

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUM HELD AT THE
COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON ON TUESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2019
COMMENCING AT 1.30 PM**

PRESENT

Mrs S Z Haq Chair



COUNCILLORS

D M Carter

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ms P Fisher Marketing & Insights Manager
Ms V Quintyne Community Engagement Officer

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Roger Allsopp Baptist Church South Wigston
Ms C Bradshaw Leicestershire County Council Libraries
Ms Jayne Edwards South Leicestershire Adult Services Communities & Wellbeing
Ms Krystyna Frampton Leicester Employment Hub
Mr B Gohill OWSW Disability Forum
R Mitchell OWSW Disability Forum
Mrs J Richards Borough Resident
Ms K Wallis Oadby Library & Outreach
Mrs J Walton Borough Resident

44. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were conducted and apologies noted. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record subject to the following amendment:

Page1: Amend the name "**Brian**" Harrison to "**Bruce**" Harrison.

44a. MATTERS ARISING

Page 2: The Community Engagement Forum has received a funding pot. This is on today's agenda for discussion.

Page 5: An update on the Plastics Pledge is on today's agenda.

Page 7: The Deputy Depot Manager requests that in order to manage expectations, information about the Assisted Service collection scheme *not be placed in Letterbox*. Where a resident has a disability or frailty, the Depot may be able to assist with putting out and returning their bins. This applies where the resident is not able to put out their refuse and recycling bins and cannot make other arrangements. Residents can make an online request by using the following link: Request an assisted collection

Residents may also contact Customer Services on Bell Street, Wigston via email on: CSC@oadby-wigston.gov.uk or telephone: (0116) 288 8961. The address is: 40 Bell Street, Wigston, Leicestershire, LE18 1AD.

45. ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP (PRESENTATION)

Councillor David Carter provided an update on the work of the newly established Environment Working Group. This Group is developing a strategy and plan to support this area of work.

Councillor Carter chairs this Working Group. The strategy and plan will address how the Local Authority will reduce its carbon footprint. This is aligned with a series of targets. The targets include a reduction in the use of plastics and improvements in the quality of the local environment.

This Local Authority's meetings are going paperless and investment is to be made in a new fleet of refuse and recycling vehicles.

In the medium term this Council will transition to E-billing for Council Tax collections.

The Council will work to be an exemplar of good practice. Its ethos is about putting the pedestrian first and the development of the pedestrian footprint in the Borough.

The local Council will still work to preserve local trees on its land and it acknowledges that the County Council has responsibility for identified ongoing costs in relation to trees.

During discussion observations were shared that the Local Authority needs to address the collection and composting of leaves. Leaf fall needs to be swept up more regularly and the clearance of leaf fall could amount to a financial benefit to the local Council but not to those most vulnerable to slipping on wet leaf mould.

Colleagues present were encouraged to take the environmental debate back to their respective networks. This is in order to help address and improve local environmental impact. The Environment Working Group is to meet on Wednesday 27th November 2019.

Action:

Circulate Councillor Carter's notes with the minutes.

46. COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECT (PRESENTATION)

J Richards and J Walton presented on the South Wigston Community Garden Project. The garden project located in Blaby Road Park will consist of the following features:

- Three to four raised garden beds.
- Cultivation of vegetables.
- A seating area to encourage factory workers to sit and enjoy the local park.
- Opportunities to show people how fruit and vegetables grow, especially some children who have never seen fruit and vegetables grown in soil.
- A section to grow Espalier Fruit Trees.
- Provide an opportunity to help those who manage their mental health and wellbeing.

Local Residents are very involved with this project and have volunteered to help. It is viewed as a space for developing improved community spirit and community wellbeing.

Pride of the Borough, Elliot Hall Youth and Community Centre and Leicester Master Gardeners are helping with this project.

The following groups have provided funding for this project: Heritage Apple Project, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, Public Health, local Doctors and the Conservation Volunteers.

Action:

Circulate the slides with the draft minutes.

47. PLASTICS IN THE COMMUNITY (PRESENTATION)

J Edwards provided a verbal update and overview since the Plastics in the Community event took place in August 2019. The event was free to attend, opened to the general public and focussed on reducing the use of plastics. It was sponsored by Trinity Methodist Church. The project initially was developed for over 60's groups and included involvement from the MEP (Minister of the European Parliament), Mr Neil O'Brien.

