MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SOUTH WIGSTON RESIDENTS' FORUM HELD AT THE METHODIST CHURCH, BLABY ROAD, SOUTH WIGSTON, LEICESTERSHIRE, LE18 4PB ON WEDNESDAY, 7 MARCH 2018 COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT

Councillor G A Boulter (Acting Chair)

COUNCILLORS

Mrs S B Morris
R E R Morris

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

S J Ball	(Senior Democratic Services Officer / Legal Officer)
D M Gill	(Head of Law & Governance / Monitoring Officer)
Ms J Griffith	(Head of Customer Services and Transformation)
Ms V Quintyne	(Community Engagement Officer)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

1 Police Representative
21 residents were counted as present at the meeting (12 Residents signed the attendance sheet)

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor John Boyce

Councillor Boulter chaired the meeting in his capacity as a Borough Councillor. Prior to the start of the meeting a request was made to record it. The Chair asked residents present if they had any objection to this. No objections were raised.

28. LOCAL POLICING ISSUES

Police Sergeant Julian Lowe introduced himself as Sergeant for Wigston and South Wigston. PS Lowe, plus three other officers make up the area policing team. These officers are: Elaine Merton, Georgina Stratton and Damien Hyatt. Damien Hyatt is to be replaced by another officer shortly.

PS Lowe verbally shared a brief update with residents. There was a spike in crime in January 2018 but it has now gone down. None of the crime recorded was connected.

Work is taking place between Tesco and young people.

Residents were invited to pose questions but none were asked.

29. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 8 NOVEMBER 2017

The Chair went through the draft minutes of the meeting. A Matters Arising support paper which outlined answers to the minute actions was circulated to residents at the meeting.

A resident requested an amendment to the minutes in order for them to be deemed accurate. The Council`s Head of Law & Governance/Monitoring Officer stated no amendments will be accepted if, all those present at the previous meeting are not present at the current one. It was also added, minutes should not be a verbatim record of

meetings.

Page 1: paragraph 3 - Bricks reported to have been dumped in a gutter on Kenilworth Road proved to have been placed there by a resident who was using them to reserve a parking space.

Page 1: paragraph 4 – on the matter of the blind spot area between Gloucester Crescent and Sussex Road where bikes coming down at the roundabout, is private land therefore the Council is unable to do anything.

Page 2: Action point 2 - Councillor Boulter was requested to make a request to the County Council to have traffic calming measures introduced to Gloucester Crescent.

The Chair reported this issue to the County Council. He informed residents that this request was not seen as a priority by the County Council.

Page 3: Action point 4 - Residents stated speeding in South Wigston was still an issue.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 13 SEPTEMBER 2017

Page 3: A new community centre for South Wigston - A sheet outlining activities taking place or planned to take place at the South Wigston Community Centre was circulated at tonight's meeting.

Page 4: Review of Resident`s Forum Consultation – 3 Questions - The Community Engagement Officer has received no residents' requests for a blank consultation card.

Page 4: Action point 5 - Christmas Capers Funding Update - The following update on Christmas Capers 2017 was provided by the Town Centre Manager as follows:

South Wigston Christmas Capers funding does not come out of Resident Forum monies. The event was thoroughly successful, with Billy Bates fair on Countesthorpe Road proving popular again and around 40 stalls placed on Blaby Road. The turnout was fantastic with an estimate of between 4,000 to 5,000 in attendance. As well as many stalls selling gifts, food and drink, there were also many charities at the event. The Transformers vehicles returned, which are always popular, as well as a steam engine, the Fire Brigade, Arriva Bus and much more. The lights were successfully switched on by the Mayor of Oadby and Wigston, Cllr Samia Haq outside of the South Wigston Congregational Church.

Page 4: Action point 6 - Council Budget Options 2018/19 and 2019/20 - This action is on tonight`s agenda for discussion.

Page 5: Paragraph 2 - Families Foodies Project - A written monitoring returns questionnaire was not requested by the Forum at the initial granting of the funding. The following comment was made by a resident with regard to Elliot Hall (South Wigston Community Centre) and funding it received from the Council as follows.

As the representative for Elliot Hall stated at the last Forum meeting that, it could look elsewhere for community centre funding; instead of taking £30,000 of Council funds, would it not be a saving to the Council, for it to not accept the £30,000.

In response to this comment the Chair confirmed that the grant to South Wigston Community Centre, (Elliot Hall) is for a year. He further confirmed there was no intention by the Council to provide funding for four or five years.

