

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CITY CENTRE FORUM

MINUTES of the meeting held at LB 31-32 - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 23 November 2015 from 15.31 - 17.21

Membership

Present

Councillor Merlita Bryan
Councillor Michael Edwards (Chair)
Councillor Chris Gibson
Councillor Nicola Heaton
Councillor Dave Liversidge
Councillor David Mellen
Councillor Anne Peach
Tom Waldron-Lynch

Absent

Jeff Allen (Vice-Chair)
Janine Bone
Chris Sinclair
Simon Gray
Councillor Brian Grocock
Councillor Nick McDonald
Inspector Shaun Ostle
Steve Pashley
Jennifer Spencer
Councillor Jane Urquhart

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Sheila Bower - Citizen
John Connelly - Digital Infrastructure Manager, Nottingham City Council
Eddie Curry - Head of Parks and Open Spaces, Nottingham City Council
Catherine Mayhew - City Centre Co-ordinator, Nottingham City Council
Kathryn Neilson-Davis - House of Fraser
Sharon Scaniglia - Principal Arts Officer, Nottingham City Council
Jennifer Scott - Nottingham Post
Adam Tamsett - Intu
Laura Wilson - Governance Officer, Nottingham City Council

13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Brian Grocock – other Council business
Councillor Nick McDonald – other Council business
Councillor Jane Urquhart

Jeff Allen - Nottingham BID
Jennifer Spencer – Experience Nottinghamshire

14 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None

15 MINUTES

The Forum confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2015 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

16 PUBLIC WIFI IN NOTTINGHAM

John Connelly, Digital Infrastructure Manager, gave a presentation on wifi provision in the City Centre and highlighted the following points:

- (a) wifi has been introduced in the City Centre because:
 - most customers expect it will be available;
 - 75% of adults in the UK own a smartphone;
 - there are 37 million users of smartphones in 2015, and this is expected to grow to 43 million users by 2017;
 - 61% of the population use mobile handsets to access the internet;
- (b) the technology to enable wifi to be available is installed in street lighting columns and BT phone kiosks that have JCDecaux advertising boards attached to them;
- (c) there will be 41 access points throughout the City Centre – 21 through street lighting, and 20 through the phone kiosks. Phase one included the phone kiosks and was completed in August 2015. The street lighting installations are phase two and will be completed by December 2015, although the access point is available as soon as the installation on an individual lighting column is complete;
- (d) the City Council has a concession arrangement which is operated by BT for a 10 year term, at no cost to the Council. BT have experience of providing the service in other cities and the Olympic Park;
- (e) the wifi features:
 - a Nottingham branded landing page;
 - #NottinghamCityFREE sign in title;
 - a simple one-off registration process for users, with no cost;
 - one single service domain so there is seamless service from one wifi access point to another;
 - an average demand per access point of 7 megabits per second;
- (f) the access points are primarily in areas of high foot fall and areas that the Council wants to attract people to use. The routes through the City are well covered, including up to the Castle and up Derby Road;
- (g) there is strong signal between the access points but it will be strongest when close to an access point. Signage on street lighting and on phone kiosks will indicate where access points are;
- (h) future potential opportunities include:
 - proactive working between the operator, the Council and stakeholders;
 - 'Big Data' providing behavioural insight for marketing and planning;
 - Location based retail and tourism apps;
 - Smart City communications.

The following comments were made during the discussion:

- (i) 41 access points appears to be a relatively small number, but is comparable with other cities across the UK;
- (j) wifi is available in both Intu shopping centres;
- (k) once users are registered, they will automatically be connected when they are in range of an access point;
- (l) there was promotion in August when the first access points were installed, and there will be further promotion once the remaining access points are installed in December;
- (m) although the bins that were installed in the City Centre have the capability to be access points, the signal isn't very strong;
- (n) as IT changes frequently, there is scope within the 10 year agreement for changes to be made and the devices have the capacity to increase in speed, etc;
- (o) the possibility of using it to promote City Centre events needs to be investigated;
- (p) there is lots of other public wifi available within buildings in the City Centre so this is a positive addition;
- (q) Nottingham is one of the best served cities for Broadband, as 95% of properties are covered, but the area least well served is the City Centre because the driver for coverage is demand, which is greater in residential areas;
- (r) there is an issue with small businesses in the City Centre not being able to access reliable Broadband, but there are some opportunities emerging which should hopefully improve access.

17 GOOD TO GREAT: ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT CITY PROJECTS

Eddie Curry, Head of Parks and Open Spaces, and Sharon Scaniglia, Principal Arts Officer, gave a presentation on projects happening within the City Centre and highlighted the following points:

- (a) there are four key areas of development:
 - entrance enhancements;
 - landscape enhancements;
 - interpretation trail;
 - creative lighting;
- (b) the entrance enhancements include:
 - Hurts Yard and the West End Arcade:
 - a feasibility study will be confirmed before Christmas and works will be carried out before the end of April 2016;

- a local artist from the Creative Quarter will be commissioned to make improvements to the visual appearance;
 - the work will address the concerns of the retailers regarding low level anti-social behaviour and low footfall;
 - Carrington Street Heritage Townscape improvements to:
 - restore and enhance the visual appearance;
 - profile historic buildings and frontages;
 - improve the streetscape quality;
 - improve the connective quality of the public realm to the City Centre;
 - create a distinctive and memorable entrance to the City;
 - Trinity Walk:
 - an archway has been made by a local artist, in consultation with the street traders;
 - the visibility of the walkway has been improved;
 - it creates a sense of identity;
 - it will improve footfall;
- (c) the landscape improvements include:
- replanting sections of the Old Market Square;
 - removing tree stumps and replanting City Centre gateway approaches such as Castle Boulevard, London Road, and Mansfield Road;
 - horticultural features at Canning Circus;
 - the City Centre sculpture trial;
 - other planting features;
- (d) the City Centre interpretation trail:
- it will:
 - build on existing apps to direct people to events in the City Centre, but needs to avoid duplication of existing apps, tours or websites;
 - actively encourage tourism;
 - allow visitors to access live information/offers;
 - provide guidance and quality visitor time;
 - profile the cultural offer and City's rich heritage;
 - the aim of the tour is to:
 - show the City off to visitors;
 - profile heritage and architectural features;
 - drive footfall to businesses that will benefit economically from the increased spend;
 - encourage return visits;
 - the timescales:
 - the tender documents are due to completed before Christmas;
 - the tender process will take place in January 2016;
 - the first phase of the project will be completed by 31 March 2016;
- (e) creative lighting:
- will:
 - create welcoming environments at night;
 - enhance footfall to a specific location;
 - generate a sense of place;

- create an environment that feels safe;
- add to the attractiveness of the City as a place to spend time in;
- create excitement about the location/site/place;
- a brief was sent out with a deadline of 18 November. Seven tenders have been returned and three have been shortlisted;
- the proposals include:
 - structural lighting;
 - interactive lighting;
 - architectural lighting;
- the process will include:
 - feedback and comments on the proposed projects;
 - consultation with the Highways and Commercial Governance Manager;
 - interviews taking place on 3 December.

The following comments were made during the discussion:

- (f) the Flying Horse Walk is an example of what can be achieved at the West End Arcade and Hurts Yard. Improvements will attract people to walk through them to access other areas;
- (g) the businesses have been fully involved in the improvements they want to see at Hurts Yard and the West End Arcade and they are also investing their own money;
- (h) additional lighting would be a great improvement to Hurts Yard as it looks dark from both entrances;
- (i) improved signage at the West End Arcade to list the shops inside is being worked on, and work will be done to make the vacant premises more attractive;
- (j) Hurts Yard can be slippery when it is wet so it is important to improve the flooring or the hand rails;
- (k) there are lots of apps available for the City already, such as the Caves and Creative Quarter tours, so there is still a lot of work to do on the interpretation tour to ensure that it is overarching rather than duplicating. It is hoped that it will be managed centrally;
- (l) improved lighting in the City Centre would have a positive impact on the night time economy and make it more family friendly;
- (m) creative lighting can attract people to areas that they wouldn't usually visit;
- (n) lighting up existing features should be considered;
- (o) lighting could also be used to lead people to a particular area and show people the way to go.

City Centre Forum - 23.11.15

RESOLVED to request that an update on the proposals for City Centre creative lighting project is submitted to the next meeting.