

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:30 pm, Thursday, 18 March 2010

**Held at: Stocking Farm Healthy Living Centre, Marwood Road,
Leicester**

Who was there:

Councillor Harshad Bhavsar
Councillor Annette Byrne
Councillor Colin Marriott

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.

INFORMATION FAIR

PLEASE SEE BELOW FOR DETAILS OF SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES THAT WERE PRESENT AT THIS MEETING

Residents were able to raise matters of concern, give opinions and find out useful information

Ward Councillors and General Information Local Councillors were on hand to discuss general queries.	Police Issues Police partners were on hand to deal with general queries and local issues.
Highways and Transportation Officers were on hand to respond to residents queries.	City Warden Local City Wardens were on hand to deal with local environmental concerns.
BIFFA Recycling A BIFFA representative was present to answer resident's queries.	

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.

71. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Bhavsar was elected chair for the meeting.

72. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

73. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Marriott declared a personal and prejudicial interest in budget item B2: Friends of Mowmacre as his wife was the treasurer. Councillor Marriott agreed to leave the meeting during the consideration of the funding application.

Councillor Marriott declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in budget item B7: Community Trust Library, as his wife was a member. Councillor Marriott agreed to leave the meeting during the consideration of the funding application.

Councillor Marriott declared a personal and prejudicial interest in budget item B9: Community Events Planning Partnership as he was on the committee for this organisation. Councillor Marriott agreed to leave the meeting during the consideration of the funding application.

Councillor Byrne declared a personal and prejudicial interest in budget item B4 Welcome club. Councillor Byrne agreed to leave the meeting during the consideration of the funding application.

74. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Abbey Community Meeting held on 15 December 2009 were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

75. INTRODUCTION OF NEW WARD SERGEANT - LOCAL POLICING PRIORITIES

New Ward Sergeant Michelle Zakoscielny was introduced to residents and talked about ward police priorities and upcoming issues affecting the Ward.

Sgt Zakoscielny explained that she had been working in the area since June 2009 (the police beat in the area was formerly called 8 Beat), and the beat was now aligned to the Abbey Ward boundaries and was covered by 6 PCs and 6 PCSOs.

She said the police set three priorities for the area in consultation with the public usually every three months. It was emphasised that feedback from the community in the ward was vital in setting the local priorities. Once the issues around a priority had been resolved a new priority would be set. The three current priorities for the Abbey ward were to deal with:

- 1) Anti-social behaviour around Tophill park, especially quad bike and mini-moto use.
- 2) Robberies on Abbey Park, which increased in the summer months.
- 3) Shed thefts in the Abbey Rise area. It was stated that several alarms had been fitted on outbuildings in the area, as part of the focus on this issue.

Residents were invited to give their views on the ward priorities during the next agenda item.

76. LOCAL ISSUES (WORD ON THE STREET)

Sgt Michelle Zakoscielny led a discussion about local issues that affected residents.

Residents raised concerns about speeding traffic during the daytime on Dersingham Road especially as there were a lot of small children in the area. Sgt. Zakoscielny stated police would visit the street and carry out speed tests with handheld cameras (DIPs) and pass the data on the Council's highways section. Residents also stated that speeding was also an issue on Parker Drive and Somerset Avenue, and that speed detection equipment on Parker Drive was faulty and inaccurate. The Chair stated that this would be raised with the Highways section of the council.

A resident stated that the problems with house burglaries on Parker Drive had improved with secure locks provided to some residents, but there was still an issue with shed burglaries. Sgt. Zakoscielny stated that the police were aware of this issue. The most effective way of catching culprits was by having police officers on the streets, and the police maintained as big a presence as possible with the officers they had available.

Residents also raised concerns about anti-social behaviour in the Ledbury Green area with groups of youths. It was stated that residents had an idea of the identity of the culprits but were unable to prove anything. Sgt. Zakoscielny stated that when feedback was provided to police they could start to deal with the problems and information could be given in confidence.

Action	Officer/Councillor Identified	Deadline
Carry out speed checks with handheld camera on Dersingham Drive	Sgt. Zakoscielny	As soon as possible
Alert Highways section of faulty speed detection equipment on Parker Drive	Steve Letten, Members Support Officer	As soon as possible

77. COMMUNITY GOOD NEWS

Sgt Michelle Zakoscielny talked about recent successes in the ward achieved by the police and partner community organizations.

It was stated that crime in the area had been generally reduced recently overall by 40%. For example there had only been one house burglary in the ward in the last two weeks, when there would usually had been on average one a day. Sgt. Zakoscielny explained that plain-clothes police patrols in the area had led to increased arrests for burglary.

