

## **NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

### **ST ANN'S AND DALES AREA (SIX) COMMITTEE**

#### **MINUTES**

of meeting held on **13 MARCH 2012** at

Loxley House from 7.02 pm to 8.35 pm

#### **Present**

- ✓ Councillor G Khan (Chair)
- ✓ Councillor Johnson (minutes 40 to 42 inclusive)
- Councillor Collins
- ✓ Councillor Liversidge
- ✓ Councillor Mellen
- ✓ Councillor Williams (Joint Vice-Chair)

- ✓ Indicates present at meeting

#### **Community Representatives and citizens in attendance**

- Ms J Summers - (Joint Vice-Chair) St Stephen's Church
- Miss C James - Gains Tenants' and Residents' Group
- Mrs D Moore - Nottingham Local Access Forum
- Mr D Sanderson - Sneinton Hermitage Community Centre
- Mr P Wright - Sneinton Tenants Outreach Programme
- Mr G Feltham - Sneinton Tenant and Resident Association
- Mr A Khan )
- Mr W Asif ) Residents
- Mr C Lydall )

#### **Others in Attendance**

- Miss S Bedford )
- Mr P Luniw ) Network Rail
- Mr D Thomas )
- Miss C Underwood - Renewal Trust

#### **City Council Colleagues in Attendance**

- Mr E Curry - Head of Parks and Open Spaces )
- Ms D Holmes - South Area Manager ) Communities
- Mr N Martin - Area 6 Clean Team )
- Mr M Sunderland - Area 6 Neighbourhood Environmental Manager )
  
- Mr J Lee - Senior Rights of Way Officer - Development
  
- Mrs Z West - Constitutional Services Officer ) Resources
- Miss L Wilson - Constitutional Services Officer )

**Please note: except where otherwise indicated, all items discussed at the meeting were the subject of a report which had been circulated beforehand.**

#### **40 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Collins.

#### **41 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Khan declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 (minute 44), Sneinton Railway Crossings, insofar as he was a member of the Development Control Committee where this item had also been discussed, which did not preclude him from speaking or voting.

#### **42 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 10 January 2012, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.**

#### **43 URBAN FORESTRY STRATEGY (Director of Sport, Culture and Parks)**

Mr Curry, Head of Parks and Open Spaces, introduced the report and presented the Committee with the following information:

- the Urban Forest Strategy covered all trees growing in Nottingham City, regardless of land ownership. Nottingham City Council owned one of the largest tree stocks in the East Midlands, estimated in excess of 100,000 specimen trees and 155 hectares of woods, spread across the City in parks, open spaces, highways, housing gardens, schools and cemeteries and crematoria;
- trees had historic importance and defined the character of an area, created a sense of place and helped to make an area more attractive for new business, potentially increasing the value of property. They created habitats and supported an extensive range of flora and fauna species. They helped to combat climate change by reducing CO2 and other emissions and trapping and removing dust particles from the air, providing shade and cool environments, reducing the urban heat island/temperature in the City, reducing soil erosion and flash flooding, and providing local food growing opportunities;
- they could also create problems, including weed and sucker growth in tree pits around the base, obstruction of CCTV, light, views, satellite dish reception, view of traffic lights and signs, dangerous limb failure causing personal injury or damage to properties, damage from fruit, sap and bird droppings, and tree root damage to roads, pavements and properties;
- there were a number of threats to local trees from disease and pests, which were exacerbated by climate change;
- the strategy set out a plan to enhance the urban forest. It ensured the Council's legal obligations for trees and tree safety were fully met. It maximised resources and sought to enhance the urban forest. It provided new policy and procedural advice and would help to manage expectations through improved communication with citizens. It recognised the importance of trees and had strong links with the City Council's aims and priorities and with national policy guidelines;

- the strategy proposed a number of policies for consideration, which had been prepared in response to large tree species, maintenance of trees, risk management, a Responsible Neighbours Guide and factors to be considered for development areas;
- the draft strategy and appendices could be viewed online at: <http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=13308>, or hard copies were available to view in all local libraries. Comments should be sent by 30 March 2012 to [ufs@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:ufs@nottinghamcity.gov.uk) or by post to:  
UFS, Tree Services,  
Woodthorpe Grange,  
Woodthorpe Drive,  
Nottingham  
NG5 4HA

Comments from the Committee, community representatives, colleagues and citizens included:

- common sense needed to be applied when planting trees in smaller gardens and near to buildings, with consideration given to their size as they grew. "Right Tree, Right Place" which was part of the strategy, gave practical advice on this to citizens, developers, and Nottingham City Homes staff;
- waiting times for cutting back trees had improved in recent years, as the tree service worked with a wide range of contractors, but the number of requests continued to be high;
- although local and historically relevant tree species were preferable, having a mix of species helped with resilience to disease;
- whilst it was noted in the strategy that planned works would be displayed on the website, and on-street notices, it would be helpful for notices to be sent to local groups and local residents;
- whilst there were often requests for more fruit trees which could help with biodiversity and sourcing local produce, they could lead to problems with mess and slip hazards from un-harvested fruit, and pests such as wasps;
- the strategy would contain advice for preventing root damage, including advice on the right type of tree, and preventative measures and precautions that could be taken by developers;
- the strategy would help to clarify priorities, and provide the policy on which decisions would be based.

**RESOLVED** that the presentation be noted, and that any further comments on the strategy to be sent by 30 March 2012 to [ufs@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:ufs@nottinghamcity.gov.uk) or by post to:

**UFS, Tree Services  
Woodthorpe Grange  
Woodthorpe Drive  
Nottingham  
NG5 4HA**

## **44 SNEINTON RAILWAY CROSSINGS**

### **(a) Presentation by Network Rail**

Mr Thomas of Network Rail, presented the Committee with the following information on the replacement of Meadow Lane and Trent Lane level crossings with footbridges:

- the Nottingham re-signalling project was a £95 million project to renew and improve the signalling, and related infrastructure, within the Nottingham Station area to enhance the operating ability of the railway;
- as part of the project the level crossings at Meadow Lane and Trent Lane were to be renewed. The Nottingham re-signalling project had been asked to try to replace the level crossings with footbridges;
- the 20 April 2013 was the final date for a decision to be made on whether to move forward with the replacement of the level crossings with footbridges or seek to renew the level crossings;
- Network Rail identified that their greatest risk to the public was through level crossings, and the level crossing at Trent Lane was subject to misuse by local youths;
- currently barrier down times were 20-40% per hour at peak times at the Meadow Lane level crossing, this was likely to increase in the future due to the Nottingham re-signalling project providing increased capacity for trains to be run eastward out of Nottingham Station;
- Network Rail believed that replacing the level crossings with footbridges would be extremely beneficial as it would eliminate the interface between the public and the railway, making crossing the railway safer and more commodious;
- the footbridges would take cycle traffic as well as pedestrians, and would have ramped access as well as stairs.

Comments from the Committee, community representatives, colleagues and citizens included:

- on the current level crossing you had to go down from the Greenway Centre to the level of the railway and back up the other side, on the plans it seemed that people would stay on the same level to cross the railway and this should open up the route for cyclists and be very beneficial;
- concerns were raised over safety of the bridges in terms of the width of the bridge and the height of guard rails, especially if football foot traffic was compressed at this point. The issues had been considered, and the 3 metre width of the bridge and the height of guard rails were considered appropriate according to railway safety standards. The plans had also been discussed at Development Control Committee, and higher guard rails could make the bridge too enclosed;
- a consultation event took place at the Greenway Centre, with mostly positive feedback from local residents. In general the bridges seemed much safer than the level crossings, even with concerns regarding guard rail height;

- there were no plans for a footbridge at the crossing on Colwick Road by the racecourse and it was planned that the replacement be like for like;
- Network Rail were improving the infrastructure and increasing the potential capacity of the rail network, but it was up to the rail operators whether they took advantage of the increased capacity with more trains. The bridge height took into account the possibility of future electrification of the track;
- CCTV was not planned at this stage, instead of a reactionary measure, the design of the bridges being more open would serve as a deterrent to crime, as would the increased foot and cycle traffic attracted by the bridges;

**RESOLVED that Mr Thomas be thanked for his presentation.**

**(b) Requests for authorisation to divert part of the footpaths at Meadow Lane (Sneinton Junction) and Trent Lane level crossings onto the new bridges (Urgent items)**

(Corporate Director of Development)

The Chair of the meeting was of the opinion that these reports should be considered as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, in view of the special circumstances that there was no further meeting of the Area Committee scheduled before May 2012, and that it would be unreasonable to delay the works to be undertaken because the Area Committee could not otherwise consider the matter before then.

Mr Lee, Senior Rights of Way Officer, introduced the reports and informed the Committee that as the level crossings were public rights of way, they would require formally extinguishing and diverting onto the new bridges. The reasons for diverting the public right of way were:

- (i) Meadow Lane Section 119 Highways Act 1980: This application was made by Network Rail in the interests of the public because the bridge would improve the local rights of way network in the area;
- (ii) Trent Lane Section 119A Highways Act 1980: This application was made by Network Rail in the interest of the safety of the public using or likely to use the crossing, as there had been incidents of misuse and safety concerns.

**RESOLVED**

- (1) that, subject to the receipt of appropriate additional information from Network Rail (the applicant), which meets the relevant statutory tests of S119 Highways Act 1980, the Corporate Director of Development be authorised to divert that part of the footpath at Meadow Lane (Sneinton Junction) Level Crossing onto a new bridge as shown on the plan at Appendix 1 to the report (by way of extinguishing the relevant part of the existing path and the creation of a new one);**
- (2) that, subject to the receipt of appropriate additional information from Network Rail (the applicant), which meets the relevant statutory tests of Section 119A of the Highways Act 1980, the Corporate Director of Development be authorised to divert that part of the Trent Lane footpath (footpath 116) crossing the railway onto a new bridge as shown on the plan at Appendix 1 to the report (by way of extinguishing the relevant part of the existing path and the creation of a new one);**
- (3) that, if the orders are unopposed, the Corporate Director of Development be authorised to confirm the orders;**

**(4) that, if the orders are opposed, the Corporate Director of Development be authorised to refer them to the Secretary of State for confirmation.**

**45 WARD PRIORITIES**

(Director of Neighbourhoods and Communities)

Mrs Holmes, South Area Manager, introduced the report which outlined the priorities for St Anns and Dales.

Comments from the Committee, community representatives, colleagues and citizens included:

- the priorities were not very detailed, nor were they quantified, which many may find helpful. This was, however, just a starting point and there would be more detailed information surrounding each priority in the Ward Action Plan;
- the recent citizen survey showed high levels of satisfaction with Council services;
- an excellent job was done by City Services, particularly with cleaning the streets, but without education, information and prevention it was a constant cycle of cleaning, and the streets were messy as soon as they had been cleaned;
- there was a particular problem with litter in front gardens in certain streets in Sneinton, and there was a lack of a dentist or opticians in St Anns, and these had both been listed as priorities;
- there was a potential impact on Area Committee decisions if Nottingham opted to have an elected mayor; and on the current availability of ward councillors.
- it was felt that ward Councillors were not always available, although regular surgeries were held in the area;
- it was felt that a lot of issues could be dealt with using normal Council services or through co-operation with Community Protection Officers, many did not feel the need to involve Councillors or the Area Committee with local problems such as bins on streets or high litter levels.
- overcrowding in family housing and houses in multiple occupations may lead to increased litter, bulky waste and fly-tipping.

**RESOLVED that the ward priorities, as outlined in the appendices to the report, be noted.**

**46 AREA CAPITAL FUND**

(Director of Neighbourhoods and Communities)

Mrs Holmes, South Area Manager, introduced the report which outlined the latest proposals under the Area Capital Fund (general provision), including highways and footways and notified the Committee of an error to the Dales public realm schemes on page 26 of the agenda which should have read £6,028 rather than £5,000.

**RESOLVED**

- (1) **that, subject to the public realm schemes amount being amended to £6,028, the Dales Area Capital Fund, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;**
- (2) **that the St Anns Area Capital Fund, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.**

**47 DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

(Director of Neighbourhoods and Communities)

Mrs Holmes, South Area Manager, introduced the report which outlined the use of delegated authority by the Director of Neighbourhoods and Communities to approve Ward Councillor budget allocations.

There was some confusion regarding the position of Lord Mayor and the Lord Mayors event detailed in the appendix. The Committee was informed that the Lord Mayor had a civic role and was different to the elected mayor mentioned earlier in the meeting, and that the Lord Mayors event was being held on St George's Day for the whole City and Councillors had been asked to contribute to.

**RESOLVED that the actions agreed by the Director of Neighbourhoods and Communities in respect of projects and schemes within Area 6, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted.**

**48 LAND AND PLANNING POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT – ADDITIONAL SITES**

(Corporate Director of Development)

Mrs Holmes, South Area Manager, introduced the report which detailed the consultation period for an additional site for development within Area 6.

Consultation was open until 30 April 2012, and the consultation document could be found at:  
<http://www.mynottingham.gov.uk/localplan>.

**RESOLVED that the current consultation on the additional site, and the opportunity to input into the process, be noted.**