

Aylestone Community Meeting

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Wednesday, 28 October 2009

Held at: Aylestone Baptist Church, Lutterworth Road, Leicester

Who was there:

Councillor Barbara Chambers

Councillor Nigel Porter

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. The Information Fair included the following:

<p>Ward Councillors and General Information</p> <p>Talk to your local councillors or raise general queries</p>	<p>Police Issues</p> <p>Talk to your Local Police about issues or raise general queries.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Planning Applications</p> <p>Shaun Miles, Sports Project Manager, Leicester City Council, was present to discuss the planning application on Aylestone Playing Fields.</p> <p>Peter Eames, Jonathan Wood, Architects, Jonathan Neale, Aldi Property Director, Lee Griffin from Bloor and other representatives from Bloor and Aldi were present to discuss the planning application. Mike Richardson, Head of Planning Management and Delivery was also present.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Glenhills Boulevard Flats Improvement Plans.</p> <p>John Thomson, Saffron Housing Manager was present to talk to residents about the project.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Aylestone Road Shops Improvement Plan</p> <p>Wilf Morgan, Acting Engineering Design Manager was present to talk to residents about the improvement plan.</p> <p>A local resident also displayed her designs for improvements to the local area.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Gilmorton Community Orchard Project.</p> <p>Representatives were present to inform residents about the project.</p>
<p>Customer Services</p> <p>Residents were able to talk to Ed Quick from Customer Services</p>	<p>Community Library Services</p> <p>Angela Evans was present from the Library Services to talk to residents</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Highways and Transport</p> <p>An Officer from Regeneration, Highways and Transportation was present to talk to residents about highways issues</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society</p> <p>Local residents were present to talk about the Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Britain in Bloom</p> <p>An Officer from the Parks Services was present to talk to residents about Britain in Bloom</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Open Minded Play Space Project.</p> <p>Residents were able to talk to representatives about this project.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">A representative was also present from the Health Authority.</p>	

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 Porter was elected as Chair for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Brim Collett, resident.

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 Porter declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the budget applications relating to the St Andrews Football Club (items B6, B8 and B17). Councillor Porter left the meeting for the consideration of those items, which had not previously been agreed on the grounds of urgency.

Councillor Porter further declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that he had helped to submit the funding bid for the security alarms (B4). This had previously been agreed on the grounds of urgency.

Councillor Mrs Chambers declared that she was a Member of the Planning and Development Control Committee and would not be able to give any views on the planning issues under discussion, although she would listen to the comments that were made.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

A amendment was requested to minute item 28, Traffic Issues in Aylestone, paragraph 6, to record that problems were rife with vehicles turning out of *Old Church Street*, and not Church Street as stated.

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting held 21 January 2009 subject to the above amendment, be confirmed as a correct record.

5. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION ISSUES IN THE AYLESTONE WARD

Wilf Morgan, Acting Engineering Design Manager, Leicester City Council gave a short presentation on work that was being planned for construction of the footways along Aylestone and Lutterworth Roads, including outside the shops in Aylestone. He explained that the proposed works were those planned to be carried out under the Highway Capital Maintenance Programme and not the Quality Bus Corridor

(QBC) scheme. Residents heard that it was intended that some of the existing paving would be replaced with block paving and some street furniture would be re-fitted or replaced as necessary with standard items. Any new special furniture such as seats and planters would have to be funded directly by the Community Meeting budget. Councillor Porter explained that this work would be carried out in response to comments arising from an earlier meeting when an action plan for the Aylestone Ward had been drawn up.

The following comments were made:

- There should have been more consultation with residents.
- The problem of people parking their cars on pavements needed to be addressed before any street furniture could be fitted.
- There was a need for a community notice board.
- There was a need for all the pavements to be replaced not just a few.
- It was suggested that a disability organisation should be consulted on the proposed improvements.

The residents were advised that consultation would take place with shop owners and residents for the Quality Bus Corridor scheme.

One of the residents explained that she had also drawn up a design for improvements in the Aylestone area. These had been available for residents to look at before the formal meeting commenced.

Councillor Porter asked residents to indicate if they were interested in forming a Focus Group to look at improvements in Aylestone and suggested that they met up briefly immediately after the formal meeting to exchange details.

6. PLANNING ISSUES IN THE AYLESTONE WARD

Mike Richardson, Head of Planning, Management and Delivery was introduced to the meeting and it was explained that planning issues concerning the football pitches on Aylestone Playing Fields, the Aldi store and the Bloor Homes development would be discussed.

APPLICATION FOR CLUBHOUSE AND ARTIFICIAL SPORTS PITCHES ON AYLESTONE PLAYING FIELDS.

Shaun Miles, Sports Project Manager, Leicester City Council Sports Services was present to talk to residents about the proposed football pitches on Aylestone playing fields. Shaun explained that a planning application had been submitted for a clubhouse, artificial surface sports pitches with fencing, floodlights, car parking and landscaping. He added that there would be 17 football pitches in total. Shaun said that objections had been received which included objections relating to the loss of ecology and the impact of flooding. He added that there were proposals to increase the habitat and it was hoped to strike a balance between the provision of sports facilities and the loss of ecology.