Sgt. Zakoscielny thanked PC Warren Heath, residents, the Council's housing section and Councillor Byrne for their hard work and cooperation that enabled the recent closure of a local crack house by police. It was stated that this was a good example that showed that when residents talked to the police about issues in the ward, the issues could often be solved. It was hoped that similar successes would follow over the coming months and Sgt. Zakoscielny emphasised that residents could inform the police of problems in complete confidence.

The Chair thanked Sgt. Zakoscielny for her contribution.

78. CITY WARDENS

Barbara Whitcombe, City Warden Manager gave a presentation on the City Warden service.

Barbara explained that the City Warden service had initially been a pilot project that would now be rolled out to all wards in the city and every ward would have a City Warden from 12 April 2010.

Barbara informed the Community Meeting that from May 2010, the City Council would be launching a new service called "One Clear Leicester" whereby members of the public would be able to take a picture, send it to the City Council and then the team within the Council that was responsible for the issue would deal with the problem as quickly as possible.

Barbara explained that previously residents had identified the priorities for the ward and the City Wardens aimed to work on these areas along with problem hotspots they identified themselves when patrolling. These included littering, dog fouling, bins on streets and graffiti. The Wardens provided educational events and worked with the community, included school visits, carnivals and festivals.

Barbara said that the City Wardens had recently purchased litter pick kits to be used in Big Tidy Up litter picks across the city. Residents were informed that if they wanted to organise a litter pick in their area then they should contact the City Warden service who would help organise the clean up. The best contact for this was Angela Vodi on 2527001.

A DVD explaining further the services provided by the City Wardens was then played.

Barbara explained further some of the issues covered by the City Wardens:

- **Littering** – The City Wardens had attended assemblies in schools across the city to educate children about littering.
- **Dog Fouling** – There had been increased signage informing people of how to dispose of dog waste.
- **Bins on Streets** – Barbara stated that fines were not issued to residents leaving their bin on the street straight away, only after the following process:

Week 1: a leaflet was posted through the door that informed the resident of the issue

Week 2: a card was posted through the door that informed the resident of services available if they had difficulties removing the bin

Week 3: a visit would be arranged from Council Officers.

If there was still no co-operation after a visit, only then would a legal notice be served resulting in a fine.

- **Fly posting** – It was explained that last year 17,500 fly posters had been removed in the city. Clubs and individuals had also been prosecuted and club promoters in Sheffield no longer put up posters in Leicester as they were removed so quickly.
- **Fly tipping** – There were duty of care inspections where the waste disposal procedures of each business were inspected.
- **Graffiti** – A fixed penalty could be issued if someone was caught writing graffiti. Offensive material was removed within 24 hours, however it could take longer for the removal of other graffiti especially if on private property, as permission of the property owner was required before it was removed.
- **Nuisance Vehicles** – if there were two or more vehicles on the public highway for sale with the same telephone number then the individual selling the vehicles could be prosecuted. In the first instance a note would be placed on the car asking the owner to remove the vehicle. The Wardens could also deal with vehicles in disrepair left on the highway.

A resident asked whether anything could be done to prevent parking on grass verges as he had reported a problem with this to a housing officer and was concerned about the size of ridges created on the verges. Barbara advised that criminal damage to the verges was dealt with by the Highways section and obstruction dealt with by the police. If criminal damage was done City Wardens had the power to issue a fine and recoup costs.

A concern was raised that people repairing their cars could be unfairly penalised. Barbara explained that action would only be taken against businesses or if there was a persistent issue with a vehicle over time. If a car repair business were being

operated from a residential address this would be passed to the planning team to enforce.

A resident raised a concern about drainage problems at two car wash businesses on Abbey Lane, where water was spilling out of the premises on to the street. Barbara advised that the City Wardens could inspect the site and pass details to the pollution & planning teams to investigate it further.

The Chair thanked Barbara for her presentation.

Action	Officer/Councillor Identified	Deadline
Check drainage issues at 2 carwashes on Abbey Lane	Barbara Whitcombe, City Warden Manager	As soon as possible

79. BIFFA RECYCLING

Sophie Glover, Community Liaison Coordinator, Biffa provided information on recycling in the city. Currently around half of city residents recycled waste via the green boxes and Biffa wanted to work more with residents to increase recycling rates. Sophie said that currently 70% of waste was currently diverted from landfill and recycled. Waste went to the Ball Mill site at Bursom, where recyclable materials such as metals and organic waste were extracted. Biffa only collected three types of recyclable waste in the green recycling boxes as there was not enough space in the city for residents to have separate bags for different recyclable materials.

