

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Tuesday, 27 March 2012

Held at: Wesley Hall, Mere Road,

Who was there:

Councillor Dr Chowdhury

Councillor Dawood

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 Members of the public could talk to their local councillors and raise general queries	Police Issues Pc 1395 Michael Woods was present to answer queries relating to Policing issues in the area.
City Warden Darren Evans could offer advice on street scene enforcement issues in Spinney Hills.	Traffic Issues Members of the community could talk to Satish Shah, Leicester City Council, Highways Design and Maintenance, about traffic issues in Spinney Hills.

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.

65. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Dawood was elected as Chair and welcomed everyone to the Spinney Hill Community Meeting.

66. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Aqbany and representatives from the Princes Trust.

67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made at this time.

68. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillors were asked to agree the minutes of the previous Spinney Hill Community Meeting held 28 November 2011.

An amendment to paragraph 3 of minute item 59: City Council Combined Heat and Power Project was requested, to read £15m instead of £15 as follows:

COFELY had invested some £15m in the Leicester scheme to provide new pipework to connect new and existing systems and to link into the existing system.

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the previous Spinney Hill Community Meeting held 28 November 2011, subject to the above amendment, be confirmed as a correct record.

69. THE PRINCES' TRUST

As apologies for absence had been received from the Princes' Trust, there was no presentation on this item.

70. HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC UPDATE

Satish Shah, Highways Design and Maintenance was present at the meeting and gave a brief update on the highways queries relating to St Matthew's Estate, that had been raised at the previous meeting.

Widening of Christow Street at the location of the 21 / 21A bus stop.

Obstruction problems had been reported on Christow Street, but this had been a bus route for many years and the bus stop location had not changed. The bus companies had not reported any problems. It was possible that recent obstruction issues may have occurred temporarily due to other factors such as irresponsible parking. At present there were no plans to widen the road.

Traffic Calming

Traffic calming measures were introduced in the estate in the late 1990s and currently there were no plans to make any changes to these.

Child safety around the mini roundabouts

The City Council maintained a database of all road traffic accidents that resulted in personal injury. There was no evidence of an injury accident problem at the Malabar Road / Madras Road / Manitoba Road mini roundabouts and there were no proposals to have them removed.

Pedestrian Crossing outside the Community Centre at Malabar Road

There were no outstanding requests for pedestrian crossings within the estate, but this request has been added to the list. The first step would be to undertake a survey which would determine whether or not a crossing would be justified. If a crossing was justified the crossing would be added to the waiting list and implemented in priority order, when funding was available. There was at present a delay on the survey work due to resourcing implications.

71. POLICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE

Representatives from the Leicestershire Constabulary were in attendance to provide an update on policing developments and successes within the Spinney Hills Ward.

Nazira Vania, Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator addressed the meeting and explained that a patch walk, involving ward councillors, council officers and the Police had been held on 7 March. Nazira explained that observations from the patch walk were as follows:

- Park on Vulcan Road – there were concerns that this was poorly lit and the possibility of obtaining a floodlight which would operate on a timer was being considered.
- The play equipment on the park looked shabby and neglected.
- Concerns had been raised about occurrences of anti-social behaviour at the seating area and options to solve this problem were being considered.
- Concerns had been raised that the street lighting there was inadequate and the possibility of replacing the yellow lighting by a stronger white lighting was being considered.

Nazira explained that one of the aims of the anti-social behaviour unit was to tackle the problem by encouraging people to change their behaviour. Youth Services had

been out in the area at the times when young people were reported to have been congregating, but did not find any groups present on those occasions; however they would be working during the Easter period. Some individuals had already been identified as being involved with anti-social behaviour and an action plan was being drawn up. There had been reports from residents of young people drinking alcohol, and although the Police had witnessed older people drinking, they had not witnessed any under-age drinking.

Nazira added that there was a general issue of confidence in the community in reporting problems to the Police and to the council.

Pc Woods explained that it was not necessarily an offence for young people to congregate in groups although the Police did need to take action if those people were drinking or taking drugs. In response to a question, he explained that the Police had the power to make a dispersal notice, but evidence was needed before this could be done.

Residents commented that people felt intimidated by the groups of youths but were frightened to report the problem and also scared to attend the Community Meeting. They explained that they had witnessed groups of youths hanging around, shouting, swearing and drinking. There had been a recent stabbing in the local area and people's property was also being damaged. Comments were made that the situation was currently worse than it had ever been.

Concerns were raised by residents that when incidents were reported to the Police, they were too slow in responding. Pc Woods explained that calls to them were graded according to their priority and they were required to adhere to the system for response.

A resident commented that she had found the Police very helpful when she had previously reported problems to them. She added that sometimes young people gathered in groups on the streets because they had no- where to go.

Pc Woods responded the anti-social behaviour was a priority of the Police and he asked people to phone 101 to report such problems. Burglary was also a priority of the Police and this was a more frequent occurrence during the warmer weather. He asked residents as well to be careful to maintain security in the home and close down stairs windows at night.

Priya Thamotheram , from the Highfields Centre commented that Leicester had disproportionately high rates of 'stop and search' for Afro-Caribbean and young Black / Asian people, although the Police were working hard to try to address this. He added that more youth workers were needed and more needed to be done to engage with young people in the area. There were sports and arts facilities at the Highfield Centre and he was happy to work with Nazira and her team to see what could be done to improve the current situation.

