

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:30 pm, Thursday, 12 January 2012

Held at: Rushey Mead Recreation Centre, Gleneagles Avenue

Who was there:

Councillor Culdipp Singh Bhatti MBE
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Councillor Piara Singh Clair MBE

Councillor Ross Willmott

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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
Recycling Scheme	Watermead Park
Sainsbury’s	City Wardens

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 Willmott was elected as Chair

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Rt Hon Keith Vaz MP.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were received.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

the minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.

5. LOCAL POLICING

PC Rob Puntney, Leicestershire Constabulary, provided an update on policing in the Rushey Mead Ward. The crime figures for the last three months were compared with the previous year. Crime was down by around 6%, although there had been an increase in burglaries. To tackle the increase window alarms had been distributed and were having an impact as numbers had dropped since October. In addition theft from unattended vehicles had increased and robbery had increased from four to six. Rob noted that thefts from young people, such as the taking of mobile phones, were often carried out by someone known to the victim. He asked that victims come forward to report the incident.

A resident queried if certain areas in Rushey Mead had seen an increase. Rob explained that Upperton Park and Lockerby Shops had incidents of phones been taken from young people. He noted that arrests had been made.

6. PROPOSED SAINSBURY'S STORE MELTON ROAD (FORMER GE LIGHTING SITE)

Bob Keys and Tim Watkins, Sainsbury's, attended the meeting to discuss the proposal of a new Sainsbury's store on Melton Road. It was reported that in addition to this store the existing store on Belgrave Road was being redeveloped. Sainsbury's were in attendance at the meeting to gain feedback from the local residents regarding the proposal and noted no planning application had been submitted. There was to be a public exhibitions on 20 January (1pm-7pm) and 21 January (9am-1pm) at St Theodore's Church. Suggestions and views through the consultation process could influence the final plans to be submitted.

The Chair explained that Sainsbury's would need to make a financial contribution (section 106 agreement) to the area if their planning application was approved. Where the funding was allocated it would be influenced through the planning process and community input was needed. Sainsbury's requested that suggestions for what was needed in the area be passed to the ward councillors.

The following was discussed at the meeting:

Section 106 agreement

- Sainsbury's indicated that as part of the overall redevelopment of the site and the current store site on Belgrave Road they would be prepared to fund the demolition of the Belgrave Road flyover.
- Residents considered that priorities in the Rushey Mead ward were:
 - The provision of community facilities (possibly a community centre)
 - Improvements to the Troon Way-Melton Road junction to take into account current safety issues and future increased traffic flows.
- Residents expressed concern that the impression was given that the Council needed the Section 106 funding for projects in the area and that this need for funds would drive the application rather than local need for a new store. Members explained that the section 106 agreement was part of any large planning application as provision would need to be made for the local community and would not influence other planning considerations.

Traffic issues

- Concern was raised regarding existing traffic problems and road safety at the Troon Way junction, as well as traffic access and volumes once the store was open.
- It was requested that the Council's and applicant's traffic studies be made available to local residents and groups, which should not be based on surveys taken in holiday periods or other low traffic volume times.

Development phase

- Following the disturbance to residents neighbouring the site during the demolition of the GE lighting building concern was expressed that traffic, noise, dust and disruption would have an impact during construction. It was requested that the Council be involved in the needs of the local residents.
- There was concern about the impact of parked cars around the site, whether on grass verges or in side streets and the need to enforce parking and obstruction of traffic regulations.
- It was suggested that a pedestrian crossing might be needed in Jacklin Drive during construction.

Operational phase

- Concern was expressed that the store would attract anti-social and criminal behaviour. PC Puntney commented that security needed to be built into the design and consultation was needed at a local level. Sainsbury's commented that it had a strict policy on anti-social behaviour and criminality at or around its sites.
- As 24 hour stores were expensive to run Sainsbury's did not run them in the Midlands and had no current plans to implement a change.
- There would be 600 jobs across both stores.

Planning and development consideration

- Access to the site was a cause of continuing concern to residents regarding how access would be placed off Melton Road and the number of access points.
- Sainsbury's reported there was no access to the new store off Troon Way. Detailed consideration would be given on safe, efficient and easy access to the store. This would need to be balanced against the requirements of existing and future traffic, local, commuter and store-generated traffic.
- Concern about increased overall traffic levels caused by aggregated traffic.
- Great care would be taken, in particular during the planning and development phases, to minimise local impact from the business units, however the site had industrial planning permission and jobs would be created beyond those relating to the superstore and associated petrol station.
- Concern was expressed for local retailers and it was queried what protections the council would offer long-term local businesses who were effected. Sainsbury's commented that they looked to work positively with local businesses and could help to retain or improve the diversity of local outlets, based on experience in other areas.
- The store would be a one storey building development.
- Sainsbury's noted design concern regarding the proposed removal of protected trees to the south east of the site and the indicative routes across the green council-owned band to the east of the site.
- It was noted the outline proposals to remove trees had been made on the basis of advice from planning officers and on consideration of security and personal safety. Further investigation was needed to resolve this and other issues. Security by design should also underpin the industrial units development.
- Tree planting for screening and environmental purposes would need discussing further with the applicant and with local residents and interest groups.

Residents from the Townsend Close area requested a meeting with Councillor. It was agreed the Councillors would meet with the residents. It was also suggested that planning officer attend the next meeting to answer further questions.

7. CITY WARDEN UPDATE

Kerry Wellington, City Warden, reported on the work of the City Wardens in the Rushey Mead ward.

Kerry explained that she could work with residents during the development of the GE site to help it run as smoothly as possible for them. It was the role of the wardens to improve the city environment.

The flower beds designed by the school children at Sandfield School had been planted and would make an improvement to the area. It was also suggested that the children could create a mural to make the area look better.

It was reported that there had been prosecutions on people who had carried out fly tipping. If residents were to identify any problems they should contact the City Wardens.

A resident queried the cars parking on the grass verge on Jacklin Drive and asked if the area could be paved. Kerry noted that there were no parking restrictions and as long as there was no obstruction there were no powers to stop the drivers. It was noted that the grass vergers were there to absorb water.

The meeting discussed problems of traffic accidents due to parked cars on Wyvern School, where cars had demolished brick walls. PC Puntney explained that cameras were unlikely to be placed at the location as there were other areas of higher number of crime. Kerry suggested that an awareness event could take place at the school. Councillor Bhatti reported that the issue had been passed to officers following a resident contacting him.

8. COUNCIL BUDGET 2012/13

The Chair reported that the Council had published the Council budget consultation. The consultation was available on the Council website and the deadline was 31 January 2012.

Concern was expressed that the 20 mile hour zones were not included for consideration. It was noted that this was to be investigated by scrutiny.

A resident queried why the Council would reject the funding from the Government to freeze council tax. It was explained that the amount was only for one year which would cause a short fall in funding the following year and a possible significant increase in council tax.

9. BUDGET

The Chair introduced applications for funding that had been received as detailed on the agenda and they were considered as follows:

BHANGRA EXERCISE STEPS

Submitted by Rushey Mead Library

AGREED: that the request for funding of £500 be supported.

CEREMONY FOR ACHIEVEMENT OF CHILDREN

Submitted by Wyvern Primary School

AGREED: that the request for funding of £1,200 be supported.

FUNDING OF ROOM RENTAL

Submitted by Ladies Social Group

AGREED: that the request for funding of £150 be supported.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Congratulations were given to Winston Nurse who had been awarded an MBE.

11. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