A DVD showing residents how to dispose of waste and how waste was processed was played.

A resident asked when recycling boxes would be made available at the flats at Kinley Road. Sophie replied that due to a lack of space boxes were not provided to residents in flats but recyclable material was extracted from the waste deposited in the main bins.

A resident questioned the lack of provision of dog bins in some areas and the European-style separate bins for different materials in the Highcross Shopping Centre was mentioned as a model for encouraging more recycling. Sophie stated that both these queries were dealt with by the Council's City Cleansing section, but dog waste could be put into street bins if it was placed into plastic bags. As all un-separated waste in the city was processed at Ball Mill separate waste bins for different materials may not be that effective in increasing recycling rates in the city.

A resident asked what happened to the waste generated by students in halls of residence in the city as he was aware that it was classed as trade waste in Coventry. Sophie replied that this waste was not classed as trade waste in Leicester and Biffa had contracts with Leicester and De Montfort universities to collect waste from communal bins, and collected a lot of glass bottles in particular. Not all the student halls of residence were located in the city, but trade waste in the city was also sent to Ball Mill.

A resident asked what would happen if the main waste processing machine at Ball Mill broke down as it dealt with all the city's waste. Sophie replied that it had broken down in the past on several occasions but repairs were done quickly so the service was unaffected. A team of engineers was onsite at all times; on one occasion when the site was affected by fire and the plant was out of action for a prolonged period collections were unaffected.

In response to a resident's question Sophie stated that fortnightly collections in Leicester were very unlikely because the high population density meant a weekly collection was a necessity.

The Chair thanked Sophie for the presentation.

80. BUDGET

Steve Letten, Members Support Officer gave an update on the current budget situation. At previous meetings there had been a lack of applications but thanks to a publicity effort there were now eleven applications to consider.

B1) Taxi Scheme

Steve introduced the first budget application that was for £100 to pay for taxis for representatives from St Patrick's Afternoon club to attend Community meetings. Kay Shorten of St Patrick's Afternoon club explained that without the Taxi service members of the club would find it very difficult to take part in Community meetings and the Forum for Older People. Steve said that it was a relatively small amount of money that provided a valuable service for elderly representatives.

RESOLVED:

That the funding application for the Taxi scheme be supported to the value of £100 from the Ward Community Fund.

B2) Friends of Mowmacre Easter Event

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

Steve introduced this application that was for £700 to fund an Easter event for children and parents on 8 April. Jacqueline Marriott, Friends of Mowmacre Treasurer explained that this event in the Easter holidays provided an opportunity to bring children of all ages and parents in the community together. Steve indicated that this event would be made available to parents and children in all areas of the ward not just Mowmacre Hill.

RESOLVED:

That the funding application for the Friends of Mowmacre Easter Event be supported to the value of £700 from the Ward Action Plan Fund, on the condition that the event be publicised in all areas of the ward.

Councillor Marriott returned to the meeting.

B3) Little Tykes Twinlakes Trip

Steve introduced this application that was an application for £1647 to arrange a trip to Twinlakes Family Theme Park in August for Little Tykes Parent and Toddler Group. Councillor Byrne explained that this trip was invaluable in giving local children a chance to leave local estates in safety for a day and experience a different environment. The application included provision for older children as well and parents would contribute towards the trip.

RESOLVED:

That the funding application for the Little Tykes Twinlakes Trip be supported to the value of £1500 from the Ward Action Plan Fund, the remaining £147 would be funded by the group.

B4) Welcome Club

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

Steve introduced this application that was for £1010 to fund various coach trips for the Welcome Club, an older persons social club.

A resident queried whether granting this application would be of much benefit to the wider community. It was felt that the club was a small, isolated group with membership limited to the Mowmacre part of the ward, and previously the club had been able to provide trips itself without financial support from Community Meeting funds.

Steve advised that conditions could be placed on any funds that required the Club to make the trips available to other community groups for the elderly such as St Patrick's Afternoon Club, and that the Club be required to advertise in the Stocking Farm and Abbey Rise areas to encourage membership from other parts of the ward.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application for the Welcome Club be supported to the value of £500 from the Ward Community Fund, on the condition that the trips were open to other community groups.

Councillor Byrne returned to the meeting.

B5) Zinthiya Ganeshpanchan Trust

Steve introduced this application and explained that the organisation worked with disadvantaged women including sex-workers and offenders and was based in the Abbey ward and Beaumont Leys. The application was for £1630 to produce a film to be shown to young people at youth centres, community centres and schools to raise awareness of the dangers of criminal lifestyles especially for young women.

