

Place Shaping Working Group Minutes Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Thursday 14th July 2016

Councillors Present:

Councillor A R Bond
Councillor J W Boyce (Chair)
Councillor B Dave
Councillor H E Loydall
Councillor L A Bentley

Officers Present:

Adrian Thorpe (Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager)
Mark Hryniw (Town Centre Manager)
Daniel Britton (Economic Development Officer)

Apologies:

Councillor M V Chamberlain
Councillor D A Gamble
Councillor S B Morris
Councillor M L Darr

1. Minutes and matters arising

1.1 None.

2. Town Centre Manager's Report

- 2.1 Mark Hryniw presented to members the Town Centre Manager's Report. Wigston currently has an empty unit rate of 8, Oadby 4 and South Wigston 6 units. All three centres have seen a drop in empty units and compare well to the national average. Councillor Bentley asked if we have had an increase in charity shops. Mark replied not in Wigston. Councillor Boyce stated that single business rates across Leicestershire are being considered as part of the Combined Authority. Councillor Loydall stated charity shops are busy and have a function. Councillor Bond questioned the effects on other businesses. Mark to look into information from Hinckley on the percentage of new items charity shops are allowed to sell. Mark to keep a list of charity shops on file. Councillor Loydall questioned the Oadby and Wigston official policy on charity shops being allowed next to each other on the primary shopping frontage. Adrian clarified the policy resists three none A1 uses a row and charity shop are A1 use.
- 2.2 Mark outlined the Co-op has sold the unit to Edinburgh Woollen Mill. The plans are for 4 retail units on the ground floor and a retail unit on the first floor. Mark believes the post office is in talks with one of the new retailers. Councillor Loydall stated that MP Sir Edward Garnier has been reported in the Leicester Mercury about the Post Office discussions.
- 2.3 Mark stated the digital display screens are doing well. Mark is currently investigating a site for a screen in South Wigston and preparing a briefing for members for decision.

- 2.4 Mark stated the annual road closure order is in place. South Wigston community fun weekend was held and the next event is the Oadby Motor Fest. Mark then outlined details of the Christmas light switch on events. Councillor Bond asked for any extra help with Oadby switch on event.
- 2.5 Mark Hryniw outlined the last Wigston market was poorly attended but Oadby is doing well. Discussion was around Oadby and Wigston markets being more expensive. Mark outlined costs for general markets are far higher due to Leicester City licensing conditions and potential to push for a wider market. Mark to provide Councillor Boyce with capacity of what Wigston could hold.
- 2.6 Mark Hryniw outlined works to the Christmas lights infrastructure are to be carried out soon. Councillor Bond stated the trees in Oadby were chopped before last year's installation. Mark said more lights are planned for this year to help with this. Councillor Loydall asked about the issues with the cones last year. Mark outlined this was to do with County Council and location for the power source with some faults to the lights. Mark will publish a map for lights for each of the three town centres for the September meeting.
- 2.7 Mark Hryniw outlined he is now Vice Chair for the ATCM. Mark has also held a meeting in Oadby for the potential to locate a defibrillator and once installed this is to be publicised on the digital screens.

3. Economic Regeneration Strategy 2015-2020

- 3.1 Daniel Britton outlined the strategy has undergone a six week public consultation period and the responses received have been reviewed and incorporated into the updated Economic Regeneration Strategy 2015-2020. Daniel highlighted the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020 and potential effects of the EU referendum vote to leave. The group agreed to leave this section as it currently reads.
- 3.2 The group agreed to take the strategy to Policy, Finance and Development Committee on 20th September for approval.

