



**AYLESTONE, EYRES MONSELL AND FREEMEN
AREA COMMITTEE**

**RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RAISED AT THE MEETING ON 12 JULY 2005 –
FEEDBACK AND SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS**
(Responses to questions from 27 October 2005 are below)

At the last meeting of the Area Committee the following questions were raised. These were passed onto the relevant officers after the meeting and the responses are below. The right hand column shows who answered the question.

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| <p>50) <i>Discussion/supplementary question 27 October</i>
One resident commented that they didn't think it was satisfactory that no consultation had taken place with residents on route 25 and the fact that the work had now been done. They requested that assurance be provided that consultation will take place for all such work in the future.</p> <p>Another resident requested that maps be provided to the area committee for the proposed locations of Star Trak systems. The County Council provided maps and an assurance was sought that the City Council would do likewise.</p> <p>Response by Officers:
We said in our last response that there is no legal requirement for consultation when we install star trak signs, because they are part of an existing bus stop location.</p> <p>But, because of the views of the area committee we've decided to change our procedures. In future we will tell people living next to the bus stop that a star trak sign will be installed. We'll do this for all future star trak route expansions, which includes the erection of pole-mounted signs for routes 25, 84 and 85.</p> <p>We will also provide maps of locations to relevant area committees, and we'll do this for all future star trak routes.</p> <p><i>(Question Asked at Meeting on 12 July)</i>
The questioner noted that there will soon be Star Trak systems implemented on the 25, 84 and 85A bus routes. He also noted that the County Council are also implementing similar systems on their part of these routes. He noted that consultation had taken place with residents on the location of the Star Trak facilities in the county council area. He then asked on what dates, where and at what times were city residents consulted on where the possible locations would be for the star trak facilities would be located.</p> | <p>Tot Brill
Corporate
Director of
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0116 252 7300</p> |
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53) *Discussion/supplementary question 27 October*

The questioner wasn't happy with the response. He wished to know what the budget's were for the centres. He felt that staff were being removed from the centres and there was no clarity on what was happening. He wanted clarity about what the levels of baseline staff were to be at the centres. He wished to know when the centres were going to be opened and what their hours would be.

Response:

(Question Asked at Meeting on 12 July)

There have been regular requests from Linwood Community Association and Southfields Drive Community Association for the following information over the last 12 months without success.

Can a year plan for the Linwood Centre and Southfields Drive Community Centre and Kingfisher Youth Centre (with a budget attached) please be made available to Peter Thompson at Saffron Resouce Centre? He is a member of Linwood CA and Southfields CA and he will pass this information on to the groups concerned.

The legal advice that the Community Associations have been given is that this is one duty that is clearly in the scheme of management of these Centres and this information has to be supplied to Community Associations by staff.

A response is awaited for this question.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RAISED AT THE MEETING ON 27 OCTOBER 2005

At the last meeting of the Area Committee the following questions were raised. These were passed onto the relevant officers after the meeting and the responses are below. The right hand column shows who answered the question.

- 58) There are a number of local youth groups looking to use education facilities for cultural and sporting activity.
- Corporate Director of Education and Lifelong Learning.
- For about 25 years, City and County Schools operated a young person friendly scheme of free facility use for youth groups up to 5pm on weekdays and at weekends. That scheme still operates in Leicestershire (the worst funded LEA in England). It may have fallen into disuse in Leicester.
- In Leicestershire there is guaranteed free use of school buildings by youth groups (with a County budget to pay the rental to schools). In Leicestershire, community designated establishments – eg. Community Colleges, have the power to make a small charge to youth groups through the Community Association, but most make no charge.
- Does the City Council continue to operate the County system of free use of education facilities by youth groups? If not, who made the decision to change the arrangements for free use by youth groups and when was the change made?
- A response is awaited for this question.**
- 59) Sir Johnathan North and Lancaster Schools are local schools. But parents now have the right to base their admission applications to LEA Community (non faith) Schools on religious conviction. Will the Director of Education arrange for an officer to speak to the Area Committee about how well this type of faith admission is working? Can the Area Committee have an answer to some of the following questions?
- Gurjit Bahra
Admissions Service
Education and Lifelong Learning Department
Tel: 252 7815
1. Which religions have been successful in claiming a new type faith place at Leicester Community (non faith) Schools?
Islamic Faith and Hindu Faith
2. How many new type faith places have been successfully claimed?
For the 2003-4 transfer, 14 successful in total as follows:
- Sir Jonathan North: 11 successful – all of Islamic Faith**
The Lancaster Sch: 1 successful – Islamic Faith
Soar Valley Com Col: 1 successful - Hindu Faith
Rushey Mead Sec Sch: 1 successful – Hindu Faith
- For the 2004-5 transfer, 15 successful in total as follows:**
- Sir Jonathan North: 14 successful – all of Islamic Faith**

