

SUBJECT: SINCIL BANK REVIEW OF ACTIVITY

DIRECTORATE: HOUSING & INVESTMENT

REPORT AUTHOR: PAUL CARRICK

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Performance Scrutiny Committee on the interventions delivered in Sincil Bank over the past twelve months

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 On an annual basis a report on the progress of projects developed in Sincil Bank are provided to Performance Scrutiny Committee. This report outlines the work to date and gives an insight into the priorities for 2020.

3. Background

- 3.1 Following on from the review of Neighbourhood Working, Executive agreed a model that would see remaining staff focus on the Sincil Bank area.

To inform the direction of the team, a Place Shaping Strategy was commissioned and subsequently delivered by Open Plan. Work on the delivery of the Place Shaping has been delivered over the past two years. During 2018/19, the focus has been on establish a base within the community to enable the team to build positive relationships and trust within the community.

- 3.2 For the purpose of discussion this would be the descriptor of the vision of how the area would be described in 2025

“Sincil Bank is a vibrant and diverse village in the city. A community where residents have access to a range of opportunities in training, skills and employment. Where they have homes and an environment they are proud of and meets their needs” OpenPLAN April 2017

- 3.3 The strategy for delivering this vision is then based around delivering projects and initiatives along themed areas, creating and enhancing links to services and work carried out in the area across the council, by its partners and third party organisations, existing or emerging within Sincil Bank. As agreed at the SRG on 07 October 2019 these are:

- Streets for People & Gateways
- Greening
- Community Hubs
- Skills & Enterprise
- Homes

4. Delivery Themes

4.1 Streets for People & Gateways

The Place Shaping Strategy recommended that streets throughout Sincil Bank should be:

- Safe
- Clean
- Social
- Green

To achieve this, the followings interventions have been developed:

- Place Based Social Action – Support was given to Lincoln City Foundation to attract an investment of £360k over a six year period (upto March 2025). This will see a team of Community Organisers employed to support the community to affect change in their area. The delivery of this project within the strategy theme is to make the area safer and sociable by enabling residents to engage in their area. It is proposed that the Neighbourhood Team continue to offer support to this programme for the duration of the project, further milestones will be set towards the end of 2019.
- CCTV - An initial scheme was piloted on Hermit Street, this has seen the eradication of fly tipping in one of the area's most notorious hot spots. This scheme will be led by Community Services with capital funding solutions to be identified by the Neighbourhood Team. It is anticipated that this work will be completed during 2020. The outcome will be to create cleaner, safer streets.
- Residents Parking - Sincil Bank residents have voted in favour of implementing a resident parking scheme. The outcome of this scheme would be to contribute to the alleviation of traffic issues. Opportunist parking by visitors to the city creates additional traffic movement in the area as well as creating parking issues for residents. Reducing traffic in the area will contribute to a cleaner, safer and potentially more sociable area. The proposal will then need to be formally agreed by LCC. If approved, it is likely that will scheme will be delivered by Summer 2020
- Residents Parking (Phase two) - The scheme only covers certain parts of the neighbourhood, the impact on the rest of the area will be reviewed following implementation.
- Highways - Alongside the implementation of Residents Parking, work is ongoing with LCC to deliver solutions to the complicated traffic management in the area. An initial study has taken place, the next phase will see further urban design work taking place, this requires costing and for the various funding to be sought. Depending on the outcome of the various studies and funding being in place, initial indications from highways are that any interventions are not likely to be delivered until 2023/24.
- Heritage England have awarded £1.75m over four years to develop the Heritage Action Zone, this programme consists of support to shops on the lower high street. This will provide stronger gateways into the area lifting the appearance and appeal of the area. Heritage England require evidence of strong community involvement throughout, this will be provided by the

Neighbourhood Team, an initial meeting was convened to raise awareness of the HAZ, this was well attended by members of the community. Further milestones will be set during 2020.

- Street Cleansing - significant on going work by Steve Bird and his team will continue in the short term to enhance the look and the feel of the area these include:-
 - Additional 240 litre bins deployed for Football Match day Bins
 - Liaison with Hermit Street development team to help design the future of waste management in the area
 - Increased monitoring of the areas bin collections
 - Daily litter picks in the area continue to take place
 - Three routine patrols for fly tipping now take place each week.

