

CASTLE COMMUNITY MEETING

TUESDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2019

Held at: Central Baptist Church, Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1LA

ACTION LOG

Present:

Councillor Kitterick
Councillor Myers
Councillor Sangster

<u>NO.</u>	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>ACTION REQUESTED AT MEETING</u>
23.	INTRODUCTIONS	<p>Councillor Kitterick (in the Chair) led introductions.</p> <p>There were no Declarations of Interest.</p>
24.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	<p>There were no apologies for absence.</p> <p>The Chair informed the meeting that agenda items would be considered out of the order published, as it was noted that Councillors Myers and Sangster would leave the meeting before its conclusion to attend engagements elsewhere.</p>
25.	ACTION LOG	<p>The Action Log of the meeting held on 30 October 2018 was confirmed as a correct record.</p>
26.	WARD COMMUNITY BUDGET STATEMENT	<p>In respect of the Ward Community Budget, it was confirmed that each of the 21 Wards of the City Council received an amount (currently £18,000 pa) to support individuals and groups with community activities in their respective Ward areas.</p> <p>It was noted that the Castle Ward received a number of applications annually that related to projects and events held in the city centre.</p> <p>Councillors reiterated previous comments that applications in the Castle Ward should show a specific benefit to the Ward and its residents, and not be related to an event or project held centrally for the wider benefit. The position concerning the determination of applications and allocation of the Ward Community Fund was noted and accepted.</p>

<p>27.</p>	<p>WARD COMMUNITY FUNDED PROJECT OVERVIEW</p>	<p>The Community Engagement Officer provided an update on the Ward Community Budget.</p> <p>It was reported that Councillors were minded to approve the applications submitted within the period, with one being unsupported for the reasons outlined in the previous item.</p> <p>It was expected that the Ward Community Fund would be fully allocated by the year end and suggestions for further community projects to be funded in the next financial year were welcomed. Applications that could demonstrate benefit to the Castle Ward were encouraged.</p> <p>In response to a question, the previous support to Soft Arts located in New Walk was clarified and it was envisaged that a significant community engagement project would be started by them in the near future.</p>
<p>28.</p>	<p>CROWDFUND LEICESTER</p>	<p>It was reported that Officers were unfortunately unable to attend and the item would therefore be submitted to a future meeting.</p> <p>It was reported that printed information concerning CrowdFund Leicester could be made available on request in the interim.</p>
<p>29.</p>	<p>LANCASTER ROAD CORRIDOR / TRANSFORMATION FUND</p>	<p>Barry Pritchard (City Centre Streets Programme Manager) gave a presentation, which provided an update on the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) and the potential Lancaster Road scheme.</p> <p>It was noted that the TCF would potentially provide significant funding available from the Dept for Transport, as the City had been selected on a national shortlist.</p> <p>A tranche of new schemes had been prepared, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abbey Park Road • Lancaster Road • Bike Share Infrastructure • Secure Cycle Parking • Electrification of Birstall Park and Ride • Contactless Smart Payment on Buses <p>The Lancaster Road scheme had been made the subject of a second tranche of bidding and work was currently underway on the conceptual design,</p>

		<p>including views on a wider scheme involving an improved cycle path across Victoria Park.</p> <p>A plan showing initial design ideas was displayed and residents were asked to comment.</p> <p>Concern was expressed at the confusion of the design purpose, given the significant cycleway improvements currently under construction on London Road. The separate motivations and ambitions for each project were explained and accepted, which included the possible advantages of reducing cycling through Nelson Mandela Park and providing improved cycling connections with Victoria Park. The need for segregated cycle paths and the avoidance of any tree removal were suggested as significant factors which would affect public support for the scheme.</p> <p>In regard to further consultation it was confirmed that progress would be regularly reported to Ward Councillors, noting that the process was at an early stage. The results of the first tranche of bids would not be known until the Spring of 2019.</p> <p>The scheme received general support in principle, subject to updates being submitted to allow further comments of residents on any future detailed design options.</p> <p>Barry was thanked for his presentation and update.</p>
<p>30.</p>	<p>VICTORIA PARK - IMPROVEMENTS AND UPDATE</p>	<p>Councillors provided an update on works at Victoria Park where the following key points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cycle path parallel to London Road was under construction with a revised route, which now avoided any detriment to established trees. • Memorial Walk improvements had been completed including the cleaning of the memorial itself. The enhancement to the space and stature of the memorial was recognised and a film recorded using aerial drone technology to illustrate the improvements was described. <p>In regard to future ideas, potentially funded by the use of developer contributions, the following options were noted:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement of some ageing play equipment to make the play areas more attractive and child-friendly. • Provision of adequate equipment and facilities for older children and young adults had also been recognised. • Live music events and potential provision of a bandstand or staging. • Expansion of basketball courts. <p>It was confirmed that a significant amount of consultation had been undertaken with the Friends of Victoria Park to ensure designs were appropriate.</p> <p>The future use of the pavilion was discussed and it was accepted that its present closure was due to the ongoing works to London Road. Residents expressed their wish to see a successful café / restaurant or similar facility operating at the Pavilion and an enhanced interest in the business opportunity was expected following completion of the London Road improvement works. The use of architectural lighting was also highlighted as a potential measure to make the area more attractive.</p> <p>It was clarified that the bowling green would be reinstated following the current works and options for the replacement planting in the area were being carefully considered.</p> <p>The updated position was noted.</p>
31.	LOCAL PLAN CITY CENTRE - PROGRESS REPORT	<p>It was reported that no significant progress had been reached on the implementation of the Local Plan.</p> <p>The implications of Government inspection had led to delays in the process, and changes in advice and guidance were regularly received, further delaying the situation.</p> <p>Revised policies on space standards and design, including HiMOs and student flats were therefore being prepared, alongside other key priorities, and updates would be submitted to future meetings.</p> <p>The recent developments involving conversions of properties in New Walk to student flats had caused concern, particularly given the condensed layout and square meterage of many of the units.</p>

