

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Wednesday, 26 November 2008

Held at: Fosse Neighbourhood Centre, Mantle Road

Who was there:

Councillor Manish Sood

Councillor Rob Wann

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 the local Police and to bring enquiries and raise and issues.

TABLE 1

- Ward Councillors and General Information

Members of the public were able to talk to their Ward Councillors and Council Officers and raise general enquiries or issues.

TABLE 2

- Rally Park Feasibility Study

A representative from Capita Lovejoy Landscape Architects was present to provide information on the development for Rally Park.

TABLE 3

- Domestic Violence Campaign

A representative from the Leicester Domestic Violence Forum Partnership, was present to provide information on dealing with Domestic Violence.

TABLE 4

- Street Cleaning

A representative from Environmental Services was present to provide information on Street Cleaning

TABLE 5

- School Attendance

A representative from the Children and Young People's Department was present to provide information on School Attendance.

TABLE 6

- Police Issues

Local Police were present to discuss any issues or queries.

TABLE 7

- Health Issues

A representative from the Local Involvement Network was present to provide information on the work of the Local Involvement Network, which seeked to have more public involvement in the development of local health services.

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.

19. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Wann was elected as Chair for the meeting.

20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

22. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting of the Fosse Community Meeting, held on 13 August 2008, be confirmed as a correct record.

23. RALLY PARK

Mark Rose, Capita Lovejoy Landscape Architects was present to provide an update with regard to the current situation with Rally Park.

Mark stated that a feasibility study would be undertaken into Rally Park and he would be providing an overview of how the park's future would develop.

The first stage in the process was assessment. Mark they stated that other parks in the city had been looked at and it was clear that the space at Rally Park was a very valuable space. There had been a number of consultation exercises conducted and in the park itself a number of people had been spoken to who had been using the park. There were a number of key themes that had resulted from the consultation. The park had some active uses however most people used it as a through route. There were concerns over security. There were concerns that inappropriate behaviour in the park would deter people from using the park.

Mark mentioned that the website at www.leicester.gov.uk/rallyparkconsultation provided more information. The next step was to create a plan to take all the identified steps forward and the Council would seek funding from various places.

The suggestions identified were as follows:

1. Change the shape of the park so that it was more open, to help with this, land should be taken from nearby employment premises.
2. There would be a stronger relationship with the river next to the park.
3. The Park would be used for a range of uses. Suggestions given had been a community type garden, more play areas and retaining older children's facilities

such as bmx and adventure playground. There may also be a performance and gathering area.

4. The security issues would be addressed. A stoop or terraced area could be created where people would have the opportunity to sit and overlook the park, which would be a form of natural surveillance.

Mark also mentioned that it may be appropriate to create more homes around the park.

The Chair commented that on the opposite side from Rally Park where the development was being completed, the developers had obtained a section 106 agreement and there would be money for Rally Park given by the developers if the development went ahead.

Mark commented that the aim was to achieve a phased approach with continual improvement and there would be a report published on the website with actions agreed.

A member of the public queried what land the new homes would be built on and whether they would be student accommodation. Mark commented that the homes would be private dwellings and there would probably be 3 or 4 homes developed. Mark added that it would not be appropriate for it to be student accommodation.

A member of the public queried how vandalism would be stopped. Mark commented that there may be a recommendation for a street warden and some areas of the park may have to be secured at night times. It was important that the park was sustained. The Chair stated that there had been a lot of money spent to stop travellers and riders in the park and there had been issues with kissing gates. It was important that there was some kind of surveillance system.

Mark stated that it was important that the park was part of the community and he would keep everyone informed of the progress. The Chair commented that when a decision had been made then there should be something included in LINK magazine or there should be a meeting similar to this one.

The Chair thanked Mark for his presentation.

24. DERELICT BUILDINGS

Adrian Russell, Service Director, Environmental Services provided a presentation on work that was being done on derelict buildings in the ward.

Adrian commented that derelict and unsightly buildings had been identified as a priority concern in the Fosse ward. There had now been a team put together involving different officers from the City Council to assess and tackle the issues. A preliminary survey and action had already been taken however it had been realised that some problems were difficult to solve in the short term.

The derelict buildings that had been identified were:

St Augustine's Church, Fosse Road North

Adrian stated that there had been problems with boundary fencing that was insecure and work had been done to ensure that the fencing was secure. The owners of the land had been written to, to find out what plans they had to make the building safer however no response had been received and the issue would now be given to Office Services.