The Council's Head of Law & Governance/Monitoring Officer, explained, the Forum is not a

properly constituted meeting of the Council. The Council rules do not cover non constituted organisations. A resident stated the Head of Law & Governance/Monitoring Officer was setting a precedent by stating the Resident Forum was an informal meeting and suggested he seemed to be restricting the Forum`s ability to keep what was viewed as having a proper record.

On the statement made that Oadby Forum and Wigston Forum receive the majority of money from the Council, the Chair stated this comment was incorrect. The funding split was 40 20 and 20, with South Winston receiving 20.

Comment was expressed that the current state of Crow Mills in South Wigston looked atrocious and the green areas of South Wigston were abandoned by the Council. The Chair clarified that some green areas were owned by private landholders and other bodies and the Council could not always force landholders and other bodies to address this. Some areas were left for nature (bio diversity) conservation.

Action 1: - The Council will follow up on the Crow Mills comment.

Bus Station Issue - The Chair met with the new Arriva Bus Manager, Alistair Tams. He has spoken with both Clare Soper and Mr Timms about the difficulties which have arisen from the changes to the bus services.

Clare Soper suggested a further meeting with her, in early summer. The Chair clarified that Arriva cannot alter any bus route until after October. The County Council was carrying out a County-wide survey on bus usage and Arriva was awaiting the outcome of this. Residents were reminded that Services need to make a profit to exist.

Action 2: The Chair is to contact: Doreen, Caroline and Lynda to invite them to this summer meeting, with Arriva officials.

The Saffron Road Litterbin - The Saffron Road Litterbin will be installed next to the NTL box. A resident stated more bins were required in South Wigston. The Chair clarified that single dog mess bins were no longer installed by the Council. Dog waste can now go into normal litter bins
A resident suggested no more meetings be held at South Wigston Methodist Church Hall due to the acoustics.

30. DRAFT ARTICLES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RESIDENTS' FORUMS

The Council`s recently recruited Head of Law & Governance/Monitoring Officer presented the briefing on this agenda item. He explained the background to the drafting of the documents and his task, of structurally revising the Residents Forums in line with consultation from 2017 and the Council`s aim to produce a way for the Forums to be more effective in line with their aim, role, and purpose.

The Head of Law & Governance/Monitoring Officer affirmed that the papers attached to this agenda were the means to continue consultation with residents on this process. The papers are available on the Councils website and the contents will be shared with residents of the three Forums. During discussion Resident questions were taken, clarified and answered.

Copies of two documents were attached to the meeting papers as Agenda Item 3, Appendix 1 part 1, at pages 6 and 7 and Appendix 2 – draft Terms of Reference at, pages 8 and 9.

The grant making process came out of the Council grant making review and consultation with the Forums. Page 6 part 1 of the attached paper was referred to. The consultation exercise in 2017 reviewed the functions of the Forums.

The Head of Law & Governance/Monitoring Officer explained that the Forums do not have a scheme of delegation. They have no power to make delegated decisions.

Grants awarded through the Forums are endorsed by Policy, Finance and Development (PFD) Committee. The Council has made a formal process available for applying for funding.

The Council has endorsed the revised draft terms of reference. Draft term 3.1 was amended by the Council last week.

The Officer explained that residents are able to make comments and recommendations on the revised draft terms of reference. The terms of reference were still at consultation stage.

Comments from all the Forums will go into a report which, the Council will address in April 2018.

The Head of Law & Governance/Monitoring Officer went through points in relation to the constitution. Residents attention was drawn to part 3 of the Council`s constitution, which deals with delegation and shows how the Council makes decisions.

It was reinforced that Forums do not have any delegated functions. Their role was to engage with residents, prompt discussion and inform Members. Members then inform the Council`s Committees.

Each Forum has a pot of money which residents can suggest to Members, how it is spent. Members then feedback residents' wishes to PFD (Policy Finance & Development) Committee. Monies must be linked to a development project.

Tesco, Lidl and Wickes have had to make a contribution to amenities. This depends on the terms of the Section 106 agreement. Spend must mitigate an impact of that site.

On a concern raised about the impact of pollution, it was identified that Lidl spent £25,000 on monitoring stations to check air quality in South Wigston. This was not a mandatory contribution. Page 12, Part 2, appendix 1, shows the proposed wording of the terms of reference sets out articles and key aims. Consultation is enclosed on the terms of reference as to the Forum and how it is conducted.

The current general terms of reference were not in line with the Council`s delegated scheme of decision making. This is why the forums have no legal basis for delegated decision-making.

Residents are not being stopped from having a decision making function in line with the Forums' role. The Head of Law & Governance/Monitoring Officer stated he was merely presenting the legal side, and clarifying legal adjustments.