Steve explained that the Trust had agreed to show the film initially in the Abbey ward before taking it citywide. Councillor Byrne said that this was a one off request and would help prevent 12-14 year olds from getting involved in crime and exposure to prison.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application for the Zinthyia Ganeshpanchan Trust be supported to the value of £1630 from the Ward Community Fund on the condition that the first showing was in the Abbey ward.

B6) North West Unity Boxing

Steve introduced this application and explained the boxing club was based at Home Farm in the ward and was holding a launch on 27 March between 3pm and 7pm. The club was aimed at young people but was also open to adults. The application was for £1800 towards an ABA approved ring, office equipment, set-up and rent costs. It was noted that boxing club had received funding from the ward fund already this year and had also received 2 grants from the Beaumont Leys Community meeting funds.

A resident questioned whether a boxing club genuinely required office equipment to function. Steve responded that in light of this and the fact the boxing club had already received funding it was proposed that the application be supported up to £825.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application for North West Unity Boxing Trust be supported to the value of £825 from the Community Cohesion Fund.

B7) Community Trust Library

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

Steve introduced this application and explained the application was for funds to supply CD audio books for the use of visually impaired library users. The applicant had agreed that as there was no urgent timescale on this application consideration could be deferred to the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

that consideration of the application be deferred to the next Abbey Community meeting.

Councillor Marriott returned to the meeting.

B8) Boxercise4Health

Steve introduced this application from Kelton McKenzie, an ex-professional boxer to run training sessions that gave young people an opportunity to gain experience of

teaching “boxercise”. The application was for £754 towards room hire and instructor costs.

A resident queried how appropriate it was to fund a commercial enterprise that included £200 of instructor’s fees. Steve responded that it was common practice for grants to be awarded to specialists who take a fee for their services. A requirement could be added that the sessions took place in the Abbey ward. The Chair stated that this was a one-off application with no follow up funding, and members were happy to the application support it on that basis.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application for Boxercise4Health be supported to the value of £754 from the Ward Community Fund on the condition that the venue and participants be drawn from the Abbey ward.

B9) Community Events Planning Partnership

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

Steve introduced this application that was to buy event management equipment including fencing and high visibility jackets to the value of £2160. This was to help to ensure that community events could go ahead safely.

A resident questioned the size of the bid given that events had been run successfully in the past without this funding, and felt that the amount for stewards seemed excessive.

Another resident felt that the equipment should be made available to other community groups and that would allow other groups to save money on stewarding costs and make their budgets go further benefiting the community. Also local events would benefit from stewards having local knowledge, for example the recent Skyride event.

Councillor Byrne said that the Partnership organised around 20 to 50 events per year. Steve advised that the Partnership had storage for the equipment and that a condition could be added that the equipment be insured to make sure it is safe and could be used as widely as possible.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application for Community Events Planning Partnership be supported to the value of £2160 from the Ward Community Fund on the condition that the safety equipment be insured and made available to other community groups.

B10) Playground Landscaping

Steve introduced this application that was for improvements to Mowmacre playground including resurfacing and additional woodchip. The application was for £2468.

Sergeant Zakoscielny queried whether the parks division had available funds to make these improvements without using the Community funds. The Chair stated that it could be agreed in principle, but deferred subject to an investigation to ascertain whether it could be paid for from the parks budget.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application for Playground Landscaping be supported to the value of £2468 from the Ward Action Plan Fund pending an investigation to discover whether funding could be secured from the parks budget.

Healthy living 5 a day – late item

Steve introduced the final application that had been received late. It was for a portable oven for cooking jacket potatoes to be served with vegetables as an alternative to chips and would be made available to other community groups and events. The applicant was happy to defer consideration until the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

that consideration of the application be deferred to the next Abbey Community meeting.

Steve explained that if these decisions were approved £26 remained from the budget to carry forward to the next financial year.

81. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A resident raised a concern about the condition of the road surface on Abbey Lane, especially near the Corporation Road junction as there had been a number of accidents and asked when it would be repaired. This concern would be passed on to the highways section.

Councillor Byrne announced that burglary reduction coffee morning mentioned at the previous meeting would be held at Stocking Farm Healthy Living Centre on 13 April at 10am. The police would be there to offer advice and money put aside from the Community fund could contribute to making properties more secure.

Action	Officer/Councillor Identified	Deadline
Ask Highways section for details on any planned road surface repairs on Abbey Lane	Steve Letten, Members Support Officer	As soon as possible

82. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8:37pm.