

# **Your Community, Your Voice**

## **Record of Meeting and Actions**

**6:30 pm, Tuesday, 15 December 2009**

**Held at: The Tudor Centre, Bewcastle Grove, Mowmacre Hill**

Who was there:

Councillor Harshad Bhavsar
Councillor Annette Byrne
Councillor Colin Marriott

## 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.

<b>Ward Councillors and General Information</b>	<b>Police Issues</b>
Local Councillors were on hand to discuss general queries.	Representatives were on hand from Leicestershire Constabulary to discuss issues or raise general queries.
<b>Community and Healthy Living Centres</b>	<b>Belgrave Allotment Society</b>
Officers were on hand to discuss general issues or queries.	Representatives were on hand to discuss general issues or queries.
<b>Highways and Transportation</b>	<b>Clockwise Credit Union</b>
Officers were on hand to discuss general issues or queries.	Representatives from Clockwise Credit Union were on hand to discuss their services.
<b>Community Meeting Budget Advice</b>	
Officers were on hand to advise on how to submit requests for funding from the Community Meeting Budget.	

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.

## **60. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Councillor Marriott was elected as chair for the meeting.

## **61. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

## **62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Marriott declared a personal and prejudicial interest in budget item B2: Mowmacre Event Planning Partnership fireworks display as he was on the committee for this organisation.

## **63. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous Abbey Community Meeting held on 15 September 2009 as circulated were approved as a correct record.

In a change to the Agenda order the Chair stated that the Clockwise Credit Union would be brought forward as the representative had another meeting to attend.

## **64. CLOCKWISE CREDIT UNION**

Veena James from the Clockwise Credit Union gave an overview of the services offered.

Veena stated the Clockwise Credit Union was a non-profit organisation that provided ethical savings and loans to the community, particularly to those who were financially excluded and without access to mainstream banking. The Clockwise Credit Union aimed to provide a fairer alternative to doorstep sellers and loan sharks that provided fast cash at punitive interest rates. Research showed 70% of targeted customers that were struggling financially used doorstep sellers.

Veena explained that some of the services offered were as follows:

- The Clockwise Credit Union allowed the community to save and borrow from the same fund, wholly financed by members of the community
- The Credit Union in Leicester covered Leicestershire, Rutland and the City and had 4000 members (the largest in the East Midlands)
- Membership was available to anyone who lived and worked in the county
- Clockwise Credit Union offered savings accounts, trust funds, loans, mini-cash ISAs (3% interest rate, higher than most banks) and current accounts (including Direct Debit facility)

The following questions were asked by residents:

**How is the Credit Union funded?**

Veena replied that it was funded entirely by members of Clockwise

**Do savings have to be deposited before a loan is available?**

Veena stated that customers did not need a savings account to apply for a loan, they just needed to become a member. Accounts can be left open with a token amount of £1 or closed completely at any time.

**Why had a loan been refused?**

Veena stated that loan applicants were credit checked and refused if a history of fraud was found. The Credit Union did not refuse loans just on the basis of past County Court Judgements, but how the applicant's finances were currently managed was important in the decision. If an applicant had a poor credit history the Credit Union would ask about the situation and if the applicant had made an effort to make repayments, requests were looked on favourably. If past debts had not being paid back at all the risk was too large to grant the loan. Veena also stated that requests for savings accounts were never declined, and any applicant who was refused a loan was welcome to apply again 3 months later.

**65. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION**

Martin Fletcher – Acting Head of Highways Management provided an update on and summary of the responses given from the relevant Officers regarding issues raised at the previous meeting:

**Langley Road - One-way system request**

Martin stated that proposals for one-way streets were not considered without appropriate traffic calming measures in place, as one-way streets tended to increase traffic speed. As no recorded personal injury accidents in last 3 years had occurred and Langley Road was number 106 on the traffic calming priority list action would not be taken currently.

**Parker Drive - Options for parking restrictions for factory visitors**

Martin explained that several visits had been made to Parker Drive in last 5 years by officers and every time parking and loading operations had been entirely reasonable and essential to the operation of businesses. If restrictions were increased this would increase the speed of traffic on the road, creating additional risk of severe accidents. Existing waiting restrictions were considered adequate and there were no plans to change them.

A resident asked why the factories did not have to provide their own parking facilities. It was commented that residents received a fine when parked on the

residential side of the road for more than a few minutes, and it was unfair that factory vehicles were not treated in the same way. The chair suggested that the resident submit an enquiry form to get this looked into.