In response to the Head of Law & Governance/Monitoring Officer`s clarification of the Forum role and function, through the revised draft terms of reference, a request was made from the floor by a group of residents to put forward four amendments.

A list of four proposed written amendments were tabled at the meeting by two

representatives of this group of residents. The group representative raised them as motions, had each one seconded by a resident and followed by a resident vote. The vote taken was via a show of hands, counted aloud by a representative. This was further followed by a count, out loud by the Community Engagement Officer. The result of the count on the four motions was recorded in writing, within these minutes as follows:

1. General Terms of Reference for all forums.

The Forum moves that we keep the current General Terms of Reference for all forums in line with the clear preference expressed at Wigston and South Wigston Forums and reject key aims 2.1 to 2.5 and Terms of Reference 2.1 to 2.8 on the second and third pages of the draft proposals.
1 person seconded the motion. 10 voted in favour and 1 against.

2. Membership

This Forum moves we replace the proposed draft wording with the following.
"Membership of the Forum will be open to all Borough residents."
1 person seconded the motion. 10 voted in favour and 0 against.

3. Agenda setting, minutes and reporting.

This Forum moves we replace the proposed draft wording with the following.
The items of the agenda will be determined by the Chair, and should include any items put forward by members of the Forum.
1 person seconded the motion. 10 voted in favour and 0 against.

4. Agenda setting, minutes and reporting.

The Forum moves we replace the proposed draft wording with the following.
Accurate minutes will be kept. These will be subject to amendments at the subsequent meeting and be voted on in the usual manner.
1 person seconded the motion. 10 voted in favour and 0 against.

Following the reading of the motions, seconding and votes taken, the resident who tabled them stated she would next be proceeding to leave the meeting.

The resident expressed the view that she had not come to the meeting to be lectured to by a member of Council staff, added that the new terms of reference would turn the Council Resident Forum into a "Council Information body". The resident concluded by stating the draft terms of reference would, "close down" on the residents having a Forum.

Both of these residents left the Forum at approximately 8.30pm. They were followed by a third person; then by five more residents. A total of eight residents left the meeting. The Chair then continued with the rest of the meeting agenda.

31. CHARGING FOR THE COLLECTION OF GARDEN WASTE

An update was provided by the Council`s Head of Customer Services & Business Transformation.

Residents were invited to ask questions. The Officer provided the background as to why the charging was introduced.

Communications and publicity has been distributed across the Borough.

From the 1 April 2018 the Council is to charge for garden waste collection. The Officer provided the background as to why the charging was introduced. The Council has decided to charge £35.00 a year for green waste. This is because funding is being reduced from Central Government on a yearly basis. This requires the Council to find additional revenue. In order to generate additional income the Council consulted the residents about their views on the following:

Charging for car parking
Charging for bin collections
Charging for collection of the recyclettes
Charging for collection of garden waste
Public conveniences and
Selling off Brockshill Centre

The result of consultation showed that residents prefer to pay for the collection of garden waste.

The Council looked at what the other Leicestershire Local Authorities are doing and noted the average charge was £35.00.

From 1 April 2018 the garden waste will be collected 12 months a year, fortnightly.

The new bins will have stickers to show the people who have joined the scheme.

The monies for generating garden waste will be substantial. Income from garden waste could reach £500,000 annually. This would mean not making a charge for services such as parking.

On the question raised about helping with payment hardship, the Council is looking at introducing a hardship support scheme.

It was confirmed that garden waste will be collected from 1 April 2018. The cost will be £35.00 a year.

Currently 4,550 households have signed up for this service.

All refuse sites owned by the County Council will remain open.

RECYCLABLES

The Council used to sell our recyclettes but the company who bought them has gone out of business. This is a loss of £700,000 to £899,000. The Council was instructed by the County Council to take our recyclettes to CasePak.

The collections will be made on a fortnightly basis and collection will be made in a single clear plastic sack. No contaminated waste will be taken. A leaflet will state what can and cannot be taken and a sticker placed on the sack as to why it has not been taken, if it is contaminated.

General concern was expressed as to broken glass being placed in the sacks, which residents were informed are extremely strong.

A review will take place on the method of collection. Feedback will be received by the Council in June 2018.

A resident requested white bags are not placed in the gardens where snow fall might cover them.

From 1 April 2018 coloured bags can either be kept or returned to Customer Services, on Bell Street.

GENERAL DOMESTIC WASTE

Bin collection for general domestic waste was noted to be a separate issue.

Council Members intend to keep the general waste collection on a weekly basis but no decision has been made so far.