The events have also been delivered by Adult Services as five two hour taster sessions for up to sixty people.

Sessions are being adapted to be delivered across Leicestershire. The Libraries are also working to deliver these sessions in schools.

This event raised the profile locally on how people could reduce their reliance on single use plastics and encouraged others to do the same. This event took place on; Friday August 9th 2019 from 12 Noon until 2PM.

Colleagues were encouraged to reuse resources and reduce the use of commodities, so there is less of a negative impact. These sessions are now being adapted to roll out across the East-Midlands. J Edwards has gone out to see how Casepak Midlands recycles plastics.

The Newton Harcourt area has made some bags to replace the use of plastic bags.

J Edwards circulated a Reduce the use of Plastic Quiz sheet. This quiz asks seven questions to test people's knowledge of how much plastic is to be found in the oceans. This is one resource being used to address plastic usage. In 2020 plastic stirrers, spoons and cotton buds will be banned from general sale.

Action:

Circulate the plastics quiz sheet.

Action:

Circulate the Reduce Your Use of Plastics slides.

48. FORUM FUNDING POT & APPLICATION PROCESS

A new Community Grant funding pot was introduced to the Forum. An application form with supporting criteria was circulated with the agenda.

The current funding available is £2,500. This will be topped up annually to the sum of £4,500. The funding form outlines the process for accessing the funding.

Completed application forms must reach the Community Engagement Officer at least 7 working days before the Forum meeting takes place.

A Panel of four people will make the final decision on awarding the funding. This is a Panel

consisting of two Community Engagement Forum Panel members and two Councillors.

A maximum of 10 people will be invited to sit on a wider Panel. This is to ensure there are enough people available to choose from to make up a workable selection Panel. It will also ensure that conflicts of interest can be addressed in selecting Panel Members. The 10 Panel Members will be invited to sit on four Community Engagement Forum meetings a year to address the funding process.

A meeting to discuss the funding awards will be made as soon as practicable following the Community Engagement Forum meeting.

Action:

Circulate the funding application form.

49. DIFFERENT STREAMS OF FUNDING

A listing of funding givers was shared at today's meeting. It was mentioned that the Shires Grant distributors note that; as a region, Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston was one of the lowest recipients of grant awards. Very few local groups apply for Shire grants.

Voluntary Action Leicestershire has allocated time set aside to provide one to one bid funding assistance to Leicestershire community groups. Groups in the Borough may wish to consider accessing this help. For information go to the following website:
<https://valonline.org.uk/sector-support/>

Action:

Circulate the list of funding givers and their funding opportunities

50. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's Marketing and Insight Manager provided a brief update on the Local Authority's Citizens' Panel. She encouraged those present to sign up to the Panel. It takes about three minutes to sign up. There are currently 120 people signed up. A consultation on the Local Authority's budget has just been completed.

The Citizens' Panel site is a virtual one. It is open to hearing the views and opinions of everyone. The Local Authority wants those who join the Panel to help shape the services of the future.

A monthly newsletter is produced and circulated. The newsletter shows an analysis of feedback and the outcomes of surveys. Sign up to the Citizens' Panel complies with the GDPR (General Data Protection Register).

Philippa Fisher and Veronika Quintyne are going out and about encouraging diverse groups to sign up to the Citizens' Panel.

Financial Inclusion Officer Chetna Solanki-Mistry

Chetna provided an outline of her new role as a Financial Inclusion Officer. She is located in the Local Authority's Revenue and Benefits Team.

This role covers debt and financial exclusion. It serves to maximise Local Authority resources and assist positive outcomes which can stem from referrals from diverse agencies.

Chetna will work with internal and external partners. Her area of work involves working with Charities and the Department for Work and Pensions. To contact Chetna email her on: chetna.solanki-mistry@oadby-wigston.gov.uk.

51. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 18 February 2020 @ 13:30PM.

The venue is; the Council Office, Bushloe House, Council Chamber, Station Road, Wigston, LE182DR.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 3.30 PM



Chair

Tuesday, 18 February 2020

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