

Subject:	Lively Cities – Regeneration in the London Road area		
Date of Meeting:	30 April 2013		
Report of:	Executive Director, Environment, Development & Housing		
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Ward(s) affected:	St Peter's & North Laine		

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report informs members of the results of the INTERREG IVB-assisted Lively Cities 'place making' pilot project that took place in the Ann Street/Providence Place area between 1 – 14 October 2012. The project is one of a number of interventions planned to help regenerate the wider area, in line with the council's London Road Central Masterplan (Supplementary Planning Document SPD 10).
- 1.2 The council now has the opportunity to develop the successful elements of the pilot into a permanent plan for implementation. Members are requested to endorse the preparation by officers of a plan for a permanent scheme that can be presented to the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee at the end of the year/ early 2014. This will enable certain transport-related elements of the scheme to fall within the remit of (and receiving funding from) the Local Transport Plan (LTP).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee endorses the preparation of a permanent implementation plan that falls within the remit of the Local Transport Plan and which takes forward and develops the successful aspects of the Lively Cities Common Room pilot project for the Ann Street/Providence Place area.
- 2.2 That the permanent implementation plan be considered at a future meeting of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 In December 2009 the council adopted the London Road Central Masterplan (Supplementary Planning Document SPD 10) as a means of addressing and guiding opportunities for redevelopment, regeneration and other improvements in the area for the benefit of all. One important aspect of the masterplan is that it identifies opportunities for public realm and open space improvements around the edge of the shopping area. The intention of the SPD in this respect is to act as a driver for improved and increased opportunities for people to spend time within and around London Road, thereby benefiting a range of social, economic and recreational needs in this densely populated inner city area.
- 3.2 In 2011 the council became a partner on the INTERREG IVB Lively Cities project, which aims to transform failing public spaces into popular and valued community assets. This represented a welcome opportunity to develop and test an innovative transformation of the Ann Street/Providence Place area to the immediate east of London Road, which is identified in SPD10 as an area in need of public realm improvements in order to help meet the masterplan's objectives. The area includes the bottom end of Ann Street and Providence Place Gardens (a small grassed park area opposite St Bartholomew's Church).
- 3.3 Detailed analyses, data collection and surveys were undertaken in the area in the autumn of 2011. A range of issues were identified that were combining to prevent the area from meeting its potential as a place for people to spend time and enjoy. These included incidents of anti social behaviour, street drinking, graffiti, the physical presence of fencing around the park - acting as a disincentive for many to enter it, a complete absence of amenities such as seating and a considerable imbalance in the physical space allocated for pedestrians (the vast majority of users) over vehicles - to the detriment of pedestrians.
- 3.4 In January 2012 the council held a competition for an innovative two week pilot project to dramatically and positively transform the area. The winner was 'The Common Room' a radical and wide-ranging proposal by Plan Projects, in association with Luis Trevino Architects. This proposed a range of activities, facilities, physical interventions and traffic restrictions - including the removal of on-street parking, a ban on heavy goods vehicles, complete removal of the railings around the park, provision of terraced steps into the park, fixed and movable seating, an art wall, a performance area, free large-capacity wi-fi and a range of activities including after-school play (for the local primary school) and table tennis. The Common Room pilot was tested between 1 – 14 October 2012 and was a considerable success in enticing a far wider range of users to spend time in and enjoy the area. A summary report on the pilot forms an appendix to this committee report, a full report is available in the members' rooms (or can be downloaded from (www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/livelycities)) and a visual presentation including video footage will be given during this committee meeting.