The Chair summarised the discussion and commented that it was not acceptable that people should be frightened to leave their homes and that he needed to have further talks with Chief Inspector Rob Nixon and Inspector Bill Knopp. He asked Pc

Woods if Police patrols could be increased in the area and Pc Woods confirmed that this had already happened.

The Chair referred to the Action Plan that Nazira had mentioned earlier in the discussion and asked that this should be delivered in a leaflet format to residents in Vulcan Road, Florence Road and Grove Road so that they knew what was happening.

The Chair further suggested that meetings with Nazira, 2 or 3 residents and himself should be arranged on a regular basis, to discuss and pass on information. He advised that a first meeting of this group should be held before the next main Community Meeting.

72. CITY WARDENS SERVICE PRESENTATION

Darren Evans, City Warden for the Spinney Hill Ward, explained that he was also present on the patch walk that Nazira reported on. He had felt that the play area on Vulcan Road was very shabby and he had subsequently liaised with Parks Officers and the Community Payback Team in order to improve the area. They planned to paint the railings, tidy up the area and hopefully add some plants as well. It was hoped that the Community Meeting budget would provide some funding in support of the project. Members of the community were asked to see Darren if they were interested in helping to tidy up and improve the park.

Darren also asked members of the public to contact him if they had any concerns over rubbish, fly tipping or bins being left out on streets.

73. HIGHFIELDS ACTION PLAN - UPDATE FROM PRIYA THAMOTHERAM

The Chair invited Priya to provide an update on the Highfields Action Plan. Priya made the following points:

- A meeting had been held with the City Mayor's Team and Chief Inspector Rob Nixon.
- Issues raised included concerns over the high rates of youth unemployment and a need for general improvements in the area. It was noted that many homes in Highfields did not have their own gardens.
- Members of the community were asked to find out more about the plan; consultants would still be taking responses until the end of March.

Priya also drew people's attention to the Highfields Festival which would be held on Saturday 30 June (all day and evening). The festival would include a wide variety of activities including a concert featuring some of the young people from the area.

74. BUDGET

Anita Patel, the Member Support Officer to the Spinney Hill Community Meeting presented the Community Meeting budget and explained that this was the final meeting of the financial year. A large number of funding applications had been received; some of which had arrived late and would be deferred to the new financial year. It was as yet unknown as to how much would be allocated to the community meeting budgets for 2012/13.

Anita explained that the Ward Councillors had made decisions on the following funding applications:

Application 1: Soft Touch Arts – Comedy Shorts Film Making

Amount Requested: £376

RESOLVED:

that it be agreed that the funding application from Soft Touch Arts be partially supported to the value of £350.

Application 2: Cranbourne Club and Day Care for the Elderly – Travel and rent expenses for the elderly to attend day care at the Neighbourhood Centre.

Amount Requested: £1500

RESOLVED:

that the funding application from Cranbourne Club and Day care for the Elderly be partially supported to the value of £1000

Application 3: Police and City Council Community Safety (Joint Bid) – Burglary Target Hardening Project.

Amount Requested: £700

RESOLVED:

that the funding application from the Police and City Council Community Safety be supported in full to the value of £700

Application 4: Leicester Lions Football Club – Easter Football Tournament.

Amount Requested: £1050.

RESOLVED:

that the funding application from the Leicester Lions Football Club be partially supported to the value of £950.

Application 5: St Peter's and Stoughton St TARA - Highfields Primary School Trip to the Space Centre.

Amount Requested: £200

RESOLVED:

that the funding application from St Peter's and Stoughton St TARA be supported in full to the value of £200

Application 6: Azad House Residents – Coach Trip to Skegness for Elderly Residents.

Amount Requested: £600 (£300 also sought from Latimer Ward)

RESOLVED:

that the funding application be partially supported to the value of £400.

Application 7: Leicester Stars – Police Integration through Football Project for Young People.

Amount Requested: £1662

RESOLVED:

that it be agreed that the funding application from Leicester Stars be partially supported to the value of £1000.

Anita then explained that the following applications had been received late and would be deferred to the next meeting.

Application 8 – Sikh Community Centre - Gymnasium equipment and new musical instruments:

Amount Requested £3000.

Application 10: Highfields Library – Health Matters in Highfields

Amount Requested £675

Application 11: North Evington Childrens' Centre

Amount Requested: £1350

Application 12: Highfields Community Association: Highfields Festival Event.

Amount Requested: £2000 (from each of Spinney Hills, Castle and Stoneygate Wards).

Application 13: AK Fitness – Easter Dance and drama workshops

Amount Requested: £675 (from each of Coleman, Evington, Spinney Hills and Stoneygate Wards)

Anita informed the meeting that Application 9, Shri Guru Ravidass Temple and Community Centre for the celebration of Shri Guru cultural event had been rejected because the event had already taken place.

Anita referred to the request from Darren, the City Warden for funding for the improvements to the park on Vulcan Road and asked him to submit a funding bid to the Community Meeting budget.

The meeting heard that after the funding bids had been approved, a balance of £3317 remained in the community meeting budget and Councillors had agreed to commit this amount to environmental and traffic works in the Ward.

75. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.47 pm.

