

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Tuesday, 4 October 2011

Held at: The Tudor Centre, Bewcastle Grove

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.

Ward Councillors and General Information Talk to your local councillors or raise general queries	Police Issues Talk to your Local Police about issues or raise general queries.
Mowmacre Tenants and Residents Association (TARA) Representatives of the Mowmacre TARA were in attendance.	Healthy Living Centre Find out about the latest work taking place at the Healthy Living Centre.
The New Orange Bag Recycling Scheme Find out more about this scheme which is to shortly be introduced.	School Admissions Find out more about the school admission s service in Leicester.
Housing Services Speak to officers in relation to local housing services.	Youth Activities in Abbey Find out more about the programme of youth activities within the Abbey Ward.
Wotbox Find out more about the Wotbox social media initiative.	Library Services Find out more about local library services.

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 Byrne was elected as Chair for the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2011 were agreed as a correct record.

5. THE NEW ORANGE BAG RECYCLING SCHEME

Kimberley Stones, Biffa, was present and gave a presentation on the new orange bag recycling scheme, which would be implemented across Leicester from 17 October.

Kimberley stated that the new orange bag scheme would replace the existing green box recycling scheme, which had generally low participation rates. There were restrictions around the permitted contents of green boxes, whilst residents could place several types of recyclables into the new orange bag. It was however made clear that materials such as food waste, garden waste and nappies could not be placed in orange bags.

Kimberley explained that a pilot study for the scheme had taken place within four areas of Leicester, and following its success, a decision had been taken to extend the scheme to the whole of the city.

Although most properties in Leicester would receive the service by October, Kimberley explained that the programme could not be immediately rolled out to the whole of the City and that the programmes would be phased over the next twelve months to include all properties in Leicester. Kimberley confirmed that many blocks of flats would not be included in the scheme initially.

6. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Steve Letten, Service Manager, Admissions & Exclusions, Leicester City Council, was in attendance to provide a brief overview of the School Admissions service.

Steve's presentation included the following points:

- The timetable of applying for a school place for the 2012/13 school year was described. It was made clear that offers would be made to parents by the week-beginning 16 April 2012.

- In respect of starting junior school, parents would only need to apply for a junior school place if their child was in Year 2 of an infant school, but that there was no automatic right for a child attending an infant to school to transfer to any junior school.
- Parents were encouraged to apply now for children currently in year 6 who would be transferring to secondary school in Autumn 2012. The deadline for this was 31 October 2011.
- General Application Forms had to be completed if parents wished to transfer their child's school mid-term.
- A robust set of criteria was used for allocating pupils to a particular school with priority given firstly to children in care of the local authority.
- Parents were asked to indicate three preferences when applying for schools. It was stated that it was vital for applicants to rank the schools in an order of preference.
- Late applications were considered after those received on time. This often resulted in such applicants not receiving places at their preferred schools.
- An independent appeals panel was in place to consider cases of those who did not receive their preferences.

7. COMMUNITY PARTNER UPDATE

Norman Rochester reported that there had been concerns that some areas of the ward were not being informed about community meetings. It was however made clear that the one neighbourhood newsletter was now circulated to all households in the Abbey and Beaumont Leys Ward.

Norman also reported that he had devised a form which asked residents for their views on local issues and to state any issues which they felt were required to be brought to attention. Of the 500 circulated, Norman stated that only three were returned, but he confirmed that he would attempt to gain further responses from residents.

Norman explained that in the Abbey Rise area in particular, there were significant problems with furniture that had been dumped and with hazardous gates. He agreed to write to the Housing Department to provide detail of such problems. Norman also explained that the City Mayor was to visit the Abbey Rise area in the coming week for a patch-walk.

Norman stated that residents were beginning to approach him more frequently and he felt that this was as a result of the article in the One Neighbourhood magazine in which he promoted his role as an Abbey Ward Community Partner.

A resident expressed concern with regards to the lengthy time taken to replace broken windows within council accommodation which had been vandalised. John Thomson, Area Housing manager, stated that the process for replacing broken window was simple, but that an incident number was required to be obtained from the Police before a damaged window could be replaced.

A further matter brought to the attention of the Area Housing Manger related to the deterioration of a garage on Rainsford Crescent, and concern was raised with

regards to potential exposure to asbestos. The Area Housing Manager agreed to inspect the property in question, and confirmed that enforcement action would be taken if there was any potential danger to the public.

8. POLICE UPDATE

A Police Officer was in attendance and stated that within the past 14 days, there had been 14 household burglaries, eight vehicle thefts and one robbery. It was however made clear that there had been a sudden increase in recent burglaries, and that the figures beyond the last two weeks were far less concerning. The Police Officer stated that this had now become a local policing priority and that as a result, there would be greater visibility of police officers.

The meeting was informed that an offender who had committed eleven burglaries and specifically targeted schools had been imprisoned for a minimum of three years. Furthermore, a local youth had recently been arrested for offenses relating to vehicle theft. This individual had also been remanded in custody.

A resident spoke of significant problems with parking along Parker Drive, and stated that this was primarily caused by excessive parking of those who worked at the neighbouring factories. The Police Officer stated that the responsibility for parking matters rested with the City Council but reminded the meeting that it was illegal to park vehicles on public pathways.

9. CITY WARDENS

Jessica Rayns, Senior City Warden, was in attendance and confirmed that there was no longer a single city warden designated solely to the Abbey Ward, and that the service across the whole city had generally reduced.

Jessica informed residents that several fixed penalty notices had been recently issued which related to dog fouling and littering offenses.

Norman Rochester requested that the City Wardens service should specifically target Kinley Road in terms of the significant level of litter and dog fouling present there. John Thomson, Area Housing manager, also confirmed that the level of rubbish collected on Kinley Road was concerning.

10. BUDGET

Jerry Connolly provided the meeting with an update on the latest position with the Abbey Community Meeting budget.

Jerry announced that the Councillors had agreed to consider two applications that had been received after the agenda had been despatched.

1. Leicestershire Police Abbey Beat Team– Police Shop Christmas Crime Prevention Operation

Amount requested: £1,035

It was explained that the Police would be opening a shop at Beaumont Leys Shopping Centre which will allow people to drop in and seek advice or reassurance around crime prevention.

It was stated that the application was for various items of crime prevention equipment which included UV ink marker-pens, wall spikes and anti-drink spiking bottle tops.

The Police Officer present encouraged residents to collect the various items described from the shop. It was confirmed that the Fire Service operated a similar facility last year and that this this generated significant success.

RESOLVED:

That a sum of £1,035 be supported towards this application.

2. Beaumont Leys LPU – Community Speed-watch

Amount Requested: £500

Jerry explained that this application was split between the Abbey, Beaumont Leys and New Parks wards to purchase a hand held speed camera device, which would be utilised on an on-going basis to respond to issues around speeding within the three wards.

RESOLVED:

That a sum of £500 be supported towards this application.

11. DATES OF FUTURE COMMUNITY MEETINGS

It was confirmed that future Abbey Community Meetings would take place on the following dates:

Tuesday 6 December 2011

Tuesday 28 February 2012

12. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7:50pm.

