

Evington Community Meeting

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Wednesday, 19 June 2013

**Held at: Judgemeanow Community College, Panoramic Cafe,
Marydene Drive, Evington, Leicester LE5 6HP**

Who was there:

Councillor Deepak Bajaj

Councillor Baljit Singh

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Singh was elected as Chair for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Paul Howey and the Police.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

5. UPDATE ON THE 36 BUS

The Chair reminded the meeting that there had been previous discussion on this bus service by individuals and groups and in the Evington Echo. However, the City Mayor was now in the process of undertaking a review of all bus services that the Council funded in the city, to examine costs and consider whether better services could be provided.

Julian Heubeck, Public Transport Co-Ordinator with Leicester City Council, advised the meeting that the Council wanted to do a very thorough review of services that were supported by the Council. This would include the cost of the services, rates of usage, the availability of other services and what other authorities did in relation to non-commercial services. As part of the review, a public consultation had started.

The 36 service cost approximately £87,000 a year and carried approximately 27,000 people per year. This meant that the subsidy for the service was approximately £3.23 per passenger. It therefore was proposed that the 36 service would not continue. However, Centre bus company had proposed that changes should be made to the 22 and 22A services, so that they served Whitehall Road and part of Goodwood Road.

The benefits of this proposal included:-

- At present, people living at the junction of Ethel Road and Whitehall Road were a bit isolated, but this proposal gave a useful link to the Evington Road area;
- The service would run every 20 minutes and would run in to the evening. This would be an improvement on the frequency of the 36 service;

- It was recognised that this broke the link with the General Hospital and Crown Hills, but for many users the new route provided an improved service. Other services operated in Crown Hills, but many users of service 36 would have to walk to access them; and
- It was hoped that the new services would be more sustainable, as the changes provided more security for the bus companies to invest.

Julian Heubeck advised that the consultation on the city-wide bus services would run for 4 weeks, (until 22 July 2013). After this, the City Mayor would examine the results and decide if any changes to services were needed. It therefore was likely that any changes made would come in to effect at the end of September or start of October 2013.

Residents expressed concern that the proposals being made did not address problems highlighted during the previous consultation on bus services. Over 1,000 people used the 36 bus after 9.30 am and before 4.00 pm, so a lot of people would be inconvenienced by the proposed changes. For example, the 36 was the only bus to go to the temple in East Park Road.

In reply, it was noted that the proposed re-routing of the 22A and 22B services would compensate for this. It was recognised that some people would not benefit from the changes and would lose service with the loss of the 36, but as the majority of journeys were to and from the city most people would benefit.

Concern was also expressed that, under the changes proposed, people would have to walk uphill when returning from the only available supermarkets. Residents were advised to include evidence such as this in their replies to the consultation, along with any other problems that would arise from the changes.

The need for two services on the 22 route was questioned, as there appeared to be many occasions on which they ran at the same time and neither had many passengers. Julian Heubeck advised that both of these services were commercially operated, so the Council had no input to, or control over, when and how they ran. It also had no passenger data, as this was commercially sensitive information.

The following points were then made in discussion:-

- People would have to go in to the city and back out again to get to the Green Lane area;
- No consideration appeared to have been given to bus services for people living near the mosque, as the proposed revisions to the 22 and 22A service would not take in Gamel Road or Spencefield Lane. Many of these people were elderly and so would not be able to, for example, reach their doctor;
- An alternative route to that proposed would be for the bus to go up Davenport Road, along part of Coleman Road and in to the General Hospital, where it could

turn round. This would enable bus users to connect with other services at the Hospital; and

- Although service 22 ran on a Saturday, neither the 22 nor the 22A ran on a Sunday or bank holiday.

The Chair reminded the meeting that leaflets about the consultation were widely available and that information on the consultation could be found on the City Council's website.

6. EVINGTON IN BLOOM

Mrs Helen Pettman gave an update on the Evington in Bloom project, drawing particular attention to the following:-

- This was the second year of Evington in Bloom;
- A further five Its Your Neighbourhood groups had now been established to support Evington in Bloom;
- Moot meetings were held, at which residents were invited to discuss any issues and help identify projects. It was hoped that the Its Your Neighbourhood groups would develop to hold their own moot meetings;
- Evington in Bloom was campaigning to have a centre in Evington Park House;
- A campaign to encourage school gardening had started at Linden Primary School. Work had been done to the ground there, to enable the school children to use it, and a labyrinth design lain out to maintain interest. The children working on this project were given choices about what activities they participated in;
- Certain criteria had to be met and how each entry met these was highlighted in the information provided for the judges; and
- The Co-op garden had been refurbished this year and was now looked after by the community.

It also was noted that a coffee morning would be held from 10.00 am to 12.00 noon on judging day, (1 July 2013), so that the community could meet and show its support.