4. Horsewell Lane Recreation Ground Regeneration Project and the Provision of a 3G Pitch

- 4.1 Adrian Thorpe circulated summary of the paper to the meeting. Adrian outlined that the project idea originally stated with an approach from the youth club and Councillor Bentley for new youth club provision. The original designs for a multi-use community building cost around £2m. These costs were prohibitive and therefore work has begun to look into alternatives.
- 4.2 The report deals with the three main issues; the location for an All Weather Pitch in Wigston or South Wigston, a replacement for Horsewell Lane pavilion and funding. Adrian outlined the funds for an All Weather Pitch came from the Station Road South Leicestershire College site. Adrian outlined the main options; Combine with a new Pavilion at Horsewell Lane – concern over security of the pitch and site limitations, Locate on the open space associated with the new residential development at Pochins Bridge in South Wigston – concern over security of the pitch and site limitations or locate within a School (Leicestershire and Rutland Sport have established links).

- 4.3 Access and management are the biggest concerns. The estimated cost of an All Weather Pitch is £685,000 and this can be funded through a maximum of 5 S106 agreements. The suggested way forward is that discussions take place to locate the All Weather Pitch within school grounds. Councillor Loydall stated this probably the right way to go but has concerns around access arrangements from previous experience. This option would present the best security option. Councillor Loydall suggested we need a strong contract around usage and costs for the community.
- 4.4 Councillor Bentley questioned why we need to have an All Weather Pitch. Councillor Boyce stated to cover the loss from the South Leicestershire College site. It was clarified the Pochins Bridge open space is linked to the residential development at Pochins Bridge. Sport England wanted an All Weather Pitch as mitigation for the loss at the Station Road site. Adrian Thorpe outlined the Playing Pitch Strategy identified a need for the pitch and sports provision is referenced in the S106 agreement. Councillor Bentley questioned can the £400,000 not be spent on a community building. Adrian outlined the fund could potentially only be spent on a sports building, but the Council already provides these facilities at Parklands.
- 4.5 The Horsewell Lane pavilion needs to be of sufficient size. The revenue plan is the main issue and we need to look to the community to run it. Councillor Boyce stated that if we can find an organisation to run it and we can make the revenue stack up the capital funds can be achieved. Running the pavilion ourselves is expensive.
- 4.6 The agreed outcomes were to initiate conversations with a School about the All Weather Pitch and for Horsewell Lane it was agreed to speak to a host organisation that could potential run the the building.
- 4.7 Councillor Dave requested that the £132,000 S106 details be outlined in any relevant committee report.

5. Local Plan (Verbal Update)

- 5.1 Adrian Thorpe outlined the HEDNA is currently being prepared by GL Hearn to establish the objectively assessed housing and employment need up to 2031 and 2036. We had thought we would have the objectively assessed housing and employment need figures however we have a delay due to establishing the effects of the EU referendum on the economy but the final deadline should still be met. Officers hope to have the information by the end of the month when officers will have the opportunity to ask questions. This will then be reported to MAG on 8th September.
- 5.2 Discussions are needed about how any unmet need can be met. The strategic growth plan aims to look are where the need can be located. Need to establish the need and then a strategy on how can be met to timescales.
- 5.3 Councillor Boyce outlined he had attended MAG and referred to the fact that the government is to shortly publish figures on housing growth.
- 5.4 Councillor Boyce outlined the importance of understanding the housing numbers and affordability issues.
- 5.5 Councillor Loydall stated that important issues are around the need, what we can provide and affordability.
- 5.6 Councillor Loydall asked if the need takes into account student numbers. Adrian Thorpe stated the issues around student accommodation are relevant to the figures.

- 5.7 Councillor Bentley asked if the number will be affected by the Direction for Growth delivery. Adrian Thorpe replied no this is more a five year housing supply issue. Councillor Bentley asked the effect to the Council if they don't accept the HEDNA and in response reference was made to the requirement for Council's to prepare a Local Plan.
- 5.8 Adrian Thorpe outlined local plan evidence studies are progressing and officers are looking at draft policies. Officers are currently looking at public consultation of the preferred options between the 4th November and 16 December 2016 and set out how this compared to the LDS which referred to preferred options consultant taking place between September 2016 and November 2016. The proposed timescale was agreed.

6. Date of Next Meeting

- 6.1 Thursday, 15th September 2016.