4.2 Greening

It is essential that some colour is introduced to the streets of Sincil Bank, the Place Shaping Strategy stated:

“Too much of life in Sincil Bank is played out against a harsh setting of unrelieved brick, concrete and tarmac”.

To address this, work has commenced to transform the existing spaces owned by the Council:

St Andrews Close – During 2019, funding was secured from MCHLG to develop a Pocket Park. This will deliver improvements to an area which is fenced off and inaccessible to the public. The aim is to bring it into use as an area for residents to socialise and enjoy. This will be delivered and managed by Sincil Bank Community Land Trust (CLT) who are currently working on the initial designs for the area. It is anticipated that this project will be delivered by early 2020.

Other council owned open spaces areas on Chelmsford Street and Archer Street pose particular challenges as for many years they have deteriorated and become hot spots for fly tipping. The potential success of the St Andrews Close scheme may be an option to deliver further open space improvements through the CLT or other partner organisations including Green Synergy.

In addition work through the Homes theme will include opportunities to create attractive green space within housing and in the area, specifically in emerging proposals for the Hermit Street and Palmer Street Garage sites.(See later paragraphs)

4.3 Community Hubs

The Neighbourhood Team moved into the Portland Street Hub on the 21st December 2018, during this period, the office has attracted approximately 1600 visitors, many seeking advice and guidance. This has proved to be a great way of engaging with the community and has assisted the team in understanding the many complex issues faced by residents living in the area. In addition a number of partners have utilised the Hub to deliver outreach sessions, these include P3 and Welfare Advice. During 2020, Housing Solutions will pilot an outreach

surgery.

Initially, a lease was agreed with LCC for the team to occupy the building until May 2021, as a result the council made the decision to renovate the ground floor only. Recently LCC have agreed to extend this lease to 2025, this opens up the opportunity to invest in developing the first floor of the building. In addition LCC have further commercial properties on Portland Street for third sector use or as part of wider consultation space. There are a range of existing buildings owned by LCC as a potential for the court extension. Depending on their future plans for expansion there is an opportunity for community development and delivery in this area.

The extension to 2025 would allow for expansion of delivery from the hub either through council staff or by use by the community. This would create an opportunity to contribute to the points raised in 2.5 above, for example:-

- The neighbourhood team could continue to be based from the first floor of the building and continuing to provide advice and guidance to the community, providing a point of contact to our services, which the community groups cannot currently provide.
- Community groups such as the Land Trust, Maze Matters and a Bulgarian Community Group could then be co-located utilising the first floor of the building. This could potentially include the Neighbourhood Team moving out in time.

Alongside the development of Sincil Bank Community Hub, support has been given to Bridge Church who will have a presence in the area for many years to come. The support has focused on the development of a Mental Health Hub and identifying creative ways to engage with families in the area. The Council has supported the refurbishment of the Church buildings by providing kitchen facilities via the Community Fund. The project team hope to extend this to the provision of showering facilities in the near future.

4.4 Skills & Enterprise

Alongside the physical regeneration, work is required to improve the capacity of local residents. External funding sources (MCHLG's Controlling Migration Fund) have allowed us to commission a third sector partner organisation to employ a coach/mentor to support local residents. The impact summary produced at the end of this programme will assist us in identifying local needs and provide evidence to develop further programmes in the area.

The Place Based Social Action project has supported local residents to take action in their area. In the first year of this programme, activities have focused on residents delivering projects to improve the physical appearance of their area. As this work develops and confidence of residents improve, there will be an aspiration to develop longer-term resident led improvements, this may include the development of community business.

Via the networks of the Neighbourhood Team, Abbey Access Training have been connected to a local organisation based on Portland Street. During November a

funding application was submitted that will see the upstairs of the former Co-op funeral parlour developed as a venue to deliver Construction Training. This outcome of this application will be known by the end of December 2019.

Further initiatives are required within this theme to create a greater impact. As a council, creating opportunities for residents to increase skills can form a part of delivering what the community cannot do. This could include our emerging delivery of opportunities through the 'world of work'.