7. COMMUNITY POLICING

Representatives of the Local Policing unit were unable to be at the meeting, so this item was deferred.

8. CITY WARDEN

Nicole Powell, City Warden, updated the meeting as follows:-

- Monthly litter picks were held. Not many residents were participating in them though, so if people advised the City Wardens of their availability, future events could be planned around this;
- Twelve Fixed Penalty Notices had been issued in the last three months;
- A campaign on the disposal of used cigarettes had been held in Coleman Road. Over 50 cigarette ends had been found in the bus stop near the General Hospital and over 500 had been found near the maternity unit there. Advice had been issued to people smoking in those locations and ten Fixed Penalty Notices had been issued to people who reoffended. Unfortunately, the Police had to be called on one occasion, due to verbal abuse from a smoker, and a court case was now pending. However, as a result of the campaign, the number of cigarette ends being left had reduced significantly;
- A successful prosecution for fly tipping had been achieved and fly tipping in the ward generally had reduced a lot;
- Dog fouling remained an issue in some areas, but green spaces in the ward were, in general, fairly clear of dog waste;
- Clean-up days were held in the ward, the last one having been on 12 June in Evington Park; and
- The City Wardens had acquired new powers in relation to the licensing of skips, scaffolding and building materials on the highway. Three cases already had been found where it had not been realised that a licence was needed and a builder had been prosecuted for badly damaging a grass verge in Welland Vale Road.

It was noted that various local residents did informal litter picking in the ward. Other people often joined them, but they preferred not to make these formal litter picks.

Representatives of Meesha 88, a young people's community group, offered to help with future litter picks in the ward.

Residents reminded the meeting that a lady in Dowling Drive would take any reports of dog fouling. She also had stencils for marking the pavement to advise people not to let their dogs foul there. In reply to a suggestion that the situation could be helped if more bins were provided, it was noted that there were limited resources for maintaining them. An option could be to fund one or more bins from the Ward Community Grant. Nicole Powell undertook to find out why a bin had been removed from Evington Park.

In response to a query about spitting, Nicole Powell advised the meeting that, although spitting was part of some cultures, paan spitting caused problems, as it

stained the floor. Paan spitting was classed as littering, so a Fixed Penalty Notice could be issued to anyone seen doing it.

9. BUDGET

a) Grant Criteria

The Chair reminded the meeting that:-

- Any grants approved from the Evington Ward Community Budget had to be used in the ward;
- The primary beneficiaries of grants approved from the Evington Ward Community Budget had to be from Evington ward, although the organisers of projects did not have to be from the ward;
- Any applications for projects outside of the ward would be examined critically; and
- Only grant applications received before the agenda preparation meeting held in advance of each main Community Meeting could be considered at a Community Meeting;

In view of the above, only grant applications received by Wednesday 31 July 2013 would be considered at the Evington Community Meeting to be held on 11 September 2013. Applications already received since the agenda meeting held in preparation for this meeting also would be considered at the 11 September meeting.

b) Grant Applications

The following applications for funding were considered:

i) Ref 2096 Proposal: Ellwood Close, May Bank Holiday Street Party

Submitted by Harshad Solanki
Amount requested: £500

NOTED:

That a grant of £500 for this project had been agreed under the Council's fast track procedure.

ii) Ref 2097 Proposal: Meesha 88

Submitted by Meesha 88
Amount requested: £1,095

AGREED:

That a grant of £1,000 for this project be supported.

iii) Ref 2098 Proposal: Replacement of Gas Fired Boiler

Submitted by Robert Esterbrook, Hon Treasurer of Evington Village Hall
Amount requested: £4,407

AGREED:

That a grant of £1,500 for this project be supported.

iv) Ref 2099 Proposal: Search for a Tennis Superstar

Submitted by Jon Siddon
Amount requested: £255

AGREED:

That a grant of £255 for this project be supported.

v) Ref 3000 Proposal: Pink Lizard Cohesion Project (Travel for Young People)

Submitted by Ady Hinds
Amount requested: £208

AGREED:

That this application could not be supported, as funding could not be provided for taxi fares.

c) Ward Community Grant 2013/14

Carine Cardoza, the meeting support officer, advised that, as all of the 2012/13 ward community budget had been spent, no balance from that budget had been carried over to the 2013/14 budget. Therefore, there had been £18,000 in the budget at the start of the 2013/14 financial year.

Grants agreed at this meeting totalled £3,255, leaving £14,745 in the budget for the rest of the year.

10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Future meetings would be held at 6.00 pm on:

Wednesday 11 September 2013

Thursday 5 December 2013

Thursday 27 February 2014

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) UK City of Culture 2017 Bid

The Chair advised the meeting that notification had been received today that Leicester was one of the four cities through to the second stage of bidding to be the UK City of Culture in 2017.