The Lancaster Sch: 1 successful – Islamic Faith

3. Which religions have been successful in claiming a new type faith place?

Students of the Islamic and Hindu Faith

4. What advice would the LEA give to a Rastafarian or Jehovah's Witness parent who wishes to claim a school place on the grounds of religious conviction?

Please refer to "Which Secondary School" Booklet page 31.

In general, we would require a letter from the priest/religious leader, outlining how and why the child's attendance at the preferred school would meet the family's religious convictions.

5. Is there any evidence that children are being consulted when their parents claim a new type faith place? Is there any evidence that the person writing the religious reference has ever met the young person concerned? Are some religious references written from outside of the UK?

6. Can the LEA estimate how many Saffron, Eyres Monsell and Aylestone children have been prevented from attending the local schools of their first choice because of the influx of children from outside the area attending local schools for reasons of faith.

Unable to provide this information for either question 5 or 6 as we do not monitor.

7. How many extra places have been provided at Lancaster and Sir Johnathan North to accommodate the children claiming a faith place? When were these extra places provided?

None. The religious conviction criterion is used together with other factors to prioritise applications for places until the school is full.

8. What advantages are parents looking for when they claim a new type faith place?

Presumably, a school that provides an educational experience for the child, compatible with their faith.

9. How many County children leave the county to claim a new type faith place in a Leicester school?

Unable to provide this information as we do not monitor.

10. Can the LEA explain how a parent can claim a faith place at Rushey Mead or Soar Valley Schools?

In the same way as for any other City school (see "Which Secondary School" p 31)

11. Is the LEA obliged to give weight to the philosophical convictions of the parent? How could the LEA extend this right to parents?

There are no 'rights' for parents regarding faith places. The LEA is obliged to follow its own published policy. The religious conviction

criterion is judged according to the Director's view of how well the supporting letter shows that the preferred school would meet the parent's religious conviction better than any other school. The policy allows the faith criterion to be used among others to prioritise when there are more applications than places.

For all schools including Catholic and Church of England Schools
The LEA has no admissions jurisdiction over admissions to Catholic and Church of England Schools

12. Is there any evidence that City parents are leaving Leicester Schools because of the large number of faith schools in the County? What advantages are Leicester parents looking for when they seek a place in the county?

City pupils moving to the County do not appear to do so for reasons of Faith. Although the LEA is obliged to give applicants an opportunity to state reasons, the majority do not provide any.

*The questions are answered individually above.
The Admissions policy is explained fully in our booklets.*

There are no places specifically reserved for any of the criteria in the policy. The criteria for allocation of places are used to prioritise admissions. The outcome is different each year because there are different numbers applying from different addresses and with different attributes. The overriding principle of law is that all requests for a given school are granted unless the school is filled with children of parents whose applications have higher priority.

60) It was enquired what was happening with the toilets on Aylestone Road?

It was felt that having the entrance inside the park wouldn't stop vandalism.

It was queried what the timescale was for the renovations?

It was queried how it would be possible to keep track of the progress being made on the toilets?

It was felt that having the entrance inside the park would allow for more antisocial behaviour?

Response at meeting:

Cllr. Chambers made a number of comments to these questions. She confirmed that the toilets were to be renovated with access from inside the park. She acknowledged that the police were in favour of shutting them. She hoped that having the park gates closed at night would mean less chance of vandalism. She wasn't able to comment on the timescale for the work. Cllr. Farmer thought they would be open in a year's time. The Police commented that he hoped that the Council

Steve Weston
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would engage with the Crime Prevention Officer who could advise on measures to reduce vandalism and drug taking.

