



Service Delivery	7 July 2015	Matter for information and decision
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Title:

Achievements at Brocks Hill & Operations since March 2014

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1. Introduction

This report covers progress and developments at Brocks Hill (BH) and Operations as requested by the Chair of Service Delivery Committee as a bullet point list for achievements at the site since March 2014, when activity was last reported.

2. Recommendations

1) members note the progress made.

2) members to make a decision whether to proceed with a contract for the installation and maintenance of bus shelters in prime locations across the borough on a free of charge basis in return for the company being given advertising rights on the shelters.

3. BROCKS HILL UPDATE

Country Park and Habitat Management

- Front of Brocks Hill Centre ponds restoration and patio gardens completed.
- Friends of Brocks Hill Memorial Mound has been fully fenced by the Group; a new sign erected and roses (sponsored by the public) and plug wild flower plants (awarded through Stepping Stones) planted.
- The 2015-16 capital project to reprofile and plant the front insulation bank is completed.

Country Park Facilities

- Section 106 money supported a new bridge, resurfacing of the farm track to the top field with stone, and fencing of the amphitheatre, as well as the final phases of the signage programme.
- Jubilee Amphitheatre/outdoor performance space completed. Public sponsorship bought roses and honeysuckles which were planted by volunteers around the new fence. The opening of the Jubilee Amphitheatre on June 7th included performances from Fleckney Silver Band, Magna Music Band and a community choir. A number of groups have approached BH about using the space, including on June 20th when there was solstice picnic and ritual hosted by the county Pagan Federation. Three of the four theatre performances for August sold out.
- Dog walkers shelter in full use, with two picnic benches moved to the space following feedback from visitors.

- Play area improvements all complete, including restoring fences through support from Charnwood Foods.
- Volunteers restored the old wooden Brocks Hill entrance sign and all plaques from fallen bird boxes (those originally sponsored by the public for £10 around BH's opening) removed and added to this sign as a feature at the ponds at the front of the Centre.

Community Engagement

- School's marketing pack sent to all schools in the Borough and the surrounding area. School bookings have significantly increased and with bookings secured for the summer term we have met the annual income target.
- Successful first Natural History Environmental Garden Party on June 7th (linking to national volunteers week and world environment day celebrations). This was also the launch of the amphitheatre. Over 2,000 people were recorded by the Centre door counters. Over 30 stalls attended with excellent feedback.
- Holiday events had strong bookings, with positive feedback gathered. Door Counters recorded nearly 40,000 Centre visitors April 1st-June 8th.
- New volunteers recruited including Leicester De Montfort Rotary Club who have adopted BHI as one of their 2015-16 environmental projects. Assisting with fixed point and seasonal photography.
- Supported the development of a borough wide Archaeology Field Work Group. Hosted a six-week talk programme. Twelve members now meeting regularly.

Centre and Building Work

- Toilet refit programme completed with excellent feedback from commercial room hirers and visitors.
- Interim arrangement SLM for café delivery and catering for events continue. External contract procurement progressing.
- Reprogramming of the trend heating system and rain water harvesting completed. This now means BH is correctly capturing heat and re-circulating air on an optimised temperature basis and flushing toilets with grey water.

4. OPERATIONS UPDATE

Capital Projects:

Capital projects completed by the Facilities and Administration Manager during 2014-15:

- Extensions to Gardens of Remembrance (Wigston and Oadby Cemeteries)
- Upgrading and repairs to allotment roads
- Coombe Park Play Area
- Ellis Park Pavilion- new floor and kitchen
- Car Park Improvements – new signage, re-lining and pot hole work completed

Capital projects carried forward to 2015-16:

- Ervins Lock footbridge – negotiations continuing with the Canal and Rivers Trust (formerly British Waterways)
- Memorial Safety – project on-going; The War Graves Commission have attended both cemeteries to check the safety of their memorials. Cemetery staff have completed remedial work to 14 memorial stones (8 at Oadby, 6 at Wigston). Quotes from a stonemason have been received for work to five large memorial stones (2 at Wigston and 3 at Oadby) Start date awaited.
- Wigston Cemetery Boundary Wall repairs – a quote has been received within budget but over the £5k meaning two further quotations are required – these are being obtained.

