

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CITY CENTRE FORUM

MINUTES

of meeting held on **28 FEBRUARY 2013** at

Loxley House from 3.47pm to 5.40pm

City Council

- Councillor A Choudhry
- Councillor J Collins
- Councillor M Edwards
- Councillor C Gibson
- ✓ Councillor B Grocock Absent for minutes 2-4
- ✓ Councillor J Hartshorne
- ✓ Councillor N McDonald
- ✓ Councillor A Norris Absent for minute 1
- ✓ Councillor S Parton
- ✓ Councillor D Trimble
- ✓ Councillor J Urquhart
- ✓ Councillor S Williams

(✓ indicates present at meeting)

Business Sector / Other

- ✓ Mr Jeff Allen)
- ✓ Ms Emma Piotrowski)
- ✓ (substitute for Steve Pashley)) Retail/Leisure BID
- ✓ Mr Tom Waldron-Lynch)
- To be confirmed)
- ✓ Mr Jim Taylor - IIN Retail Forum
- ✓ Ms Jennifer Spencer - Experience Nottinghamshire
- ✓ Ms Janine Bone - Capital Shopping Centres
- ✓ Mr Andy Rooke - Notts Constabulary

(✓ indicates present at meeting)

Also in attendance

- Mr Ben Tebbutt - FHP Property Consultants
- Ms Sue Flack - Director of Planning and Transport)
- Mr Nigel Hawkins - Head of Culture and Business Management)
- Ms Nicki Jenkins - Head of Economic Development) Nottingham
- Mrs Zena West - Constitutional Services Officer) City Council
- Mr Hugh White - Director of Sports, Culture and Parks)
- Mr John Yarham - Director of Economic Innovation and Employment)

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor McDonald be appointed Chair for the 2012/13 municipal year.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED that Jeff Allen from the Nottingham BID be appointed Vice-Chair for the 2012/13 municipal year.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chris Gibson and Jon Collins, who were on other Council Business, and from Steve Pashley from the Nottingham BID.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

**5 ASPIRATIONS FOR THE CASTLE
(Presentation of Corporate Director of Communities)**

Hugh White, Director of Sports, Culture and Parks, introduced the presentation to the Forum, which included the following key points:

- Nottingham City Council had applied for £26 million of Heritage Lottery funding for redevelopment of the Castle. A decision would not be made on stage one of the application until the end of April 2013. If the bid was successful, Heritage Lottery would then contribute £1 million for a feasibility study. A funding and investment strategy would then be developed;
- the Castle redevelopment project was interconnected with other City Centre developments and would strengthen the City's cultural ambition, attract investments, act as a regeneration catalyst for the Castle Quarter and strengthen the link to the Creative Quarter and Southern Gateway;
- the redevelopment would harness the Robin Hood global brand and better connect his legend to the city, whilst avoiding a pastiche representation of Robin Hood;
- new national galleries would provide unique educational value;
- a public consultation had shaped the top three development ideas – greater access to the City's caves, creation of a Robin Hood themed attraction and enhancement of the Mediaeval Castle;
- Nottingham Castle would become a world class heritage attraction and nationally significant centre for learning about protest and rebellion. The Castle's story and role in shaping the history of Britain would be told via three themes:
 - 1) Nottingham Castle: Mediaeval fortress to Ducal Palace today, revealing more of the mediaeval site and improving the area to allow greater access for

activities and events, uncovering and telling the rich and multi-layered history of the Castle site over the centuries, opening up access and experiencing some of Nottingham's unique caves and understanding their history and providing exciting access between the Castle site and Brewhouse Yard/Waterworks site