Response by Officers:

- The toilets in question have been closed to the public for a number of years because of vandalism to them and anti-social behaviour in them.
- We know there's a need for toilets in the park and the refurbishment of these toilets was included in the programme approved by Cabinet on 24th October 2005.
- Following that report a number of people were worried by the proposal to re-open the toilets.
- We listened to the concerns of Ward Members, the Parks User Group and the police about the potential for the return of the vandalism and anti social behaviour if the toilets were reopened.
- So we've decided to convert the current toilet facility into a messroom/storeroom for the parks grounds maintenance staff.
- The entrance to the building will be moved and the building will be fenced off from the public road. We hope that the presence of the parks staff in the building will deter vandals.
- The toilet facilities in the building will be for use by the parks staff, but we intend to make those toilets available to the public when there are events in the parks. In these circumstances they will, of course, be supervised by Parks staff.
- The overall refurbishment programme for public toilets is scheduled to be completed by April 2006.

- 61) The questioner thought that it was planned to create a footpath from Aylestone to Asda. It was requested that this path be designated as a bridleway. The questioner kept horses in the area and didn't want them to be stranded by not being able move them about freely.

Response at meeting:

Andy Brookes commented that as Chair of the Local Access Forum, he would have a look at the definitive map to see if it was feasible to have a bridleway in this location. He also noted that the Council was currently reviewing its bridleways.

Response by Officers:

There are no plans to create a footpath or a bridleway on Aylestone Playing fields from Aylestone to Adsa.

- 62) With regard to the proposed widening of Glenhills Way, the questioner felt that there hadn't been satisfactory consultation. She was told late about the consultation and there was little or no consultation with the residents of Eyres Monsell. She felt that it would be wrong for these proposals to go to full Council without the benefit of the views of the residents of Eyres Monsell. She requested that the consultation be reopened.

She felt that there were a number of problems with the proposals that weren't suitable, ie. the lack of access / egress for buses entering the

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estate, similar for emergency vehicles. She felt that the plans would create rat runs on the estate. She felt that there hadn't been full consideration given to the impact on Southfields Drive.

She didn't find it acceptable that there was a charge for the plans of the proposals. She requested that the Eyres Monsell Tenants Association and the Linwood Community Association be provided with a copy.

She didn't think that it was acceptable to put more traffic lanes in as it would mean more lives lost.

Another resident requested that figures be provided to show how the air quality improvements would be achieved in view of the increased traffic.

Response at meeting:

Councillor Porter agreed that there should be proper consultation and free maps available to local people. Councillor Farmer also agreed to ensure that free maps were provided. He also commented that this scheme did not have member backing and that all the local ward Councillors were consistently opposed. He said more crossing points were necessary to allow residents better access to schools and the library.

Response by Officers:

1. No matter how large, or extensive a consultation there are people who feel left out of the process. The Council carries out highways consultations along a set of agreed protocols. In this case, those protocols ensured that we sent out some 1,450 letters, starting on the 14th September, either to the properties within 200m of the scheme or distributed through Montrose School. The letters outlined the scheme and informed residents of the public exhibitions which were held on 22nd, 23rd and 26th of September. Comment sheets for people to tell us their views were supplied with the letter. Plans of the scheme were exhibited at two venues for a week before the exhibitions and at the library for one week after them. The closing date for returns was the 3rd October, although comment sheets received up to 21st October were included in the Consultation report.
2. This scheme was designed to improve access/egress for public transport. The bus companies and the emergency services have been fully involved during the consultation and none of them have objected to the proposals.
3. The Southfields Drive area was looked at quite thoroughly and a first solution was taken to the public exhibitions. In response to residents' and other interested people's comments the scheme has been revisited and the design modified. This modification will shortly be going out for consultation to the affected residents.
4. Following the consultation, we modified our proposed arrangements for Glenhills Boulevard South, designed to prevent "rat-running". We

are now proposing to block Sharpland to through traffic to stop rat running and a reversing of the one-way flow in Southfields drive to stop “rat-running” there.