- 3.5 The testing of the pilot project and its proven success have been important factors in attracting funding and resources via Section 106 Agreements and elsewhere for a permanent scheme to be developed and implemented - in line with the objectives of SPD10. It is now proposed that a costed and phased plan be prepared in-house by officers in collaboration with the Common Room design team, and in consultation with ward members and the local community. This will allow:
- an informed means to identify existing funding available for implementation of the initial phase(s) and an effective means of attracting finance for later phases
 - efficient and collaborative working across the council on a project that spans a variety of service areas and interests including planning, transport, regeneration, parks, sports and recreation, economic development
 - spin-off benefits to be fully explored in respect of other projects and proposals within and around the London Road area.
- 3.6 Following community consultation and agreement by the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee of a phased plan, it is anticipated that implementation will commence in 2014.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Community engagement and consultation have been and will continue to be integral to this project. A stakeholder forum including representatives from a range of local community interests was established in July 2011, has met on a number of occasions to input to the project and is kept abreast of project developments. This has included representation by resident interests, St Bartholomew's Church, St Bartholomew's School, City College, the London Road Local Action Team (LAT) and local ward councillors. The project has been discussed a number of times at meetings of the LAT. Community workshops were held as part of the data collection in the autumn of 2011. Fieldwork undertaken by community volunteers who were trained by the council helped to gather a wide range of data from residents, workers, shoppers and other users of the project area. This information was integral in informing the pilot project brief.
- 4.2 The judging panel for the pilot project included a range of stakeholders including community representatives. Shortlisted entries were the subject of a public exhibition and consultation, with public feedback informing the judges' decision on the winner. Further data, including the public's responses to the pilot, was collected by community volunteers during the pilot project in October 2012. An online survey was conducted on the council website. The results of these various exercises are discussed in the appended report. Various forms of social media have been used to advertise the project's ongoing development including Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, as well as press releases.
- 4.3 The community will continue to be consulted via a variety of means (including the above and via the stakeholder forum) in implementing a permanent scheme for the area.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 Preparation of the detailed implementation plan will be funded by a mixture of existing staff resources, INTERREG IVB and the LTP. Once the implementation plan is prepared, the individual elements of it will need to be properly costed and funding identified for it. The permanent scheme will be funded from a mixture of INTERREG IVB, Section 106 contributions, the LTP and other potential future funding sources (e.g. via possible access to funding under a future City Deal arrangement).

Finance Officer Consulted: Jeff Coates

Date: 14/03/2013

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Any infrastructure to be provided as part of the permanent implementation plan may fall within the definition of “development” under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and will therefore require planning permission, unless permitted development rights apply.

The traffic measures outlined will require traffic regulation orders which will need to be advertised in accordance with the relevant legislation, following approval of the detailed implementation plan by Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee.

In carrying out consultation on the scheme the Council must comply with the legal requirements for fair consultation. This means that consultation must take place at the stage where proposals are being formulated, adequate time and information must be given to consultees to enable proper responses to be given, and the results of any consultation must be taken into account when developing the scheme.

Lawyer Consulted: Hilary Woodward; Carl Hearsum

Date: 21/03/13

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The Lively Cities project seeks to implement an element of SP10, for which an equalities impact assessment was undertaken. Equalities implications have informed the data collection process to date. Identified equalities issues will be taken into account in developing a detailed implementation plan, for which a further equalities impact assessment will be undertaken.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The Lively Cities project seeks to implement an element of SP10 for which a sustainability assessment was undertaken. The project seeks to provide a greatly improved environment and public realm that will be a valued community asset, encourage walking, cycling, outdoor play and recreation and assist in the physical and economic regeneration of London Road, an important inner city area in recognised need of improvement.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 The project has identified and seeks to tackle a range of public safety issues including anti-social behaviour, graffiti, street drinking, drug dealing and general perceptions and fear of crime.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 A risk assessment was undertaken as part of the pilot project in order to ensure public safety and the safety of those taking part in its implementation. Further risk assessments will be undertaken as appropriate in developing a permanent improvement scheme for the area.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 The pilot project tested a range of facilities and attractions that had positive public health implications, including the provision of table tennis facilities and after-school play for the local primary school. It is intended that these aspects be taken forward and developed as part of the permanent project for the area.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 The project helps to take forward important aspects of SPD 10, which is an adopted corporate document that sets out the council's land use, sustainable transport and regeneration aspirations for improving the London Road area.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The 2012 competition for the pilot project allowed for a wide range of alternative options to be examined against the competition brief. The Common Room was considered by the judges to best represent the concerns of the project brief, in addressing the various recognised issues, deficiencies and other problems in the area.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Endorsement for the principle of preparing an implementation plan for a permanent transformation of the area will enable elements of the scheme, including input from certain officers, to be funded against the Local Transport Plan (LTP)

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Ann Street/Providence Place Gardens – Common Room Site Assessment Report (Summary – Headlines & Recommendations)

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. Ann Street/Providence Place Gardens – Common Room Site Assessment Report

Background Documents

1. London Road Central Masterplan (SPD 10)