

Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

Report to: Executive – 8 February 2017

Subject: Piccadilly Gardens

Report of: The Chief Executive

Summary

This report informs the Executive of the outcome of a public consultation exercise undertaken jointly with Legal & General, on proposed public realm enhancements within Piccadilly Gardens. The report also seeks the Executive's approval and endorsement of the outline proposals, to enable the preparation of a planning application.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- I. Note the consultation comments and responses to the Legal and General proposals for public realm enhancements, and approve the further development of the outline proposals leading to the submission of a planning application.
 - II. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive and the Head of Development, Strategic Development, in consultation with the Leader and the Executive Member for Finance and Human Resources, to finalise the terms and conditions of:
 - a) an Agreement for the grant of a new lease of the Piccadilly Pavilion, and
 - b) a new pavilion Lease, and
 - c) an Agreement for the delivery of the proposed public realm works, and
 - d) all other associated documents.
 - III Authorise the City Solicitor to conclude and enter into such agreements necessary to give effect to the above recommendations.
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Wards Affected

City Centre

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
<p>A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities</p>	<p>Public realm within the city centre plays a key role in delivering the vision and objectives of Manchester as a world class city to live, work and visit. Investment and maintenance of public spaces helps to create neighbourhoods of choice and enhances the city's image.</p> <p>Improving Piccadilly Gardens and adding new amenities will increase the desirability of the area and encourage visitors to spend more dwell time there. As one of the city's highest footfall areas, the proposals contain a strategy to deliver the ongoing and future maintenance of the public realm, which will ensure the long term success of the gardens as a key public space.</p>
<p>A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success</p>	<p>The investment and refresh of Piccadilly Gardens will serve as a catalyst for future investment across the wider Piccadilly area, and contribute towards the economic success of the city centre.</p> <p>Promoting new development within the hospitality, commercial, leisure and retail sectors within close proximity to Piccadilly Gardens will provide an increased number of employment opportunities.</p> <p>High quality public realm is an essential element of the place making strategy for the Piccadilly area, to ensure it is a desirable neighbourhood to live, work and visit.</p>
<p>A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities</p>	<p>A primary focus in the city centre is to ensure the provision of sustainable world class public realm. The proposals for Piccadilly Gardens are aligned with and complement development at adjacent city centre neighbourhoods.</p> <p>The improved public realm delivered through the proposals will improve linkages and access to key city centre leisure and tourist attractions, including the city's retail core and Town Hall Complex. The provision of new restaurant units within the gardens will provide new business and job opportunities for residents of the city.</p>
<p>A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work</p>	<p>The scheme proposals will deliver a desirable space to visit and dwell. This includes the enhancement of the area's green space, new trees and planting and additional amenities for families, residents, workers and visitors to the city centre.</p>

<p>A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth</p>	<p>Piccadilly Gardens is positioned at the heart of the city centre and benefits from excellent connectivity. The area's location, adjacent to key bus, tram and rail hubs contributes towards making the gardens the city centre's most used area of public realm.</p> <p>The proposals prioritise pedestrian use and the delivery of improved pedestrian connectivity. This will provide residents, commuters and visitors with improved linkages to surrounding city centre neighbourhoods and city centre districts in addition to enhancing the experience within the gardens. The refreshed public space and additional amenities will serve to improve the environment of this part of the city centre.</p>
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Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

The annual estimated maintenance costs for the gardens are currently in excess of £100,000. Without taking action to refurbish and refresh the existing public realm these costs will increase year on year. It is proposed to introduce new advertising screens as part of the proposed scheme, with the Council receiving any income generated by the screens which can be used to offset future maintenance costs. The income generated from the proposed advertising is likely to be in excess of £50,000 per annum. In the period following any capital investment the annual maintenance costs will be significantly reduced.

Financial Consequences – Capital

The proposals for the Pavilion have been subject to consultation and the works would be undertaken by Legal and General at their cost, which is estimated to be in excess of £8 million. Improvements to the public realm have also been subject to consultation and have been valued at £2 million which will be included in the capital budget. The profile for 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 will be clarified as the design is progressed. The land required for the new Pavilion buildings will be leased by the City Council to Legal and General and the capital receipt of £1.3 million will be invested into the public realm works, together with an additional external contribution of £700,000 from Legal and General.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Report by FSP Retail Business Consultants – October 2016
- Environmental Security Review by Greater Manchester Police – 29th December 2015
- Landscaping Plan by LDA design Consulting Ltd.- 18th October 2016
- Report to Executive – Piccadilly Gardens – 16 November 2017
- Statement of Community Engagement – January 2017

All held in Room 303, Town Hall

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On the 16 November 2016, the Executive noted proposed draft changes to Piccadilly Gardens. These proposals focused on enhancing the public realm, and also included the replacement of the existing Pavilion building and wall, in order to improve the quality and safety of a significant public space and complement development in the wider area.
- 1.2 The Executive requested that officers, working with Legal and General, undertake a public consultation exercise in relation to these proposals. This report summarises the outcome of the public consultation.

