partnership with Citizens Eye and Leicester Libraries.

Notice Board: Gilmorton Development Group (1351)

Amount requested: £502

The proposal was to purchase and have fitted an external notice board to inform all 500 residents of activities taking place in the Gilmorton Rooms and on the estate plus any additional activities in the Ward and surround area.

RESOLVED:

that it be agreed that the funding applications for the Gilmorton Gazette and the Notice Board be supported in full.

Slab Path to disabled ramp. Slab area around toilet and disabled ramp: Eyres Monsell Allotment and Garden Society.

Amount requested: £370.58 (1348)

The proposal was to provide a path from the road to the disabled ramp to the rear of the meeting room to provide a safer access to the ramp. In addition to slab the areas around the ramp and around the toilet access ramp to make the general area level and safer.

RESOLVED:

that it be agreed that the funding application from the Eyres Monsell Allotment and Garden Society for the improvements to the pathway and area around the ramp and toilet access to ramp be supported in full.

Ms Anne Hayto from the Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society gave a brief outline of the following two funding applications:

Fruits of Nature Fun Day: Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society (1354)

Amount requested: £250

Funding was requested for a Fun Day to take place on 16 September on the Open Minded Play space on Aylestone Meadows to showcase the wild fruits that are grow on the Meadows and also to help people learn about the UK heritage of native variety of apples and pears.

Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society Publicity Leaflet: Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society (1355)

Amount requested: £100

The proposal was for the production of publicity leaflets, a newsletter and posters, in which to publicise the the Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society and its events.

RESOLVED:

that it be agreed that the funding applications from the Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society for the Fruits of Nature Fun Day and Publicity be supported in full.

Secure Container for storage of society and members' equipment: Eyres Monsell Allotment and Garden Society (1349)

Amount requested: £1900

Funding was requested for the purchase of a secure steel container for storage of the members' rotavators and the society's own equipment.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application from the Eyres Monsell Allotment and Garden Society for a secure steel container be supported in full.

Road Safety Measure: Montrose School (1350)

Amount requested: £2500

Funding was requested to address a serious problem of dangerous parking close to Montrose School. Following discussions with the local police and the council's highways officers a proposal to extend the road markings on the approach to the zebra crossing and the removal some of the parking provision had been recommended as an appropriate solution to the problem.

Members of the community, although sympathetic to the need for the work to be carried out, questioned why the community meeting budget should finance this work rather than the Highways Department. Councillors explained that the approval of the funding bid would enable the work to be carried out quicker as a child had been hurt in an accident and prompt action was needed. However it was intended to approach

the Deputy City Mayor to ask for Highways to meet some of the costs. David Poxon, Team Leader explained that the work would cost considerably more than the £2500 as a Traffic Regulation Order would be required and there were associated legal costs with that.

RESOLVED:

that it be agreed that the funding application from Montrose School for road safety measures be supported in full and that Councillor Clarke submit a request to the Deputy City Mayor that the Aylestone Community Meeting budget be refunded with some of the costs of the work.

Rev Tim Ferguson was present at the meeting and gave an outline of the following bid:

Aylestone 2012 – Olympic Themed Fun Day: Spirit of Aylestone Community Group (1352)

Amount requested: £1990

The proposal was for a fun day to be held on Sunday 1 July to be based in Aylestone Hall Gardens. There would be a variety of events including different sporting activities, a bouncy castle, face painting, a mini Olympic torch run and hopefully a community barbeque. There would also be a mass participation zumba event. It was hoped to hold an open air service in Aylestone Hall Gardens before the event started.

RESOLVED:

that it be agreed that the funding application from the Spirit of Aylestone for an Olympic Fun Day be supported in full.

Gilmorton Messy Church: Spirit of Aylestone Group (1356)

Amount requested: £539

The proposal was to hold Messy Church in the Gilmorton Community Rooms every last Sunday of the month. This was in response to a request to the churches in Aylestone from the Aylestone Ward Councillors to provide activities for the families on the Gilmorton estate.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application from the Spirit of Aylestone for Messy Church be supported in full.

130. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

BUS USERS' PANEL

The Chair explained that the Council were setting up a Bus Users' Panel, and it was hoped that it would include a member of the public from each Ward. If anyone was interested in sitting on the Panel they were asked to talk to the Councillors or Julie, the Democratic Services Officer.

131. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.32 pm.