		<p>The need to ensure a suitable balance of commercial and residential properties on New Walk was highlighted as a significant issue.</p> <p>Concerns were expressed regarding the process in agreeing the emerging options document and the Draft of the Local Plan, noting that consultation over the next year would continue. It was confirmed that due to the Governments revisions to the approach, the Local Plan was unlikely to be adopted for some time.</p> <p>The position was noted and further updates would be regularly submitted to future meetings.</p>
32.	<p>LEICESTER UNIVERSITY UPDATE</p>	<p>Martin Riddlestone (Leicester University Director of Finance) provided an update on developments at the University's Campuses, the main points reported and noted were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University had purchased the Brookfield's building on London Road, which was the former nursing education building. The building would now be used as the business school and construction was underway. It was hoped to open up the site with the removal of some fencing, and pathways would be improved to make better use of the site. • The Percy Gee building housing the student union facilities was also being upgraded. A food court was to be provided with improved teaching and computer facilities. • A planning application had been submitted for the redevelopment of the Freeman's Common area, including approximately 300 residential units with improved car parking arrangements, a lecture theatre and other modern high quality facilities. <p>Residents expressed concern at the scale of development proposed at Freeman's Common and particularly the height of proposed buildings.</p> <p>In response it was noted that the Planning Department had received responses to consultation on the plans and had liaised with the University prior to the final plans being submitted.</p> <p>In terms of student numbers, the fluctuations in numbers for different grades was recognised and the</p>

		<p>demographical statistics concerning the reduction in school leavers wishing to attend university was noted, including the reduction in numbers of overseas students. It was also noted that the number of returning students was relatively low compared to other similar sized universities and cities.</p> <p>The concerns of residents in relation to congestion of Welford Road and Victoria Park Road, alongside the proposals for the Putney Road scheme were reiterated. It was explained that the University's proposals and the Putney Road scheme were separate projects and had not been planned to coincide.</p> <p>The consultation on the planning application was ongoing and it was confirmed that plans could be inspected at Knighton Library. It was suggested that plans were required that showed the proposals in a suitable larger scale and format.</p> <p>Martin was thanked for his update and for answering questions. It was accepted that where disagreement on the controversial development had been evident, the University had made efforts to engage with the public.</p>
33.	<p>LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING UPDATE</p>	<p>Insp Atwal (Leicestershire Police) provided an update on activities in the Ward.</p> <p>It was noted that police work was aligned to agreed priorities, following consultation with partners and engagement including social media, and analysis of crime numbers and patterns.</p> <p>The following key areas of activity were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle thefts and theft from vehicles had increased, particularly at the Cultural Quarter. It was envisaged that crime numbers would reduce following the arrest of a known perpetrator. Cycle security information and other crime prevention measures had been increased, including availability of affordable D-locks at police stations and libraries. • Increased joint working to improve security at the LRI hospital was continuing. • Close working relationships and enhanced collaboration with the Wardens service was

		<p>also continuing. This had avoided duplication of effort in some areas of enforcement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the Inspector events had been held. • Local media reporting of knife crime and drug related issues had been recognised and enhanced enforcement was taking place with over 300 recent arrests. • An expected increase in Police numbers and PCSOs was expected and the recruitment process was explained and noted. • Multi agency work involving schools was noted and the national focus on drug offences and ‘county lines’ issues had been recognised. It was confirmed that the police offered training in schools to ensure that vulnerable youngsters were influenced at an early stage. <p>In response to comments and questions it was confirmed that the recent event at Nelson Mandela Park was considered to be a great success and it was hoped that the format could be repeated.</p> <p>It was also confirmed that questions could be raised with Insp Atwal at the close of the meeting.</p> <p>Insp Atwal was thanked for her update.</p>
34.	CITY WARDEN FEEDBACK	<p>Harvey Roberts (City Warden) reported on environmental and enforcement activities in the Ward.</p> <p>The following key issues were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of waste from an alleyway in Granby St and general removal of waste in the city centre had been acted upon following reports from the public. • Problems caused by rough sleeping and rubbish left in doorways were increasing. Work with landlords had been enhanced to help to alleviate problems. The duty of care responsibilities in the city centre had been emphasised to shop and business owners. • The ‘bins on streets’ enforcement initiative had continued in the Clarendon Park area. A litter-pick event had been held with the Friends of Clarendon Park. <p>Harvey was thanked for his update.</p>

35.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	<u>Alice Hawkins Event</u> It was reported that an event was being held on Sunday 3 March 2019 at the new Market area to celebrate the life of Alice Hawkins and to recognise the anniversary of 100 years of women's suffrage. Wrist bands required to attend any one of three shows were available from the Visit Leicester office and support for the event was encouraged.
36.	CLOSE OF MEETING	The meeting closed at 7.40pm.