

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

7:00 pm, Thursday, 3 December 2009

Held at: Church of the Martyrs' Community Hall, Westcotes Drive

Who was there:

Councillor Andy Connelly

Councillor Sarah Russell

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.

Ward Councillors and General Information Members of the public could talk to their local Councillors or raise general queries	Police Issues Sergeant David Shields, Police Constable Ross Peachey were present from Leicestershire Constabulary.
Street Pastors and Nite Lite Ann Murphy, Ruth Fryer, Jenny Few and other team members were present to talk to residents about their work.	Environmental Services Residents could talk to Barbara Whitcombe, City Warden Manager and Graham Smith, City Warden.
Housing Paresh Chanadrana was present from the Neighbourhood Housing Office.	Police Authority Residents could talk to Bernard Greaves, Member of the Leicestershire Police Authority.

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.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Russell was elected as Chair for the meeting.

The Chair opened the meeting with a one minute silence as a mark of respect for June Wiggins from the Manor House Neighbourhood Centre and long standing resident of the Westcotes Ward.

The Chair explained that she was pleased to announce to the Community Meeting that extra funding to the value of £71,500 had been secured to help residents in the Westcotes Ward. This would be spent on door entry systems on Norfolk Walk.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Prema, Assistant Director for Project Implementation, Leicester City NHS.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor Russell declared that both she and Councillor Connolly lived within the consultation area of the Residents Parking Zone.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

5. UPDATE ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The Chair introduced Graham Smith, City Warden and Barbara Whitcombe, City Warden Manager to the Community Meeting.

Barbara asked residents to give their views on the 'hotspots' in the Westcotes Ward, and the following problems were identified:

- Wheely bins were left out on pavements in Luther Street, Livingstone Street, Walton Street and Ridley Street.
- Commercial bins on Briton Street.
- Fly tipping by the library on Celt Street.

- Dog fouling on the Great Central Way, Bede Park, Luther Street, Shaftesbury Road and the footpath to the canal.
- Problems arising from the night-time economy – urinating on Braunstone Gate.

Barbara explained that the Council were presently working with businesses on Narborough Road, to make sure that waste carriers (who were paid by local businesses to remove their waste) were licensed.

Barbara explained that the City Warden scheme was being 'rolled out' across the City, and recruitment would be starting soon so that every ward in Leicester would have a City Warden.

6. POLICE ISSUES

Bernard Greaves from the Leicestershire Police Authority was introduced to the meeting and he explained that he had come to the meeting in order to hear the views of residents regarding policing in the area. The aim was that the Police would learn more about the issues that concerned the residents in order that they could respond to those concerns. Bernard added that it was a joint responsibility of the Council and the Police to address anti-social behaviour.

Bernard explained that the Police Authority existed to be the voice of local people and they held the police into account and kept "tabs" on their performance.

Questionnaires had been given out for people to complete and Bernard asked residents to talk about the issues that they thought the Police should be addressing in the area, in order that the Police could prioritise their work.

A resident commented that the Police sometimes took too long time to respond to a call, which meant that by the time they had arrived, it was too late, because the perpetrator had left the scene.

Bernard responded that the Police were trying to improve their call out times, but the call centres on average received 6000 calls a day. He added that the 101 Service had taken a considerable amount of pressure off the Police, but the Home Office had withdrawn their funding so the service was closed.

7. COMMUNITY MEETING BUDGET

Peter Cozens, Members Support Officer to the Westcotes Community Meeting, presented a budget application that had been received for the Community Allotment Project. Peter explained that funding had been requested equally from Castle Ward, Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields Ward and Westcotes Ward, with £1321 being requested from the Westcotes Community Fund.

RESOLVED:

that it be agreed that the funding application for the Community Allotment Project be supported to the value of £1321

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
The budget application for the Community Allotment Project, that the Members had agreed to support, be submitted to the Cabinet Lead for approval.	Peter Cozens, Members' Support Officer	As soon as possible

8. ADDITIONAL ITEMS

There were two additional items, as previously notified to everyone who was on the Westcotes Community Meeting Distribution List.

RESULTS OF THE RECENT CONSULTATION ON THE RESIDENTS' PARKING SCHEME.

Andrew Thomas, Head of Traffic Management, gave a presentation on the consultation vote on parking in Westcotes, and his presentation is attached.

Residents heard that, of the 1995 properties surveyed in the consultation area, to the west of Narborough Road, the majority of residents who had responded had voted against having a residents' parking scheme. There would therefore be no residents parking scheme implemented there. Although within the Harrow Road area, some residents on certain streets were in favour of the scheme, overall the majority indicated they did not want a residents' parking scheme.

