

## Information requested by O&S members in relation to Matchborough and Winyates District Centres

Extract from O&S minutes:

- Members were informed that a meeting had taken place with some Ward Members, businesses and residents. Members asked for clarity of the arrangements for these meetings and the notes arising from them. The Committee further expressed their concerns that not all ward Members were informed of this meeting.

### Officer response:

The meeting referred to above was held on 29 January 2019 at Christ Church, Matchborough at 2pm, with business tenants from both District Centres in response to the press coverage of the District Centres report presented to Executive Committee on 8 January 2019.

The Standard reported on 11 January 2019 with a headline of *“Bold plans could mean end for two centres”* stating *“Ambitious plans which could see the bulldozing of both Winyates and Matchborough centres and the creation of a single joint centre have taken a step closer to reality”*.

The meeting was held with business tenants to allay any fears from the press article and to answer any questions. By way of additional information, a letter was sent to all residents in the District Centres with the same message.

On 21 January 2019, an email was sent to Cllrs: Brunner, Fisher, Lovell, Pulsford and Smith advising of the meeting and asking if they were able to attend. Attached to the email was a copy of the letter to be issued to all business tenants inviting them to the meeting.

Attendees from RBC: Ruth Bamford (Head of Planning), Jeremy Williams (Estates Surveyor, Property Services). Of the five Members invited, three attended.

No written notes/ actions were recorded at the meeting. However, business tenants expressed that they wanted to be kept informed as the regeneration project gathered momentum, but didn't feel the need to hold regular meetings unless there was something particular that needed their input. Should further meetings take place, all the ward Councillors would again be notified by email. It was agreed that an email circulation group was the best way to keep all business tenants informed at this point in the project. Jeremy Williams is the business tenants point of contact and will be compiling the email circulation group.

## **Additional Information**

There are currently two other groups currently meeting in relation to the regeneration of the District Centres:

- Officer Working Group
- Stakeholders Group

### **Officer Working Group**

Departments represented: Housing, Planning, Communications, Policy, Legal, Estates, WCC.

Officers from various Council departments meet once every two weeks to deal with current tasks relating to bring forward the District Centres regeneration. Whilst there is not currently a need for all Group members to be undertaking tasks, their attendance is imperative to understand the enormity and complexity of the regeneration project. Tasks assigned will be undertaken as and when necessary.

For example:

- Following the press reports after the Exec meeting in January, the Comms Team are drafting a communications plan and setting up a dedicated web link to keep the public informed of progression.
- Tenant Liaison Officers have enough information to answer any queries from the public at this stage, and will play an increasing part in ensuring tenant involvement as and when we get to a stage of increased public engagement.
- Legal will be involved heavily to draft the terms of the forthcoming Invitation to Tender document.
- A representative from Worcestershire County Council handles queries we have relating to highways, ecology and education (for example).
- Property Services are collating information regarding tenancies, floorspace and rental incomes.

### **Stakeholders Group**

This Group comprises our external partners and stakeholders and attendance is growing as progress is made with the regeneration project. This Group is sometimes referred to as 'Board Meetings'. The 'Board' was introduced as part of the OPE7 bid preparation to demonstrate that the Council was actively working in partnership with local stakeholders to support the regeneration project for the District Centres. At this point in time, the meetings are informal and 'actions' are shared within the Group. Two meetings have been held to date, with the next meeting arranged for 9 May.

The current representatives extend to:

- Ruth Bamford (Chair)
- Leader of the Council (as relevant Portfolio Holder)
- Arrow Vale RSA Academy
- Ipsley Academy
- Matchborough First School
- Christ Church

- Police
- WCC
- Health Centre
- P & E Sports

Actions to date have been minimal and are mainly centred on information sharing such as:

- Sharing the feedback form the consultation exercise undertaken in 2016
- Share the OEP 7 bid
- Invite WCC staff who oversee Bus routes to next meeting
- Advice on school parking issues
- Share youth crime statistics

It was suggested at the last meeting that community representatives were invited to join the Group going forward.

The group was discussed at PAP on 13<sup>th</sup> March. Members are asked to note that this is an informal group, designed to enable attendees to share information. All Matchborough and Winyates ward Members are welcome to attend and dates for meetings will be shared with all ward Members electronically.