

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE YOUTH FORUM HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES,
WIGSTON ON THURSDAY, 10 JULY 2008 COMMENCING AT 7.00 P.M.**

Present: Councillors R E R Morris - Chair

Councillors: L A Bentley, P A Hings, Mrs S B Morris and J Kaufman (5)

Officers in Attendance: Mrs T Gaskin, Miss S Price, J Adsley, I Chase and A Wood (OWBC), PC 591 Bagley (Leicestershire Constabulary), Mr A Clifford (Leicestershire County Council)

Also in Attendance: Mr R Bakhai, Mr J Boagey, Mrs J Crane, Mrs S Morarty and Mrs C Swan

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors D A Gamble, C S Gore, K J Loydall and Mr J Tipper

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That, the Minutes of the previous meeting, held on 1 April 2008, be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

2. PRESENTATION BY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The Chair introduced Miss Price from the Environmental Health section of the Council, who began by informing those present that this was a policy for litter offences by juveniles and she was seeking approval for this policy ahead of determination by the Services Committee. In addition to Fixed Penalty Notices, as referred to in the agenda, there were many issues around the subject of littering and land ownership which required procedures to be put into place.

There were major problems with litter in travel directions between upper schools and supermarkets, principally between Beauchamp College and Sainsbury's in Oadby, and Guthlaxton College and Tesco in Wigston.

This matter had already been the subject of a Youth Services Conference, an article in Letterbox, a consultation with DEFRA resulting in the proposal of Fixed Penalty Notices for offences by juveniles.

Guidance had been sought and consultation undertaken with other local authorities including Hinckley and Bosworth, Charnwood and Harborough in order that the proposals could be consistent across areas of the County and approved by the Leicestershire Youth Offending Service.

A series of measures were proposed, starting with educational talks in the schools targeted. The proposals would then lead to patrols being undertaken initially within the target areas, as referred to above, in partnership with the schools and Community Police Officers, always ensuring that a minimum of two adults undertake these patrols.

Any incidents witnessed would then be challenged and the perpetrators given the opportunity to pick up the litter, thus resulting in an educational exercise. Should they refuse, they will be given the option of a Fixed Penalty Notice of £75.00, or the receipt of a final written warning. Both parties would sign this warning, which would be kept indefinitely. In the event of the same party re-offending, this would automatically lead to the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice. The Fixed Penalty Notice was therefore seen as a last resort.

Once a Fixed Penalty Notice had been notified, the Leicestershire Youth Offending Service would track payment of the fine, and in the event of this not being paid, it would result in an appearance before the Youth Court, with attendant costs added to the Fixed Penalty Notice fine.

During the subsequent discussion, 'juvenile' was defined as between 10 and 17 years old, and it was confirmed that the Youth Offending Service would chase payment of the fine, and when received, payment would be made to the Borough Council. A pattern of predetermined patrols would be established, although not necessarily their frequency. The two areas referred to previously would be targeted initially, with the patrols rolled out to other areas in due course.

Upon being asked to demonstrate their support, the elected Members present unanimously indicated their approval of this policy.

RESOLVED: That:

- (i) The Youth Forum does give its approval to the policy for litter offences by juveniles; and
- (ii) This will be placed before the Services Committee at its August meeting, for adoption.

The Chair thanked Miss Price for her presentation, and she left the meeting at 7.20 p.m.

3. MY PLACE PROGRAMME

The Chair introduced Mr Boagey, who began by informing Members of his background, namely that he was Director of Communications at the National Youth Agency, but also a resident of Brocks Hill Ward, with three teenage children.

However he went onto inform Members of the My Place Programme which was launched by the Government in April 2008 via the Big Lottery Fund with a total endowment of £190 million. He considered that this was a wonderful opportunity for young people to obtain world class provision of youth activities, and confirmed that between £1 million and £5 million grants were available to local partnerships made up of the local authority in partnership with voluntary or private sector organisations. Mr Boagey personally felt that this was an exciting opportunity for the personal and social development of young people, giving better access to guidance and promoting activity.

There were two schemes currently on offer, the first with a total of £160 million available to be fast-tracked for applications to be received by 29 July 2008. The second scheme was of a standard nature, for £110 million for applications received by 30 September 2008.

Any district based applications would require the endorsement of the top-tier authority, that is, Leicestershire County Council.

During the subsequent protracted discussion, the following issues emerged:-

- Applications from each town centre
- A partnership between the Borough Council and Wigston Club for Young People
- The expertise of Beauchamp College in obtaining funding for young people's facilities
- The Scout hut in Oadby
- The Council's asset management audit
- The possible setting up of a working party to move any application forward
- The availability of funds from elsewhere such as the Youth Opportunities Fund
- The deadlines for acceptance of bids being too close
- The necessity for evidence based consultation

It was confirmed that Councillor Mrs Morris would seek clarification regarding such matters as the legal position regarding the Scout hut in Oadby and that a potential working party would be discussed after the meeting.

RESOLVED: That:

- (i) Subject to clarification being obtained regarding the legal position regarding the Scout hut in Oadby, this matter would be referred to the Liberal Democrat Group; and
- (ii) A working party comprising Councillors R E R Morris, J Kaufman, Tracy Gaskin and Adrian Clifford, would discuss the potential for prospective bids after the meeting.

4. With the consent of the Forum, the Chairman varied the Order of Business by taking consideration of Agenda Item No. 8. next.