However, in the area to the East of Narborough Road, residents had indicated by 81 votes to 41, that they were in favour of a residents parking scheme. Of 668 properties surveyed, 126 votes were returned. A scheme was therefore viable there.

Residents made the following points:

- *By having a residents parking scheme on the East of Narborough Road, the parking problem will be transferred elsewhere. Why does the Council not invest in better bus services?*

Andrew explained that a new park and ride service was being provided which would help ease the traffic. The bus services were however de-regulated and therefore the Council were not allowed to invest in the bus services.

- *I live on Harrow Road and went from house to house talking to people and they said that they did not want a residents' parking scheme. You indicate that*

they do. The Council should knock on doors to do a proper survey and also they should provide people with passes for cheap bus travel.

Councillor Connelly stated that some people in Harrow Road were in favour of the residents parking scheme but overall the majority in the area voted against the scheme. He added that residents were given an opportunity to make the decision and it was important that the Council respected their views.

- *On the whole, only a small percentage of the population voted on the parking scheme. You are making a decision on a result where only 19% of the population voted. In Aylestone, I heard that the residents' parking scheme was cancelled because insufficient people voted.*

The Chair responded that the Council had stated that the residents would be given the chance to vote on the parking scheme but they could not make it compulsory to vote.

Andy Thomas also replied that in Aylestone, a large area was surveyed and overall there was no support, which was why the residents parking scheme was not implemented.

- *What would the Council's solution be where a property has two or more vehicles?*

Andy Thomas responded that Officers were considering a number of possibilities, which included looking at the design of parking bays and how they were controlled, visitor permits and experimental traffic regulation orders. Officers would work with Councillors Connelly and Russell to find the best way forward.

Councillor Connelly commented that he understood that the parking scheme would allow for people to have two cars.

- *We should not have to pay to park outside our house. People from outside the area should pay to park.*

The Chair responded that she understood that times were difficult at the moment, but the charge of £25 paid for the administration of the scheme.

- *The main problem is parking on match days. Why should residents pay to resolve because of this?*

The Chair explained that the Football Club, had, as part of their planning permission, a condition relating to the Park and Ride Scheme to ease the problem of match day parking.

- *I am against the residents' parking scheme. I live just off Narborough Road and am concerned that parking restrictions will result in loss of trade to the shops.*

The Chair explained that the needs of local businesses were recognised and the Council would be looking for ways to ensure that their needs would be met.

- *Have you considered introducing diagonal parking?*

Andy explained that the Council was bound by the Department of Transport Regulations. Some vehicles such as the large people carriers might protrude from the diagonal parking bay, and this would pose a danger for other road users.

Andrew explained that the parking scheme would commence in approximately June or July 2010 and would initially operate on a trial period for 6 months. During this time the scheme would be monitored and adjustments could be made to the scheme as required. After the trial period, the scheme would be operation for 12 months before the scheme would either be confirmed or cancelled.

STREET PASTORS.

Ann Murphy from Street Pastors gave a presentation to the Community Meeting on the work of the organisation. Ann explained that the Street Pastors consisted of volunteers who worked with the Police and Graham Smith the City Warden, within the Westcotes Ward (and elsewhere in Leicester). The Street Pastors gave up their free time to work with people on the streets and Ann talked about some of their experiences and the people they had helped as follows:

- Asylum seekers and people of no fixed abode.
- Young people who had fallen out with their parents.
- They had stopped some students having wheely bin races
- Helped someone with diabetes who had fallen over.
- Given first aid.
- Helped two student nurses who were trying to come to terms with their first death at work.

Residents heard that the Street Pastors in Westcotes worked with an organisation called Nite Lite who ran a late night coffee bar in the Robert Hall Memorial Hall. Ann explained that toilet facilities were also available at the Hall, which helped to prevent anti social behaviour by people who had been drinking.

Ann Murphy explained that the Street Pastors and Nite Lite would be grateful for funding from the Westcotes Community Meeting to decorate the Robert Hall Memorial Hall, where Nite Lite was held and to facilitate the scheme. Residents heard that as the building they used was a listed building, such work incurred additional costs and they would be grateful for £3500.

The Chair explained that the group would need to submit a formal funding application, which could be brought to the next community meeting and that the Community Meeting welcomed bids from community groups. Councillors commented on the excellent work of the Street Pastors and Nite Lite and residents indicated that they supported the funding bid. Ann was informed that Peter could help them to submit a budget application.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
To help the Street Pastors and Nite Lite submit a funding application for improvements at Robert Hall Memorial Hall to facilitate Nite Lite.	Peter Cozens Members' Support Officer	As soon as possible.

9. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 9.22 pm