

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:30 pm, Wednesday, 21 January 2009

Held at:

Who was there:

Councillor Culdipp Singh Bhatti

Councillor Ross Willmott

INFORMATION SHARING – ‘CAROUSEL’ 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**

Table 2 **Leicester LINK**

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.

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Clair.

35. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at this time.

36. BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE (BSF) PROGRAMME

Carolyn Robson, Head Teacher, Rushey Mead School opened the discussion and welcomed people present to the meeting.

John Garratt, Head of Planning and Property, Children and Young People's Services outlined the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) process. John stated that BSF was a massive investment programme across the country and represented the largest investment in education since Victorian times. It was hoped that, as a result of the BSF investment programme, a majority of schools could be modernised and modern methods of teaching could be implemented that would enable a lead to be gained in the world arena.

In Leicester a sum of £275 million had been negotiated from the Government to re-model a number of schools, including some specialist schools. There would not be enough funding to re-build every school in the City but some would and others would have limited work carried out.

As part of this work a new extension to Fullhurst Community College was opened in December and similar schemes underway at Beaumont Leys, Soar Valley and Judge Meadow were due to be opened in June 2009.

The Government had asked the City Council to re-write the business case that had been previously submitted and had questioned whether we were clear on our priorities. A Strategy for Change was currently being worked up and would be ready for consultation soon.

Rushey Mead School would be in the next phase of building work, with an anticipated start date during the winter of 2009/10. There were currently 1350 places at Rushey Mead School and some £9.5 million had been allocated to the project to provide some new buildings, modernise others and enable the removal of existing temporary buildings. A separate bid for £1 million had been submitted to make Rushey Mead School a model greener school in Leicester.

BSF was critical to Leicester as the Council had a 25year Plan in place, within which several priorities related to education and provision of facilities for children. The Plan also included reference to the provision of safer and sustainable communities, as well as wellbeing and health with an ability to access leisure facilities and an ability to learn beyond 16 years of age.

BSF was a partnership between the Government, the City Council and schools. The City Council decided the priorities and the allocation of funds, with the schools involved drawing up a list of their aspirations and expectations.

Carolyn Robson, Head Teacher, Rushey Mead School stated that when the school moved forward it needed to move from where it was now. The most recent OfSTED GCSE results had been most encouraging and the school had achieved a rate of improvement that exceeded County and City schools. The school had recently been awarded Higher Leadership School and national Support School status and would now be looking to help other schools.

BSF would give the school a chance to identify what it would like to see for the children and recent consultation had enabled staff, governors and some pupils a chance to design their vision of a new school.

Rushey Mead School had big ambitions and it was to be hoped that further ideas could come forward from the Community Meeting.

Questions

At this point questions were invited from the public present and the appropriate responses are shown.

- i) *“Is the BSF funding Private Finance Initiative (PFI) funding, with an outside private company”.*

John Garratt stated that the BSF funding was direct from the Government and did not involve outside private companies.

- ii) *“Were there any provisions in the BSF proposals for a Hindu based school.”*

John Garratt stated that there were no proposals within the proposals submitted to the Government for other faith schools. The City Council did however have a duty to assist those who proposed to develop a faith school

Carolyn Robson stated that any discussions around the provision of a Hindu school would be outside the scope of the Community Meeting.

- iii) *“What proposals were there for Adult Classes at Rushey Mead School.”*

Carolyn Robson stated that Rushey Mead School was not designated a Community College, unlike Soar Valley and Judgemeanow and therefore a comprehensive range of adult classes was not likely. The school did however offer a range of adult activities and within the BSF proposals childcare and crèche facilities would be made available.

- iv) *“What provision would be made for those pupils at exam stage whilst building works were underway.”*

Carolyn Robson stated that it was anticipated that a phased building programme would be in place to ensure that there was minimal disruption.

One of the first phases would be the re-building of the science laboratories.