### **Parker Drive – Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) Pilot**

Martin explained if the VAS pilot showed vehicles were still speeding alternative measures would be looked at. The results of the current study would be made available in the middle of 2010 as part of a study on road safety on main roads.

PC Ian Lovell stated the police had carried out checks with handheld speed guns on Parker Drive, speeding vehicles had been detected at the Somerset drive end and some fixed penalty notices had been issued. The traffic management section of the Police may install a “grey box” to record data about speeding soon.

### **Halifax Drive - Concrete bay removal**

Martin explained that an officer had inspected the removal site. The tarmac had sunk slightly but was in a safe condition. Halifax Drive was routinely inspected every six months.

### **Somerset Drive & Halifax Drive - Speeding issues**

Martin explained that the VAS pilot study covers Halifax Drive. If it showed vehicles were still speeding alternative measures would be looked at. The results of the current study would be made available in the middle of 2010 as part of a study on road safety on main roads.

Martin also commented that Somerset Avenue was number 62 in the traffic calming priority list and only one recorded personal injury had occurred in the last 3 years. Given the low priority and low accident rate no immediate action was warranted.

### **Sudley Avenue - Request for yellow lines**

Martin explained that no recorded road traffic accidents involving personal injury in the last 5 years had occurred and parking did not cause undue delays to through traffic, therefore action would not be taken as it would incur significant costs.

### **Hatton Avenue/Marwood Road - Road Surface**

Martin explained that both roads had been inspected and were in a safe condition so no action would be taken.

### **Orton Road – Road safety issue**

Martin responded to a resident’s query that the road was too narrow and frequently obstructed. He explained that the only obstruction was related to the school and not parking enforcement, so the issue had been referred to the police and Councillor Bhavsar’s constituent had been notified by e-mail.

### **Galliwood Drive – Vandalised fences**

Martin explained that as this was a Park Services issue, Stuart Marbrooke was dealing with the issue with Councillor Bhavsar.

### **Abbey Lane/Abbey Park Road – Bus shelters**

Martin explained that the shelter at the stop on Abbey Park Road was removed due to development work and could not be replaced in a safe or acceptable position.

The shelter at Abbey Lane could be relocated as part of the development. However JC Decaux were not satisfied the new location was acceptable from an advertising perspective.

Both locations had been added to the waiting list of sites for Council funded non-advertising shelters; the speed at which they would be installed was unknown as this was dependent on funding.

### **Bus service request to Gateway College via Watermead Rd**

Martin explained that there were bus services in the vicinity that went to Hamilton though none at the exact location.

### **Beaumont Leys Lane – Drive-way request**

Martin explained that this request had very specific circumstances: the resident had raised kerbs outside their property due to a bus shelter. The issue had been ongoing for several years and there was nothing new to add at this time.

The following questions were asked by residents:

### **Who is responsible for looking at an issue when a business selling cars parks them on the road and pavement nearby?**

The resident stated a complaint had been submitted on this issue regarding a business on Northgate Street and no response had been forthcoming.

It was stated by an Officer that the Street Wardens Team and Parking Enforcement were responsible for this type of issue.

Steve Letten, Members Support Officer apologised for the lack of response and suggested a written enquiry be submitted and it would be ensured the site would be visited.

### **Can anything be done to prevent cyclists (especially youths) on the pavement on Parker Drive from being a danger to pedestrians?**

Another resident suggested that the motivation for cycling on the pavement was often fear, as the road had no bike lanes and speeding motorists. A resident also

stated road surfaces were too bumpy to cycle comfortably on in the area and the footpath on some roads was wide enough to accommodate a cycle lane.

Martin Fletcher responded that irresponsible cycling on the pavement was an education issue among young people and a wider social problem, and that the Council led the way in providing cycle lanes.

**Where are cycle lanes are located in the ward?**

Martin replied that Heasham Drive had a cycle lane, residents queried whether it was usable due to obstruction by parked cars.

Action	Officer/Councillor Identified	Deadline
Parker Drive to be checked by the Council Cycle Officer to see if it is listed anywhere for a planned cycle lane	Martin Fletcher	As soon as possible

**66. ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR / CRIME UPDATE**

Ian Lovell - Police Constable, Mark Williamson – Community Support Officer and Jessica Essex Community Initiative Co-Ordinator were present to discuss Anti-social behaviour and crime issues in the ward.

