

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Monday, 14 June 2010

Held at: Sparkenhoe Community Primary School, Sparkenhoe Street

Who was there:

Councillor Iqbal Desai
Councillor Parmjit Singh Gill
Councillor Hussein Suleman

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	Police Issues
Talk to your local councillors or raise general queries	Talk to your Local Police about issues or raise general queries.
Organ Donation Campaign	City Warden
To receive information on the latest organ donor campaign.	Obtain information on the services available including the ‘One Clean Leicester’ and ‘Anti-graffiti’ programmes
Leicester Home Choice	Smoking Reduction
To receive information about the new way of finding out about Council housing.	Find out about the latest campaign around smoking reduction.
‘One Pass’	
Find out about entitlements available to concessionary bus-pass holders.	

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.

77. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Gill was elected as Chair of the Stoneygate Community Meeting for the 2010/11 municipal year.

78. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Michael Davies, Community Partner.

79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

80. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Stoneygate Community Meetings held on 2 February 2010 and 11 March 2010 were approved as correct records.

81. ORGAN DONATION PROGRAMME

As an additional item, the Chair agreed to accept a presentation from Dr Mike Ferguson on the latest organ donation programme. A copy of the full presentation can be found on the Leicester City Council website at <http://www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk>.

Following the presentation, it was queried whether public information around organ donation was provided in languages other than English. Dr Ferguson confirmed that the NHS only provided such materials in English, but that the information was accessible online in other languages, and that the offer of translations was available. Councillors were of the view that the NHS should distribute materials relating to organ donation in other languages to cater for the needs of different communities.

Dr Ferguson acknowledged that there was a need for awareness of organ donation to be promoted amongst BME communities. This was partly in light of the fact that members of BME communities were statistically more likely to develop kidney diseases.

The Councillors suggested that the presentation should also be given to a future meeting of the City Council’s Health Scrutiny Committee.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
That the organ donation presentation be given to a future meeting of the	Mary Louise-Harrison, Members Support Officer.	As appropriate

City Council's Health Scrutiny Committee.		
That the Stoneygate Community Meeting asks that literature relating to organ donation should be available to all languages relevant to people in Leicester.	Dr Mike Ferguson	As appropriate

82. LEICESTER HOME CHOICE

Kamina Rughani, Neighbourhood Housing Manager, was in attendance to provide a presentation on the new Leicester Home Choice (LHC) website.

Kamina explained that the scheme would become a more flexible way of offering social housing properties where the applicant plays an active part in the process. It was made clear that the scheme did not affect the overall policy of allocating social housing, and remains as one based on need.

Kamina explained the process of applying for a property via the Leicester Home Choice website. The first step was to download an application form from the website. Alternatively these could be obtained from Housing Options, or by telephone on 0116 252 7008. Once a form was completed, the applicant would receive a registration number used when choosing a property. Properties could be viewed on the LHC website either at home or at libraries and community centres. Alternatively, properties could be viewed at the property shop at the Housing Options Centre, by interactive television services or via the weekly vacancy sheet.

When applying for property, Kamina stated that applicants would need to supply their HA reference number, their security PIN number and the advert reference number. The next step was that officers list those who have applied for a particular property before offering the property to the successful applicant. Kamina advised that if a response had not been received within 7 days then it is unlikely that the applicant had been successful.

Kamina further stated that an individual could apply for up to three properties per week. If three refusals were given within a twelve-month period then the individual concerned would receive reduced points.

In response to a question from a Member of the Public, it was confirmed that there were between 13,000 and 15,000 people on the waiting list at any given time.

In response to a point raised around access, Kamina confirmed that the website could be accessed at libraries and community venues. The Ward Councillors stated that there were no such venues in the Stoneygate Ward which placed their

constituents at a disadvantage. Councillor Suleman suggested that officers should investigate the possibility of using the Mayfield Centre as an access point.

The Ward Councillors also requested that statistics on the number of council-owned properties in relation to other wards be made available to them.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
That officers consider using the Mayfield Centre as an access point for the Leicester HomeChoice website.	Ann Branson, Divisional Director, Housing Strategy and Options.	As appropriate
That statistics on the number of council-owned properties in relation to other wards be given to the Stoneygate Ward Councillors	Kamina Rughani, Neighbourhood Housing Manager.	As soon as possible

83. HIGHWAYS REPAIRS UPDATE

In the absence of an officer from the City Council to provide an update on highways repairs issues in Stoneygate, Councillor Gill read out a written update that had been supplied by officers.