A number of comments and concerns were addressed by residents, which included the following:

- The proposed football pitches would not actually be on Aylestone Playing Fields but on Aylestone Meadows, a site to the east of the playing fields. The Council were using an incorrect and out of date map.
- Aylestone Meadows was defined as a local nature reserve and residents considered it to be a 'gem' of a country park. There were concerns that it would become fragmented if parts of it were built on.
- The work in mitigation would not compensate for the damage to ecology.
- The Council should do more to support green spaces in the City rather than damaging the areas such as this.
- The Council should be making improvements to the Meadows.
- The proposal for 17 pitches with floodlights was vast and would spoil the beauty of the park
- There were concerns over the number of environmental groups that had objected to the proposal.
- The proposal was not supported by the local community.
- There had been no consultation on the proposals apart from the usual planning notices, though Shuan explained that there had been consultation events.
- There was already very heavy traffic in Aylestone.

Mike Richardson addressed the meeting and explained that the comments from residents had been very valuable and they would be fed into the planning process. He added that Green Wedge policies permitted developments in green wedge areas that provided for sporting facilities and therefore the proposal did not contradict those planning policies.

Shaun explained that they had been unable to find anywhere else in the city to accommodate 17 football pitches but the Council were looking for alternative sites.

Members of the public were asked to indicate by a show of hands whether they were in favour or against the proposal. The vast majority of residents present indicated that they were against the proposal.

The Chair suggested that residents should write to Planning, Management and Delivery to give their views on the proposal.

ALDI AND BLOOR HOMES

Representatives from Aldi and Bloor Homes addressed the meeting and it was explained that planning permission had already been granted for 190 homes to form a residential development. However in the current economic climate such a development was not viable and Aldi and Bloor had teamed up to provide a mixed use development.

The following comments were made:

- **Traffic was already a problem in the area and this would surely exacerbate the problem.**
- **The store would be close to a school and additional traffic would be anticipated because the plans showed a provision for 89 parking spaces at the store.**
- **It would be likely that the traffic situation would deteriorate when the park and ride scheme commenced, with buses travelling along Aylestone Road.**

In response the meeting heard that there would have been extra traffic anyway as the development for 190 homes had already been approved. The new application was for 69 properties instead of 190 so the number of cars coming to the residential homes would be reduced. It was anticipated that Aldi would serve the local community as there were other Aldi stores in the City and that people would shop there when passing the store.

- **What does Aldi offer the local community?**

The meeting heard that Aldi would be keen to become part of the local community and the Area Manager would ensure that the store would represent the community in a positive way. Aldi had supported football teams and charities in the past and anyone who wished to attract their attention should write in.

- **I live on Old Church Street and I saw the revised plans from Bloors but I did not know about the plans for the Aldi store until tonight.**

Mike Richardson explained that there were two separate planning applications and a planning notice had been displayed at the Bloor site. Decisions would have to be made on each application. Mike added that the Highways Authority had not objected to the applications. They looked at the volume of traffic, turning issues and pedestrian issues and would respond if they thought the application would pose any danger.

In response to queries about the implications of any flooding issues, the meeting heard that Bloor had spent a considerable amount of time and money on research, which showed that only a very small part of the land was actually on a flood plain.

The Chair asked residents to write to Planning Management and Delivery with their views on the application, but in the meantime residents were asked to indicate by a show of hands whether they were in favour of, or against the proposals. The majority of residents present abstained from voting, but of those who did vote, there were more against the proposal than in favour.

7. HOUSING INVESTMENT PLANS

John Thomson, Saffron Housing Manager gave the meeting a brief update on the Glenhills Boulevard Project. John explained that the car park and bus stops were at the rear of the flats and people accessed the flats through the rear doors by walking through the bin stores. This area was surrounded by walls, which led to a fear of

crime. The tarmac in the courtyard was also worn and the courtyard area was a 'dead space'. It was planned that the following work would be carried out to improve this area as follows:

- The walls would be removed and replaced with fencing.
- The existing tarmac would be removed and replaced with a more attractive surface.
- The existing bin stores and sheds would be removed and replaced with a low level bin store.
- Some robust rotary dryers would be fitted and picnic tables and benches provided to enable the residents to use the courtyard as an amenity.

John explained that various strategies had been used to consult the residents including questionnaires and a door to door survey.

John was thanked for updating the meeting on the project.

8. OPEN MINDED PLAY SPACE

Representatives from the Open Minded Play Space had been in attendance for the information fair but were not present at this point to give a briefing on the project.

9. POLICING UPDATE FROM LEICESTERSHIRE CONSTABULARY

PC Kev Butler and PCSO Steve Barnes from the Welford Road Local Policing Unit were introduced to the meeting.

PC Butler explained that the Police priorities for Aylestone were as follows:

- To tackle drunken youths who were causing damage to vehicles in Knighton Lane.
- To tackle alcohol-related anti social behaviour in the Mill Lock area on Aylestone Meadows.

