

Future Oswestry Meeting

Notes of meeting held Thursday 19th May 2022 via Teams

Attending: Oswestry Town Council: Councillor Mike Isherwood & Councillor Duncan Kerr,
Shropshire Council: Councillor Rob Macey & Councillor Steve Charmley, Oswestry BID: Adele
Nightingale & Ian Follington,

Community Representatives: Peter Lloyd & Craig Marston

Officers: Arren Roberts (OTC), Andy Wigley, Sam Jones, Joe Bubb, Hayley Owen, Rose Dovey,
Steve Law (SC)

Welcome and apologies

Apologies from Ffion Horton, SC

1. Notes of the last meeting

Notes of the previous meeting held 14/4/22 were accepted.

2. Declarations of interest

None

3. Update from Property and Development Team

Steve Law provided an update. Former Morrisons site will be marketed formally to assess interest which will inform the process. A broad range of interests have been expressed and options will be considered as part of an options appraisal including any interest generated through the marketing. Appraisal work is being undertaken on the consolidation of services and possible reconfiguration options at CastleView. Shropshire Council remains in negotiation with the Trust with regard to the Cambrian building, detailed inspections to be undertaken to make safe and drop the scaffold.

Matters arising:

Opportunity for Ophthalmic services and involvement of RJAH to be followed up.

Previously Agreed: Festival Square options to be considered at a future FOG meeting.

4. Police and Crime Commissioning Support

Matters arising: Contact Ian Bartlett on any opportunities for funding.

5. Communications and Engagement Plan

Update received from Andy Morris on collective communications over the past 18 months:

Social media via Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn

288 posts

4,119 clicks

2,502,127 reach

757,216 impressions

1.53 per cent engagement

442 retweets/shares

2,000 likes

608 comments

Sentiment: 1.5 per cent positive; 23.4 semi positive, 45.7 per cent neutral, 25.1 per cent semi negative, 4.2 per cent negative.

Top posts:

1. First Mile End drone pic
2. OIP gets planning approval for road infrastructure
3. Love Oswestry Festival is here!
4. Residents urged to have their say in OIP consultation
5. First look at plans for Oswestry Alleyway work

6. Updates on Priority Projects

- a) High Street Heritage Action Zone

Sam Jones provided an update. HAZ scheme of up to £30k for targeted intervention to include new enhancement and signage grants for shop schemes requiring a tidy up and re-erection of heritage signage. Sam working with Historic England on the HSHAZ evaluation. Vinyls including text on history of buildings being progressed through contact with agents and owners. Alleyway improvements progressing with Cae Glas park entrance almost completed. Cultural Audit study to be discussed by FOG at a separate meeting.

b) Indicative masterplan and movement / access strategy

Feedback summary on the consultation responses shared. Ian commented on the strong responses received helping to identify key priorities. Feedback to be added to the website with possible infographics.

Consultation overview circulated. From the responses, there seems to be a number of key areas of focus and cross cutting themes that emerge:

- Town Identity and USP – tourism, history,
- Public Realm – Festival Square, Castle Mound, Bailey Head,
- Public Transport – around town and with key settlements
- Connectivity walking and cycling – around town and with key settlements
- Car parking – locations and costs
- Empty shops, Market Hall (mixed views), Mixed use economy, night-time economy
- Former Morrisons development

Cross cutting themes across all of these are **Sustainability** and **Accessibility**.

Officers have met with the leads for the LCWIP and the Transport Assessment to start to draw together project ideas into one table. This can be used by FOG members to identify emerging projects and FOG priorities, interdependences and timescales, identify possible funding opportunities, and plan for the stakeholder workshop. FOG to meet 25th May to consider projects suggested and possible prioritisation of emerging project ideas as part of the development of the Action Plan. This will consider possible funding opportunities such as Levelling Up and UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This work will then feed into the planning of a workshop with key stakeholders.

c) Transport and connectivity Update

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) survey sent out to stakeholders on draft report following earlier workshops. This will feed into the prioritisation workshop being planned. Consultation on proposed network and interventions anticipated in September 2022.

Matters arising:

Brown sign on Shrewsbury Road - The changes that relate to the Mile End scheme footprint relate to the Shrewsbury Road sign. The existing sign on the A453 was retained / re-erected. Options are under discussion with the road contractor which includes masking out the text with an adhesive patch or to replace the relevant panels. The text for each unfortunately straddles 2 panels which would mean replacing most of the sign. Any changes to these signs will still leave a large number of signs in the local area that still require changing – a review of the brown signs has been added as a potential project idea to the FOG long list.

FH to pick up with the Transport Assessment regarding option for 20mph zone to include these areas.

Adele met with SC Transport officers, WSP and Environmental Associates regarding proposals for Church Street. SC has issued an order to WSP for design drawings. These will be used to share with businesses and Access Group to discuss concept proposed. Discussions ongoing regarding re-surfacing works.

d) Wayfinding including signage for the industrial estate.

Update from Adele Nightingale. Good feedback received on signage, currently looking if any additional signs are needed. Directory has been received well by businesses – available as a hard

copy and electronic. Town centre directory to be printed and circulated to businesses. Following discussions with businesses, the boards are not to be progressed. Foliage obscuring some signs – Action: AN to take photos and send to SC team.

e) Review of the Taxi Provision

Working Group arranged for 24th May, Duncan to attend on behalf of Mike.

f) Co-working space pilot at the Memorial Hall

Updates to be shared.

g) Opportunities for roundabouts - to be taken off the agenda

h) Capital Infrastructure Projects

Matters arising: JB to enquire if there is any window of opportunity to influence bridge and ramp design.

The bridge design has been developed in conjunction with National Highways and stringent requirements on both aesthetics, materials, design and colour. NH have a deciding factor on the overall colour as the structure crosses their network and should not be considered to detract drivers' attention. The whole process has been some 18 months in the making.

The Council has also been through a detailed planning process, the structure, it's design and layout became locked down many months ago to enable discussions could be held with National Highways in order to obtain their approval. That said, with a local steel works in the area, the team have considered approaching them to see if a piece of artwork could be produced, perhaps utilising recycled metal. We wondered if there was an opportunity to engage with local schools and run a design competition for suitable piece or pieces that perhaps reflected the heritage of the area. These could be placed near to the ramps or on the approaches but we would advise not on the structure as this may result in revisiting the whole design process again with National Highways.

i) Restore your Railway Bid update

Update provided on progress to date to appoint consultants to support the development of the Strategic Outline Business case.

7. Governance

Action: Terms of Reference regarding structure and capacity to be reviewed by AR and JB Discussed geographical area and remit of the group, as activities have an impact on wider areas then briefings to local members and Parish Council to be incorporated into the governance arrangements possibly through meetings or briefings.

8. Any Other Business

Adele Nightingale has made contact with owners of premises adjacent to the alleyway by the Regal for possible approach by BID for improvements.

OTC has agreed free bus travel on Saturdays for town centre services.

Work at the Edinburgh Woollen Mille to commence over next 3 months. Short term use could be considered in the interim.

Carpark consultation led by OTC has now closed. Feedback is being analysed.

Discussions with cinema operator interested in the Regal building continues.

9. Date of next meeting and agenda items

Thursday 9th June at 10.30am

Thursday 14th July at 10.30am

10. Confidential briefing for core FOG Members only