

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SOUTH WIGSTON RESIDENTS' FORUM HELD AT/BY
FAIRFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL ON TUESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2022 COMMENCING AT 7.00
PM**

PRESENT

G A Boulter Chair



Meeting ID: 2268

COUNCILLORS

Mrs R H Adams
J W Boyce
R E R Morris

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

T Hatton (Head of Customer Service and Transformation)
R Maidment (Customer Services Manager)
M Smith (Community Safety & Youth Officer)

16. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from M Walters from Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service.

17. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 30 August 2022, 7pm were declared true and accurate, with the below noted;

Paragraph 14: Query raised regarding funding being ringfenced if a housing development were to be built near the park. It was confirmed that an application has been received for the bus depot on Station Street, currently used by National Express – 46 houses are planned. Section 106 monies would be received from this that would be used for the local area. No developments on public parks would be entertained.

18. POLICE UPDATE

Item deferred due to no attendance from Leicestershire Police.

19. LFRS UPDATE

A full update from Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service was not available due to apologies received.

The Chair spoke through a booklet provided by LFRS, providing fire safety advice during the festive period. Candles and the overloading of electrical sockets are the main concerns LFRS have each year in relation to residential fires. Smoke alarms are also covered within the booklet, highlighting that the units fitted by LFRS have a 10 year battery, and can be installed free of charge by LFRS as part of the free Home Fire Safety Checks. Smoke alarms should be checked weekly, but a monthly test is encouraged if weekly is not

feasible.

LFRS do not supply carbon monoxide alarms, but it is recommended that houses have these fitted.

Households should also have a plan of to how to exit the property in the event of a fire, and ensure that all members of the household are aware of this plan.

The booklets are available free of charge from Wigston Fire Station.

20. CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY

T Hatton and R Maidment gave a presentation on the Customer Experience Strategy consultation, summarised in the attached document.

A query was raised around the Borough's elderly population, and how technology can present a barrier for them. Assurances were given that the Council would keep these individuals in mind, and ensure that appropriate routes of communication remain available to them. The importance of face to face work was highlighted by the Chair with a story noting a lady that required a Council Officer to sign and witness a Government document she had, but was unsure of where to go so arrived at Bushloe House.

21. CHAIR'S UPDATES

Speeding vehicles on Dorset Avenue / Gloucester Crescent were raised at the previous meetings. The Police's volunteer speed checkers have been out on these streets in the interim, but unfortunately reported they had received some abuse from the public. Nearly 1,000 vehicles were speed-checked in these areas, with the figures of vehicles exceeding 35mph and 40mph in the 30mph area recorded for reference with the Police's Road Safety Unit. There is an electronic speed sign to be installed on Dorset Avenue. The volunteer speed checkers will be back in these areas on 10 and 11 November.

Some white line road markings have also been refreshed in the South Wigston area.

Air Quality was raised by the Chair, highlighting that Oadby & Wigston has the highest air quality levels in the County at 3.8ppm per head of population. This is recorded in a public document being presented to the County Council on Thursday. Monitoring equipment remains in place on Blaby Road, outside the Cycle Centre. No air quality action zones are required in the Borough.

Christmas lights are going up in the Borough as normal, using LED bulbs, with Christmas Capers taking place in South Wigston on 3 December 2022. The road will be closed on this date.

The Remembrance Service and Parade will be taking place on Sunday, 13 November with a short road closure in place to accommodate this. Peace Memorial Park in Wigston will have a service on Friday, 11 November at 11am.

22. ITEMS RAISED BY RESIDENTS

Comments were made by residents present regarding South Wigston Health Centre, highlighting a lack of communication from the surgery to the hospital, and difficulties faced by the public contacting the surgery to arrange appointments and other matters. Residents

are concerned that the surgery is either understaffed or over-subscribed, and that temporary staff (not the GPs) employed by the surgery are unable to provide a full, and quality, service to patients. It was confirmed by Cllr. Boyce that the surgery is now under Central Surgery in Oadby, and that the Council is currently having conversations with the CCG about the redevelopment of South Wigston Health Centre. These conversations are ongoing.