5. The scheme provides a number of new pedestrian/cycle crossing points across Glenhills Way to make it safer for vulnerable road users to cross in safety.
6. We intend to use a quieter road surface to reduce noise. We also expect that air pollution will drop due to better traffic management.
7. As part of this scheme we are planning to plant 150 trees to replace 50 that are either dead, damaged or need to be moved. These extra trees will be on both sides of Glenhills Way and we'll fill in gaps in the existing tree line. The replacement will be with semi-mature trees.
8. We are also placing low mounds with shrubs on their tops in front of the trees along Glenhills Boulevard North and Sharpland to reduce noise and visual impact.
9. The Air Pollution Team say that they have no capability for direct measurement of air quality at properties on Glenhills Boulevard. They rely on experience at similar sites elsewhere in the City and extrapolate to the situation at Glenhills Way / Saffron Lane.
10. In general levels of nitrogen dioxide fall off rapidly from the carriageway until they reach the prevailing urban background level at, say 10 metres. Extensive experience in Leicester shows that, even where levels of nitrogen dioxide exceed the annual mean Limit Value criterion of 40 microgram's per cubic metre at roadside monitoring sites, e.g. at Lutterworth Road / Glenhills Way, this level is not exceeded at the facade of properties significantly in excess of this distance from the road.
11. This criterion is set to avoid any adverse health effects, even to vulnerable groups in the population.
12. From first principles, any improvement in traffic flow will tend to reduce emissions. Since there will be no significant increase in traffic volumes, as a result of the implementation of the proposal, and since congestion will be reduced (that is the object of the scheme), it is unlikely that pollution levels in the vicinity will rise. Since the distance from houses to the carriageway will be comfortably outside the 10 metre zone referred to above.
13. It is therefore concluded that residents along the Boulevard will not be exposed to annual mean levels of nitrogen dioxide in excess of the annual Limit Value criterion, which has a compliance date of 2010 as a consequence of the implementation of this scheme.
14. The City Council's charge of £25 for large plans just covers our printing costs. This charge forms part of the Council's long standing practice in highways consultation.

15. Copies of the plans were available for inspection at the Pork Pie Library, Ayleston Leisure Centre and where the consultation exhibition was displayed .

63) The questioner raised concerns about an accident which took place on Glenhills Boulevard involving the loss of a young boys eye. The accident took place around middle to late October of this year. There was work being undertaken undertaken on the approach to Pork Pie island and it was to improve a corner that was dangerous. The questioner queried why 'Harris' fencing was being used as this could not secure a site properly and would allow easy access to young children on to dangerous sites. She also commented that she had regularly monitored the site and had noticed that there were numerous periods when there were no persons working on the site. She felt that this delayed the work unnecessarily and created additional safety concerns. She queried what monitoring arrangements were in place by the Council and whether there were penalties to be paid by contractors for taking too long to undertake work.

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Highways and
Transportation/
Regeneration and
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Tel: 252 6540

Response by Officers:

My responses to the questions are as follows:

Why was Heras fencing used?

The Safety at Streetworks and Roadworks code of practice states that "Barriers may comprise separate post and plank systems, "gate frames", linked together, or semi-permanent constructions built to enclose the site". These systems are usually constructed in plastic. Experience shows us that although these systems comply with the Code of Practice they are relatively fragile.

Heras fencing in contrast is much higher (6 foot or 1.8m), anti climb and can be securely tied together using scaffold clips. Therefore we use Heras fencing because it is safer and more secure than other forms of temporary barrier.

Periods of inactivity

The only period of inactivity was the time when the widened section of road, constructed in concrete to match the existing road, was left to cure. This was the standard period of 7 days where, other than fleeting monitoring by the supervisor, there was no presence on site.

What monitoring was in place?

The site supervisor (and on occasion the agent) visited the site daily during the periods of activity and drove past the site daily during the period of inactivity.

What penalties where applied to the contractor?

Works were carried out within the agreed programme and therefore would not necessitate the consideration of penalty.

64) Who is in charge of running the city? It was thought that it was supposed to be that officers were responsible to elected members and elected members were responsible to the public, but it was thought

Answered at
meeting.
Charles Poole

that the balance of power had swung more in officers favour.

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Tel: 252 7015

Response at meeting:

The Councillors make and approve Council policy and officers operate that policy. Councillors can't be involved in all minutiae of Council business. There are checks and balances and there are mechanisms for reviewing policy. Local government today is different today to previous years. There didn't use to be as many rules and regulations governing how Councils operate. There was often a tension about how these rules were applied and a tension between officers and members.

- 65) The questioner was a resident of St Annes Drive. She stated that she had campaigned vigorously to get trees introduced to the street and having been successful had nurtured them to maturity despite one or two being ripped out by vandals. She was therefore disappointed to discover that the Council planned to remove the existing trees and replace them with saplings. As far as she was aware the trees wouldn't disturb the services but were being remove because of problems with slabs on the street. She enquired why this was happening? Was it really necessary and what was the general policy on these matters?