Additional Council led initiatives in the area include: -

- Significant investment in a commercial opportunity that led to the development of a new Travel Lodge facility in the adjacent area creating employment opportunities in the area. It is hoped that this type of initiative will continue, for example the proposals for investment in the Hermit street could bring opportunities for employment in the area.
- Enhanced working relations with colleagues at LCC have enabled discussed to take place about a number of, potentially surplus, public sector buildings in the area, which could again provide opportunities around skills and employment.

4.5 Homes

Whilst there are a range of private rented, owner occupier and social houses within the area there remains a continued demand for homes. There are a predominance of one bedroom flats in the council owned homes and there are a large number of shared private rented houses. We have conducted a city wide housing needs survey to underpin proposals for new housing. There are a number of opportunities in Sincil Bank for new homes. These can generate interest and aspiration to move to and remain in the area by delivering high quality alternatives to existing provision and where required renovating and remodelling existing homes to create a more balanced offer of homes.

Hermit Street – The council have appointed experienced architects to explore options on remodelling the Hermit Street area, including the council garages, existing flats and communal (potentially green) areas. This is to address long standing issues of ASB and criminal activity, there is also a need for family accommodation to assist in developing a cohesive community. The Neighbourhood Team will work closely with the community to ensure that they directly influence suggested proposals. This initial study will be completed during early 2020, further milestones will be set following on from the completion of the study. This is a significant project that will cut across the themed areas as it provides homes, greening the area and contributes to streets for people.

Palmer Street Garage site – Following on from the study of Hermit Street, work will commence to identify sustainable alternative uses for the garage site. The Palmer Street site is a great opportunity to provide a high quality development showing what the council can do in terms of environmental standards and leading by example. The site is in the area which is most effected by commuter opportunist parking. Further disruption in the area at this time might have a considerable impact on existing residents. Once the proposed resident parking scheme has

taken hold it is hoped there will be a reduction in disruption. Work on exploring the options is likely to commence during late 2020.

Sincil Community Land Trust – Support has been given to the creation of the Land Trust. An initial grant of £25,500 has been awarded from MCHLG to develop a former play area as a social space. A further application has been made to Homes England to develop the capacity of the group. This grant will enable the group to explore the viability of purchasing three properties in the Sincil Bank area including the purchase of empty homes. Support to the group will be ongoing for the duration of the project; the Council's Acquisition Policy (recently approved by the Exec) gives the option to transfer RTB receipts to the CLT to enable further property purchases if appropriate.

Additional Council led initiatives in the area: -

- Empty Homes - Work has been carried out by our private sector empty homes officer and there has been a range of successes in bringing property back into use. The problem continues, however as new homes begin to fall into the category of long term empty. As a council, the HRA can support the private sector team by using its ability to purchase properties, supported by the use of 1for1 RTB receipts.
- Housing Standards – The Private Sector Housing team have focussed and will continue to do so, on driving up private sector housing standards in the area. Significant enforcement action has been undertaken and the team will continue to have a focus in the Sincil Bank area.
- Investing in our Homes – We will continue to improve our delivery on the estates and areas we manage, ensuring that the communal areas are kept clean and safe, the grounds surrounding our homes are managed and where required proposals for improvements will be brought forward. Additional resources from Tenancy Services will be continued to be deployed in the area, this will hopefully improve issues such as ASB.

6. Performance Indicators (appendix a) & Project Monitoring Table (appendix b)

A set of performance indicators have been developed for key interventions in Sincil Bank. A list of these indicators are included in appendix a).

The Project Monitoring Table provides an overview of the current and live projects developed in the area. This table is attached to this report as appendix b)

7. Strategic Priorities

- 7.1 The work in Sincil Bank cuts across the key strategic priorities, regular reports are received by the Reducing Inequality and Remarkable Place Vision Group, whose remit is to ensure the delivery of this strategic priorities.

8. Organisational Impacts

- 8.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

8.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

There are no E&D implications arising from this report.

9. Risk Implications

9.1 Options Explored – Not applicable.

Key risks associated with the preferred approach – Not applicable.

10. Recommendation

10.1 To consider the progress of the project to Revitalise Sincil Bank.

Is this a key decision? No

Do the exempt information categories apply? No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply? No

How many appendices does the report contain? Two

List of Background Papers: None

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