

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Tuesday, 26 November 2013

Held at: St. Patrick's Centre, 100 Beaumont Leys Lane, Leicester

Who was there:

Councillor Annette Byrne
Councillor Vijay Singh Riyait

22. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Riyait was elected as Chair for the meeting.

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Bhavsar.

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

25. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the Minutes of the Abbey Ward Community Meeting held on 3 September 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

26. CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Helen Child (City Operations Director of LeicesterShire CAB) gave a presentation which provided an overview of the service (copy of PowerPoint slides attached)

It was reported that from April to September 2013, almost 6000 clients had received help since the service had been contracted to LeicesterShire CAB.

The following aims of the CAB were confirmed:

- to provide the advice people need for the problems they face; and
- to improve the policies and practices that affect peoples lives.

The principles of the CAB were also confirmed; 'to provide free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities'. It was reported that the CAB valued diversity, promoted equality and challenged discrimination.

The details of the service as a breakdown of clients by Ward were presented and it was noted that the Abbey Ward was one of the highest client groups. Councillors requested further information on the types of enquiries most often raised by clients on a Ward basis. Helen confirmed that information could be made available and agreed to supply the data concerning the types of issues being dealt with to Councillors in due course. It was noted that 'benefits' type enquiries were the most frequent across the city.

The use of volunteers was highlighted. It was noted that volunteers delivered advice and information which was fundamental to the CAB approach. Details of the training provided to volunteers were also reported and noted.

In respect of outreach working it was reported that outreach sessions ran once a week in various Wards and those sessions in the Abbey Ward currently took place at the Tudor Centre on Tuesdays from 9.30 am -12.20 pm.

Information was supplied on how residents could refer issues to CAB, including via the local Ward Councillors and partner agencies who could refer clients directly.

In conclusion Helen commented on the CABs on-line advice guide which was available 24 hours per day and provided an easy to use advice service, covering all UK law and including links to fact sheets.

Helen was thanked for her presentation.

27. POLICE UPDATE

PC Ian Button updated the meeting on Police activities and operations in the Ward.

He commented on recent crime statistics and it was noted that incidents of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage had reduced.

In respect of problems reported at Burgess House it was confirmed that the Police were working in close liaison with the Council's Housing department to resolve issues. In respect of anti-social behaviour problems reported at Bewcastle Grove, it was reported that arrests had recently been made and Banning Orders on the offenders had been imposed.

PC Button reminded the meeting not to keep Christmas presents or items on display, due to the increased risk of burglary during the festive period.

In reply to questions PC Button made notes of the problems of cyclists travelling at high speeds on the pavements, which had been recognised as a problem for the elderly in particular. Comment was also made on the need to increase Police patrols generally and the meeting debated the effective use of unmarked police vehicles.

In conclusion it was reported that the mobile CCTV unit had recently been purchased, partly having been financed by the Ward Community Grant, and was fully operational.

PC Button was thanked for his report.

28. CITY WARDEN'S UPDATE

Barbara Whitcombe (Manager of the City Wardens Service) informed the meeting of the consultation being undertaken concerning 'Spitting in the Street'. She advised

that the offence had recently been tested in the Courts by another local authority, which had dealt with a case through a prosecution by Magistrates; the Council was therefore consulting residents on the future enforcement in the city.

Consultation cards were circulated and details of the online consultation process were reported.

Matt Davinson reported on his environmental and enforcement activities in the Ward.

He made particular reference to the work undertaken in reducing fly-tips and commented on the joint working with the Housing Department in this respect.

Fixed Penalty Notices had been issued in respect of dog fouling and in response to a question Matt confirmed that any bin could be used for the disposal of dog waste.

In respect of his patrols Matt confirmed that he was the City Warden appointed to serve two of the largest Wards in the City and advised that he would deal with all incidents reported to the Council.

In reply to questions the meeting discussed the communal cleaning of flats and the need to ensure the tidiness of bin storage areas. In this respect the Housing department would be asked to liaise and consult with tenants. It was reported that some tenants would benefit from greater advertisement of the free collection service which it was felt would clear problem areas of bulky items and unwanted goods.

