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|-------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Subject: | London Road Central Masterplan Update | | |
| Date of Meeting: | 7 July 2011 | | |
| Report of: | Strategic Director Place | | |
| Contact Officer: | Name: | Alan Buck | Tel: 29-2287 |
| | E-mail: | alan.buck@brighton-hove.gov.uk | |
| Key Decision: | No | | |
| Wards Affected: | St Peter's and North Laine | | |

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 In 2009 the council adopted the London Road Central Masterplan as a supplementary planning document (SPD 10) to guide future development proposals and improvements in the London Road area. The document sets out a wide range of projects which, if realised, will secure considerable improvements in and around London Road for the benefit of all who use the area.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on proposals within and around London Road that will help to realise its objectives of creating an attractive and economically successful shopping centre.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Planning, Employment, Economy & Regeneration notes the various emerging proposals.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

Background

- 3.1 The adopted Masterplan seeks public realm and other environmental enhancements to encourage users to spend more time in the London Road area, help create a vibrant shopping centre and improve its economic fortunes for the benefit of all. The document was prepared during a time of economic recession and it was recognised at the time that that its objectives of realising significant public realm improvements would be largely dependent on new development in the area.

LICI

- 3.2 Since 2009 the weak economy has continued to hinder development investment in the area and the council has therefore been actively seeking funding opportunities. It has recently been successful as a partner in a bid for INTERREG IV B finance to fund an improvement scheme in the London Road

area under the Lively Cities programme which has been recently approved by the EU.

- 3.3 Lively Cities (LICI) is a four year INTERREG IV B project that aims to strengthen communities by reclaiming public space for public use. It is focussed on achieving the transformation of poor quality underused urban spaces into places that are lively, vibrant and successful.
- 3.4 The project seeks to instil and utilise best practice in place-making techniques to achieve a transformation of a defined urban space in each of the partner cities. It involves co-operative working amongst the partners so that they can examine and learn from best practice around the world, pool their skills, advise each other and learn from each others examples.
- 3.5 The lead partner on the project is the AMCV, a Mons-based organisation providing design guidance to local authorities in the Wallonia Region of Belgium. As well as Brighton & Hove City Council, other partner authorities are Aberdeen, Tournai (Belgium), La Louvière and Lille (France) and Eindhoven (the Netherlands). A number of academic institutions are observing the project as part of their research: (Åbo Akademi University in Finland, Univeristé du Luxembourg, Wageningen University in the Netherlands and North West University in South Africa).
- 3.6 For Brighton & Hove, LICI will draw in EU funding to achieve a project within or across an area comprising Elder Place and the bottom of Anne Street. The project will be the result of competition that will invite innovative proposals to create a lively and well used space in an area that is lacking in such amenities. Community and stakeholder consultation and involvement will be integral elements in the project.
- 3.7 As well as providing a project on the ground, the programme provides a valuable opportunity for the council in building and refining its place-making skills as it shares experiences and problem-solving with its partners over the course of the four year project, These skills will be applied to future projects in the city. The total value of the project for the council in terms of learning and project implementation is £250,000, with the council's match funding element being 'payment in kind' through officer time spent on the project.

Open Market

- 3.8 The new Open Market project received planning permission in April and work is expected to commence later this year, once temporary accommodation has been put in place for the existing stallholders.

Site J New England Quarter

- 3.9 In the nearby New England Quarter, Square Bay Properties has a planning application under consideration for a mixed use development that includes residential, offices and hotel. The proposal would also bring forward the majority of the long-awaited New England Quarter southern greenway (the northern element having opened recently) and the completion of the pedestrian route to the rear of the station that connects past Sainsbury's to Anne Street and London Road. Development control negotiations are ongoing at the time of writing.

New England House

- 3.10 The council is seeking a package to upgrade and refurbish New England House. Any scheme would be expected to contribute to the objectives of the London Road Masterplan, including proposals to improve the Elder Place-York Hill area.

Brighton Station Gateway

- 3.11 This emerging project has the potential to assist in the regeneration of the London Road area, particularly the 'northern gateway' element of the scheme which will tie in the east west linkages referred to above.

The Level

- 3.12 A project seeking to improve the Level is being led by City Services, who have a presence on the LICI officer steering group. Opportunities will be sought for the LICI project to tie into and improve east west pedestrian and cycle connections across the NEQ, London Road, the Level and beyond.

Former Co-op

- 3.13 A developer is seeking to replace the existing building with student housing above shops and held a public exhibition in May in respect of their plans.

Emerging projects

- 3.14 A number of officer meetings have taken place in connection with some other significant sites in the Masterplan area. Further information will be released in due course with the agreement of the developers or if and when these proposals enter the public domain.

Implementation of projects

- 3.15 The LICI funding will be used to help to generate interest and stimulate investment in London Road from a variety of sources. The Masterplan SPD will continue to be used as a key planning policy document in guiding projects in the area and as a justification for extracting payments for additional public realm schemes to secure the its objectives.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 With regard to various improvements sought in the Masterplan, a series of officer working groups are being activated as and when appropriate. One such group has already been convened for the LICI project and member and stakeholder involvement will follow shortly. Further information on this programme will be revealed over the next few months.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 Any costs associated with the preparation of the update have been met from existing Planning revenue budgets. The new improvement scheme in the London

Road area will be funded by external INTERREG grant with a contribution of council officer time.

Finance Officer Consulted: Karen Brookshaw

Date: 17/06/11

Legal Implications:

5.2 The London Road Central Masterplan is a Supplementary Planning Document, a category of policy document introduced under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Masterplan SPD, which was subject to statutory consultation, will be a material planning consideration against which those planning applications falling within its remit will be assessed. Any enhancement works will be subject to planning and, where relevant, procurement regulations.

5.3 No adverse human rights implications arise from the Report.

Lawyer Consulted: Hilary Woodward

Date: 27/06/11

Equalities Implications:

5.4 The brief seeks an accessible and safe environment that will benefit existing local neighbourhoods.

Sustainability Implications:

5.5 Sustainability objectives are set out within and are integral to the masterplan and realising its objectives.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.6 The brief seeks the creation of a safe and successful neighbourhood.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

5.7 These will be assessed where appropriate in relation to the details coming forward in relation to individual projects.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.7 As a major gateway to and from the city, London Road is of significant importance to the council.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

6.1 Assessments of options were undertaken during the SPD consultation process in 2009.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Report is for information.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

None

Documents In Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

1. London Road Central Masterplan (SPD 10)