- 2) Robin and the Rebels: Protest, Rebellion and the rise of Democracy, including a new interactive and participative gallery;
 - 3) Creative City: enhanced access to and improved understanding of the Museum's extensive heritage and art collections;
- other significant elements of the redevelopment would be:
 - a) creative and future-proofed use of new technologies to encourage engagement and participation (mobile technology, 4D building projections, apps, holograms);
 - b) restoration of the moat and bridge entrance;
 - c) a new free visitor centre adjacent to the Gatehouse, incorporating a café and gift shop;
 - d) creation of a new entrance to an expanded cave system and to a new two storey gallery development;
 - e) changes to the grounds to facilitate use as an event space;
 - f) three creative options for access to the cave network, with access to Brewhouse Yard involving a glass lift through the cosmic cave, connected to various museums and bringing the Waterworks Building back into use for collections storage;
 - g) expansion and modernisation of exhibition space within the Ducal Palace;
 - h) enhanced city centre connectivity to the castle, with a clear view from Collin Street and better public transport links;
 - an independent assessment offered a prudent estimate of an increase in visitor numbers from 196,000 (2011/12) to 315,000 (2025);
 - the redevelopment represented a once-in-a-generation opportunity for a step change and to grow Nottingham's tourism sector by £1 billion. The City could be reconnected (particularly the retail offer, creative quarter and Southern gateway) over the next eight years, entry level and long term employment would be generated and an international attraction with the global Robin Hood brand would be created, complimenting other developments and attractions.

Arising from discussion, the following issues were raised:

- in conjunction with tram works, ring road improvements, new areas for shops and streets, redevelopment of shopping centres and the redevelopment of the train

station, this proposed project represented a once in several generations opportunity to change the face and the offer of the City Centre. The developments would be difficult to bring together, but the City Centre Forum could help to keep the focus on these developments and raise their profile. The City Centre Forum had an important role in pulling together the significant developments underway in the City, including the Castle redevelopment, to ensure this unique opportunity to change the landscape and the offer of the City was grasped;

- connectivity and public transport between attractions, in particular pedestrian connectivity over Maid Marian Way was an issue in Nottingham. Developing attractions could act as a catalyst for initiating transport solutions;
- the City needed a feature attraction and the Castle could become an anchor venue. However, to improve the overnight stay rates, features such as accommodation and attractions needed enhancement. Other practical services were also required to support the City as a short stay destination, such as information available to visitors before they arrive, food and drink outlets and public toilets. Overnight visitors spent a lot more in the City on average than day visitors;
- the Gatehouse was currently very cluttered, and the Forum welcomed news of the proposed visitors centre, but were wary that the Forrester's Exhibition currently housed in the Gatehouse should not be lost, as it was a vital piece of Nottingham's history;
- the timescale for the Castle improvements would be as follows - stage one of the Heritage Lottery Fund bid would be decided by the end of April, the feasibility study would last 18 months through to October 2014, and the entire redevelopment scheme would be completed by 2019. It would be completed as a phased development over five years, so the Castle could remain open to visitors throughout, and include displays of the heritage being unearthed;
- a "fun factor" was required, as if children enjoyed such attractions they would bring their parents back. Interactivity was key, and there was a fine balance to be found between history and heritage to secure funding, and fun interactive activities to encourage repeat visitors;
- Nottingham City Council already had links with archaeological groups in relation to excavations for the tram, who may wish to be involved during the development of this project;
- a balance was required between procurement and acceptance of help from private advisors, and having attractions run by commercial operators, but some commercial funding was necessary to cover running costs;
- the project appeared deliverable and practical, with significant potential economic and regeneration dividends, and Business sector representatives were willing to lend their support and help to develop the project;
- it was important to have links with local cultural offerings such as theatres and music, and it was agreed that connecting smaller attractions into one larger offering would be both a challenging and fruitful endeavour;

- the Forum noted that increasing Nottingham's profile as a business location would be beneficial, and offering conference facilities for mid-week visitors may help to make leisure offerings in the City more financially viable.

RESOLVED that the Forum's thanks to Hugh White for his presentation be recorded, and that he be requested to ensure that the Forum's suggestions and feedback as detailed above be taken into account as the redevelopment plans for the Castle progressed.

6 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE CITY CENTRE FORUM (Report of Corporate Director of Development)

This item was withdrawn.

7 CITY CENTRE RETAIL STRATEGY (Presentation of Corporate Director of Development)

Nicki Jenkins, Head of Economic Development, introduced the presentation which included the following key points:

- a vibrant City Centre was key to transforming Nottingham's economy. Thriving retail and leisure sectors were important for attracting and retaining talent, and providing employment opportunities to local residents;
- some key challenges needed to be addressed – economic climate, high levels of shop vacancy, growth of internet shopping and changing consumer behaviour;
- annual retail spend in Nottingham was £2.8 billion. Its retail position was ranked 6th outside of London, 8th nationally, and had been steadily declining since 2003. There was direct correlation in ranking increase and the opening of new shopping centres.
- Nottingham had a catchment area of 3.8 million people, 37% of whom shopped in Nottingham. The closest competitor was Derby, where 7% of Nottingham's catchment area citizens shopped;
- 43% of Nottingham's businesses fell into "low risk" categories;
- a City Centre Retail Strategy steering group developed a new vision and strategy for the future growth of the retail and leisure sectors, undertook data trends and analysis in conjunction with Experian, held Stakeholder workshops and conducted ongoing consultations with key groups;
- the vision for Nottingham City Centre was: to create a dynamic and successful retail and leisure sector which re-positions and keeps Nottingham within the top five retail destinations nationally. This would be achieved by increasing the number of shoppers visiting and the level of spend within the city, focusing on three proposed priorities;
- priority one: "strengthening Nottingham's retail and leisure offer in the City Centre, by growing the size and variety of both multiple and independent sectors and in

doing so increase the number of visitors from the catchment” would include a number of key actions such as; improving the quality of our shopping centres so that they are commensurate with Nottingham’s target as being a top five retail destination by 2017, ensuring a thriving independent retail/leisure sector in the City Centre that is as strong as anywhere else in the UK within two years, reducing the number of vacant City Centre units in Nottingham by a third by September 2013 and by 60% by September 2014, retaining all existing top brands and actively working to bring new top brands to Nottingham City Centre by 2017 and better promoting Nottingham’s retail and leisure offer inside and outside of the City;

- priority two: “improving the Nottingham visitor experience, offering variety quality and a joined up approach to leisure and retail and therefore increasing dwell time and the level of spending within the City Centre” would include the following key actions; improving the use of public spaces so that by 2014 there is a clear strategy for each public square in the City Centre, ensuring that by 2014 events in the City Centre better support retail and leisure, creating an established late night shopping culture and ensuring a seamless transition from retail into the late night economy in the City Centre by 2015, supporting the development of better visitor attractions and ensuring that all are well-promoted to form part of a coherent tourism offer within three years, ensuring that it is and remains easy and inexpensive to get to and from the City by car and on public transport and developing mobile software that comprehensively sells and supports retail and leisure;
- priority three: “improving the physical environment and infrastructure within the City Centre, so that it meets the future needs of retailers and provides an attractive and welcoming place to visit” would include the following key actions; addressing the issue of where Nottingham’s core retail areas are and supporting the introduction in 2013 of a clear spatial plan for the City, ensuring a continued focus on good public order and cleansing, continuing the trend of decreasing levels of crime, reviewing the regulatory framework in the City Centre and making recommendations by May 2013 as to how the regulatory environment can better support retail and leisure by discourage vacancy and making it easier to trade in Nottingham City Centre, conducting a property review in the City Centre and working with landlords and agents to establish a Nottingham register of City Centre landlords by May 2014, promoting clear and fair protocols for rent reviews, encouraging the use of a standard Service Level Agreement between landlords and their tenants, encouraging pop up shops in long term vacant units and establishing a plan including identification of internal and external funding sources by May 2013 to physically develop and regenerate certain key retail and leisure hot spots in the City Centre.

Arising from discussion, the following issues were raised:

- some other large cities used sophisticated technologies for development of retail engagement. Nottingham needed to embrace technologies that could be developed quickly to avoid becoming outdated, that would be inclusive for all citizens regardless of age or background;
- the City Centre shop front was a valuable investment for attracting people to the region. HMRC and Capital One both decided to locate in Nottingham in part due to local transport and City Centre retail offers and a large national employer on the

outskirts of Nottingham was currently considering moving more of their offices here, as it was easier to attract skilled workers from the South-East given Nottingham's retail and leisure reputation;

- the number of employment opportunities for local citizens offered by Nottingham's shopping centres was often underestimated, and as such it was important to maintain investment;
- the vacant unit database had already proved to be very useful;
- the visitor experience including retail, leisure and tourism needed to be analysed as a whole. The pattern of shoppers and other visitors was very different to twenty years ago, and the City Centre would need to fit with those changing patterns and habits.

RESOLVED that the Forum's thanks to Nicki Jenkins for her presentation be recorded, and that she be requested to ensure that the Forum's suggestions and feedback as detailed above be taken into account as the Nottingham City Centre Retail Strategy progressed.

8 CITY CENTRE PLACE PLAN (Presentation of Corporate Director of Development)

Sue Flack, Director of Planning and Transport, introduced the presentation which included the following key points:

- the Place Plan was a framework for the City Centre, to establish what certain areas of the City would be geared towards. The area encompassing the Broadmarsh Shopping Centre, the Victoria Shopping Centre, and the route between them would be the Retail Quarter, with independent shops on the radial roads;
- the Creative Quarter had been previously identified as the area around the Lace Market, and would be home to innovative and creative businesses. The Castle Quarter would be home to Nottingham's tourism offer, containing the Castle and various restaurants;
- the Royal Quarter would be pushed down to the West side of Market Square. This had previously been a central retail area, but the aim was to slim down the retail section and encourage other uses. A wide variety of other uses would be encouraged for the Royal Quarter such as service industries;
- the Canal Quarter would be home to entertainment and businesses. It was currently a work in progress, but would soon be home to a new station hub and employment offices. More pubs and clubs would be encouraged for this area, and some clubs currently located in unsuitable areas of the City (i.e. near housing) would be encouraged to move to the Canal Quarter;
- the Southern Gateway would be an area linking important areas to the south of the City such as the Broadmarsh Shopping Centre, the Station Hub, Nottingham Castle and City Centre offices. There would be an office/commercial employment hub near the station, improved links north via Carrington Street to the City Centre and

improved links south to the Meadows. The Southern Gateway improvements would complement the Broadmarsh area proposals;

- the Market Square would continue to serve as the iconic centre of the whole City and function as a meeting place and family friendly area, extending around the Council House, the Corner House, the Royal Concert Hall and the Theatre Royal, accessible and safe for all age groups;
- the key walking route between the Broadmarsh Shopping Centre and the Victoria Shopping Centre would be extended to the north and to the south. Two east/west walking routes would be established: one to connect independent shops across the Retail Core, and one to create a tourism circuit between the Castle and the Lace Market;
- main traffic routes to the east and south of the City would be pushed further out, but this would not be possible to the west and north. Maid Marian Way would continue to be difficult as geographically there was nowhere else to route the traffic. As part of a long term 20 year vision, the NCP car park in the Broadmarsh area on the corner of Collin Street and Maid Marian Way would be removed, Collin Street pedestrianised, and Canal Street made more accessible;
- the next steps for the Draft Place Plan involved a full draft of the City Centre Place Plan being prepared for consultation, adding the main concepts and sites to the Local Plan, seeking approval of the Place Plan in the Spring 2013, developing separate City Centre Quarters Action Plans which would contain further details on responsibilities, timescales and funding, and combining the Retail Strategy with the City Centre Place Plan to form an overarching City Centre Strategy.

Arising from discussion, the following issues were raised:

- whilst some connectivity issues had been addressed in the presentation, cycling around the City centre was still problematic. The new rent-a-bike scheme would need to be enhanced by developing clear, defined, continuous and safe cycle routes through the City Centre. The free City Centre bus which connected the north and the south of the City Centre was a positive development and was proving exceedingly popular, particularly with elderly passengers;
- it was felt that the tram system may benefit from a City Centre only ticket, as it was currently very expensive for shorter journeys. Some tourist cities have a time-limited travel ticket which would be a useful tool for a compact City Centre such as Nottingham. However, as private operators made decisions commercially, this was outside of the control or scope of the City Centre Forum or Nottingham City Council, who were only able to make suggestions to private companies;
- some suburbs had poor connectivity to the City Centre, and citizens may be encouraged to visit more often if public transport, walking and cycling links were improved;
- encouraging night time leisure activity in particular areas would be helpful for many reasons. It would mean that cleansing and community safety resources would not be spread so thinly across the whole City Centre, and that citizens would not have

to travel as far between venues. The Place Plan would feed into other City Council objectives to do with licensing, planning and enforcement, and would lend weight to clearer strategies for the City Council;

- work was currently progressing to develop an electronic smart platform for ticketing in Nottingham, which would be helpful for visitors who may not know which travel options they would need in advance. The system would also be linked up with offers at popular venues.

AGREED that the Forum's thanks to Sue Flack for her presentation be recorded, and that she be requested to ensure that the Forum's suggestions and feedback as detailed above be taken into account as the Nottingham City Centre Place Plan progressed.

9 FUTURE MEETINGS DATES

RESOLVED that the City Centre Forum would meet at 3:30pm on the following dates:

<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
3 June	24 February
2 September	
25 November	