Matt and Barbara were thanked for their report.

29. HOUSING UPDATE

Ela Krychowska-hall, Area Housing Manager updated the meeting on finances recently made available for various improvements to the housing stock. The works included improvement works at Abbey Rise and upgrades and additions to CCTV cameras at housing schemes in the Ward.

It was noted that a greater involvement of tenants in progressing the schemes had resulted in reductions in vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

In reply to questions Ela commented on the possibility of future improvement schemes, including the refurbishment and repainting of stairwells and other communal areas.

Ela was thanked for her report and update.

30. HEALTHWATCH LEICESTER

Philip Parkinson (Healthwatch Leicester) updated the meeting on the establishment of Healthwatch in conjunction with Voluntary Action LeicesterShire, following the Health and Social Care Bill being passed by Government in 2012.

It was reported that Healthwatch had recently received its company status and would be fully operational from April 2014. The aims of the organisation were to help and support those people who received Health and Social care.

Philip referred to the consultation exercise which showed where the greatest support was required, it was noted that these principal issues currently related to personal finance problems arising from the direct payment initiatives being introduced as part of wider welfare reforms.

In reply to questions Philip reported on the wider role of Healthwatch and how the effectiveness of its work was monitored.

Philip was thanked for his report.

31. CITY OF CULTURE 2017 - UPDATE

It was noted that Hull had recently been announced as the City of Culture 2017.

In response to questions it was reported that the City Council intended to organise and promote some festivals and events which celebrated diversity and multiculturalism.

Councillor Riyait agreed to raise the concerns and opinions of community representatives present, that the financing of such events could now be put to more appropriate uses.

32. WARD COMMUNITY BUDGET

The Member Support Officer presented the latest position with regard to the Abbey Ward Community meeting budget.

A) It was reported that the following applications had been approved under the Fast-Track procedure since the previous meeting:

Application 1 (1316)

Applicant: Stocking Farm Events Committee

Amount: £500

Proposal: Stocking Farm and Abbey Rise Xmas Fete

Application 2 (1320)

Applicant: Thursday Night Social Group

Amount: £500

Proposal: Christmas Celebrations Event

Application 3 (1313)

Applicant: Square Mile Project (DMU)

Amount: £500

Proposal: Slater School Hall Refurbishment

B) The following applications were received for consideration and were determined as indicated:

Application 4 (1315)

Applicant: Belgrave Rugby Club

Amount: £500 (to each Ward)
Joint application to Belgrave and Beaumont Leys Wards

Proposal: Better facilities at the Rugby Club

Mr John Goddard spoke in support of the application.

AGREED:

that the application be supported in the sum of £500.

Application 5 (1319)

Applicant: All Nations Church Leicester

Amount: £1,918 (to each Ward)
Joint application to Beaumont Leys and Fosse Wards

Proposal: New debt coach to provide counselling in Leicester

Mr Joe Shrigley spoke in support of the application.

It was confirmed that the Fosse Ward Councillors had supported the application at their recent meeting in the sum of £1,918.

AGREED:

that the application be deferred pending further information from the applicant and that a visit to the Church be arranged for the Ward Councillors.

Application 6 (1321)

Applicant: Friends of Mowmacre

Amount: £500

Proposal: Fair Share Food Bank

Mrs Jackie Marriott spoke in support of the application.

AGREED:

that the application be supported in the sum of £500.

C) EVALUATION FORMS

The Ward Councillors then referred to an evaluation form received from the Banks Residents Group following their day trip and event which had been funded by the Ward Community Budget.

The evaluation included information, photographs and all relevant receipts for expenditure incurred against the grant funds and Councillors described this as a good example which should be repeated by successful applicants.

It was reported that applications would be unlikely to receive favourable consideration in the future should evaluation forms and receipts be outstanding.

33. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next Ward Community Meeting would be held on 18 February 2014 at the Tudor Centre.

34. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm.