

Future Oswestry – 12th September 2019 2.30pm
Oswestry Town Council, Council Chamber

Attendees:

Cllr Steve Charmley (Shropshire Council), Cllr Sandy Best (Town Council and retired Mayor), Arren Roberts (OTC) Joe Bubb, Hayley Owen and Julie Ruler (SC Economic Growth) Cllr Robert Macey (Shropshire Council), Lindsey Pierce (BID)

Apologies: Cllr Chris Schofield (Town Council) Adele Nightingale (BID) Coralee Standish
Ian Follington (BID)

1. Welcome and introductions provided by Cllr Steve Charmley

2. 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.

3. Declarations of interest

Cllr Steve Charmley asked that any declarations of interest be noted during the meeting. None declared.

4. Priority Projects

LEP funding has been secured to undertake a refresh of the masterplan for the Innovation Park and a ground conditions survey of land owned by the Council at Park Hall. Further development appraisal work will be undertaken for the wider growth corridor to be funded through the One Public Estate programme funding. The group want regular reports on the progress.

A 'package' of an offer exploring the vision e.g. "Invest in Oswestry" was agreed as a possible joint project for all partners. Arren Roberts agreed to ask for Oswestry Town Council agreement in principal. All agreed that having an officer knowing and doing something about empty shop facilities as they become vacant would support the town centre. This could be facilitated from funding when secured. Also case studies to demonstrate success would be a way forward.

5. Hot topics

Empty Properties and Business Support

Oswestry's High Street survey work has been completed. Emma Smith is working on collating this to feed into the Market Towns Survey. The results of the survey are available and considered a work in progress and will be available at the next meeting. An officer meeting with Ruth Hitchen invited from the conservation team.

Festival Square

Saturday 26th October – Halloween weekend and Saturday BID to co-ordinate the activities the town retailers are dressing their windows. Events insurance has been arranged. Lindsey Pierce of BID is meeting with David Clough of OTC has a Halloween market – activities for children to tie up to compliment this.

Traffic Order Review

Kevin Aitken has met with Arren Roberts OTC and he will need guidance from the FOG and he highlighted a need to be involved in the process. FOG acknowledged there is a need for a formal piece of work in order to consider the correct parking (disabled parking / loading / signage etc) in place. There is a SC meeting scheduled with Steve Davenport, Steve Brown on traffic regulations

Wifi in Town

Comments have been fed to Chris Taylor and he has suggested that details of not spots be recorded and he can take up to offer solutions.

Local Economic Growth Strategies

It was reported that a suite of documents have been prepared and these will be passed via Steve Charmley for public consultation within 6 weeks.

Heritage Action Zones

HAZ

Bid has been submitted and Joe Bubb reported that they have been asked to up-scale it.

6. Officer updates

Joe Bubb reported that BID team had arranged an agents meeting and hoped this will become a forum. It is proposed that the agents will be given an introduction to the plans of F O G.

Also discussed the possibility of pop up shops in the old Dorothy Perkins/Burton property. The Planet Donut success and desire to have space in Oswestry was seen as positive and to be encouraged.

Julie Ruler has had a positive response from social landlords re any redundant properties that may possibly be returned to residential.

Sandy Betts reported that Conservation Officers on occasion highlight obstacles to property proposals but sometimes can be helpful.

A public consultation is taking place at Mile End Golf Club to obtain feedback on the proposed work on Mile End Road Improvements. Sandy Betts suggested again that the event should be in town and suggested that attendance will be low.

7. Communications Protocol and PR update

It was discussed that members should only issue written quotes to local press and radio as recent verbal information provided by BID had been misquoted. Joe Bubb reported that all press releases from Shropshire Council went via the press office. She also said she is working up appropriate communications with Garreth Proffitt.

Collective marketing for F O G was suggested as an item for 2020

8. Agreeing next steps

Emma Smith to be invited to next meeting to suggest what support is available.

Further Consultation Workshop agreed for 6 months time and re visit in a timed manner.

Housing Infrastructure fund- confirmed Shropshire Council have made an application.

9. Any other business

Discussion took place regarding Gregs Alley and Chapel Walk Lindsey Pierce (BID) reported that issues had been raised about the locking of Gregs Alley but this was to deter young people climbing on the roofs.

Arren Roberts Oswestry Town Council reported that EB charging points were being installed in Central Car Park.

Loyal Free is working In Oswestry and Lindsey Pierce (BID) is checking the data.

10. Date of next meetings

10th of October 2pm, 7th of November 2pm, 5th of December 2pm