PC Lovell stated that the ward boundaries for police patrols would be changing as of 4 January to encompass a wider area as far as Abbey Park and Leicester College.

PC Lovell stated that anti-social groups of youths outside the Tudor Centre and on Billington Close had been identified and would be tackled in the next 4 – 5 weeks.

Crime Figures Sept- Dec 2008/9

PC Lovell presented the crime figures for the ward:

**House Burglaries**

Month	Recorded 2008	Incidents	Recorded 2009	Incidents
Sept	26		10	
Oct	14		10	
November	7		10	
December (to 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec)	25		4	

**Outbuilding Burglaries (sheds and garages)**

Month	Recorded 2008	Incidents	Recorded 2009	Incidents
-------	---------------	-----------	---------------	-----------

Sept	8	4
Oct	12	4
November	7	2
December (to 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec)	12	4

### Unattended Motor Vehicles

Month	Recorded 2008	Incidents	Recorded 2009	Incidents
Sept	10		0	
Oct	7		7	
November	10		9	
December (to 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec)	14		11	

### Criminal Damage

Month	Recorded 2008	Incidents	Recorded 2009	Incidents
Sept	13		25	
Oct	20		25	
November	22		22	
December (to 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec)	5		30	

### Theft of Motor Vehicles

Month	Recorded 2008	Incidents	Recorded 2009	Incidents
Sept	4		1	
Oct	4		5	
November	2		4	
December (to 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec)	6		2	

### Damage to Motor Vehicles

Month	Recorded 2008	Incidents	Recorded 2009	Incidents
Sept	7		5	
Oct	10		6	
November	15		5	
December (to 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec)	13		7	

### Robberies

Month	Recorded 2008	Incidents	Recorded 2009	Incidents
Sept	2		1	
Oct	2		0	
November	3		0	
December (to 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec)	2		2	

It was stated robberies are fairly rare and usually occur on isolated unlit stretches for example the bottom of Corporation Rd.

The following questions were asked by residents:



**Would new area boundaries result in less of a police presence in the area?**

PC Lovell stated that there would be more police officers now covering the wider area: currently the area was covered by 4 officers, with the revised boundaries there would be an additional 2 CSOs, 2 beat officers and a neighbourhood Sergeant.

**When tackling anti-social behaviour among groups of youths, are groups just warned or moved on?**

CSO Williamson stated that officers engaged with groups, and if no offence had been committed they cannot be moved on. Typically the first time a group was encountered the group would be asked to move and if they are still there on a second encounter they would be sent home. A recent incident outside The Rocket pub where youths were throwing bricks and subsequently escorted back to their parent's homes by police officers was cited.

CSO Williamson remarked that intoxicated adults was also a problem, and they could only be asked to move, any further action depends on them committing a public order offence.

CSO Williamson also stated that problems with anti-social behaviour on motorbikes were hard to police given that culprits tended to leave quickly when an officer was sighted and it was too dangerous to pursue them. It was remarked that motorbike issues had been reported around Edale Park and Edale Avenue and a green motorbike was seized on Thursday that was involved in the incident.

It was also remarked that attempts were also made to engage with youths and direct them towards legal motorbike schemes and youth facilities.

**How often do beat officers patrol on foot in the area?**

PC Lovell responded by saying two police officers patrolled in the area covering Stocking Farm, Mowmacre and the Abbey Rise area; according to government guidelines officers should spend 80% of their time on the beat, though this was dependent on the number of incidents they are called to investigate. Two Community Safety Officers also covered the area, though they had a larger area to cover.

**Is there any help available to disabled and elderly residents to secure their properties?**

PC Lovell stated that the Staysafe scheme available through Leicester City Council could provide cheap locks and there was a "Drop In" centre at 111 Ross Walk. Staysafe provided free surveys and free or cheap installation if the customer was disabled or on income support. A resident asked whether the scheme covered a specific area, it was replied that the scheme was citywide. It was also remarked that locks and security devices could be purchased at the local police station.

The Chair stated that Staysafe representatives would be invited to an upcoming community coffee morning in January.

**An abandoned car on Hadrian Road has been reported twice but not visited. When will this be looked at?**

CSO Williamson remarked that he had visited the vehicle on the day of the report. The vehicle was involved in a traffic accident and was taxed, locked and secured, and was not causing an obstruction. The Chair stated that the concern was the parts of the car being dismantled on the street, CSO Williamson replied that he would make the owner aware of this.

