

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SOUTH WIGSTON RESIDENTS' FORUM HELD
AT THE FAIRFIELD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL, CHESHIRE DRIVE, SOUTH
WIGSTON, LEICESTERSHIRE, LE18 4WA ON WEDNESDAY, 28 JUNE 2017
COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM**

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs S B Morris (Chair)

COUNCILLORS

J W Boyce
R E R Morris

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ms V Quintyne (Community Engagement Officer)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

3 Borough Councillors (Oadby)
1 Police Representative
18 Residents

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Bill Boulter
Jessie Cook (The Conservation Volunteers)

2. LOCAL POLICING ISSUES

Police Constable Damien Hyatt introduced himself as the new beat officer for South Wigston. He is based at Wigston Police Station. PC Hyatt gave an outline of his policing experience. He gained policing experience with communities across Leicester and Leicestershire.

The following crime figures were reported and cover the past twenty eight days:
Four vehicle crimes including, two thefts of motor cycles and two burglaries of dwellings.
One of the burglaries was aggravated. Police have a lead on this.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 07 MARCH 2017

Residents provided a list of amendments to the minutes of March 7th 2017.

Action:

Include the amendments received to the minutes of March 7 2017 and circulate.

4. DEFRA AIR QUALITY ANNUAL STATUS REPORT UPDATE

A slide presentation titled, Air Quality Status Report 2017 was received by Residents. Hard copies of the presentation were circulated.

Key points were made, observations noted and answers to Resident questions received as follows:

DEFRA directed this report be shared with Residents. It requires the Council to involve and

advise Residents on the findings of the report.

The data set is complete. It refers to the 2016 statistics. All reports are available on the Council website.

The meaning of the term Air Quality was outlined, in relation to pollutants and the measurement and the effects on peoples' health state.

Nitrous Oxide sampling was measured borough wide using diffusion tubes. A photo of a diffusion tube was shown.

Previous collection sites were highlighted. These have now been removed from monitoring as results were low.

51.58 was the raw data measurement in South Wigston. Canal Street facade had an exposure limit of 39.72.

Additional monitoring was being done on: Aylestone Lane, Shakerdale Road and Blaby Road. Additional tubes were added.

Residents enquired about the monitoring of traffic pollution levels on Saffron Road.

A Resident expressed the view that Blaby Road was one of the worst polluted areas, due to traffic flows most of the day. Monitoring was done near to the Tigers training ground. This had now ceased.

A Resident suggested that the Council should be made aware of the rise in pollution levels with the building of Glen Parva prison. The Resident asked if the Council could request DEFRA to measure pollution levels.

The Officer said in his personal opinion, DEFRA was unlikely to, as this would be a matter for the Local Authority to address in its draft Air Quality Plan.

Action:

The Chair agreed to discuss the matter of raising a petition to DEFRA with Councillor Bill Boulter, noting the potential increase in pollution with the building of Glen Parva jail.

An in depth study was necessary to address what needed to be monitored, especially as Blaby Road was a cut through road.

Suggestions made by Residents for monitoring in South Wigston.

- Monitor the air quality on Saffron Road and Tigers Road.
- Place monitoring tubes at roundabout.
- Monitor acceleration and change points, namely roads going uphill and at traffic lights
- With heavy traffic on Saffron Road, would the Council write to Leicester and Blaby Councils to devise a strategy to monitor the pollution levels during construction of the proposed new prison, and once the prison opens.
- Implement a twenty mile an hour speed restriction to cut deaths caused by pollution.

In concluding the presentation, the Officer said the Council had received £25,000 for monitoring equipment. There was shared monitoring in South Wigston of Magna Road to

Blaby Road. The Officer would be requesting monitoring from further up Saffron Road.

Residents were requested to send comments and observations by email to:
enviromental.health@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Action:

Circulate the presentation to Residents.

5. WASTE SURVEY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK (INFORMATION ONLY)

The following results were shared from the Waste Survey feedback by Councillor Boyce. The survey results were shared electronically and by post with Residents. on the South Wigston Forum database.

- Two questions were asked on ranking of what residents wanted.
- Overall Residents wanted to keep weekly bin collections.
- On the third question regarding green waste, the recycling rate was less important.
- On the question of introducing wheelie bins the strongly agree and agrees and the strongly disagree and disagree views were almost identical.
- A report was out today which addressed the Council`s budgetary position and the potential changes to be made.
- Once a plan was in place Councillor Boyce said the Council would reconsult Residents.
- Over 2,300 residents responded to the consultation. A resident pointed out that is less than 5 percent of the Borough population.
- A Resident asked about the use of wheelie bins for the collection of normal waste. The response received for their introduction was fifty-fifty.
- Forty percent of responses were by paper and the remainder by email.

37% of respondents strongly agreed that a fortnightly waste collection would cause them hardship.

6. SOUTH WIGSTON TRADERS' UPDATE

The South Wigston Trader`s Representative in his update report covered the following issues:

Declining Business in the South Wigston Town Centre

The South Wigston Trader`s Representative said the Town centre businesses needed to be better supported. This was due to the imminent closure of seven shops. The sentiment was, the Town Centre Manager`s presence in South Wigston should be more obvious. At present this was felt not to be the case.

