

# Place Shaping Working Group Minutes

## Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

### Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016

#### **Councillors Present:**

Councillor JW Boyce (Chair)  
Councillor LA Bentley  
Councillor GA Boulter  
Councillor DM Carter  
Councillor L Darr  
Councillor J Kaufman  
Councillor S Morris

#### **Officers Present:**

Adrian Thorpe (Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager)  
Judith Sturley (Economic Regeneration Officer)  
Jamie Carr (Planning Policy Officer)  
Mark Hryniw (Town Centre Manager)

#### **1. Apologies:**

1.1 Councillor T Barr

#### **2. Minutes and matters arising**

2.1 Councillor Boyce asked if there had been any contact from the Cooperative Group or the Post Office regarding premises on Bell Street. Mark Hryniw said that he had contacted both on a number of occasions however there is no further update from previously.

2.2 Councillor J Kaufman mentioned that the Post Office on Rosemead Drive was to remain with no changes to its services.

#### **3. Festive Lights Review**

3.1 Mark Hryniw took Members through the agenda report picking out key items for discussion.

3.2 The festive light review was undertaken and all Members were asked for their opinions and comments. Mark made particular reference to section 7 and 8 of the report that focused on the issues that had arisen during the last festive light period and the proposed remedies where required for the 2016 / 2017 festive period.

3.3 Councillor Boyce asked if the replacement tree lights (for the ones that had been damaged by the County Council) would be brighter? Mark Hryniw said that they would be brighter as they would be the new LED bulbs.

3.4 Councillor Boyce asked how long was left on the 'cone' tree warranties? Mark Hryniw said that they were still within warranty for this coming festive light period. Councillor Boyce asked if real Christmas trees should be used instead of the 'cones' once the warranty had run out.

- 3.5 Councillor S Morris asked what the timescales were for replacements should items malfunction within the warranty period. Mark Hryniw said that they would normally be fixed on site but if replacements were needed he would have to confirm. The lights are normally built to order and out of season delivery is 8 weeks. Mark added that he would double check the lights contract and feed back at the next Member Working Group.
- 3.6 Councillor S Morris said that the Council need to be open regarding the arrangements for faults and or replacement lights during the festive period. She added that if the public know the arrangements it is less likely there would be complaints.
- 3.7 Councillor Bentley asked what fixings were used for the 'cone' tree ties and if a method statement had been undertaken. Mark Hryniw said that the fixings should have been as per manufactures specification, however he would ensure that a method statement would be produced for the forth coming festive lights.
- 3.8 Mark Hryniw said that a lighting plan for each of the town centres would be drawn up for the forth coming festive lights and would be distributed to trader groups to ensure that they are aware of the extent of the lighting.
- 3.9 Councillor S Morris asked that a report was taken to Committee so that Members could have sight of the lighting plans and any changes that have been made to the infrastructure an / or lights. Councillor Boyce suggested that a report could go to Service Delivery Committee in September / October time.
- 3.10 Councillor Boulter asked if a cost for replacing all of the electrical sockets could be obtained. He also mentioned that it could be possible to submit a funding bid to the local Forums for any additional monies that were needed to replace all electrical sockets at the same time.
- 3.11 Councillor Boyce asked if Mark Hryniw could answer the contractual related questions at the next Member Working Group.

#### **4. Economic Regeneration Strategy 2015 - 2020**

- 4.1 Judith Sturley summarised the related agenda report and strategy and discussed key items with Members.
- 4.2 Councillor Boyce suggested that where for example Leicestershire Promotions is referenced it should be made more generic rather than picking out particular organisations. Councillor Boyce also queried whether the 'Leicestershire' column on page 18 of the report pack included or excluded Leicester City. Judith Sturley said she would check and would also check the accuracy of figures contained within the table.
- 4.3 Councillor Boyce also said that the strategy should acknowledge the Combined Authority.
- 4.4 Councillor Boulter made reference to page 30 and said that in his opinion getting local people into work was not currently effective, especially local labour for example on development sites. Judith Sturley said that we as an authority could only encourage the use of local labour and also that it was skill dependant. Councillor Boyce suggested that we undertake some further work to see if a contractual arrangement could be put in place for use of local labour, especially on sites that the Council has an interest in. Councillor Boyce

also suggested that work should be undertaken to assess whether the low use of local labour was attributed to the employer or the employee.

- 4.5 Councillor Boyce said that the strategy was long term and should be aspirational.
- 4.6 Councillor S Morris suggested that one of the reasons that the use of the local workforce was low, was because a number of the larger employers use agencies to recruit employees. Councillor S Morris also suggested that the Council should produce more business related leaflets and newsletters that highlighted items that could affect businesses within the Borough, such as planned roadworks, town centre events etc.
- 4.7 Councillor Boyce suggested that the business pages on the Council's website were not very proactive or engaging to local businesses. The pages should be updated regularly and emails sent out, for example monthly. It was suggested that Harborough District Council were a good example locally relating to the Council helping local businesses.
- 4.8 Councillor Bentley asked whether the 'Business Gateway' had been / was a success? Judith Sturley said that she would try and obtain some information relating to this.
- 4.9 Councillor Bentley asked if 'Local Investment in Place' included an enterprise centre? Judith Sturley said that the Council had been speaking with the owners of Alpha House in South Wigston. The Council have been asked for expression of interest funding bids but that it would not be specific to, for example Alpha House, it would be more generic.
- 4.10 Councillor Boulter asked if the Council could submit a bid to the Local Growth Fund? Judith Sturley said that the Council cannot bid directly to the Local Growth Fund and that we would submit bids to the LLEP and then they would decide which funding stream it was most appropriate for.
- 4.11 Councillor Boyce suggested that the LLEP funding priorities could be influenced by the Combined Authority. The Council needs to produce a list of 'oven ready' sites that are ready to develop.
- 4.12 It was suggested that Oadby Industrial Estate should be looked into. There are a number of empty units as well as applications for change of use. Work needs to be done regarding potential options for the site.
- 4.13 Councillor Boyce said that a discussion paper should be produced for the next Member Working Group meeting that looked at options and ways forward for all of the employment zones within the Borough.

## **5. Melton Local Plan – Emerging Options (draft plan)**

- 5.1 Adrian Thorpe read through the agenda report and said that the Council comments are to be going to Policy, Finance and Development Committee on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2016 for formal Member sign off.
- 5.2 Councillor Boulter asked if the Council were to be running their new Local Plan to 2036 rather than 2031. Officers suggested that the Council is proposing to go to 2036 to ensure that it is aligned to the housing market area wide Strategic Growth Plan, provided that all of the evidence base is in place to allow the Council to go to 2036.

5.3 Members agreed with the contents of the report.

**6. North West Leicestershire District Council Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocation Consultation Document**

6.1 Adrian Thorpe summarised the agenda report and said that the Council comments are to be going to Policy, Finance and Development Committee on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2016 for formal Member sign off.

6.2 Members agreed with the contents of the report.

**7. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Consultation**

7.1 Jamie Carr summarised the related agenda report and strategy and discussed key items with Members.

7.2 Members agreed that the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment methodology should be consistent with the methodology at the wider housing market area level.

7.3 Councillor J Kaufman asked if new homes could be made more affordable. Jamie Carr said that the Council can require the provision of affordable homes through planning policy, however that the Council cannot have a direct influence the affordability of market housing.

**8. Custom and Self Build Housing Register**

8.1 Government legislation states that by the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 each Local Authority should begin to keep a register of individuals or associations that would like to acquire serviced plots of land in their authority area. A page will be added to the Council's website to this effect.

**9. Date of Next Meeting**

9.1 To be confirmed.