Action	Officer/Councillor Identified	Deadline
Invite Staysafe representatives to upcoming coffee morning	Councillor Byrne	As soon as possible
Inform owner of abandoned car (Hadrian Road) that car being dismantled	CSO Williamson	As soon as possible

**67. BUDGET**

Steve Letten, Members’ Support Officer presented the Community Meeting Budget and introduced three applications for funding:

**B1 – Senior Community Society: Guru Nanak’s Birthday Celebration Event**

Steve explained that the application was retrospective for an event that had already taken place on 22<sup>nd</sup> October. It was stated that retrospective applications were not usually considered but due to circumstances concerning the timing of the event and the fact that a previous application for a different event had been mislaid, Members had agreed to consider this application even though the event had already taken place.

Gurmaj Singh, the event co-ordinator, explained the application was for £1175 for fireworks and food for the event, which was held on 22 October 2009 at the Holy Bones Centre. Gurmaj stated that the event was well attended and enjoyed by a cross-section of the community. Members of the public heard that the event was a multicultural rather than a religious event.

**RESOLVED:**

that the funding application for Guru Nanak’s Birthday Celebration be supported to the value of £1175.

Mr Singh was advised that if he wished to apply for funding for a similar event next year, he should submit it in plenty of time, for example in Spring 2010.

## **B2 – Mowmacre Community Bonfire and Firework Event.**

**Councillor Marriott, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, left the room for the consideration of this item.**

Steve explained that the application was another retrospective application for a fireworks display that was held on 5 November 2009. The event was organised by the Mowmacre Planning Partnership and the Outdoor Adventure Playground and £2586 had been requested to finance the event.

Steve stated that the application had been received too late for consideration before the event.

Councillor Byrne stated the event was well attended by over 500 people.

A resident questioned whether there had been any health and safety problems at the event and Councillor Byrne replied that there had been no concerns. A resident commented that there had been fewer fireworks generally in the area this year around November, which was possible as a result of the fireworks event.

### **RESOLVED:**

that the funding application for the Mowmacre Community Bonfire and Firework Event be supported to the value of £2586

The organisers were advised that if they wished to apply for funding for a similar event next year, they should submit their application in plenty of time.

**Councillor Marriott returned to the meeting.**

## **B3 – Community Boxing Club**

Steve introduced a funding application for a Community Boxing Club that had been submitted by the North West Unity Boxing Club. Steve explained that the Boxing Club had received £600 from the Beaumont Leys Community Fund and was now applying for funds from the Abbey Ward. Residents heard that this was because the club was currently based at the Home Farm Community Centre and was attended by residents of both wards.

The application was for £1600 for the purchase of a collapsible boxing ring that could be moved to other premises should the club need to relocate. Ajmal Butt – Boxing Instructor was fully trained and the facility would be accessible to children and adults, both male and female.

The Chair commented that the club would help to take children off the streets and reduce anti-social behaviour in the area.

**RESOLVED:**

that the application for the Community Boxing Club, to the value of £1600 be supported.

Steve explained that the funding bids that the Councillors had supported, would be sent to the Cabinet Leads for final approval.

Steve explained that there was approximately £12000 left in the Community Meeting Budget and residents were asked to contact him, if they were aware of any community projects that would benefit from funding.

Councillor Byrne explained that a Coffee Morning was being planned where the Police and an organisation called Staysafe would be present to give advice to members of the public on making their homes secure. It was suggested that money from the budget should be set aside to help fund event and provide some equipment to help residents improve home security.

**RESOLVED:**

that it be agreed that some of the uncommitted funds be allocated to finance this event.

**68. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chair announced that the next meeting would be held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at Stocking Farm Healthy Living Centre.

**69. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A resident suggested that issues affecting residents over 50 years regarding healthy living and day care needed to be discussed.

The Chair stated that the resident was welcome to attend an upcoming coffee morning where these issues would be discussed.

A resident complained that not enough people are aware of the meeting in the area.

Carlym Sandringham – Officer responsible for distributing the quarterly Community magazine explained that 13,000 copies had been printed and distributed. This figure was based on a census which may be out of date so 14,000 copies of the next edition would be published to allow for any shortfall.

Carlym had only been made aware of the shortfall in the last delivery too late to print the extra copies needed.

A resident stated that other residents on Metcalfe Close were not aware of the meeting.

The Chair questioned whether the Community magazine went out with the Link.

Officers replied it did not as the Link was bi-monthly and the Community Magazine quarterly.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

## **70. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8:45pm.