New projects for 2015-16

- Car Park re-surfacing – (year 1 of 5) re-surfacing work to Borough car parks on a rolling programme over the next 5 years. Specification and tender documents are being drawn up for the re-surfacing of sections of East Street Car Park in Oadby.
- Refurbishment of bus shelters – see below

Street furniture:

Since the last report street name plates have been replaced at:

- Denmead Avenue, Shenton Close, Farleigh Avenue in Wigston
- Rockbridge Road, Oadby

In each of the above cases drivers were attempting to use roads as a cut-through and ending up in cul de sacs.

The following street name plates are awaiting installation:

- Willow Place, Wigston,
- Trent Close, Copse Close, Hamble Road, Oadby
- Waverley Road, Ivanhoe Road, Kenilworth Road, South Wigston

Via Oadby Forum and in liaison with Oadby Civic Society 3 benches and a litter bin have been ordered for Burton's Corner, Oadby. Delivery due mid July.

Bus shelters:

There are 55 bus shelters across the Borough of various designs, age and condition. The majority are of a bespoke design with solid back and side panels in corporate colours Seventeen shelters are in fairly good condition (6 were re-painted in March 2015); the remaining 38 are in various states of disrepair. There is a limited annual revenue budget (£3,000) for repairs and maintenance and for 2015-16 a capital allocation of £26,000 has been agreed to re-furbish as many shelters as possible.

Recently requests have been received via the town centre forums to install shelters at the following new locations:

- Howdon Road, Oadby
- Horsewell Lane opposite entrance to Durnford Road, Wigston
- Horsewell Lane between Durnford Road and Barnstaple Close, Wigston
- The Firs, Oadby Road, Wigston

Also, Wigston Forum has requested a quote to re-furbish the two non corporate shelters on Paddock Street and install bench seating.

Before installing any new shelters to the current bespoke corporate design Members are asked if they wish to review the type of shelter installed in the Borough and / or whether they wish to enter into a contract with an advertising company who would install and maintain some shelters free of charge in return for advertising. It should be noted that site visits have been held with Leicestershire County Council at three of the above new locations and their preference in each case would be to have shelters where the end panels are transparent.

Options 1: Continue with re-furbishment of existing shelters and any new shelters installed to be of the current bespoke corporate design:

The current price for rubbing down and re-painting one green and cream shelter is around £550 depending on the amount of work required.

Other than re-painting the existing shelters when required there is little other revenue cost involved other than cleaning which, is carried out in-house once per year with any graffiti being removed as and when required.

The cost of a new corporate bespoke shelter inclusive of installation and licence from Leicestershire County Council is £3,200. These are painted green and cream and have solid panels with a barrel roof. If required they can be manufactured to have polycarbonate (vision) end panels.

Option 2: Continue with re-furbishment of existing shelters (as above) but any new shelters installed would be of the Queensbury Arun design (or similar):

The Queensbury Arun design is similar in shape to the existing bespoke corporate design but includes vision panels. These should not require re-painting but there may be additional revenue costs in maintenance (for example if the vision panels need replacing) and cleaning.

The cost of a Queensbury Arun barrel roofed 3 bay shelter with half end panels is:

£3,288 for a shelter with toughened glass inclusive of delivery, installation and Leicestershire County Council licence.

£3,503 for a shelter with polycarbonate panels inclusive of delivery, installation and Leicestershire County Council licence.

Replacement toughened glass panels inclusive of labour are £200 each.

Glass is easier to clean than polycarbonate which can discolour and be scratched.

Option 3: A combination of options 1 and 2; Members may wish to consider replacing well used shelters that are nearest to the town centres with the Queensbury Arun shelter and continue with the corporate bespoke design in other areas.

Members are asked to make a decision as to which option they wish to follow. In addition, a decision is requested on the following:

Advertising on shelters:

At Services Committee in March 2015 Members agreed to look in more detail at the possibility of entering into a contract with an advertising company who would provide, install and maintain shelters in prime locations free of charge in return for being given the right to display advertising material on the shelters they install.