There had also been an application for 24 flats in November 2008 however that had now expired and would now not happen. The Chair commented that the City Council had refused the planning application for the flats but the applicants had taken the case to appeal and won however had not done anything on the site since. The City Council had gone in and done some work on the site however had not been paid. Since the application had lapsed the site owners would have to apply and go through the planning process again. The Chair stated that the site looked unsightly and it was important to get the owners to take responsibility for the site. Adrian mentioned that there were some powers available under the Planning Act, which allowed to action to be taken against buildings that were eyesores in the area.

A.E. Charlesworth's, Rugby Street

Adrian commented that the fence around the building had been made secure and the Council were in the process of taking action against the owners to make sure the glass in the windows was safe. There had been no applications received for the site.

The Old Robin Hood, 7 Woodgate

The site had been attracting flyposters and action was being taken against the owners. There had been a planning application in 2007 for the building of a restaurant however nothing had happened to date.

Friar Tuck Tavern, 4-6 Woodgate

The chimney pots on this site were not safe and action was being taken against the owners to make them safe. There had also been fly tipping in the area. There had been a planning application submitted for the building of 6 flats however this had now been withdrawn.

Northbridge Tavern

Notice had been served against the owners and as a result the rubbish that been on the site had been cleared up, however since then there had been more rubbish placed on the site.

Premier Screw and Repetition, Woodgate

The owner had been contacted in order for the plants on the site to be improved.

Kwik-Fit Garage, 1-3 Littleton Street

The owner had been contacted about the over grown vegetation on the site.

Car park adjacent to 125 Bonchurch Street

Environmental health powers were being used to clear up the rubbish on the site.

The Vicarage, 8 Pool Road

The site had been made secure. There had been an application for a 3 storey building for 6 flats which was approved however nothing had been done since on the site.

88 Woodgate

Environmental health powers were being used to clear up the rubbish on the site.

12 Littleton Street

The site had been made secure however the owners had been contacted about the metal fencing.

45 Frog Island

There was broken glass on the site and this had now been boarded up however Adrian mentioned it was important to keep an eye on this. There had been no applications submitted for this site.

Land adjacent to 10 Ravensbridge Drive

Adrian mentioned that powers were being used to get the overgrown vegetation.

Adrian stated that if anyone else knew of any other derelict buildings in the area they should contact Gary Geldard, Building Control Surveyor, on 0116 252 8623.

The Chair commented that every ward had problems with derelict buildings in the ward however this evidence showed that officers had gone around the ward and identified the problems.

25. YOUTH PROVISION

Ali Latif, Area Youth Work Manager, Leicester North was present to provide information about youth provision.

Ali commented that there was nothing happening in the ward with regard to youth provision. There seemed to have been the retraction of youth provision in the area in terms of City Council provision.

A member of the public commented that he had no funding to run youth projects as well. He said there was to be a meeting at Woodgate Resources Centre next week on 4 December at 7:15pm to discuss issues in the area.

A member of the public stated there should be a youth centre on the St Augustine's site and queried why the previous centre had stopped. The Chair commented that the last administration of the Council had cut voluntary sector funding by 75% and a lot of great projects had finished because of this. The current problem was that that funding was now in other areas and an attempt to get the funding back would be difficult as once the funding was cut it was difficult to get it back.

26. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Stephanie McBurney, Domestic Violence Co-ordinator, Leicester Domestic Violence Forum Partnership was present to provide a presentation on the 'Informing, Involving and Inspiring Communities in the 2008 Domestic Violence Campaign'

Some of the main points that were highlighted were:

- Victims of Domestic Violence can find it difficult to tell anyone what they were going through and can feel scared and lonely.
- Local Statistics included:
 - There are between 600 to 700 incidents reported to the Police each month.
 - 2,034 contacts had been made to victims by Victim Support.
 - Over 100 calls had been made to the Domestic Violence Integrated Response Project helpline.
 - Domestic Violence is the third highest cause of homelessness
 - There are 1 to 4 homicides relating to Domestic Violence each year.
 - 161 children have been involved in very high risk cases in 7 months.
 - Some of the issues associated with domestic violence can include violence and abuse which could be both emotional and physical.
- Domestic Violence can include violence and abuse, it can be linked to emotional, physical, sexual and financial, it can happen whether someone is in a relationship or you can suffer it from a intimate partner or family and it can happen to people irrespective of age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, location, disability, religion or belief and gender.
- National Figures include:
 - Up to 50% of women experience domestic violence in their lifetime.
 - 9 out of 10 people will know someone affected by domestic violence
 - 90% of children are in the same or next room.
 - People can experience up to 35 incidents before they report it to the police.
 - On average 2 women a week are murdered by a current or former partner.

