

Cabinet Committee – Local Leadership Meeting – 23 November 2017

Update on the progress of the Hall Green and Selly Oak Connecting Communities and Assets Pilot

Background

- A discussion paper was presented to Cabinet Committee-Local Leadership in November 2016 on, **"Unlocking community assets and talents in the south of the city"** based on preliminary discussions and activity that had initially taken place in Hall Green District.
- The recommendations and future focus outlined in the discussion paper were to take a refreshed vision looking at a more holistic, creative and imaginative approach when looking at neighbourhood assets (both physical and social capital) to meet local aspirations and for the setting up of a pilot project in the Hall Green and Selly Oak Districts. The pilot project was approved at the meeting to take forward some of the concepts as outlined in the original discussion paper to further develop a place based approach, focusing in the first instance on Council owned assets to develop responsible local stewardship and ownership, increase capacity building and engagement, promote wellbeing and assist in the sustainability of a community infrastructure.
- Following the agreement given at Cabinet Committee – Local Leadership a **Hall Green and Selly Oak Connecting Communities and Assets Steering Group** was formed.

Hall Green and Selly Oak Connecting Communities and Assets Steering Group

- The Steering Group was initially made up of Members and Officers from the Council as per the following -

Councillors Claire Spencer and Karen McCarthy – District Chairs for Hall Green and Selly Oak District

Councillor Tony Kennedy – Assistant Leader and local Councillor within Hall Green District
Neil Vyse, Ghaz Hussain, Hiteshree Kundalia and latterly Noreen Akhtar– Planning & Regeneration

Phillip Andrews – Property Services

Karen Cheney and Austin Rodriguez – Neighbourhood Development and Support Unit and District Head for both Districts

But also most importantly involving key community stakeholders in the relevant workstreams

- The Terms of Reference for the Steering Group i.e. purpose, scope and sought outputs and outcomes are outlined in **Appendix 1**
- After some discussion and scoping work around assets and background material It was felt that the best way of exploring this was to initially identify 3 key areas of work in each

District by the Members from the Steering Group - these are outlined in detail in **Appendix 2**. The three in each District were ranked and it was agreed that the priority was given to Balsall Heath in Hall Green District and Selly Oak Library and Heritage Quarter in Selly Oak District. Unfortunately due to time constraints and diminishing officer capacity due to main personnel leaving the bulk of work has concentrated on the first two priorities.

- The propositions of the in-depth work in both Balsall Heath and Selly Oak Library and Heritage Quarter have been developed over the last 6-9 months by local community stakeholders, supported and enabled by the Steering Group Members and Officers through a series of workshops and meetings. These propositions are outlined in **Appendix 3 and 4** and there will also be a verbal presentation today on the Balsall Heath Community Led Housing proposition.
- In addition to the individual local streams of work it was felt to be really important to hold citywide conversation workshops on Connecting Communities and Assets. These were held on 12 July in the morning and afternoon around the themes of “**Creative ideas and approaches for connecting communities and assets – practical and pragmatic blue sky thinking**” in the morning and in the afternoon “**How we can support and invest in creative ideas and approaches to make them happen – different ways of financially investing in assets, as well the important role of communities in making good ideas and projects happen**”. The information on the Workshops, attendees and write up and recommendations of the conversations are attached in **Appendix 5**

What next

- 2 key propositions have been developed from the priority local work – streams in Balsall Heath and Selly Oak and now need to be taken forward.
- Key messages from the workshops held on 12 July on things Birmingham City Council can do, things others can do and things that can be done in partnership as outlined in **Appendix 5** to be taken forward to key decision makers and relevant strategic development groups i.e. the Community Property Strategy group and the City Property Board.
- The pilot was always seen as a learning process so it would be beneficial to share those lessons learnt from both the specific work streams and the asset based process plus the Workshop key messages with others – councillors, officers, partners and citizens.

Karen Cheney

Head of Service -Neighbourhood Development and Support Unit