- v) *“What strategies are in place for school placements.”*

Carolyn Robson stated that this would be dependant on whether the school remained the same size, or expanded. Currently the school was at 1400 pupils and it was not envisaged that it would be smaller following BSF.

- vi) *“Will Rushey Mead School be developed as a 6th Form College.”*

Carolyn Robson stated that there were no such plans as there were already several 6th Form Colleges within the City and it was clear that children seemed to be quite excited to be moving slightly out of the area to attend 6th Form Colleges or other further education establishments.

- vii) *“Rushey Mead School is a Sports and Science College, was it envisaged that when BSF works were complete, that there would be public use of the facilities at weekends.”*

Carolyn Robson stated that this would not be possible under current legislation as any sessions provided had to QA checked, tutors had to be CRB checked and First Aid had to be available. The school was currently open until 10pm on term days for certain activities and supervised activities were also provided after school and at weekends, along with those offered at Soar Valley Community College. Should sufficient funding be available then a number of community facilities would be provided. Rushey Mead School would also have links with the new Gateway Community College being built at Hamilton.

- viii) *“Would there be a possibility of having a Youth Development Worker appointed at Rushey Mead School.”*

Carolyn Robson stated that City Council Youth Development Workers had previously been based at Rushey Mead School and at Soar Valley, but it was now a question of ensuring that sufficient funding was in place to cover all costs of Youth Development Workers to be based here.

In concluding, Jerry Connolly, Members Support Officer encouraged those present to complete the BSF Feedback forms that had been circulated prior to the meeting.

37. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Meeting held on 16th October 2008, as previously circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

38. COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGET

1) Application for Funding (Community Cohesion Fund)

Jerry Connolly, Members Support Officer reported that an application for funding had been received, as set out below: -

Highfields Rangers	£2000
Community Fun Day	
(Stage and Marquee)	£1000
(Inflatables)	£1000

RESOLVED:

that the bid for funding, as set out above, be **Approved**.

2) Application for Funding (Community Fund)

Jerry Connolly, Members Support Officer reported that an application for funding had been received, as set out below: -

Highfields Rangers	£2000
(Kiddies Rides)	£1000
(Kiddies Entertainer)	£800
(Publicity and Printing)	£200

RESOLVED:

That the bid for funding, as set out above, be **Not Supported**.

3) Application for Funding (Ward Action Plan)

Jerry Connolly, Members Support Officer reported that an application for funding had been received., as set out below: -

Leicester City Council	£4000
Play and Youth Development	
Improvements to Nagle Grove Play Area	
(Two-seat swing)	£2500
(Small spring see-saw)	£1500

RESOLVED:

that the bid for funding, as set out above, be **Approved**.

4) Environmental Services

The Chair reported that, following discussions there was a proposal to make available a maximum of **£2000**, from balances available, to Environmental Services to enable litter bins to be provided at various locations in the area to alleviate litter problems identified.

RESOLVED:

that the proposal, as outlined above, be **Approved**, subject to Environmental Services making available a breakdown of intended expenditure to the Ward Councillors prior to the funding being released.

39. LOCAL POLICING - UPDATE

There were no Police representatives present at the meeting.

40. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Adrian Russell, Service Director, Environmental Services gave a brief presentation outlining the work of the division.

During 2008 33.3% of the City's waste had been recycled.

From the recent MORI Survey 80% of residents had expressed satisfaction with the refuse collection service but the department was still looking to improve on this. The department were in the process of looking at complaints received and of the causes of these complaints. At the beginning of 2008 the department were receiving some 65 complaints per week around refuse collection, this figure was now down to around 25 complaints per week.

Within Rushey Mead Ward incidences of fly-posting were higher than the City average, whereas incidences of fly-tipping, abandoned cars and discarded needles were lower than the City average.

To date 131 Cable Boxes had been re-painted in Rushey Mead Ward.

Regular street cleanliness inspections were carried out across the Ward and it was reported that all areas inspected were within the 90% - 100% satisfactory.