It was suggested Councillor Boulter contact the Town Centre Manager to discuss this matter.

Community Centre

There will be a new South Wigston Community Centre. It will be open for use by all in the community. A Resident commented that the hall still required more resources to assist its development.

Electronic Notice Board

An electronic notice board will soon be erected in South Wigston town centre The Town Centre Manager was progressing this .It should be in place by the Autumn. These boards are subject to a high rate of tax but this is to be challenged by the Council.

6a. **CHRISTMAS CAPERS 2017**

See minute reference 8c.

7. ITEMS RAISED BY RESIDENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE ITEMS

Changes to Bus Routes 44 and 49a

A Resident said that the bus services cuts have affected the South Wigston area creating a travelling divide and community isolation.

The general sentiment was that Arriva Bus Company did not care about the travel needs of South Wigston Residents or the impact of cuts on local business.

A Resident said that without the service some elderly Residents were, having to use taxis or were stranded.

South Wigston Traders were said to be contacting the Arriva Bus Company Services Manager to discuss the transport cuts and the impact on the Town.
The Chair said Councillor Boulter was in dialogue with the Arriva Bus company.

Changes to the Forum

The following questions, observations and exchanges of information were shared under this heading as follows.

A Resident said the draft minutes of March 7th 2017were inaccurate. A typed sheet of amendments were proffered as the amendments .The Chair said the minutes were not meant to be verbatim and long. The Resident requested putting the proposed amendments to the draft minutes to a vote. The Chair stated this was not necessary and to note they were accepted.

The Chair said a hard copy of the Local Government Association Peer Review was available for residents to take. The link to an electronic copy was also included in the Chair`s Update paper.

A Resident questioned whether matters arising from the last meeting were completed; namely consultation with the conservatives and why the changes requested by Residents at the last meeting could not be voted on in the meeting.

A Resident stated each Forum was different and the Resident was merely asking for the suggested changes to South Wigston Forum be agreed.

Councillor Boyce stated that, as all the forums all worked the same any changes to the Terms of Reference would require the other two Forums be consulted on any changes.

A resident replied to Councillor Boyce that the changes residents had asked for didn't need any change to the Forum Terms of Reference, and read aloud from the constitution that the remit for the Forum is to:

`...give local residents a greater say in Council affairs; increase public involvement in

public services; help shape council policies; challenge and give feedback on performance; and promote community cohesion.”

The resident also said that the changes to the Forum that residents had asked for were consistent with the Council’s new Corporate Vision, which read,

‘Work with existing forums and forge new relationships in order to strengthen community engagement and cohesion throughout the Borough.’

A Resident said that as it was only minor changes that were asked for and the changes did not need to go to the other Forums.

A Resident from Oadby said, in the past he had attended all three Resident Forums. He said that a change in the way South Wigston’s Forum ran its business could lead to a change in the Terms of Reference for Oadby and Wigston Resident Forums. He further stated that sometimes proposals for funding were brought to the three Forums and change could make it difficult in the future for people to access funds for joint projects.

A Resident said money must be properly accounted and applied for. If this was not the case a Forum would not be needed.

A Resident said, at the previous meeting the manner of how the agenda was set was questioned. Local issues tended to be “bunched up” under any other business and presentations took away time from proper discussion.

A Resident queried why Councillors were seated at tables, when it was agreed for this meeting they would not be.

Action:

For the September meeting , the Chair has agreed to sit in front of Residents and the other Councillors have agreed to sit amongst the Residents.

On the query raised by a Resident as to why the previous changes put to the Forum in March were not implemented; the Chair said this would be addressed following the consultation on change going to Wigston and Oadby Forums on the 12th and 27th of July. Following collation of the results on 4th September, 2017, they would be shared.

A Resident expressed some confusion as to what item had been reached on the Agenda .The confusion was caused because the Chair had moved around some items to allow the DEFRA Air Quality item to be placed further up the agenda. This was to allow the presenting Officer to leave the meeting, to make a three hour journey home.

A Resident said neither the Chair nor Councillor Boyce had attempted to contact anyone about the changes requested and added, where do Residents move forward with this agenda.

The Chair said the issue had gone to the Oadby and Wigston Forums. A report following the consultations in July would be shared in September This would help clarify next steps.

A resident stated that a Freedom of Information request had been made to the Council on the costs of the staffing, and management problems. The costs from May 2015 to the end of March 2017 were £793,000 – including legal and investigation costs, staff suspensions and agency staff, and the Change Management Programme to improve the organization and management.

The resident went on to say since asking for information about the grievance, there was a sense of the Council "closing down" on Residents and "things" having become more difficult. A question was then raised on when an update was to come to the Forum on the crisis in the Council.

Councillor Boyce challenged anyone to show where Council services have not been delivered. It was promised that public services would not suffer due to the grievance and they have not.

The issue was still ongoing and other issues which predate the grievance. Information placed in the public domain was said to be more than the lawyers had agreed there should be. The Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review report was on the website.