There are three main national companies (Adshel, JCDecaux and Primesight) who carry out this work. All have been approached but none are particularly keen to enter into a contract in the Borough as the locations available are not considered likely to give a good return on investment. However, a similar scheme has operated in Hinckley and Bosworth for some time in liaison with a local company K2 Media. K2 is potentially interested in taking on some locations in Oadby and Wigston particularly those they consider to be along prime routes. The standard shelter they install is the Queensbury Arun (as detailed above). K2 ensure the shelters are clean and well maintained and attend to any problems following a call-out. As part of the contract they are also to be responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of the shelter thereby reducing costs to the local authority.

Potential suitable sites would be those that are heavily trafficked, for example

- Along the A6, Oadby (3)
- Along the A5199, Wigston (5)
- Church Nook and Paddock Street, Wigston (3)
- South Wigston town centre (2 – currently 'Victorian' shelters)

Members are asked whether or not they would like to proceed with entering into a contract of this sort in which case the market would be tested to see whether other local advertising companies may be interested before proceeding.

In making a decision Members may like to note the following which could be built into a contract:

- Advertising on shelters is likely to require planning permission; the cost of applying for this is borne by the advertising company.
- The advertising panel within the shelter would be lit 24/7 with power installed and paid for by the advertising company.
- Shelters would be cleaned and maintained by the advertising company at their expense.
- Contract length would be around 15 to 20 years which is the approximate lifespan of the asset and allows an adequate period of time for a company to make a return on their investment.
- Members may wish to restrict the type of advertising allowed and this could be built into the contract. For example, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council specify local advertising.

Garden Waste Collection Scheme and Recycling

Since the "opt-in" scheme for wheeled bins for garden waste collections commenced in February this year, over 13,000 wheeled bins have been distributed to households (60% of total properties). There continues to be a steady stream of requests for wheeled bins at approximately 20 per day. The majority of households have opted for the larger size bin (240L) including some

terraced properties. Officers have carried out checks around the borough and there does not appear to be issues of bins being left out on the roadside. In summary to date the introduction of the “opt-in” scheme has resulted in:-

- Positive feedback from residents on ease of bins particularly for putting out for collection as opposed to bags
- Reduced sickness levels with staff
- Significant reduction in officer time of dealing with complaints that the bag system generates of “non collection” eg overweight /too many bags; “lost.” No complaints being received of “missed bins”
- Health & Safety issues still remain where continuing with bags have been opted. The crews still have to lift the bags to shoulder height to lift into a slave bin and therefore still the blow-back of dust
- The dual system has resulted in collection rounds unable to be completed within the allocated day so has a knock on effect for other collections throughout the week

In June there was delivery of 6 new state of the art refuse vehicles with dual bin lifts which will assist with ease of collection. The dual lifts give versatility for universal working so that any vehicle can be sent out for any scenario, whether collecting from estate sites or individual properties. This versatility will also give greater opportunities for maximising greater efficiency for round collections. There will be a significance reduction in maintenance costs, time-off road etc.

Recycling

- Participation rates – 70%
- Paper prices are recovering following the downturn earlier this year
- Garden Waste Credits have now ceased.
- A report for a policy decision on the future of the trial food waste collection will go to Policy Finance and Development committee later in July

Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance

- Litter picking – 6-8 week cycle across the borough with hot spots daily basis eg school areas. Volunteers de-litter Asda area at weekends
- 2 x footway Sweepers in each Oadby & Wigston & South Wigston - 4 times per annum minimum and target hot spots. Footway sweeper also cleans housing estates
- Road Sweeper for main road channels every 6 weeks and target hot spots 3 times per week.
- Alley ways are swept and litter picked every other week
- Approximately 18 tonnes picked up between footways and alleyways every 3 weeks

- Blaby DC now have contract from Leicestershire County Council for verge cutting
- Parks and play areas are visually inspected daily and recorded
- Parks are mowed monthly
- Hedgerow maintenance is carried out as winter work due to nesting
- East Midlands in Bloom judging on 9 July; summer bedding plants al planted, volunteers assisting with planting at St Peters Church, Blaby Road Park and Charnwood Foods site.

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Implications	
Financial	The above schemes can be met within budgetary provision
Risk (AC)	All projects will be risk assessed; CR1 : Decreasing Financial Resources CR8: Organisational Change
Equalities (AC)	No significant implications
Legal (AC)	No significant implications