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Parks & Green
Spaces
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Response at meeting:

Richard Welburn, Head of Parks and Green Spaces confirmed that he would look in to the matter.

Response by Officers:

Please be assured that the City Council are **NOT** going to remove any of the trees.

On the contrary, we are going to plant 7 new trees in addition to those that have been well looked after by the residents. The new trees will be outside house numbers: 1, 2, 8, 18, 22/24, 34, 60 and the corner next to 16 Paigle Road.

Trees don't last for ever and these new trees are to replace trees lost over time. They will all go into spaces that have been kept available especially for the purpose.

The notices that the Council posted on St Annes Drive, are generic and are used throughout the city, so their wording is not specific to this site. We're sorry if this has caused any confusion. Any one who has worries about tree work can always telephone the Council and staff will be happy to let them know what's planned in any particular area.

One existing tree outside number 25 needs some work to reduce its crown width by 30%, because it has a very broad spread.

- 66) The questioner felt that the Area Committee should be the body which elects the LEA representative on to the Governors Board for the Samworth Academy. It was enquired whether this would be possible? It was felt that it would be the means by which a private school could become more publicly accountable as the representative could report

Trevor Pringle
Education Officer
Client & Governor
Services,
Education and

back to the Area Committee.

Response by Officers:

Academies are set up as companies limited by guarantee with charitable status. The Governing Body is constituted under the Academy's Memorandum and Articles of Association in accordance with guidelines established by the DfES.

All members of an Academy governing body are appointed on the basis of the contribution that they will make to the school and have a legal duty to act **only** in the interest of the Academy. Governance procedures themselves are not prescribed in primary or secondary legislation. In these circumstances careful consideration must be given to appropriate representation.

In considering recommendations for the local authority governor position the City Council will need to be mindful of the above requirements and the need to ensure accountability. The City Council appointee must have the appropriate experience and skills to discharge this role. At present such appointments are determined by an appointment panel drawn from each party and a representative from the City of Leicester Governors Association (COLGA). At present it is not proposed to vary this practice unless, of course, Elected Members wish to do so. This of course does not however prevent a candidate nominated by the Area Committee from being considered. The Panel will of course be advised of the wishes of the Area Committee for active involvement in this process and would no doubt welcome nominations from this Committee for consideration.

The governing body of The Academy is accountable to the Secretary of State through the requirements of a Funding Agreement. The Funding Agreement requires the governing body to publish procedures of its meetings. As a charitable company the Academy must also prepare and file annual accounts with the Charity Commission, prepare an annual report for the Charity Commissioners, and ensure that their accounts are independently audited.

- 67) The questioner made a number of points with regard to parking / traffic issues in the area:-

Concerns were expressed about the parking situation down Narrow Lane. It was felt that the street should be kept free of parked vehicles as currently the access for emergency vehicles would be blocked.

Marsden Lane, it was stated that the 2.5 tonne limit needed to be enforced as it was frequently breached.

Knighton Lane East, it was stated that there was a bus stop flag and a bus stop road marking, but the bus stopped at neither of these as there was currently no bus that ran down this route at the current time. It was requested that the situation be clarified.

Also there were no lowered curbs on the central refuge outside the

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Aylestone Leisure Centre which it was felt should be looked at.

Response by Officers:

Narrow Lane: The width of this road does indeed cause problems and is in an area where the Council has looked at traffic calming. We would like to make the road a shared surface between motor vehicles and pedestrians, but we have no funding just now for this kind of work. Car owners should not park in a way that obstructs the road, but we know how hard it can be to persuade some car owners to behave responsibly

Marsden Road: The 2.5 tonne limit does not correspond to any current weight limits for vehicles. That makes it difficult to identify vehicles that break the weight restriction. Because of this problem the police can't be asked to enforce the order. We will update the order as soon as the Traffic Regulation Orders for this area are reviewed. Unfortunately because of the team's existing work commitments this won't be before 2007.

Knighton Lane East: Knighton Lane East is on the route of the inner circle bus service (No 10/11) which runs half hourly. Buses stop at all the the bus stops on Knighton Lane East, but not very frequently.

Aylestone Leisure Centre: We will investigate the need for dropped curbs at the Leisure centre.