The Chair added, once there was a conclusion to the Grievance a meeting would be called.

Councillor Boyce said, the Council would share what it could when it could. Savings other than £700,000 will be the cut to be met.

The Council was already thinking of how to raise revenue. The accounts showed the Council had turnover money in reserve, plus £2 million.

A Resident questioned when the outcome of talks with Councillor Dave, about changes to the Forum would be shared with this Forum.

Action:

The Chair agreed to update Residents on the outcome of talks held about changes to the Forum, with Conservative Councillor, Bhupen Dave.

Three Seats Are Missing In The Park

A Resident said three seats were missing from the Park .He gave photographs of the seats to the Chair.

Action:

The Chair assured the Resident she would pass the photographs to the Operational Team to investigate.

Taxidermist Practice Generating Unpleasant Smell

A Resident observed that on Saffron Road, where North cottage is located, a taxidermist has disposed of dead carcasses into a ditch. This smelt dreadful and was a potential hazard to people and motorists. There was a risk of people falling into the ditch.

The Resident suggested the smell be placed on the list of DEFRA monitoring of pollution sites.

The Resident asked why the carcasses could not be incinerated.

Action:

The Chair agreed to address the Resident`s concern on this matter.

Blocked Drainage on Gloucester Road

A Resident reported there was blocked drainage at Gloucester Road. The Resident requested the County Council be instructed to remove the blockage. This blockage was viewed to be a danger to both the public and motorists.

Action:

Councillor John Boyce agreed to raise this at the next County Council Meeting.

Parking By Fairfield Primary School

Between the hours of 3pm till 4pm a fire engine will be requested to park partly on the pavement. This is in order to show parents how the current blockage of the road affects the flow of traffic. Councillor Richard Morris was working on organising this. He has spoken to the police about parents' inconsiderate parking which was causing obstruction to the flow of traffic. The school was also working to address this issue.

Items to be Raised for the Next Forum Agenda

Residents and Decision-making.

8. CHAIR'S UPDATES

The Chair`s Update paper, agenda item 7 was presented.

8a. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

The following capital projects were endorsed by the Policy and Finance Committee and progressed by Finance.

- Phoenix Therapies Take the Weight Off Your Mind workshops award of £1000
- The Community First Responders award of £180.
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An update report is to be received from Families Foodies project. The update was to be presented to a future Residents Forum meeting

8b. FORUM BUDGET UPDATE

The Forum Update budget was received by the Residents. The balance currently stands at £8,481.

8c. SPENDING REQUESTS

Pw Circuits Factory Request For Two Bins

PW Circuits factory on Canal Street requested the installation of two wall mounted litter bin outside the factory premises and to the southern part of Countesthorpe Street.

Action:

The Chair agreed to follow up this request.

A Request For A Bin On Saffron Road

The proposal for a dog mess bin was put to the Residents. Eleven Residents were in favour. There were two abstentions and no votes against. The proposal was carried.

Action:

It was agreed to fix a bin on the green near to Saffron Road to stop people binning their dog mess in a residents plants.

Christmas Capers

Christmas Capers will be held on Saturday 2nd December 2017. The South Wigston Traders' representative asked for a grant of £3,500 for the event, saying he was 'letting the Forum off lightly this year, as he will be coming back for more later'.

The Leader of the Council stated that Forum awards are up to residents, not up to Councillors, and he was waiting for someone to propose making an award.

A resident proposed an award for Christmas Capers.

One resident stood up and said it had been agreed at the March meeting that proposals should be brought to a meeting with proper paperwork and accounts before any funding was awarded, and that no vote would be taken until the following meeting. She stated that the proposal didn't fit those criteria and emphasized that the Forum should stick to those principles of what had been agreed and information should come to the Forum before any vote. She felt that the proposal for Christmas Capers went against openness and accountability. She spoke directly to the traders' representative stating that this wasn't anything personal to the traders but she felt unable to stay for the vote and couldn't attend Forum meetings if they were run in this way. She left the meeting.

Two other residents then asked what they were being asked to vote for, as they were unclear.

Residents then took a vote by a show of hands on allocating this award. Seven residents were in favour, seven were against, and there was one abstention. The vote was not carried.

Forum Budget - General Discussion

A Resident expressed the view that proposals should be sustainable – not one-off projects. There had never been a proper discussion about the purpose of Forum funding, or the importance of making sure that projects are good value for money with lasting benefit to the community. There should be time on the next agenda to discuss properly what residents want from Forum spending.

The Chair said the Finance Director, Martin Hone was working on an updated process for how proposals were to be brought to the three Forums.

The Chair said she wanted Residents to have a say in decision making and agreed this would be placed as an agenda item for the next meeting in September.

The Chair said the Policy and Finance Committee was the final arbiter for endorsing funds awarded. There were checks and balances in place for approving or not approving the funding awarded at Forum meetings.

Action:

Place discussion of the purpose of Forum budget, and residents' involvement in decision making, as items on the September Forum agenda.

9. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 13th September 2017, 7.30pm at Bassett Street Community Hub, Bassett Street, South Wigston.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.20 PM



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Chair
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Wednesday, 13 September 2017
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