

Future Oswestry – 4th of June 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 (SC Economic Growth); In
attendance: Coralee Standish (minutes)

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

2. Apologies: David Preston (OTC), David Preston (retired Town Clerk) will be invited to attend the meeting when necessary, Ian Follington (BID), Corrie Davies/Hayley Owen (Shropshire Council Economic Growth)

3. Matters Arising

- a) Circulate Future High Streets key actions for next meeting – dedicate some time to look at the priority projects included. **Done: Item 4 on Agenda**
- b) Combine list of current projects from organisations and documents (Os 2020, Place Plan, Oswestry Local Economic Growth Strategy, Public Realm) under the three key strands (Environment / Transport / Environment) for the group to then drill down and make an appropriate list with short, medium and long term. **List has been combined; further refining into priority to be undertaken**
- c) Circulate a draft outline TOR utilising templates and partnership agreements. **Done: Item 5 on Agenda**
- d) Ask Gareth Profit to put together a communications protocol and an agreed first press release for the group. **Done: Item 6 on Agenda**
- e) Schedule of dates to meet monthly starting week commencing the 3rd of June. **Done: Item 7 on Agenda**
- f) Hayley to talk to Emma Smith re empty properties and Ian to share current information. **JB has emailed FOG with feedback**

4. Review of project lists to develop an action plan

FOG decided on three items from the Project list as the initial focus for the group.

a) Empty Properties & Business Support – action identified within the FHSF EOI to proactively address the number of vacant town premises and bring vacant shops and unused upper floor back into beneficial use

Shropshire Council (SC) will be undertaking a survey and information gathering on empty properties and ownership. Adele Nightingale (AN) and Emma Smith to discuss how the BID could assist. Joe Bubb (JB) will set up. With the new member joining the BID team, there may be capacity to support the survey. There was discussion on various empty properties and the Regal Group Project meeting coming up with AN to look at properties.

Accountability of Landlords to maintain their properties was discussed with

acknowledgment that SC may become involved when a property becomes dangerous. The

need to attract smaller/independent businesses to the town was acknowledged. JB to check what information is available on businesses interested in locating to Shropshire. Should finance become available, as part of the FHSF EOI, there may be scope to explore the purchase of empty properties / take on a limited holding to enable development of what the town needs.

Agreed that officer group would report back on this item at the next meeting.

b) Festival Square – Action identified within the Oswestry 2020 plan to explore opportunities/options for the enhanced use of Festival Square as a multi-functioning civic space

In a move towards creating a multi-functioning civic space, as a trial/test bed FOG will explore the use of Festival Square for more one off events. Arren Roberts (AR) will speak to David Clough to discuss the possibility of extending the food festival activities. Ideas are to be discussed at the next meeting and a list of dates of events currently happening is to be drawn up AR. JB will speak to Steve Brown about the potential of using the square for further events given the loss of potential revenue to Shropshire Council.

c) Traffic Regulations

Invitation to attend a FOG meeting needs to be extended to an officer from Highways for clarification on the aims of/involvement with the traffic review to enable FOG to move forward with this - JB

Overarching Projects List is to be categorised into key areas and priorities - Corrie Davies (CD) and Coralee Standish (CS) with key priorities identified being referenced to source document. Ian Follington's copy of the prioritised project list will help facilitate this.

5. Governance Arrangements

Terms of Reference

Changes agreed:

Additional line to be added to the purpose of the FOG

Declaration of Interest; this should be a standard Agenda Item

Minutes of last meeting to be agreed by the Chair – to be added as a standard agenda item.

Hot topics to be added as a standard agenda item – it was agreed to utilise the existing Officers meetings to progress issues outside of the FOG meeting and report back to FOG. Quorum and Period of Membership – to be reviewed when necessary.

Key recommendations made by FOG are to be minuted. Parent bodies will be responsible for their own reporting arrangements acknowledging and in accordance with the potential sensitivity of contents, this arrangement to be reviewed should partnership arrangements develop.

FOG signed off the TOR

Draft Reporting Structure

It was noted that the Neighbourhood Plan Review was a separate process. Optional groups with TORs can be added when necessary.

FOGs role was discussed and its purpose to focus on strategic issues was emphasised with the scope to invite relevant people from various organisations to the meeting as and when considered necessary. Sharing of the minutes for the group was discussed in reference to the Code of Conduct in the Terms of Reference.

6. Communications Protocol and PR update

Communications Protocol

Media spokespeople agreed: for Shropshire Council (Cllr Steve Charmley, Cllr Rob Macey), for Oswestry Town Council (Arren Roberts in first instance), for Oswestry BID (Ian Follington, Adele Nightingale)

Communications Leads agreed: for Shropshire Council (Gareth Proffitt), for Oswestry Town Council (Arren Roberts), for Oswestry BID (Ian Follington, Adele Nightingale)

Communications Protocol agreed by FOG.

Gareth Proffitt released a Communications piece. The group decided that positive aspects from FOG should be shared on a regular basis with extra press releases as and when necessary.

7. Agreeing next steps

Action: Adele Nightingale and Emma Smith to discuss the survey. Joe Bubb will set up.

Action: Joe Bubb to ask what information is available on traders wanting to locate to Shropshire.

Action: Arren Roberts (AR) will speak to David Clough to discuss the possibility of additional activities at the food festival if Festival Square is available for use.

Action: A list of dates of events currently happening in Oswestry is to be drawn up (AR)

Action: JB will speak to Steve Brown about the potential of using the square for future events.

Action: Invitation to attend a FOG meeting needs to be extended to an officer from Highways for clarification on the aims of/involvement with the traffic review to enable FOG to move forward with this – JB

Action: Projects List is to be categorised into key areas and priorities - Corrie Davies (CD) and Coralee Standish (CS)

Action: Update the Terms of Reference and Communications Plan document with contacts agreed.

8. Date of next meetings

4th of July 2pm, 1st of August 2pm, 12th of September 2pm, 10th of October 2pm, 7th of November 2pm, 5th of December 2pm