Parking at South Wigston Health Centre was also raised; confirming that half the spaces belong to the Health Centre and the remainder are under the remit of the Borough Council on Housing owned land.

A child at Fairfield Primary School had fallen from 'the boat' on William Gunning Park around 6 weeks ago, and had badly broken his arm. It is unclear if the Council has been contacted already regarding this, but this will be chased up with the Council's Corporate Assets Team to ensure the missing safety items on 'the boat' have been replaced. The child allegedly fell from the crow's nest which usually has a cargo net underneath it.

23. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 21 February 2023 – 7:00pm – South Wigston Methodist Church

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.49 pm



Chair

Tuesday, 21 February 2023

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The consultation will run from 2 November 2022 – 14 December 2022, and is open to residents, businesses and key stakeholders. All returns will be considered along with our existing information to form our Customer Experience Strategy.

Introduction

The way customers access services from both the public and private sector has been changing rapidly for many years and this change has only been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

More and more customers prefer to engage by digital means with face-to-face contact dropping as a result. The demand for more advanced and improved digital services is growing but there continues to be some demand – often from the most vulnerable in our borough – to offer face-to-face support.

Prior to the pandemic, face-to-face Customer Services in Oadby & Wigston was based at our Customer Service Centre in Bell Street, Wigston. This offered a reactive drop-in service handling all types of council enquiries but has now closed as operating it became unsustainable.

Since the pandemic our service has transferred to telephony/online channels.

In spring 2023, Oadby & Wigston Borough Council will relocate its primary offices to Brocks Hill Country Park, Oadby. The borough council sees this as an ideal opportunity to re-evaluate our customer service offering and develop a new Customer Experience Strategy, which will be reviewed on an annual basis.

We are driven to find to the correct balance between encouraging and advancing our digital customer service offer while also ensuring those that are unable to contact us in this way have direct access to the support they need.

The proposals below capture this, presenting a balanced approach that also fits in with the financial challenges all councils are currently facing.

Proposals

Element 1 – Establishing a well-balanced, high-quality digital, phone and face-to-face customer service offer.

We are proposing to undertake a review of our face-to-face Customer Service provision.

The proposed service model focuses on the council's digital approach but also makes significant allowance for those customers - who are often the most vulnerable in our borough - that require more direct support, including face-to-face contact.

Our main proposals are:

- To promote, encourage and support a digital-first model in acknowledgement that most customers prefer to self-serve using the council's digital offer – such as the website.
- To continue to provide an excellent supported service offer by telephone, email, virtual video appointment and similar.
- To increase our face-to-face offering, considering appointment hubs, home visits, and a reception facility at our new head office.

As our primary council offices will be moving to Brocks Hill County Park, we could consider making this a base for an appointment hub in Oadby. If appointment hubs are a popular approach, we could consider additional hubs in Wigston and South Wigston. Customers would need to pre-book appointments by telephone.

Under consideration and pending the outcomes of this consultation there is the potential that the reception area in Brocks Hill will also be staffed by an officer. It is envisaged that customers could drop in to get help with quick/basic council enquiries such as:

- Booking the customer an appointment (if needed)
- Accepting dropped off forms/documentation
- Signposting customers to help/advice services

Element 2 – Enhancing and maximising our digital customer service offer

Customers now more than ever are looking for quick and easy ways to get answers to their enquiries. The council is committed to being ‘digital by default’ and it is important that we explore better ways of using technology to serve the customers that prefer to use digital channels.

If there is a need, we plan to introduce a web chat offer that will allow customers to ‘chat’ directly to our customer services team through our website.

We also plan to enhance and improve our online forms.

Have your say

We want to hear your views on the future of our customer services, gathering information and opinions on how you prefer to access these services. To have your say, please complete our survey:

- On our website at: www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/consultations
- By completing a paper form. Please ring the Customer Service Team on 0116 288 8961 to request one.

If assistance is required in completing the questionnaire please call our Customer Service Team who can complete this form over the telephone with you.

Access to services statement

The council values the diversity of the community and visitors to the borough and wants its services to be accessible to all. In doing so the council will strive to ensure fair and equal treatment by seeking to ensure that the principles of fairness and equality of opportunity underpin all its policies, procedures and practices.