



**South Wigston
Residents' Forum**

**Wednesday, 13
September 2017**

**Matter for
Consultation**

Title: Review of the Residents' Forums Consultation

Author(s): Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In order to give local residents a greater say in Council affairs, it has appointed a Residents' Forum for each of the town centres within the Borough: Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston.
- 1.2. At its meeting on 28 March 2017, the Council's Policy, Finance and Development Committee requested that a review of the regulations governing grant allocations, including the funding of voluntary organisations and 'on the night' grants allocation at Forum meetings without supporting paperwork, be undertaken. This supports the wider commitments of the Council's transformation agenda.
- 1.3. At its meeting on 5 September 2017, Council considered a report from the Chief Finance Officer setting out various options for changes to the administration of the Forums. This is attached to this report as an *Appendix*.
- 1.4. Members were asked to provide policy guidance on the proposals contained in the report. Their comments are set out below. The original report and the comments of Members are now being sent to the three Residents' Forums for consultation at the September cycle of meetings. The final results of the consultation will be reported back to the Council's Policy, Finance & Development Committee on 31 October 2017.

2. Recommendation(s)

Members of the Forum are asked to comment on the proposals contained in this report and Appendix 1, which will then be consolidated into a report to the Council's Policy, Finance & Development Committee meeting on 31 October 2017.

3. Information

- 3.1 The Council's constitution includes three Residents' Forums. The purpose of each of these is included in their general terms of reference:
 1. To increase public involvement in public services;
 2. To help shape the Council's policies for public services;
 3. To challenge and give feedback on the performance of public services;
 4. To promote community cohesion; and
 5. To report to the relevant Committees.

At its meeting on 5 September 2017, Council considered the report on possible changes to the administration of the three Residents' Forums (see Appendix).

- 3.2 In summary, the views expressed by Members of the Council were as follows:
 1. Members would not support the merger of Wigston and South Wigston Forums.

2. Members were happy with the clarification of 'one-off' grants and financing in general, but felt that the pro forma application forms (**agenda item 4a**) were too complex for the relatively small sums of money that the Forums distributed to local groups and individuals.
 3. It was suggested that small grants (say up to £200) could be awarded by Forums without the need to complete too much paperwork.
 4. As regards chairing of the Forums, there was a general view that this should continue to be by an elected councillor rather than a local resident given the need for the Chair to understand the operations of the Council and to have easy access to officers and politicians.
 5. It was proposed that the Chair of a Residents' Forum could in future be any councillor, not necessarily one whose ward was within the geographical area of the Forum.
 6. Members were happy that the financing of the Forums should be included in the Council's annual budget setting exercise.
 7. Members were happy that the agenda for Forums should continue to be set by either agreeing at the conclusion of a meeting what should appear on the next meeting's agenda and/or by residents contacting the Chair of the Forum to agree an item.
 8. Members were keen to stress that the Forum meetings were non-political, and that agenda items should not touch on political matters.
 9. It was felt that the current Terms of Reference for the Forums as contained in the Council's Constitution should be redrafted.
 10. As part of the review of the administration of the Forums, Members asked that thought be given as to how to increase participation from local residents.
 11. It was felt that any changes agreed must be consistent across all three Forums.
- 3.3. It has also been expressed by Members outside the meeting of 5 September that the minutes of forum meetings are too close to a verbatim record and should be condensed either by adopting best practice minute-taking guidance as used at formal committee meetings or shifting towards a note-style/action-based format.
- 3.4. Forums are invited to make any further comments and/or recommendations.

Background Documents:

Report to Council on 5 September 2017 entitled 'Review of the Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston Residents' Forums' (Appendix)
Capital Project Guidance, Application & Evaluation Forms (Agenda Item 4a)

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Implications Review of the Residents' Forums Consultation	
Finance	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer)	
Legal	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer)	
Corporate Risk(s) (CR)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political Dynamics (CR3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organisational/Transformational Change (CR8)
Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer)	
Corporate Priorities (CP)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An Inclusive and Engaged Borough (CP1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Effective Service Provision (CP2)
Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer)	
Vision & Values (V)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> "A Strong Borough Together" (Vision) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accountability (V1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teamwork (V3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Customer Focus (V5)
Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer)	
Equalities & Equality Assessment(s) (EA)	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (EA)