2.0 Consultation process

- 2.1 The Piccadilly Gardens consultation was undertaken using a variety of methodologies. This included a three day exhibition event, dedicated website as well as social media and press media campaigns.
- 2.2 A dedicated consultation website; www.piccadilly-gardens.co.uk, was created to inform the public exhibition. The site advised people about the proposals and the dates of the exhibition, and provided the opportunity for users to submit their feedback online.
- 2.3 Prior to the consultation events, a media briefing was held with the Manchester Evening News, who subsequently published details of both the proposals and planned consultation programme. This was supported by a wider press release prior to the consultation.
- 2.4 In total, there were 33 pieces of press coverage relating to the proposal and the public exhibition. This included stories in the Manchester Evening News, BBC online, ITV online and Place North West. These articles reached a total of 9,864,825 readers and achieved an advertising value equivalent of £103,310.
- 2.5 The Council's Facebook page and Twitter feed (99,000 followers) promoted the date, time and location of the exhibition, along with links to the consultation microsite. A calendar of posts was scheduled with the Council's digital team, which ran for the 10 days leading up to the exhibition, during the exhibition and until the consultation closed on the 23 December.
- 2.6 The exhibition events were held over three consecutive days between the 1st – 3rd of December. The event on 1 December 2016 was a stakeholder session, allowing city centre partners and Councillors to view and comment on proposals. This was followed on the 2 and 3 of December by two public exhibitions open to all attendees. These sessions were scheduled for Friday and Saturday respectively to capture the maximum public engagement, with workers and the business community on the Friday and visitors and shoppers on the Saturday. Sessions on both days ran between 10 am and 4 pm to maximise the opportunities for people to attend.

- 2.7 The public consultation events were hosted in the Media Lounge within Manchester's Town Hall Extension. The venue ensured the sessions were highly accessible by public transport.
- 2.8 Over the three days a total of 285 people attended the consultation sessions, attendance was split as follows:
- Stakeholder pre-view - Thursday 1st December - 25 attendees
 - Public exhibition - Friday 2nd December - 160 attendees
 - Public exhibition - Saturday 3rd December - 100 people
- 2.9 The consultation events were facilitated by City Council officers along with representatives from the project team which included Roland Dransfield PR and Legal and General.
- 2.10 A total of 223 feedback forms were completed in response to the consultation, 109 of which were completed at the exhibition sessions with the remaining 114 via the online feedback function.

3.0 Consultation response

- 3.1 Respondents were asked to answer the following 7 questions relating to the proposals presented for Piccadilly Gardens.
- 70% of respondents were either fully or broadly supportive of the creation of new covered public realm within the gardens, with 22% not supportive of this.
 - 89% of respondents were either fully or broadly supportive of the creation of additional seating within the gardens, with 6% not supportive of this.
 - 89% of respondents were either fully or broadly supportive of the proposed lighting enhancements within the gardens, with 3% not supportive of this.
 - 59% of respondents were either fully or broadly in agreement that the new Pavilion buildings will be an improvement and help to create a better community environment at Piccadilly Gardens, with 29% not supportive of this.
 - 63% of respondents were either fully or broadly supportive of improvements to the gardens being privately funded by Legal & General, with 22% not supportive of this.
 - 54% of respondents were either fully or broadly in agreement that the proposals will be beneficial in reducing anti-social behaviour in the gardens, with 22% not supportive of this.
 - When respondents were asked for their view on the collective proposals for Piccadilly Gardens, 63 % were either fully or broadly supportive, with 26% not supportive of the proposals.