At the last meeting of Council, he had congratulated the City Mayor on the Council's bid and had asked him for an assurance that consultation would be held with community groups. It therefore was hoped that some groups in Evington would be consulted.

b) Petitions

Councillor Bajaj advised the meeting that:-

- In response to a petition regarding Coleman Road, an additional 8 parking spaces had been provided. Two of these had been obtained by removing yellow lines from the road;
- A petition was circulating that asked the Council to consider introducing a 20 miles per hour speed limit in Headland Road. As no funding currently was available for this, it was important that as many people as possible signed the petition

c) Ward Councillor Activities

The Ward Councillors advised the meeting of the following activities:-

- Councillor Bajaj advised that he would be meeting the City Mayor to discuss the highways and transport budget and would be requesting as much investment in Evington as possible. Residents were welcome to suggest priorities for discussion;
- Councillor Baja advised that he had attended an event at De Montfort Hall to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Hall; and
- Both Ward Members had attended a service to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the arrival of Ugandan Asians in Leicester.

d) Parking Issues

Residents reported that during 2012 a lot of work had been done to replace paving in Downing Drive. However, cars were now parking on grass verges in the road and breaking the verges up. Some of these vehicles had been identified as belonging to people involved in the development of the nearby City of Leicester College.

Residents were concerned about this, as there appeared to be no notice taken of people parking on grass verges. In reply, it was noted that the contractor was required to make good any damage done during the development, but this would not be until the development had finished.

Councillor Singh reported that a similar situation had arisen in front of Hunters Fish Bar, so it had been proposed to plant strong plants and/or saplings there, to resolve the situation.

Residents also reported that problems were created in Angela Drive/Whitehall Road when parents dropped children off for school and in Greenacre Drive by vehicles breaking up grass verges. A petition had been presented to the Council in respect of the latter, which was due to be discussed by the City Mayor and highways officers.

Councillor Singh further advised the meeting that the Council's Neighbourhood Services were aware of the range of parking issues being experienced across the city, but no decisions had been taken on how it could be tackled.

Nicole Powell, City Warden, reminded the meeting that the City Wardens would have powers relating to parking enforcement with effect from August 2013. Some campaigns already had been carried out to encourage parents dropping children off at school to park responsibly, but only Police officers could make arrests. The Police had been asked to participate in a further campaign, but it was not known if they had sufficient resources to be able to do this.

e) Housing Issues

Chrissie Field, Area Manager with the Housing service, advised the meeting that new fire regulations had been introduced in relation to communal areas in multi-occupied properties. Under these regulations, the fire service could inspect any landlord's property, to ensure that the regulations were being complied with.

The new regulations meant that residents were no longer allowed to have anything that could be a trip hazard in communal areas. This was causing problems nationally, as it included things such as mats, plants, buggies and mobility scooters.

If items that contravened the regulations were found in the communal areas, the fire service could issue an advice note on their removal, or a deficiency notice, under which a situation had to be rectified within three months. An Action Plan or Enforcement Notice could then be issued. If a problem was still not rectified, the fire service could issue a Prohibition Notice.

To date, four Enforcement Notices had been issued in the city. A fine of up to £500,000 also could be imposed, but the Council had not been fined so far.

For some time, the Council had allowed tenants to put their own property in communal areas at flats, but under the new regulations this would have to be removed. Tenants would be given three chances to remove their items, after which items remaining in the communal area would be destroyed, as there were no storage facilities for them.

f) Evington Fete

John Sloan, Chair of Evington Village Fete and Show, updated the meeting as follows:-

- This year's event would be held on Saturday 10 August;
- As Chair of the Fete, he had been invited to attend a City of Culture event, as the Evington Fete and Show was held in high regard. The brochure for this year's Fete and Show carried the "Support the bid" logo in recognition of the support given to the Fete by the Council;
- Entries were needed for the various classes of the Show. These were very cheap to enter. There also was a scarecrow competition, which families, groups and businesses could enter;
- Brochures about the event, which included the Show schedule, were available; and
- A fundraising quiz night would be held at The Cedars on Friday 21 June.

g) Boarded Up Properties

Residents reported that a house in Downing Drive had been boarded up for many years, but the Council had said that it could not take action on it, as it was privately owned and the owner had run out of money. In reply to a question, it was noted that a property had to be in this condition for a number of years before the Council act to get the situation remedied, but the exact number was not known.

In addition, a bungalow in Delaware Road had been boarded up and it had not been possible to find out what the plans were for the site. An established tree had been removed from the grass verge in the road, but the Council had said that it had no funds for the replacement of such trees.

The Ward Members undertook to look in to these matters and asked that full details be sent to them.

12. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.35 pm.