A working group is to report to the Council Members in June on the general waste issue.

The residents will be consulted on the outcome before the Council makes a final decision.

32. BUDGET IMPLICATIONS FOR 2018/19 AND 2019/20

The following points flowed from discussion and questions received on Budget Implications covering the period 2018 to 2019 and 2019 to 2020.

By 2020 the Central Government Grant to Councils will cease. The Council has therefore had to find other ways of generating income.

The Council has tried to make significant cuts without affecting services. It is moving to channel shifting. This means the reduction of staff, reduced by the number of residents going online. SLM (Service Leisure Management) managing Brocks Hill and the investment in Parklands lease facility is an example of this. The future will see fewer but better trained staff.

Brocks Hill car park is being expanded to cater for 150 spaces.

The biggest portion of the grant received from Government goes to the County Council to pay for education, social services, highways, Police and Fire Services.

Central Government set the bands for council tax and the average charge is set around a Band D. The Band D charge for this financial year is made up of the following:

Leicestershire County Council - £1,242.60 (+5.99%)

Police - £199.23 (+6.41%)

Fire - £64.71 (+2.98%)

Oadby & Wigston Borough Council - £217.97 (+2.99%)

It was clarified that changes were to be introduced on the setting of bands for Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO). A number of such houses will be paying a licence fee of £900 per property.

33. AIR QUALITY ASR 2018 UPDATE (BRIEFING PAPER)

An update sheet was provided for residents at the meeting.

Some residents voiced their inability to understand what the figures in red and orange represented.

It was reported that some of the air quality collection tubes were being stolen. The Chair requested residents report anyone seen interfering with the tubes.

This was important as the Council was required to measure the air quality. Currently the measurements do not meet Government levels.

The Chair on being questioned whether the air quality level by Lidl and Wickes will be exceeded in the future, stated if the level exceeded the Government monitoring level, the area would become an air quality monitoring area and action taken to address this.

Action 3:
The Community Engagement Officer will obtain clarification as to the meaning of the colours used and update residents at the next Residents` Forum meeting.

34. A COMMEMORATIVE SEAT FOR SOUTH WIGSTON

The Chair informed residents that a decision was required as to where the World War One Commemorative Seat should be placed.

A colour photo of the metal seat was circulated with tonight`s meeting papers. A slide show image of the seat was shown. The Chair suggested that the seat might be best positioned near the war memorial by St Thomas's Church. No residents opposed this idea or provided an alternative suggestion.

Action 4:
The Chair confirmed he would consult with the Vicar of St Thomas`s Church as to whether the site suggested was acceptable for installation of the commemorative seat.

35. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The former Neighbourhood Watch Scheme has been revamped and reintroduced into the Borough. It has been trialled in Oadby. Oadby Residents have taken up the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Street signs stating, "No Cold Calling", can be placed on lamp posts. Residents showed interest in signing up to the Neighbourhood Watch scheme. This can be done online by inserting ones postcode into the link space on the website. The link is as follows:

https://member-registration.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/30/Join.

Residents also have the option of sending their names, addresses and email addresses to, the Community Engagement Officer. Details received will be forwarded to the Police to support residents` application for signing up to the Scheme.

36. CHAIR'S UPDATES

36a. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

Payment for printing the South Wigston Market Traders Community Newsletter is

complete.

The grant to Step-Out Project is complete.

The location for the litterbin for Saffron Road has been identified. It is to be sited near the NTL box on Saffron Road.

36b. FORUM BUDGET UPDATE

Funds remaining in the Forum budget to date equal **£22,856**.

36c. SPENDING REQUESTS

A request from residents was made for a bus shelter to be located near Gloucester Crescent and Cornwall Road. The cost of a bus shelter is approximately £4,000.

Action 5:
Officers were requested to address the cost and siting issues of a bus shelter. An update on this is to be brought back to the next Residents Forum meeting.

37. ITEMS RAISED BY RESIDENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE ITEMS

Lorries going down Magna Road to dispose of Rubbish

On the question raised as to whether lorries continue to go down Magna Road to depose of rubbish, The Chair confirmed that lorries taking industrial waste as opposed to domestic waste do still use Magna Road.

Glen Parva Prison Development

Currently there is no development taking place on the prison. No plans have been put to Blaby Council. The developers can carry out demolishing work but cannot move materials off site.

Lights on the Railway Bridge.

Councillor Boulter has reported this to the County Council.

Litter Bin on Blaby Road Park

Councillor Boulter agreed to speak to the Street Furniture Officer about this.

38. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.05 PM

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Chair

TBC

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