- Stephanie commented that the aims of the campaign were to increase understanding, reduce tolerance and increase awareness of the local resources that were available.
- The community meeting was informed how they could make a difference and of the local resources available to anyone who needed assistance.

The chair queried how the Polish and Somali communities were being informed of the support available to them. Stephanie commented that it was challenge to reach those communities however they had got leaflets translated into the language of the respective communities.

27. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Adrian Russell, Service Director, Environmental Services, informed the Community Meeting about the 10,000 trees initiative which was going on across the city. He encouraged everyone to submit their ideas as to where the trees should be planted.

28. WARD PRIORITIES

Anita Patel, Member Support Officer, provided an update on the priorities that had been identified for the Fosse Ward. These included anti social behaviour, street scene, litter, security and CCTV, youth provision and derelict buildings.

Anita informed the community meetings that there had been presentations on street scene at the last meeting, youth provision and derelict buildings at this meeting and there could possibly be a presentation on anti social behaviour at the last meeting. There would also hopefully be more issues identified by residents by the next meeting.

29. BUDGET

The Chair noted that the Woodgate Residents Association had applied for for £800 for installing ventilation in the toilets at the Woodgate Resources Centre. Members were in agreement of this proposal.

RESOLVED:

that the application be supported and £800 be allocated subject to final approval from the Cabinet Lead for Front Line Service Improvement and Neighbourhoods.

30. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair, Councillor Wann declared that planning policy matters fell under his cabinet portfolio and he stated that he would be making no views on the application.

The Chair agreed to take as urgent business a discussion on the proposed planning application for Fiveways House, Tudor Road.

A member of the public raised concern that the proposed development only included four car parking spaces however there would be a large number of flats built in the development. Concern was also raised that there would be problems caused with noise and more traffic such as when students moved in and out of properties. Members of the public felt the problems would have a detrimental effect on the residential value in the area.

A member of the public stated that there was no car parking space at all in the area and this had been a problem for the last five years.

The Chair commented that there had been an application for the site before that had not been implemented also that the City Council had to consider all applications for development that were submitted. He stated that if anyone wanted to get their opinions considered, writing to the planning department would help and so would any petitions. The Community Meeting was informed that the application had just gone in into the Planning department. An application had to be decided within 13 weeks once all the information had been received however if an application required extra information then that would take extra time.

Members of the public raised concern that a lot of people living on Tudor Road did not know about the application. Adrian Russell, Service Director, Environmental Services commented that planning applications were normally advertised with an on site notice and there would also be notification in the Leicester Mercury as well.

A member of the public raised concern that there could be a serious issue where Emergency Services could have their access restricted in the area.

A member of the public stated that the scaffolding that had been erected on the application site was an eyesore and queried the reason that it had been assembled as the people who had erected the scaffolding said nothing would start until next spring. Adrian commented that for someone to erect scaffolding they would need a licence and the Highways department checked if this had been complied with. Adrian mentioned that another way to get views heard on the application would be to approach your local ward councillors.

A member of the public raised concern that a previous application in the area had been approved and had only 6 parking spaces compared with 24 flats. A suggestion was made by a member of the public that Tudor Road should be one way. The Chair commented that previously when speed bumps had been installed in the area the Highways department had considered making Tudor Road one way however had decided against it. Terraced housing in the area had been built when people did not have cars.

A member of the public commented that people around the area wanted a parking scheme however did not want to pay for residents parking. Concern was also raised that students had been consulted on residents parking schemes however they were only staying temporarily in the area. Another member of the public commented that people living the Woodgate area did not want a residents parking scheme. He commented that he received notifications of all planning applications in the city and

encouraged other residents to form a residents association to get information from the Council about planning applications.

The Chair encouraged the public to speak to his co-councillor, as he would be unable to speak on their behalf at the meeting due to planning matters falling under his Cabinet portfolio. He commented that he did not know where the application was in its current status with regard if it was going to the Planning and Development Control Committee or not.

A member of the public queried why derelict land could not have been used for the application. The Chair commented that someone had brought the land and the Council could not stop anyone submitting a planning application as they had to consider by law all applications that were submitted to them.

A member of the public raised concern that the notices for the application had been placed a week late on the site and stated that all residents should be notified of the decision as they had a right to know.

RESOLVED:

that the views of the Fosse Community Meeting on the Fiveways planning application be submitted to the Planning department and be included in the application report.

31. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8:09pm.