The update stated that officers had responded to 131 public reports and had raised 148 work orders since last January. In terms of the wider highway maintenance programme, funding arrangements were being reviewed with a view to increasing expenditure on improving the condition of highways. The meeting heard that officers were focusing works on the roads in the worst condition and which carried a significant volume of traffic, but that a list of severely affected side streets had also been prepared. Those local streets on the list included Bartholemew Street, Rowsley Street and Sawley Street and that the total cost of carrying out the repairs was £250,000. It was made clear by officers that significant increases in expenditure were required for this work to be carried out, and that this was made more difficult by national budget constraints.

Members were not satisfied that the national budget outlook was a sufficient reason for not carrying out highways repairs work and that this work had been required for 10 years. The Chair requested that definitive timescales for carrying out the £250,000 of highways repair works be supplied to Ward Councillors. It was also requested that the Service Director, Regeneration, Transport and Highways be asked to attend the next meeting to respond to the concerns identified.

Councillor Suleman further stated that as the Stoneygate Ward did not receive the same level of service as other wards in areas such as community centres, libraries and youth work, that there was a stronger case for the highway repair works to be undertaken in Stoneygate as a priority.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
That definitive timescales for carrying out the £250,000 of highways repair works be supplied to Ward Councillors.	Martin Fletcher, Acting Group Manager, Highway Maintenance.	August 2010
That the Director, Regeneration, Transport and Highways be asked to attend the next meeting to respond to the concerns identified.	Jeff Miller, Director, Regeneration, Transport and Highways	August 2010

84. POLICING ISSUES

PCSO Sam Truntell was in attendance to provide a brief update on policing issues in the Stoneygate Ward.

PCSO Truntell explained that an operation to combat local burglary had been set up and had been successful. He also reported that there had been four car thefts this month to date compared to just one in the entire previous month.

The meeting heard that there had been an increased police presence in the area surrounding Medway Primary School in light of an increase in problems with drug crime in that particular area. Since the operation commenced, there had been 10 spot checks which had resulted in two cautions.

Woody Wood, Community Partner, was of the view that there had been ongoing concern with regard to drug dealing in the Biddulph Street area. In response, PCSO Truntell reported that there would be an increased police presence in this area within the next month.

A member of the public raised concerns around the proposals for a residents parking scheme for Highfields. Councillor Gill agreed that an item on this matter would be considered at the next community meeting.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
That an item on the proposals for a residents parking scheme for Highfields be brought to the next	Jeff Miller, Director, Regeneration, Transport and Highways.	2 August 2010

meeting.		
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85. CITY WARDENS

Barbra Whitcombe, City Warden Manager and Chiraq Ruda, City Warden for the Stoneygate Ward was in attendance to provide an update on the recent work that had taken place within the ward.

Chiraq introduced himself as the new Warden for Stoneygate and had been in post since April. He explained that he had attempted to pilot a number of new schemes in relation to dog bins, pigeon feeding and bins on streets. He also stated that he was happy to attend any local meeting and that he worked flexible hours which included evenings and weekends. The Ward Councillors pledged their support to Chiraq's work within Stoneygate.

Hughie Blair, Graffiti Services Manager was also in attendance and announced that a new campaign to combat graffiti across the City was to launch on 22 June 2010. If anyone encountered problems with graffiti, he encouraged them to report it by telephoning 0116 2527001.

86. BUDGET

Steve Letten, Members Support Officer, introduced the Stoneygate Community Meeting Budget for 2010/11.

Steve explained that a total of £17,000 was available for the year, with £10,000 of this being allocated from the Ward Action Plan fund, £5,000 from the Ward Community Fund and £2,000 from the Community Cohesion Fund. Furthermore, it was reported that a sum of £2,556 had been carried forward from the previous year that had been earmarked for environmental improvements.

Members considered the following applications for funding which had been received.

a) Wimbledon Fever – request for £614 from Leicestershire Tennis Club.

This was a joint application for funding from the Castle and Stoneygate Wards. The application was for the provision of structured coaching sessions on Victoria Park and was also for the purchasing of tennis equipment.

Members were minded to reject the application as it had been submitted by Sports Development, Leicester City Council, and felt that this should be funded from central budgets. Members were also concerned that there was no guarantee that an equal proportion of participants lived in the Stoneygate Ward.

RESOLVED:

That the application be rejected for the reasons outlined above.

b) Colours of Health – request for £4,533 from the Centre for Indian Classical Dance.

This was a joint application for funding from the Castle, Spinney Hills and Stoneygate Community Meetings. The application was for the provision of 20 dance workshops at 6 different venues across the three wards. The application also covered costs around publicity, marketing, DVDs, photography, administration costs, the purchase of instruments, performances and hall hire.

The Members expressed concerns around several of the costs included within the application. They supported the principle of the application and agreed that it be submitted to the City Council's central community cohesion budget, rather than the Ward funds.

RESOLVED:

That the application be submitted to the City Council's community cohesion budget.

87. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8:20pm

