

Future Oswestry – 4th of July 2019, 2pm
Oswestry Town Council, Council Chamber

Attendees:

Cllr Steve Charmley (Shropshire Council) Cllr Robert Macey (Shropshire Council),
Cllr Chris Schofield (Town Council) Cllr Sandy Best (Town Council and retired Mayor)
Adele Nightingale (BID) Arren Roberts (OTC) Joe Bubb, Hayley Owen and Corrie Davies
(SC Economic Growth); Ian Follington (BID)

1. Welcome and introductions provided by Cllr Steve Charmley Chair outlining the agenda for discussion.

2. Apologies: Cllr Chris Schofield (Town Council) Kevin Aitken (SC Traffic regulations)

3. Notes of the last meeting

The notes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. Matters arising would be picked up through agenda items.

4. Declarations of interest

Cllr Steve Charmley asked that any declarations of interest be noted during the meeting. Hayley noted interest regarding Festival Square.

5. Priority Projects

Joe updated that the list of priorities shared previously had been slimmed down, based on information shared at the last meeting. Any references to the three main priority areas had now been grouped for the further consideration of the group, with remaining areas listed for further discussion at a later stage.

a) Empty Properties and Business Support

Ian updated on the officer meeting held with Emma Smith at Shropshire Council. Emma would be looking to prioritise Oswestry for high street survey work and would share dates in due course and update Market Town Report. Corrie noted that this had been agreed as a joint piece of work with the BID in terms of foot work. The BID are in the process of taking out a licence for GOAD maps which would allow them access to data, trends and patterns relating to the town going back to 2007. BID would share any information when available. Arren had a work experience student who had recorded a list of active shops and their purpose. This would add to the layering of information generally available to the group for future work. Photographic evidence on top of this would add to the portfolio of information. Cllr Best noted the group needed to add reasons as to why the properties might be empty about their position, facts, history etc.

b) Festival Square

Cllr Robert Macey had suggested the ability to tag events within the space to existing scheduled activity. Arren updated that they had hoped to link to the Food Festival but given the tight timescales it wasn't possible to alter details this year. The group discussed ideas to test through pop up event. Discussed ideas with the BID to lead. Date to be determined. Cllr Best raised enquiries from Gillham's. Corrie and Joe to email Zoe Mortimer about use

of the space for free on this day. Food stalls would need trading licenses so will not be included within this trial.

c) Traffic Regulations

Kevin Aitken had sent his apologies for this meeting. Issues to be discussed a meeting with Kevin include:

- Traffic regulation review to determine if there are any flexibilities and if Oswestry Town Council could take on a role.
- Wider traffic flow around the town.
- Ticketing, clear signage and enforcement
- Options for one-way system
- Upper Brook Street (within Place Plan)

Kevin had updated that he was in discussion with Paul Milner regarding ward issues to bring to OTC attention. The BID had prepared a business questionnaire seeking business feedback on traffic issues. Arren expressed that this needed to run parallel with resident concerns. Adele to circulate the survey to the group. Police event on the 10th of July 2.30-4.30 at Qube. BID would look to circulate to businesses. BID are prepared to pay for a wayfinding strategy to include a key workshop with stakeholders if SC and OTC offer in principle support to consider implementation of its findings.

6. Hot topics

Local Economic Growth Strategies

Hayley updated that following previous work and workshop the draft LEGS were due to be circulated back out to the Town Council and Future Oswestry Group for comment for 4 weeks. This would be followed by a further period of consultation on the website. The projects entailed within this linked to strategic ambitions around the growth corridor. Hayley and Ian raised links to the LEP and aspirations associated with the Growth Deal.

Heritage Action Zones

Hayley updated that Andy Wigley in the Historic Environment Team was leading on a bid for Heritage Action Zone funding. The timescales were incredibly tight and as yet the team were unsure as to whether they would be able to work up two bids in time for deadline on the 12th of July with only two officers working on it. Corrie suggested that if they did they would need supporting letters from representatives. Joe would look to see which aspirations from the FHSF bid could be included. Cllr Sandy Best expressed interest in this work with her historic knowledge. She raised the appearance of guttering, roofs, chimneys and window sills in the town generally, which left the town feeling uncared for. Arren noted the reference in the public realm strategy to re-positioning of the castle area in conjunction with Bailey Head and concerns about the repairs required for the Information and Exhibition Centre

Cross Street and Bailey Head

Hayley updated that she had seen this as a key location. The group discussed the market hall as there was a feeling that the closed shutters on non-operational days gave a feeling of the town being closed to business. Arren noted that he was mindful of the feasibility study due and he would feed back further upon that piece of work being carried out.

North Gateway Opportunities

Hayley referenced the Morrisons site and recent discussions regarding Cambrian Railway. Adele asked for follow up with Mark Barrow on dates and feasibility study discussed at recent meeting. Cllr Robert Macey noted links to Selattyn and Gobowen Parish Council.

7. Officer updates

Street Signing cleaning

Following the issue being raised by the BID, Shropshire Council's teams had responded and cleaning of signage had commenced. BID noted that they had also had the OBC maps in and around the town updated in conjunction with OBT and OTC.

Public Protection

Corrie noted that Andy Wigley had raised that public protection were in discussion internally regarding empty properties and their role in supporting, dependent on resources to build case files on key strategic buildings that remained an issue. Corrie suggested it would be useful for a member of the team to attend a meeting in due course, when further confirmations available.

8. Communications Protocol and PR update

Joe noted there were points relating to the comms protocol awaiting feedback by key representatives. Corrie to resend the email to reps. The group suggested a piece of PR that looked at empty properties (survey work due) and street signage in first instance, then pop up space tester when details are available.

9. Agreeing next steps

Action: Adele to circulate business survey to the group

Action: Joe/Corrie to seek confirmation on permissions for festival square on the 10th of August with Zoe Mortimer

Action: Adele to co-ordinate pop up event in Festival Square to test

Action: Corrie to resend email in relation to comms protocol request

Action: Gareth to prepare press release in relation to survey work on high street and pop up event when confirmed

Action: Emma to confirm dates for high street survey work in due course

Action: Joe/ Corrie to confirm Kevin Aitken and representatives to talk at the next meeting in August.

10. Any other business

Ian raised point of dealing with hand-over of OBC assets that would continue to be a problem. Arren updated on conditions report regarding street lighting and would feedback on this in due course.

11. Date of next meetings

13th of August 11.30pm, 12th of September 2pm, 10th of October 2pm, 7th of November 2pm, 5th of December 2pm