It was stated that, within the City Centre, there had been problems with 'flyers' from clubs and bars being scattered around the streets. The City Council had now adopted legal powers to allow only those premises with licences to distribute 'flyers', the problem had now since reduced drastically.

The Division were also responsible for regularly checking the 1250 taxis and 297 Private Hire vehicles in the City, and regularly undertook spot checks. Adrian stated that all Black cabs were required to operate all journeys on meters within a 10mile radius of the City Centre, although there were reports that some did not. Any incidences of this happening should be reported to the Licensing Section.

Adrian stated that spot checks were made on retail premises that were licensed to sell alcohol to ascertain whether persons under the required age were being sold alcohol, and also whether illegal drinks were being dispensed at pubs and clubs, nine such premises had been found to be guilty. It was reported that Bargain Booze on Gipsy Lane had recently sold alcohol to persons under age and the case had been referred to the Council's Licensing Committee for determination and this could lead to the loss of the liquor licence.

Pest Control cases were higher in Rushey Mead than the City average and a number of these cases centred around food being left out for birds. Officers were to investigate reasons for the complaints.

Noise nuisance was another area covered and there had recently been complaints of noise emanating from the 3 Kilns Public House, officers had visited the premises. Adrian stated that officers had recently been aware of a gang that were being paid to dispose of worn vehicle tyres, but rather than dispose of them in the proper way they were just dumping them at the roadside. After some research the van was tracked and seized. The owner of the van opted not to reclaim it so the vehicle was crushed.

Officers had recently moved in quickly with the Police and stopped a 'Mock Auction' taking place in the City. At a 'Mock Auction' the public were invited to bid on certain items under the impression that they were bidding on quality goods, when in fact all they ended up with were low quality items and with no recourse to get their money back. No quality items had been found at the premises visited.

Adrian stated that, regarding the 10,000 trees project discussions had been taking place with certain City schools with a view to creating Community Orchards.

At this point several questions were asked by members of the public present. The questions and the respective responses are set out below: -

- 1) Following the appearance of graffiti on part of St.Gabriel's Church the City Council's Graffiti Team had been contacted and had stated that they would require high reach equipment to enable the graffiti to be removed. No further contact had been made for some while.

Response

Adrian stated that he would contact the Graffiti Team to get this graffiti cleaned.

- 2) The City Council no longer sited Community Skips in the street, what alternative arrangements were in place.

Response

Adrian stated that there had been numerous problems with the previous Community Skip scheme, hence it's conclusion several years ago. The problems had been around the types of material being dumped in the skips that had included old paint and old engine oil and other substances that were difficult to extract and re-cycle.

The City Council now worked on the basis that households were allowed 5 free collections of bulky waste and the Council received some 40,000 requests per year for this service, a figure higher than a lot of other Councils.

RESOLVED:

That the information be noted.

41. DRAFT WARD ACTION PLAN

Jerry Connolly, Members Support Officer reported that the major issues identified in the Plan were: -

Community Facilities – this was partly being addressed through the Building Schools for the Future programme

Environmental Clean-up - this was partly being addressed by the allocation of £2,000 to Environmental Services, as discussed earlier in the meeting.

Traffic and Parking - To be discussed at a future meeting

Community Facilities

It was accepted that there was a shortage of community facilities in Rushey Mead Ward and Mr. Patel, a member of the public, stated that he had a plan that could help to address this shortage and that he wanted to bring to the Community Meeting to gauge public reaction. The Chair stated that the Ward Councillors would like to see details of the Plan before the next Community Meeting in order to assess resource implications.

RESOLVED;

that Mr. Patel be requested to submit his proposal to Jerry Connolly, Members Support Officer at the City Council, prior to it being presented at the Community Meeting.

42. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Community Meeting would be held at 6.30pm on Wednesday 7th April 2009, at a venue to be announced.

43. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.