4.0 Additional comments

- 4.1 In addition to responding to the above prescribed questions, the consultation also provided respondents with the opportunity to submit additional comments

relating to the proposals. A number of comments were provided all of which can be categorised into the following areas:

- The consultation process
- Lighting, seating and amenities
- Commercial activity
- Funding and delivery
- Maintenance
- Anti-social behaviour
- Design
- General

The Consultation process

4.2 The following comments were made relating to the consultation and exhibition:

- The exhibition was well presented, clear and concise.
- Only a single option was presented with no alternative proposals to consider.

Lighting, seating and amenities

- 4.3 A number of comments expressed support for the concept of improving lighting within Piccadilly Gardens, stating that additional and enhanced lighting is key to improving safety within the gardens.
- 4.4 A request for sustainable lighting was raised by a single respondent with a second suggesting LED lighting should be used to ensure energy efficiency.
- 4.5 The retention, restoration and use of the fountains within the gardens was praised by a number of respondents. However, in contrast to this view, four comments received stated that the fountain should not benefit from investment but should instead be removed due to concerns about it becoming damaged.
- 4.6 Three responses commented that the children's play area within the gardens should be removed due to its position in the heart of the city centre and its relationship with the wider gardens area. Comparatively, a single comment stated that the play area should be expanded as part of the proposals.
- 4.7 The inclusion of public toilets was requested by two respondents.
- 4.8 A number of respondents praised the enhanced seating offer with two stating that providing better seating will increase the areas suitability for older and disabled people. A single comment was made in relation to the seats included within the proposals lacking arm rests.
- 4.9 The inclusion of cycling provision was welcomed by a single respondent.
- 4.10 A single comment was received stating that no litter bin provision had been included in the proposals presented.

- 4.11 A respondent commented that they felt the proposals should include installing fixed artwork into the gardens.
- 4.12 The creation of a bandstand was requested by a single respondent.
- 4.13 A comment was received suggesting that the area is used to grow vegetables and plants.

Commercial activity

- 4.14 A number of comments received were made in reference to retail space and commercial activity within the proposals, with the views expressed split in favour of and against this aspect of the proposals. The following specific comments were made:
- The proposals will see the provision of restaurants with easy access for people with disabilities.
 - The gardens will provide a suitable setting for a happy place to relax and eat.
 - The expanded offer within the gardens will see the creation of new jobs.
 - The creation of a bar within the setting of the gardens would be enjoyable for those working within the city centre.
 - Allocating space to a gallery rather than further eateries would provide a more balanced mix of uses.
- 4.15 Four respondents expressed a negative view on the proposed electronic advertisements within the gardens. However in contrast, the advertising signage was also referenced as a positive component of the proposals due to its potential to generate funds to maintain the gardens.
- 4.16 A number of responses voiced disappointment that the proposals will see the delivery of increased commercial space. Comments made stated that investment should be made into the gardens and provision of public space rather than commercial buildings. One specific respondent added that litter is an existing problem within the gardens, and increasing the number of outlets would generate more litter.
- 4.17 The desire to see independent and unique businesses occupying the proposed new retail space was expressed by 3 respondents.

Funding and delivery

- 4.18 A single respondent commented that the proposals should be implemented if no public money is required to deliver them. Two responses stated that investment should be made by the Council not Legal & General. One of these responses stated that the investment should not be made by Legal & General due to their commercial focus.

- 4.19 A comment made was supportive of the proposals, stating that the Council should enable Legal & General to speed up their implementation timetable.
- 4.20 A respondent asked if the wall currently in situ within the gardens could be sold as a source of income generation.

Maintenance

- 4.21 A number of comments received referenced maintenance within the gardens. While these responses were generally supportive of the proposals, they were concerned that maintenance would need to be a critical component of the long term success of the gardens.
- 4.22 A concern was raised that without adequate maintenance arrangements in place, any investment would be a waste. Particular reference was made to increasing the frequency of cleansing and maintenance of benches.
- 4.23 A respondent added that allocating a maintenance budget to the gardens will ensure they encouraged increased usage as a tourist attraction, and act as a catalyst for further investment in the area.

Anti-social behaviour

- 4.24 Anti social behaviour was referenced in a number of the comments received. The responses illustrated a split opinion, with a proportion feeling that the proposals would have a positive impact on tackling ASB within the gardens, and others commenting that they would have either a negative or no impact on ASB. The following specific comments were made:
- Measures will be required to prevent skateboarding.
 - Preventative measures will be required to protect the gardens from vandalism.
 - The undercover seating proposed may encourage anti social behaviour.
 - The additional lighting should have a positive impact in relation to tackling any ASB. This along with ensuring tree cover is not excessive, will allow the area to be policed effectively.
 - Implementing CCTV within the gardens would provide security benefits.
- 4.25 A number of respondents suggested increasing the police / security presence within the area on an ongoing basis to tackle ASB.
- 4.26 Two responses specifically referenced the children's play area, with one individual commenting that the area is likely to be vandalised and a second stating that improvements in safety at the playground should be prioritised.

