

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:30 pm, Thursday, 15 March 2012

Held at:

Northfield House Primary School, Northfield Road, LE4 9DL

Who was there:

Councillor Culdipp Singh Bhatti MBE

Councillor Ross Willmott

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.

City Wardens Service	Community Safety
Care and Repair Home Improvement Agency	Ward Councillors and General Information

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. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

No such interests were declared.

13. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2012 were agreed as a correct record, subject to the first line of minute 5, “Local Policing”, begin amended as follows:

“PC Rob ~~Puntney~~ *Pountney*, Leicestershire Constabulary, ...”

14. CARE AND REPAIR

Steven Chard, Senior Technical Officer in the Care and Repair service, explained that Care and Repair was a non-profit making home improvement agency that helped elderly and disabled people get repairs to their properties. They had a list of recommended contractors that could be used. A Handyman service also was available for a small fee.

The meeting noted that those who had used the service had found it to be very good.

Leaflets explaining the service had been circulated at the meeting and all present were encouraged to pass this information on to anyone who could benefit from the service. Presentations could be made to any groups interested in the service.

15. CITY WARDENS UPDATE

As the City Warden was unable to be at the meeting, this item was not considered.

16. UPDATE ON SAINSBURY'S PLANS FOR FORMER GE SITE

The Chair reminded the meeting that Sainsburys was about to submit a formal planning application to develop the former GE site. Consultation events had been held and Sainsburys had provided an update on their plans for the site.

The Chair presented the update, which had been prepared by Mr Bob Keys of Sainsbury's:-

- The Sainsburys team had met local ward groups and Thurmaston Parish Council since the proposals were announced;
- The proposals had created a high level of interest and Sainsburys had responded to suggestions and comments as far as possible in progressing the plans. Consequently, amendments had been made to the store design, landscaping and highways safety involving the scheme at Rushey Mead;
- Sainsburys also had been working closely with planning officers in addressing local issues and considering suggestions from local residents regarding what community benefits could arise from the scheme. The meeting was reminded that it was the Council that prescribed what community benefits should be delivered, as there were practical as well as legal constraints on what could be provided. For example, the Council would have to meet on-going costs;
- The planning applications for Rushey Mead and Belgrave Road would be submitted before the end of the month;
- Once submitted, both the GE site and Belgrave Road schemes would be subject to formal consultation and Sainsburys would continue to engage with both communities. For example, further meetings would be held;
- Sainsburys would arrange further ward briefings during April. These would be confirmed by Council officers. In the meantime, Sainsburys could still be contacted on 0800 975 5299 or by visiting www.sainsburys-leicester.co.uk. Alternatively, residents were welcome to contact Ward Members.

Concern was raised that it already was difficult for pedestrians to cross the road at the proposed development site, especially when crossing Troon Way. To assist with this, it was suggested that it would be useful for there to be pedestrian entrances at the back of the proposed store. It was noted that the main entrance on Melton Road would lead on to one of the busiest junctions in the City, so pedestrian crossings also would be needed there.

It was noted that plans for the proposed store would be made available on the City Council's website when submitted. Sainsburys also would publicise them.

The Ward Members reminded the Meeting that no response had been received to date on the request for community facilities to be provided. Ward Members would continue to press for such facilities, but it was noted that the running costs of anything provided would have to be borne by the City Council.

It was noted that Sainsburys had suggested holding a joint meeting with Belgrave Ward on this application, which was welcomed in principle, although there was some concern that the meeting could be too large to enable anyone to get their views heard properly. Consideration would need to be given to where a potentially large joint meeting could be held.

17. PRINCES TRUST PRESENTATION

As no representatives of the Prince's Trust were able to come to the meeting, this item was not considered.

18. POLICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE

PC Rob Pountney, Leicestershire Constabulary, gave an update on local policing in Rushey Mead.

There had been a slight increase in the number of major crimes from 28 to 32. This was mainly due to an increase in the number of burglaries, which was a concern to the Police. As a result, reducing the number of burglaries had become a priority issue for the Police.

