

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Tuesday, 21 August 2012

Held at: Stocking Farm Youth and Community Centre, Marwood Road

Who was there:

Councillor Harshad Bhavsar
Councillor Annette Byrne
Councillor Colin Marriott

12. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Bhavsar was elected as Chair for the meeting.

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Byrne declared an interest as a member of the Mowmacre Events Planning Partnership and as a member of the Welcome Club, being organisations which were the subject of grant applications under the Ward Community Budget item.

Councillor Marriott declared an interest as a member of the Mowmacre Events Planning Partnership, being an organisation which was the subject of a grant application under the Ward Community Budget item.

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, the interests declared were not considered to be Disclosable Pecuniary Interests but were Other Disclosable Interests and were not considered significant as to prejudice Members judgement of the public interest.

Members were, therefore, not precluded from considering and determining the grant applications.

15. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the Minutes of the previous Abbey Community Meeting held on 22 May 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

16. ABBEY WARD ACTION PLAN - UPDATE

Jerry Connolly, Member Support Officer, referred to the current Ward Action Plan and advised the meeting that views and opinions were being sought to update the Plan.

He advised that a questionnaire had been issued to community members and stakeholder organisations which asked for priority action areas to be identified. It was noted that the questionnaire was also available online.

Jerry informed the meeting that the priority areas outlined in the current plan concerned areas of anti-social behaviour problems, a need for increased out of school activities for children, and a need to reduce unemployment levels.

It was noted that the revised and updated Ward Action Plan would influence future grants from the £18,000 annual Ward Community Budget. Applications for grant funding which included proposed outcomes that were in accordance with the Plan would be more likely to receive favourable consideration. The importance of input to the consultation stage of the Plan's review was therefore highlighted and noted.

The meeting thanked Jerry for his report and community members agreed to complete the questionnaire forms to identify their suggested priority action areas.

17. POLICE REPORT

Sergeant Michelle Zakoscielny provided an overview of current Police priorities within the Ward.

Michelle referred to the recent use of a mobile speed camera which had led to around 50 speeding prosecutions. The streets where the camera had been principally utilised were reported as Marwood Road, Halifax Drive, Bedale Road and Parker Drive. In discussing the effectiveness of the camera it was reported that many drivers had slowed on noticing the camera. Although no offence was committed it was considered an effective operation as the camera had acted as a deterrent against speeding. In this respect the meeting was reminded of the requirement on Police Officers to be fully visible, including using high visibility clothing, when undertaking the operation.

The meeting welcomed the use of the camera within the Ward and members of the community were asked to identify areas for its continued use. Cheltenham Road and Somerset Drive were discussed and agreed as appropriate areas for future operations.

In respect of crime figures generally, Michelle reported that a decline in reported crimes had fallen, including a significant fall in the numbers of thefts, burglaries and robberies.

Anti-social behaviour continued to present problems and specific areas being targeted were reported. Michelle asked members of the community to report all instances of anti-social and nuisance behaviour, to help the Police to deal with the problem and to identify trends in behaviour.

In conclusion Michelle reported with regret that Warren Heath was to leave the Local Policing Unit that covered the Ward, as he had been selected to join the Force Squad from 3 September 2012. The meeting expressed that their best wishes be forwarded to Warren and that he be thanked for his past contribution to the community.

The meeting noted the Police update.

At this point of the meeting the Chair was advised that young people who were members of the neighbouring youth club were in attendance and wished to address the meeting. In view of the nature of the issue the Chair agreed to consider the following additional item:

18. YOUTH CENTRE CLOSURE AND STAFF REDUNDANCY

The Chair welcomed a group of young people to the meeting who had arrived to ask questions about the closure of the neighbouring youth club and the resultant redundancy of the youth worker, Haj Kaur.

Three young people were invited to address the meeting. They referred to the importance of the club in the community and spoke of their personal experiences where the club had helped them to be active and not to be involved in anti-social behaviour. They commented on the number of young people that had also been helped by the club and in particular by Haj as the youth worker.

The young people had organised a petition to reinstate Haj to her job and to continue with the youth club. They felt strongly that the Council had made a mistake to close the club and stated that anti-social and nuisance behaviour would probably result.

They asked Councillors to consider the petition and to support them their aim to reopen the club and reinstate Haj to her job.

The three young people who made the address were congratulated on their initiative to attend the meeting and raise the issue.

It was agreed that the young people should be supported and that the issue be investigated fully by Ward Councillors and reported to the next Ward Community Meeting.

19. WARD COMMUNITY BUDGET

Jerry Connolly, Member Support Officer, provided an update on the Ward Community budget.

The following applications were submitted for consideration:

A) Events Planning Partnership

Amount: £500

Objectives: A contribution towards a free community bonfire event for residents of Abbey and Beaumont Leys Wards to be held on 2 November 2012.

RESOLVED:

that the application be supported to the value of £500.

B) Lucy Bailey (Booty-Camp Workouts)

Amount: £360

Objectives: A proposal for a dance workout class to be held at The Rushey Mead Centre, aimed at young to middle aged men and women working or living near to Frog Island. It was anticipated that the funding would lead to ongoing classes following an initial 6 month period and would help people who wanted to keep fit and healthy.

RESOLVED:
that the application be not supported.

C) St Patricks Afternoon Club

Amount: £100
(Mrs Shorten was in attendance and advised the meeting that she wished to reduce the amount of funding requested from £100 to £40)

Objectives: To provide a taxi service to and from meetings for older persons.