The meeting heard that from January 2010 there would be new priorities and residents would be notified of these in their newsletter.

A resident expressed concerns that there was a problem with cars being damaged in Wigston Lane and the Chair asked the Police to make a note of these concerns. Pc Butler explained that someone had been charged with causing damage to 6 cars but the resident commented that this was still an ongoing problem.

PC Butler informed that meeting that from January 2010 there would be changes to the Aylestone Police beat boundary and these would result in two additional Officers.

10. BUDGET

Jerry Connolly, Member Support Officer to the Aylestone Community Meeting presented an update on the budget.

Jerry explained that the following funding applications, B1 to B8 had already been considered and supported by either Councillor Mrs Chambers or Councillor Porter, or both. The procedure rules allowed for Ward Councillors to approve funding applications up to a value of £500 in between meetings, on the grounds of urgency. These applications were brought to the Community Meeting for information purposes.

B1 YMCA Youth Enterprise had requested £1,000 from the Community Fund, for a community event in the grounds of the YMCA, Belvoir Drive to be held during the Easter holiday 2009.

Two separate bids of £500, making a total of £1,000 in respect of the above application had been supported.

B2 Mrs Angela Doore, Environment Group Leader, Montrose School had requested £600 from the Community Fund, for gardening in the school grounds.

The funding application to the value of £500 had been supported.

B3 Welford Road Local Policing Unit had requested £50 from the Ward Action Plan, for Delivering Service Excellence Monthly Awards.

The funding application to the value of £50 had been supported.

B4 Councillor Nigel Porter had requested £500 from the Community Fund for security alarms which could be issued to domestic and club premises.

Councillor Mrs Chambers had supported the funding bid to the value of £500. Councillor Porter had declared a personal and prejudicial interest on this application as he had helped to submit the bid.

B5 The Police and Community Support Group had requested £300 from the Community Fund, for a 100% Best Attendance Project.

The funding application to the value of £300 had been supported.

B6 St Andrews Football Club had requested £1000 from the Community Fund, for an upgrade to floodlights and for repair costs to a damaged security door following a break in.

Councillor Mrs Chambers had supported the funding application to the value of £500.

Councillor Porter had declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the application.

B7 Parks Services supported by the Friends of Aylestone Hall had requested £500 from the Community Fund, towards the cost of replacing the current chain link type fencing that surrounded the tennis courts at Aylestone Hall Gardens.

The funding application to the value of £500 had been supported.

Councillor Porter having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the following two funding bids left the room for the consideration of the budget applications.

B8 Darren Creed, Football Coach, St Andrews Football Club had requested £1250 from the Community Fund for the Aylestone Summer Soccer Scheme at St Andrews Football Club.

Jerry explained that £500 of the bid had already been supported on the grounds of urgency and the balance of £750 was brought to the Community Meeting for further consideration.

RESOLVED:

that a further payment to the value of £750 in respect of the funding application, be supported.

B17 Jerry Connolly explained that this funding application had not been attached to the agenda, but copies had been distributed at the start of the meeting.

Darren Creed, Football Coach, St Andrews Football Club had requested £1500 for a soccer scheme for 2010.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application to the value of £1500 be supported.

Councillor Porter returned to the meeting.

B9 Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire had submitted a funding application for £1000 from the Community Cohesion Fund, for the Gilmorton Avenue Community Orchard. This was for the involvement of young people in the construction of the Kissing Gate entrance.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application to the value of £1000 be supported.

B10 Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire had submitted a further funding application for £1000 from the Community Cohesion Fund for the Gilmorton Avenue Community Orchard. This was for creative interpretation involving young people.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application to the value of £1000 be supported.

B11 - B14 Leicester City Council, Parks Services, Riverside Team had submitted four funding applications for different projects.

Members of the public expressed concern that services within the City Council were requesting money from the Community Meeting to fund items that they might provide anyway. Adrian Lane from the Parks Service explained that funding had been requested for projects that were over and above those that the Parks Service could provide.

Residents indicated that they would like to defer the funding applications for the time being, for enquires to be made as to whether they could be funded by the Council, or failing that if cheaper alternatives could be provided.

RESOLVED:
that the funding applications be DEFERRED

B15 The Spirit of Aylestone Community Group had submitted a funding application for £559.94 from the Community Fund for Carols in the Park 2009.

RESOLVED:
that it be agreed that the funding application to the value of £559.94 be supported.

B16 The Eyres Monsell Allotment and Garden Society had submitted a funding application for £2,400 from the Ward Action Plan budget for disabled toilets for allotment users.

RESOLVED:
that the funding application to the value of £2,400 be supported.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
The budget applications for the bids, that the Members had agreed to support, be submitted to the Cabinet Lead for approval.	Jerry Connolly, Member Support Officer	As soon as possible

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair thanked members of the public for coming and reminded those people who wanted to form a Focus Group to look at improvements in Aylestone, to meet immediately after the meeting to exchange details.

A resident questioned how the meeting was publicised and was informed that approximately 1000 leaflets had been distributed and the meeting had also been publicised in the Leicester Mercury.

12. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