Residents were reminded that:-

- The Police hoped to be able to repeat a recent project under which window shock alarms could be bought for £2.50 each from the Police, which was cost price. These stuck to the glass and made a high pitched piercing sound when the window was jolted;
- Window shock alarms were still useful if a house already had a burglar alarm;
- The Police should always be telephoned if an alarm was heard. If an alarm at a property went off continuously the Police would visit that property and request that the alarm be repaired / altered;
- If anyone suspicious was seen, or came to your property, residents could telephone 101 and a Police officer would attend as soon as possible. If the people seen were acting very suspiciously, residents should dial 999;
- If someone visited the house claiming to be offering a service, one way of checking if they were genuine could be to ask them to return at another time;
- Burglars currently were often looking for gold that was kept in homes.

PC Pountney also advised that the number of thefts from motor vehicles had risen from 1 to 3, but robberies and burglaries of non-dwellings had both reduced.

It was noted that leaflets on home security were available at the meeting, as were UV markers that could be used to write a postcode on items of property as a deterrent to burglars.

19. COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGET

The Chair explained that:-

- A written policy was followed in the making of decisions on grant applications. For example, projects had to be of benefit to local people and could not be for on-going costs such as salaries;
- A lot of the grant funding was given to voluntary groups and volunteers to help realise projects that otherwise would not happen;
- Applications for grants were determined by the Ward Councillors; and
- A newsletter was being prepared to advise residents on what funding was available.

The applications were then considered as follows:-

a) More People Canoeing More Often (Leicester Outdoor Pursuits Centre)

AGREED: that the request for funding of £1,220 be supported.

b) Celebration of Outdoor Life (Leicester Outdoor Pursuits Centre)

AGREED: that the request for funding of £820 be supported.

c) Mamta Ladies Group

AGREED: that the request for funding of £1,050 be supported.

d) Get Together and Fun Days (Oshwal Association of UK)

AGREED: that the request for funding of £600 be supported.

e) Yoga Sessions at Rushey Mead Recreation Centre (Mr Rajiv Shah)

AGREED: that the request for funding of £700 be supported

f) Birth Celebration of Shri Guru Ravidass Mahary Ji (Shri Guru Ravidass Temple and Community Centre)

It was questioned whether this celebration was confined to one community. In reply, it was noted that the Ward Members had some concerns about this application and that grants towards religious activities were not usually approved.

AGREED: that the application be rejected as it was a religious activity and not for the sole benefit of people in the Ward.

g) Don't Just Kick It (Owen Johnson)

Owen Johnson addressed the meeting, explaining that he worked as a league football coach in Leicestershire, using sport to mentor and coach children in life skills. This included working with football academies, but it was noticeable that it was often the children with access to higher levels of funding that were able to progress through these. This project therefore aimed to address this situation.

AGREED: that the request for funding of £1,000 be supported.

h) Communal Meeting Hut (Harrison Road Allotment Gardens)

The Treasurer of the Harrison Road Allotment Gardens Sub-Committee addressed the meeting, explaining that people with ages ranging from 21 to 83 used the allotments, some of whom were disabled. Work also was done with the neighbouring school, to encourage the children there to grow things. However, there currently was nowhere on site for allotment users to meet. Garden huts therefore were to be used, but they were not suitable to use in bad weather.

It was noted that a committee member had agreed to lend the Sub-Committee the money needed to provide a communal meeting hut. Various fund raising activities were being organised to repay this, including an open day on 23 June.

This was the first application that the Sub-Committee had made for funding from the Community Meeting budget.

AGREED: that the request for funding of £1,000 be supported.

i) Additional Requests

The Meeting noted that requests for funding also had been received from Sandfield Close Primary School, towards flower planting, and for funding to be provided to repair potholes in Strathaven Road.

AGREED: that funding towards flower planting at Sandfield Close Primary School and the repair of potholes in Strathaven Road be supported in principle, the final amounts awarded to be agreed by the Ward Members under the Council's "fast track" procedure.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Frequency of Meetings

In response to a question, it was noted that Community Meetings were held on a regular basis, the venue moving around different parts of the Ward.

They were publicised through the Leicester Link and leaflets distributed around the Ward.

b) Leicester Link

It was noted that residents in Glencoe Avenue were not receiving Leicester Link. This would be investigated.

21. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chair thanked all present for attending and reminded them that they were welcome to contact the Ward Members if they needed help with any issues.

The meeting then closed at 7.50 pm.