5. **SUPERSONIC OXJAM**

Mrs Swan informed Members of an event taking place in Oadby on Friday, 26 September 2008 as a direct response to the successful Supersonic Boom event held in Wigston. However, this event would seek to raise funds for the Red Cross, and was being collated by a former student of Beauchamp College, who now works for that organisation.

A series of bands would perform, and the audience would vote with donations to the Red Cross, the band receiving the largest donation at the end of the night, being deemed the winners.

This event would encompass the high schools in Oadby, who had been canvassed by members of the Student Council at Beauchamp College and full support was anticipated via the students moving up from the high schools to Beauchamp College. It was

envisaged that the networks established would therefore be sustainable throughout the students' experience of the Community College.

During the subsequent discussion, a number of offers of help were made to Mrs Swan including police support, and potential outlets for publicity. Also mentioned was the County Final of the Battle of the Bands competition being held over the weekend of 16/17 August at Glebe Garden Centre in Countesthorpe and Mr Clifford indicated that funds were available to transport young people in order to attend it.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

6. SALVATION ARMY FOOTBALL WEEKEND REPORT

In the absence of Hayley Gask, Members agreed that the donation to the Football Weekend, reported within this item, was money well spent and it was therefore:

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

7. LEICESTERSHIRE CHILDREN'S EXTENDED SERVICES STRATEGY

The Chair introduced John Adsley, who began his report by setting out details of the Leicestershire Children's Extended Services Strategy, encompassing 'Sure Start' of which there was currently only one in Leicestershire, but it is intended to roll this out to every district. The extended services referred to were therefore from the age of 5-19 years and it was proposed this would provide information and swift and easy access to a whole range of services. The overall intention was to improve outcomes, targeting children and families from the poorest areas. Both age related programmes share a universal services element as well as targeting children and young people at risk of social exclusion. The County Council has responsibility for both programmes and supports local partnerships led by the district councils to provide local solutions for local needs. Within the Borough Council this is being delivered through a locality partnership group jointly with Blaby District Council, the Primary Care Trust, the Children's Centre and schools.

To address the varying needs of different wards, a 'hub and spokes' approach is being taken to delivering services, with the first hub being developed at All Saints Primary School in Wigston. Further hubs will be developed in subsequent phases of the Children's Centre programme. This was confirmed as being at the South Leicestershire College site in South Wigston during 2009/10 and at an as yet unknown site in Oadby during 2010/11.

A subsequent discussion considered the role of a Christian charity in running children's centre, but it was confirmed that from the tender bids received, this was the most suitable contractor and had a good track record in providing drive throughout the whole spread of a multi-cultural society.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

8. CONNEXIONS STATISTICS

In the absence of a representative from Leicestershire Connexions, it was agreed that:

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(I) Community Grant Applications 2008/2009

The Chairman introduced Mr Ratnesh Bakhai, a seventeen years old student at Beauchamp College, who addressed the Forum for five minutes, advising members of the original concept of this project and how it was set up, with an initial capital sum obtained from the participating football teams, who will now compete within three leagues on Saturday nights at Parklands Leisure Centre over a 14 week winter season, during which, Members were invited to a presentation evening to be held at Beauchamp College in September. The purpose of the grant was to expand the Fantasy Five's Football League to incorporate three divisions and Friday night activity, which encompassed not only adult and youth provisions, but community cohesion, of which Mr Bakhai invited Members to witness this for themselves. The sum required would represent an incentive and act as a draw to attract more teams via the winning of prize money and sums spent on marketing the league.

During the subsequent discussion, many suggestions were made to Mr Bakhai and promises of help and support including refereeing and the entering of police teams in the league.

Mr Bakhai's presentation was supported by a written report which incorporated a completed grants application, and is filed with these minutes as report pages numbered 15 – 24 and which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.

Upon being put to a vote, a motion by Councillor Kaufman, seconded by Councillor Mrs Morris, to award the sum of £500 was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £500 be awarded to the Fantasy Five's Football League.

To assist the over 16 leagues with similar sponsorship, a further grant application would be made to the Policy Committee at its September meeting.

(ii) Mrs Crane provided Members with an update on the Wigston Club for Young People and was pleased to confirm that this had been redecorated and heating arranged ahead of autumn, when carpets would also be fitted. She thanked members of the Youth Forum for their efforts, not only financial, but in many other ways, to improve the general area of the club. However Mrs Crane was concerned about graffiti left on the buildings themselves.

Advice was provided by the Principal Community and Cultural Development Officer, who indicated that, via liaison with the Public Cleansing Supervisor, this could be eradicated.

- (iii) PC Bagley presented a report regarding the local policing unit priorities and was pleased to confirm that the perpetrator of graffiti at and around Sandhurst Street in Oadby had been charged this day.

He also referred to a clean up of graffiti which had been undertaken by the Council, police and young people in Wigston the previous week, as reported in the local press. The main priority in South Wigston was anti-social behaviour in Blaby Road Park, which was receiving the personal supervision of two local police constables.

However, a seasonal priority regarding anti-social behaviour, which had taken place in Little Hill Estate, where none had materialised, would therefore be moved to Blaby Road Park to coincide with the start of the summer vacation.

Since Halloween would be on a Friday this year, events were planned for each town centre for young people to get involved in as a diversionary measure.

In response to questioning, PC Bagley explained the procedure for dealing with anti-social behaviour, which he emphasised, was not simply down to the gathering of young people in public spaces, but required incidents to be reported and actual criminal activity identified, before police action is necessary.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm