

## **NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

### **BRIDGE, DUNKIRK AND LENTON (AREA 8) COMMITTEE**

#### **MINUTES**

of meeting held on **14 MARCH 2012** at Loxley House  
from 5.40 pm to 8.00 pm

- ✓ Councillor Piper (Chair)
- ✓ Councillor Heaton (Vice-Chair)
- Councillor Edwards
- ✓ Councillor Trimble (minutes 40-45 inclusive)

✓ indicates present at meeting

#### **Citizens and Community Representatives present**

- Ms D Clausen - Arkwright Meadows Community Garden
- Mr T Preston - Dunkirk and Lenton Forum
- Mr J Hughes - Friends of Victoria Embankment
- Dr P Millington - The Lenton Centre
- Mr B Latif - Meadows Muslim Centre
- Mrs J Dobson ) Meadows Partnership Trust
- Ms D Whitworth )
- Mr D Shaw - New Meadows Tenants' and Residents' Association
- Ms M Fletcher - Nottingham Action Group

#### **Others and City Council Colleagues in attendance**

- Ms C Ziane-Pryor - Constitutional Services )
- Mr I Reed Aspley Marketing and Communications )
- Mrs H Cattle - Development ) Nottingham
- Mr A Ghaffar - Neighbourhood Management Team ) City Council
- Mr E Curry - Parks and Open Spaces )
- Mr W Adams ) Nottingham City Homes
- Mr P Howard )

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

#### **40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor Edwards,
- Mr R Morrell, East Meadows Tenants and Residents Association,
- Mrs M Daly, Meadows Dance and Social Group,
- Mr S Harrison ) Neighbourhood Managers
- Mrs D Holmes )

Councillor Trimble apologised that he would have to leave the meeting early due to other City Council commitments.

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

No declarations of interests were made.

#### **42 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that, subject to the following amendments, the minutes of the last meeting held on 11 January 2012, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair:

- a) the inclusion of an apology for absence from Mrs Fletcher;
- b) that, in regard to minute 38, Flood Risk Within Area 8, the eighth comment of the Committee be replaced with:

**'there was concern that the Urban Drainage System which included the Meadows Recreation Ground had been adversely affected by the flood defence 'Bund' of impermeable clays.'**

#### **43 ENVIORNMENTAL SUBMISSIONS FROM NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES (NCH) - DUNKIRK AND LENTON**

The Chair of the meeting was of the opinion that this item, although not included on the agenda, should be considered as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, in view of the special circumstances that approval of the Committee was required for the supported projects to progress prior to the new financial and municipal years.

Consideration was given to the report of Nottingham City Homes, copies of which were placed around the table and submitted to the on-line agenda following the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the following schemes be approved:

<u>Site</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>£</u>
Friary Close	Removal of paving slabs from the main footpath and tarmac pathways through out the complex	16,339.00
Alleyway to the side of 51 Montpellier Road	Installation of a push code lock gate to the alleyway behind the properties. (one third contribution to the total cost).	212.00
Friary Close	Provision and planting of low maintenance plants and shrubs within the complex, to include the provision of compost, tools and possibly benches	829.00

#### **44 WARD PRIORITIES**

Mr Ghaffar, Neighbourhood Action Officer, introduced the report which requested that the Committee confirm that the previously identified Ward Priorities remained relevant as of this meeting.

Priorities had been identified following community consultation at a variety of events and through varying routes such as 'your choice, your voice', complaints and comments to City Services, community and consultation events.

Community representatives commented that further consideration should be given to holding meetings and events during the evening to enable citizens who worked during the day to attend and contribute. In addition, last minute notification of consultation was not helpful for groups who would want to be involved in consultations that were relevant to them.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (1) that the Ward Priorities, as outlined in the report, be confirmed with the inclusion of 'tree related issues' within the Dunkirk and Lenton Neighbourhood Ward;**
- (2) that further consideration be given to the times of day at which consultation events were held.**

#### **45 URBAN FORESTRY STRATEGY**

Mr Curry, Head of Parks and Open Spaces, presented the report which informed the Committee of the draft Urban Forestry Strategy and the opportunity to comment on it. The report was accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation relevant to Area 8, and submitted to the on-line agenda following the meeting..

The Strategy proposed a number of policies including:

- large tree species;
- maintenance of trees;
- risk management;
- responsible neighbours guide;
- factors to be considered with development areas.

The Committee were asked to comment on the Strategy at the meeting and also in more detail on line at [ufs@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:ufs@nottinghamcity.gov.uk).

Councillor Trimble, as Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Tourism, was responsible for trees in parks and open spaces but not on road sides. As such he requested clear language and policies to ensure that trees were managed in a reasonable and logical way. Due to the funding restraints, the Council needed to tell people if they were unable to resolve an issue that had been raised. If citizens wanted to pay for work to be done to resolve issues which the City Council could not fund, then they should approach Councillor Trimble.

Comments of the Committee included:

- the area around Woodward Street was lacking trees and, while issues of narrow pavements and parking were understood, trees would be a welcome addition to the area, even if they were to be planted at the end of streets;
- the City Council appeared to maintain the trees in the Lenton area very well, but the garden refuse collections stopped too early in the season for fallen leaves to be collected. As leaf mould was a valuable compostable material that was lost if placed in the domestic refuse bins, it was requested that garden waste collections be better co-ordinated in future to assist residents to better manage the recycling of fallen leaves;
- where trees were removed, new ones should be planted for the benefit of future generations, especially along the route of the Tram where mature trees were removed;
- concern was expressed at the possibility of the Victoria Embankment trees being threatened by wind turbines along the Trent, and it was requested that the trees be protected;
- in previous years, trees had been planted in the New Meadows in some unsuitable places, which resulted in the need for some unusual pruning which was unsightly. As there was uncertainty as to how high these trees would grow, citizens questioned if it would be better to remove the badly placed trees and plant replacements in more suitable sites;
- it may be possible to remove the majority of old tree roots from the corner of Bunbury Street. This would enable new trees to be planted.

Mr Curry responded as follows:

- there were a lot of factors to take into consideration when planting trees, some streets were not designed to include trees, while others were influenced by the placement of cables and drains;
- trees were not the only way to add greenery to streets, the best examples of alternatives were resident's floral displays in the Meadows;
- it was often difficult to replace trees at the exact sites where they had been removed. This was because it was very expensive, and sometimes also impractical, to remove the well established roots of the trees which may have grown around cabling or utilities, and so the trees were cut to a stump. This did not allow ground space for new trees to root;
- the Urban Tree Strategy included a section outlining the litigation framework which explained that it was for the home owner to prove that a City Council, or neighbour's tree, was responsible for damage to property;

- a common sense approach was required in regard to pruning the overhang of a neighbour's tree, but the opinion of Tree Services should be sought in the first instance, especially in conservation areas;
- with regard to pruning, felling and planting, each tree was considered on its own merits.

**RESOLVED that the draft Urban Forestry Strategy be noted and any further comments be emailed to [ufs@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:ufs@nottinghamcity.gov.uk).**

**46 QUEENS WALK TREES - COMMUNITY USE OF TIMBER**  
(Report of Director for Neighbourhoods and Communities)

Mr Shaw, New Meadows Tenant and Resident Association, was accompanied by Mrs Dobson of the Meadows Partnership Trust, to present a joint business plan proposing community uses for the lime trees which had been felled on Queen's Walk as part of the Tramline 2 works. A brief presentation was also delivered to compliment the report.

The business plan had been well received and supported by City Council colleagues in Parks and Open Spaces, Nottingham South MP Lillian Greenwood, and local media. Through partnership discussions, it had been agreed that the wood from the felled limes could be retained and stored for use in The Meadows at no cost.

With the support of the Parks and Open Spaces Section, The New Meadows Partnership was hoping to make an application for Heritage Lottery Funding to enable community park projects focusing on the felled trees, to take pace.

**RESOLVED**

- (1) that the Committee's praise of the partnership working achievements to date, and the best wishes for the completion of the proposals, be recorded;**
- (2) that the thanks of the Committee to the New Meadows Tenant and Resident Association and The Partnership Trust, be recorded for their interesting and informative report and presentation.**

**47 LENTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY - TRAM LINE WORKS NEAR ABBEY BRIDGE**

This agenda item was withdrawn.

**48 LAND AND PLANNING POLICIES DEVELOPMENT**

(Joint report of Director for Planning and Transport, and Corporate Director for Development)

Mrs Cattle, Development Policy and Research, presented the report which informed the Committee that six additional sites in the area had been identified for inclusion in the Land and Planning Policies Development Plan. The report included plans of the sites.

Comments from the Committee included:

DS97 and DS98 both in the area of Electric Avenue

- when considering residential use, further investigations should be undertaken to determine possible ground contamination from the former Wilford Power Station which stood on the site;

#### DS99 NG2 South (Alternative Uses)

- there was concern that the greenery and attractive mature trees, particularly along the stream, would be lost if the site were to be developed;

#### DS100 Station Street/ Carrington Street

- the buildings in question were within a conservation area and, although not all were in good repair, there was not a presumption that the buildings could or could not be demolished, more that there could be changes of use;
- the majority of buildings were owned by one person which could simplify development of the site;
- it was a concern that developers may retain the properties but allow them to decay, which would make demolition a more attractive proposition to City Council Planners;

#### DS101 Cattle Market

- if the site were to include residential use, public transport links to the east would need to be improved;
- there were some older buildings on the site which may be of interest and should be considered for protection;

#### DS102 Former Dunkirk Fire Station

- this site should not be used for student accommodation as there was a disproportionate population of students in the area, and building student accommodation would not release houses in multiple occupation, but further compound the issue;
- any development needed to be low profile and low density. As Queens Medical Centre did not require further staff accommodation, commercial use appeared be the best option;
- vehicle access to the site from the large roundabout had not affected emergency vehicles, but the noise from the ring road and roundabout would be an issue;
- any high-rise development would have an adverse effect on Waterside Bungalows next to the site;
- proposing the site for science based project work would be ideal, as the site was close to the hospital, university and the tram was due to run nearby.

**RESOLVED**

- (1) that the current consultation on the additional sites and the opportunity to input into the process be noted;
- (2) that the comments of the Committee be noted, specifically the following points:
  - a) that in regard to site DS100, Station Street/Carrington Street, any allocated use should retain and utilise the current buildings;
  - (b) that the site of the former Dunkirk Fire Station was not suitable for residential accommodation.

#### **49 AREA COMMITTEE CHANGES**

(Director for neighbourhoods and Communities)

Mr Ghaffar presented the report which informed the Committee of changes to some of the Area Committee boundaries.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

#### **50 BENEFIT COMMUNICATIONS**

(Presentation by Mr Reed Aspley, Marketing and Communications)

The Chair had been working with Mr Reed Aspley to try and find ways to lessen the impact of the forthcoming welfare reforms on Nottingham, by informing and encouraging people to prepare for the changes in advance of their implementation.

There were to be changes to several benefits including child benefit, disability living allowance, abolition of Council Tax Benefit, and a cap on Housing Benefit.

In October 2013, Universal Credit was to be launched and responsibility for hardship was to be passed to Local Authorities.

It was anticipated that there were to be some challenges ahead, and people in receipt of benefits needed to be informed of what was to change and to what extent, to try and prevent people getting into debt and financial difficulties, as this was bad for them and for the City.

It was noted that 41,540 people claimed Department of Work and Pensions benefits in the City of Nottingham, 11,000 were on a low income and out of work, 21,300 children (35% of children in the City) lived in non-working households, 11,900 adults were on a low income and receiving some benefit credit, and 3,700 working families received tax credit.

The Committee responded to the request for suggestions as to how best to communicate with affected people as follows:

- o identify the geographical areas with concentrations of affected people, which would include private rented property and social housing;

- inform landlords, and landlord organisations and associations, of the forthcoming changes to housing benefit so they would be in a position to approach relevant tenants;
- some community groups had found that speaking to people face to face had been the most effective method of communication in the most deprived areas, as this offered the opportunity for people to ask questions, and for the reality of how issues affected them directly to be highlighted. Little notice was taken of letters and pamphlets;
- consideration should be given as to how Plymouth City Council had liaised with the relevant groups;
- Tenant and Resident Groups were able to pass information to communities alongside the existing help and advice centres such as the One-Stop-Shop in the Meadows, social venues such as bingo halls, and charities and the voluntary sector;
- as most people appeared to have mobile phones and internet access, messages via social networking sites should be considered;
- it was important that people were not just told of the changes, but were offered a solution. Organisations such as The Meadows Partnership Trust acted in an advocacy role and could possibly assist people in opening bank accounts and ensuring that bills were paid. It was vital that people were clearly directed to appropriate help.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) that the Committee's thanks to Mr Reed Aspley for his presentation and attendance be recorded;**
- (2) that any further suggestions of how to help people prepare for the welfare reforms be forwarded to Councillor Piper at either [sarah.piper@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.piper@nottinghamcity.gov.uk) or to Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham NG2 3NG.**