RESOLVED:
that the application be supported to the value of £40.

The following applications had been approved for funding under the Fast-Track procedure and were reported for information:

D) Welcome Club

Amount: £500

Objectives: To take senior citizens on a day trips.

RESOLVED:
that the funding approved under the Fast-Track procedure to the value of £500 be noted.

E) Tiptree Neighbourhood Watch

Amount: £350

Objectives: Start-up costs for Tiptree Neighbourhood Watch

RESOLVED:
that the funding approved under the Fast-Track procedure to the value of £350 be noted.

F) Friends of Mowmacre

Amount: £250

Objectives: Container for storage of equipment on Wheatland gardens

RESOLVED:

that the funding approved under the Fast-Track procedure to the value of £250 be noted.

20. COMMUNITY REPORTS

A) UNITY BOXING CLUB

Ajmal Butt was invited to address the meeting.

He referred to the funding assistance previously approved and received from the Ward Community Budget and advised the meeting of how those finances had been utilised to progress the aims and objectives of the Club.

Ajmal reported that the club enjoyed a large membership of around 200 members and that Amateur Boxing Association (ABA) affiliation had been recently been awarded which had raised the objectives and profile of the Club. Ajmal also commented on how the funds received from the Ward Community Budget had helped in the process of gaining ABA affiliation. He reported that a Club Constitution had been adopted and a Committee had been established with appointed Officers, including a Club Treasurer.

In view of the support received by the Club from members of the community, Ajmal referred to the recent second birthday celebration event held at the Club premises which had been visited by Ward Councillors, the Police and other community groups and representatives. The meeting was informed of the Club's community links and the work undertaken with Connexions and employers' organisations, particular in assisting young people who were categorised as NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

As a competitive Boxing Club, Ajmal reported that 19 boxers had been registered to fight competitively. Of the 45 bouts which the Club had competed, 39 had been won. Two young boxers were introduced to the meeting and Ajmal reported on their successes, it was noted that that one of them had recently defeated a former ABA finalist. The importance of the Club in the lives of many young people was emphasised and the help and support given to young people was highlighted.

It was reported that as well as the name of the Club 'Unity' was the principle and the theme of the Club. Ajmal reported that no special sessions were held for any particular groups and confirmed that Women and girl boxers were members alongside a wide representation of races and backgrounds. In this regard Ajmal commented on a recent article published in the Leicester Mercury newspaper, which

highlighted the boxing career of a seventeen year old girl who was a club member and had enjoyed success at national level.

A qualified boxing referee also addressed the meeting in support of the Club. He reported on the excellent work being carried out and asked the meeting to note the significant work undertaken by volunteers to maintain the Club's operation. It was noted that there were many outstanding issues to be resolved which would assist the Club; including the need to formally register an address for the Club for it to gain a postcode, and the need for a regular refuse collection service to be in operation. In conclusion of his address the referee commented on the importance of the Club in the community, he asked the meeting to support the Club in its aims in whatever ways possible and reminded the meeting of the theme of 'Unity'.

In conclusion Ajmal displayed artwork produced by some of the younger members of the Club which highlighted the importance of the Club to them personally.

Ajmal was thanked for addressing the meeting. He was congratulated on his work and for describing how funds received had been utilised in progressing the aims and objectives of the Club. It was agreed to support the Unity Boxing Club in any possible way in the future.

B) COMMUNITY FIRST

Carlym Quantrill was invited to address the meeting.

She referred to the work being carried out by the Community First Panel in respect of funding opportunities for voluntary organisations. It was noted that a system of match-funding had been identified to maximise the funds available to organisations. The need for the Ward Community Meeting to work closely with the Community First Panel was expressed, as greater opportunities to increase funds could be realised through joint working.

The complications of the system were described to the meeting by Carlym, and she referred particularly to the confusing statements made in the advice received. It was noted that contradictory information had been received concerning the opportunities for public and private sector organisations to be involved in any match-funding applications.

Carlym was congratulated on her work undertaken to progress opportunities through the Panel and in respect of item 18 above concerning the closure of the Community Centre and its staffing; she agreed to refer the situation to the Panel for consideration.

Carlym was thanked for addressing the meeting and providing the update on the Panel's work.

C) LEICESTER CITY LADIES FOOTBALL CLUB

Louie Carr, Chairman of Leicester City Ladies Football Club, was invited to address the meeting.

He referred to the funding assistance previously approved and received from the Ward Community Budget and advised the meeting of how those finances had been utilised to progress the aims and objectives of the Club.

John reported that 10 teams were currently established over various age groups and the numbers of active club members was around 160 players. The numbers of qualified coaches had been also been increased and it was reported that funding received from the Ward Community Budget had assisted in the training of those individuals, allowing them to gain their required qualifications.

In respect of funding generally, John Kavanagh, Secretary of the Club, submitted a list of annual expenses which detailed various areas of mandatory expenditure. These expenses included hire costs of match pitches, training facilities, FA administration and registration costs, costs of kit and equipment, and referees expenses, along with many other necessary expenses. The meeting noted the significant expenditure required to effectively run the Club and John was thanked for supplying the detailed breakdown.

In conclusion, Louie referred to the League and County Cup successes of the Club and it was noted that teams of all age groups had won honours.

Louie and John were thanked for addressing the meeting and it was agreed to support the Leicester City Ladies Football Club in any possible way in the future.

21. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future Ward Community Meetings were noted as follows:

20 November 2012
19 February 2013

Both meetings to commence at 6:00 pm.

22. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7:07 pm.

