

Future Oswestry Group

Notes of Meeting Wednesday 18th December at 9:30am-11:30am at Oswestry Guildhall

Partners	Oswestry Town Council (OTC)	Shropshire Council (SC)	Oswestry BID	Community Representative
Welcome and apologies	James Owen Arren Roberts Apologies: Duncan Kerr & Olly Rose	Robert Macey Chris Schofield Andy Wigley Joe Bubb Apologies: Sam Jones	Adele Nightingale Apologies: Graeme Kirkham	Graham Mitchell
1. Notes of the last meeting	Notes of meeting 10 th October 2024 agreed.			
2. Declarations of interest	None			
3.	Presentation on Depave Demonstrator project to be postponed until future FOG meeting. Discussed opportunities for greening up verges and islands – JB and AN to discuss with Kat at SWT.			
4. Project priorities	Updates on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regal Kinokulture re-opening in March. OTC interest in Regal to be discussed in the new year. Cambrian Gateway Comms piece on the Cambrian Building is imminent. Short term activity – tidy up bus station Question asked about vegetation around the Range and who is responsible. If it is managed by SC could partners deliver maintenance? Also are monies from bus operators paid to maintain bus station or for other items? JB to check.			
5. Governance	Matters Arising: It was suggested that the MOU sign off be put back until after the local election. All agreed.			
6. Update from Shropshire Council's Property and Development Team	Matters Arising: Interest expressed by OTC in acquiring sites is to be considered by SC Portfolio Holders. Visit to be arranged to Castle Court with AR. RM to be invited.			
7. Update from Oswestry Town Council	Update from Arren Roberts: OTC looking to establish ownership of alley adjacent to Sports Direct. The next round of grants has been agreed for 4 businesses. A total of 35 Expressions of interest were received. The Lottery grant application for Llywd Mansion has been submitted. The Cross has been re-installed.			
8. Update from BID	Matters Arising: <i>Planters to be delivered.</i> Update from Adele Nightingale: Planters have been installed and planted up on Willow Street and Central Car Park at rear of toilet block. Looking at potential locations within town centre for remaining planters. Possibly Bailey Head or next to Aldi. JB to check ownership of area by Aldi. BID has shared photos of shops in potential breach of planning / conservation including lighting and signage. Discussed enforcement issues. The Oswestry Shop Front Design Guide will serve as a practical resource for those considering development proposals. Following the advice in the guide, should facilitate a smoother planning process. Shop front design code consultation is ongoing with drop in event arranged for 15 th January.			

	BID Pub Watch meetings with Police in attendance are being well attended.
9. Update from Shropshire Council	<p>High street rental auctions: Non-statutory guidance - GOV.UK New permissive power to Councils to take action by facilitating auctioning off leases for commercial buildings such as retail, pubs and commercial units (with some restrictions such as buildings with significant repairs required and department stores) that have been vacant for long periods. Four Local Authorities have been announced as early adopters so there will be lessons learnt on resourcing implications for LAs and impact.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to review this power and lessons learnt from the early adopters.</p> <p>Also, recent report produced which may be of interest Look beyond retail to reverse high street decline, says new Lords report - Committees - UK Parliament</p> <p>Discussed strengthening the Market offer in the northern Market Towns. Work is ongoing between the Town Councils.</p> <p>Sam is chasing the clock.</p> <p>Residents parking - this is still being drafted and any policy confirmation or changes are yet to be discussed</p> <p>RM is chasing a date for bollards on Clawdd Du to be installed to be confirmed</p> <p>School Streets sign has been changed.</p> <p>Motion agreed at Shropshire Council (as supported by the BID and OTC) against the possible closure of the Oswestry Post Office.</p>
10. Update on Comms	<p>OTC comms re the new clock on the Market Hall and improved accessibility.</p> <p>BID newsletters have been sent out.</p> <p>Positive comms on Cambrian Railway building on work undertaken to date.</p> <p>Comms on Design Guide consultation.</p> <p>Views sought about new Oswestry shop front design guide - Shropshire Council Newsroom</p> <p>Oswestry High Street Heritage Zone Shropshire Council</p> <p>Oswestry Shop Front design guide consultation Shropshire Council</p> <p>News articles</p> <p>Ten schools first in Shropshire to apply for national active travel accreditation - Shropshire Council Newsroom</p> <p>Improvements to Oswestry's Unicorn Road recreation ground to be carried out - Shropshire Council Newsroom</p> <p>New additional bus service added in Oswestry - Shropshire Council Newsroom</p> <p>Oswestry Borderland Tourism has been awarded the Kings Award – all agreed that the award was well deserved.</p>
9. Engagement	Design Guide – Update on planned consultation to run online from 2 nd December 2024 until 24 th January 2025. Drop in event arranged at Memorial Hall on 15 th January from 3.00pm to 6.00pm. AN to promote to agents and landlords.
10. Date of next meeting and agenda items	<p>Thursday 6th February at 9.30am Presentation on Depave Project (to be confirmed) and update on the Greenways Project</p> <p>Thursday 20th March at 9.30am to be postponed (election period) however officers to meet to progress outstanding items.</p> <p>Thursday 3rd July at 9.30am to be confirmed</p>