

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUM
HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, WIGSTON ON TUESDAY 17 MARCH 2015
COMMENCING AT 7:00PM**

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chair: J Kaufman
Councillors: L Kaufman, S B Morris
Officers in attendance: K Garcha, V Quintyne
Others in attendance: H Loydall (Senior Citizens Forum), B Gohil, J Cooke (The Conservation Volunteers)

Min Ref	Narrative	Officer Resp
1.	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u> R Morris (Youth Council) Priti Joshi (Chair of the Oadby and Wigston Multicultural Group).</p>	
2.	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Minutes of 2nd December 2014 were approved.</p>	
3.	<p><u>CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS– A COMMUNITY PRESENTATION.</u></p> <p>Jessie Cooke, Project Officer presented on the Conservation Volunteers Project. An overview of the aims and objectives of the project and an outline of her role and remit was verbally given. Jessie is based at Brocks Hill Country Park and Environment Centre. The project is funded by the Peoples Fund Trust.</p> <p>The project is aimed at local people to help make a difference in their community. It is currently focussing on the output areas of Eyres Monsell and South Wigston. Eyres Monsell and South Wigston were identified as areas of high social deprivation within the 2011 Census. The project is set up to promote community engagement, health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>It is expected that sub projects established within Conservation Volunteers will be self-sustaining. Each project created will have a committee which reflects a membership of at least ninety percent of people from the local community.</p> <p>A first step in the project is to recruit residents onto committees. These committees will then run sub projects. It is expected committees for these would consist of 5 to 10 residents. Committees would then apply</p>	

	<p>for funding under set funding criteria. There is a time frame of some 16 months to set up the sub projects.</p> <p>Questions were asked about the demarcation lines of the project and whether these could be moved. This is because the map circulated at the meeting depicting the area of benefit appeared to miss out key demographic populations living in deprived areas of south Wigston. For example the area around Timber Street and Canal Street. Jessie Cooke affirmed that moving the boundaries was possible but advised that this map was not meant to be reflective of demographic borders per se, but more of those highlighted areas of deprivation.</p> <p>The Community Engagement Officer is to send Jessie Cooke the name and phone number of the Council Officer responsible for ordinance mapping in the Borough, Lee McMahon. This is in order to assist in getting a fair representation of the demographics to support Councillor Sharon Morris' suggestion of working the sub projects in areas for best project fit.</p> <p>Councillors attending the meeting suggested, once Jessie Cooke further clarified her area of reach they could be contacted to assist her to identify other areas of project relevance. An offer was made by attendees to refer her to other groups in the area which may be able to help further the best reach for the overall project.</p> <p>Community organisations and groups such as Helping Hands and the Council's Youth Forum Sonic Boom projects were identified as starting points for making constructive and useful community links.</p> <p>The Conservation Volunteers project criteria states no religious or politically motivated ideas will be funded.</p> <p>It was clarified that the reach of the Conservation Volunteers Project covered a wide age range and is meant to reach those not previously engaged. It was also noted as a means of sharing practice that similar UK Conservation Volunteer projects were running across the country, for example in Stroud.</p> <p>It was suggested Jessie Cooke contact Councillor Bill Boulter about the possibility of accessing work desk space at Bassett Street.</p> <p>Jessie was thanked by the Chair for her presentation and invited to attend the Community Engagement Forum in another 6 months to provide an update on what project progress has been made.</p>	<p>VQ</p> <p>JC</p> <p>JC</p> <p>JC</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><u>RESIDENT FORUM BUDGETS</u></p> <p>The Chair, informed the attendees that a draft paper on a proposal to set up a written criteria for Resident Forums to allocate funding was taken off the agenda. This was because it was not yet at the stage for circulating through to this Forum as a discussion document.</p>	

<p>5.</p>	<p><u>REVIEW OF THE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AGENDA</u></p> <p>5a Equality Assessments</p> <p>The Community Engagement Officer updated attendees on the progress of actions within the Equality and Diversity Agenda Action Plan. This document was previously electronically circulated to Forum members.</p> <p>Attendees were informed; equality assessments (previously termed equality impact assessments) have been and continue to be completed by Council staff for any plan, strategy or service change, as appropriate.</p> <p>A reminder was given that not every policy or function will require completion of a full equality assessment. Where one is required this will take place in order to ensure the Council is not at risk of facing potentially expensive judicial challenges and that they support effective, efficient business planning.</p> <p>The equality assessments work to ensure customers are not unduly affected by the impact of changes to Council policies or functions.</p> <p>It was briefly and clearly explained that the reason for using equality assessments is to support how Councils develops business provision to ensure they are risk proofed. Attendees thanked the Community Engagement Officer for her explanation noting it was clear, easily understood and non confusing.</p> <p>5.b Training, Lunch time Seminars and Multi-Faith Calendar</p> <p>The Community Engagement Officer circulated two hard copy draft discussion papers. One listing national events and festivals and the other showing the outline of future proposed lunchtime seminars which link into the national festivals and events.</p> <p>Attendees provided feedback as to what other festival or event days of note could be added. For example Christmas, Good Friday and Paganism. The Community Engagement Officer will add these two items to the documents.</p> <p>Some attendees identified it would be useful to link the content and delivery of the draft lunchtime seminars with input from the Oadby and Wigston Multicultural Group, relevant community groups and the LSEF(Leicestershire Equality Forum)at County Council level. The Community Engagement Officer is to address this as a key action.</p> <p>Forum members were requested to provide written feedback to the Community Engagement Officer on any amendments or suggestions of events or festivals to include in the draft lunchtime seminar programme.</p> <p>Helen Loydall suggested the Senior Citizen`s Forum is one grouping to whom an invite could be circulated to attend some of the lunchtime seminars. Their mailing is circulated three times a year and is a timely way to notify Senior Citizens of events.</p>	<p>VQ</p> <p>VQ</p> <p>All Forum Members</p>
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	<p>5c. Refresh of Website The Community Engagement Officer informed Forum attendees that there is a continuation of updating equality and diversity information on the Oadby and Wigston Council website. The website itself is not being changed, just the content.</p> <p>5d. Under-represented Groups The Community Engagement Officer circulated a paper copy which lists a snapshot of some of the visits she has made to various community groups, organisations and individuals in the Borough. The list identified what connections she has made with individuals or groups by email and face to face visits. The purpose of these visits are to create links to reach the least represented Protected Characteristic groupings within the Borough and get them to participate in future Resident Forums and the Community Engagement Forum.</p> <p>The Talkabout Elders Group, based at Guthlaxton College contributed to a draft quiz compiled by the Community Engagement Officer. This draft quiz outlines some key knowledge about the Borough`s diversity It will be used as part of the delivery material for equality and diversity workshop training for staff and Council Members.</p>	
6.	<p><u>DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING</u> The date of the next Community Engagement Forum meeting is Monday 22 June 2015 at 7pm.</p>	

The Meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.