Design

- 4.27 A range of positive comments were received in relation to design aspects of the proposals for the gardens, these included:

- Contemporary designs demonstrate big improvements.
- Seating and raised lawns look impressive.
- Proposals will improve the functionality of the gardens.
- The design will encourage a sense of community.
- A green roof is a good idea and looks great.
- Design proposals are sympathetic with surrounding existing buildings.
- Regeneration will provide an opportunity to promote the high quality building standards.
- The design will bring older people to the gardens especially in summer.

4.28 A number of negative comments and concerns in relation to design aspects of the proposals for the gardens were also made, these included:

- Replacing the gardens with an open paved public square would have been preferable.
- The design lacks community involvement.
- A loss of trees behind the Pavilion building is regrettable.
- Proposed new buildings could be more in keeping with their surroundings.
- The extra grass is a positive feature however this doesn't need to be raised.
- The banks of grass should be further separated into smaller segments.
- Evergreen trees should be used in the gardens to ensure they look vibrant all year round.
- The proposals focus on developing the gardens as green space including more greenery in the form of trees, flowers and shrubbery.
- Adding a new pavilion will make the gardens darker and pose a health and safety risk due to an increase in the volume of pedestrians.
- The design proposals look cluttered and busy.
- One Piccadilly should be demolished.
- The design should take inspiration from the Winter Gardens in Sheffield city centre.
- The proposals should include a hard piazza linking the gardens to City Tower.

4.29 A number of comments agreed with the proposal to remove the wall feature currently in the gardens whilst two respondents felt that the wall should be retained. A separate comment asked if the Council would seek money back that was paid to the designer of the wall.

4.30 Two specific comments were made relating to grass within the gardens, with one respondent suggesting that this should be replaced by wildflower meadows and a second with artificial turf.

General

4.31 A significant proportion of respondents provided support and praise for the plans presented for the gardens. The rationale for this support varied and included the following:

- Will benefit the wider city region.
 - Deliver a significant aesthetic improvement on the current gardens.
 - Position Piccadilly as the centre of Manchester again.
 - Deliver a definite improvement to the present Pavilion building.
 - Improve the image of the gardens.
 - Refresh a tired yet central area of Manchester, breathing new life into this area of the city.
 - Could set a precedent and approach for other areas of the City.
- 4.32 A lesser number of general responses were received in relation to the proposals, providing the following comments:
- The proposals are essentially the same as the current design.
 - The scheme is too large in scale and mundane in design.
 - The plans are underwhelming.
 - The proposals lack vision in comparison to other great European cities.
- 4.33 Age Friendly Manchester Design Group, broadly support the proposals for the gardens, and would like to remain involved as the scheme is taken forward.
- 4.34 Two respondents cite the bus and Metrolink stops as a concern with one stating that the public transport hub should be relocated.
- 4.35 A single response requested that the enhancements proposed facilitate the retention of the memorial plaque and tree dedicated to the victims of the Halabja massacre.
- 4.36 A single response outlines a desire to see creative festivals held in garden.
- 4.37 A comment was submitted suggesting the gardens are renamed Victoria Gardens to mark their Victorian heritage.

5.0 Delivery Arrangements

- 5.1 An agreement for lease (AFL) and lease will be put in place with Legal & General (L&G) for the new Pavilion buildings mirroring the terms of the existing lease (subject to reasonable modification and changes to reflect the transaction). The AFL will contain obligations on the part of L&G to undertake certain works before the granting of the lease. Discussions are taking place with L&G and strategic development, advised by the City Solicitor, regarding the Heads of Terms for the proposed AFL, the lease and the delivery arrangements of the public realm works.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The consultation outcome determined that a majority of those who took part (63%) are supportive of the proposals presented for Piccadilly Gardens, with 23% not supportive of the scheme.

- 6.2 One response suggested that we should be replacing the gardens with an open paved public square. This is not supported given the scarcity of green space in the city centre.
- 6.3 There is considerable support for the overall approach recognising this is a significant public space at the heart of a major transport hub, and the balance of proposals represent a major opportunity to bring long term investment to the gardens, encouraging people to dwell and enjoy the space, and to help deal with a number of the issues raised through the consultation, in particular having a positive impact on anti-social behaviour. The proposals will also help to fund the ongoing maintenance of the gardens.
- 6.4 The consultation exercise indicates considerable support for the overall approach and the balance of the proposals.
- 6.5 The proposals presented are indicative and set out high level development principles. Specific detail will be provided as a planning application is developed.
- 6.6 A number of the comments received relate to detailed aspects of the proposal. The feedback that has been provided and summarised within this report will be used by the project team to inform the detailed planning proposals.
- 6.7 Any proposal that is submitted as a planning application will be subject to further public consultation at that time, which will enable further comments to be submitted on the detailed aspects of the scheme.
- 6.8 Concerns raised relating to maintenance are addressed by the Council's intention to invest income generated from the scheme's advertising screens into the ongoing maintenance of the public realm. Using this income, a comprehensive maintenance strategy will be developed and put in place to ensure the continued maintenance of the gardens.
- 6.9 A strategy for maintenance within the gardens is essential. As one of the city centres's most well used public spaces, approximately 310,000 people pass through the gardens on a weekly basis. In addition to this, during the summer months they are a popular place to visit and spend time for visitors, residents and those working in the city centre. As such well used public space the gardens require a high level of continued maintenance and management.
- 6.10 The proposals will be further developed in consultation with the Council's neighbourhood delivery team and Greater Manchester Police, to ensure the creation public realm space that maximises functionality whilst minimising scope for anti-social behaviour.

7.0 Contributing to the Manchester Strategy

(a) A thriving and sustainable city

- 7.1 Public realm within the city centre plays a key role in delivering the vision and objectives of Manchester as a world class city to live, work and visit. Investment and maintenance of public spaces helps to create neighbourhoods of choice and enhances the city's image.

Improving Piccadilly Gardens and adding new amenities will increase the desirability of the area and encourage visitors to spend more dwell time there. As one of the city's highest footfall areas, the proposals contain a strategy to deliver the ongoing and future maintenance of the public realm, which will ensure the long term success of the gardens as a key public space.

(b) A highly skilled city

- 7.2 The investment and refresh of Piccadilly Gardens will serve as a catalyst for future investment across the wider Piccadilly area, and contribute towards the economic success of the city centre.

Promoting new development within the hospitality, commercial, leisure and retail sectors within close proximity to Piccadilly Gardens will provide an increased number of employment opportunities.

High quality public realm is an essential element of the place making strategy for the Piccadilly area, to ensure it is a desirable neighbourhood to live, work and visit.

(c) A progressive and equitable city

- 7.3 A primary focus in the city centre is to ensure the provision of sustainable world class public realm. The proposals for Piccadilly Gardens are aligned with and complement development at adjacent city centre neighbourhoods.

The improved public realm delivered through the proposals will improve linkages and access to key city centre leisure and tourist attractions, including the city's retail core and Town Hall Complex. The provision of new restaurant units within the gardens will provide new business and job opportunities for residents of the city.

(d) A liveable and low carbon city

- 7.4 The scheme proposals will deliver a desirable space to visit and dwell. This includes the enhancement of the area's green space, new trees and planting and additional amenities for families, residents, workers and visitors to the city centre.

(e) A connected city

- 7.5 Piccadilly Gardens is positioned at the heart of the city centre and benefits from excellent connectivity. The area's location, adjacent to key bus, tram and rail hubs contributes towards making the gardens the city centre's most used area of public realm.

The proposals prioritise pedestrian use and the delivery of improved pedestrian connectivity. This will provide residents, commuters and visitors with improved linkages to surrounding city centre neighbourhoods and city centre districts in addition to enhancing the experience within the gardens. The refreshed public space and additional amenities will serve to improve the environment of this part of the city centre.

8.0 Key Policies and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

- 8.1 The proposals are aimed at enhancing the connections from Piccadilly Station, to other areas of the city centre, enabling better access to commercial and leisure attractions and job opportunities for all people.

(b) Risk Management

- 8.2 Risk management is a key consideration in the process and officers will work with Internal Audit to develop an active Risk Register which will be fully monitored and managed throughout the process.

(c) Legal Considerations

- 8.3 Legal Services will continue to support the project team to ensure delivery of the proposals in such a way as to comply with all legislative requirements and minimise risks to the Council.