

Future Oswestry Meeting

Not of meeting held Thursday 9th February 2023 at Oswestry Guildhall.

Partners	Oswestry Town Council (OTC)	Shropshire Council (SC)	Oswestry BID	Community Representatives
In attendance Andrew Watkin (WSP)	Cllr Mike Isherwood (Chair) Cllr Duncan Kerr Arren Roberts	Cllr Robert Macey Cllr Chris Schofield Joe Bubb Rosie Corner Alice James Sam Jones Steve Law Emma Williams	Adele Nightingale Ian Follington	Peter Lloyd
Welcome and apologies	Ruth Sperring	Andy Wigley		Craig Marston
1. Notes of the last meeting	Notes were agreed.			
2. Declarations of interest	None.			
3. Governance	<p>Review FOG objectives Members agreed amendments to the objectives section of the FOG Partnership Agreement. These included updating the name of the Future Oswestry Plan, including references to the Delivery Plan and the continuation of HSHAZ activities and legacy building. This is a live document and there will be another chance to revisit the objectives in the upcoming governance review.</p> <p>Format of FOG meetings Members agreed to a new rotation meeting format: Month 1 - Updates from partner organisations Month 2 - Project development (Cllr Dean Carroll invited to attend)</p> <p>Conflicts of interest Members discussed how to navigate the declarations of interest process for non-councillor FOG members. To be reflected within the review of the Partnership Agreement.</p>			
4. Communications and engagement	<p>Communications Update from Alice James:</p> <p><i>Recent activity:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LUF outcome • <i>Love Oswestry – Half term drama offer</i> • <i>Love Oswestry – Photography competition</i> • <i>Love Oswestry – reshare of Town Council press release including all activities</i> • <i>Andy Begley, Shropshire Council Chief Executive visit to Oswestry – internal piece of news to Shropshire Council staff</i> • Cross Street – Dorothy Perkins/flat accommodation • Shropshire star coverage • Border Counties Advertizer coverage <p><i>Upcoming:</i></p>			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dean Carroll visit to Oswestry 13th February</i> • <i>Continued Love Oswestry promotion</i> • <i>Church Street works – awaiting information from Oswestry BID currently</i> <p><i>Other:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Alice James has redrafted the FOG media protocol, in liaison with Town Council and Oswestry BID representatives. FOG members to review at 09.02.23 FOG meeting</i> • <i>Negative commentary about various Oswestry projects emerging on Future Oswestry Facebook Group. Shropshire Council cannot comment on the group for technical reasons.</i> <p>Members discussed different strategies for improvement engagement across FOG’s digital channels including monthly newsletters, a ‘Tell us your concerns’ thread on the official FOG Facebook page . Opportunity for ‘mythbusting’ and correcting misconceptions about council tax and business rates. Members agreed to pause the review of the Comms Protocol while this new approach is being trialled.</p> <p>Engagement Verbal update from Joe Bubb:</p> <p><i>The Engagement Working Group met to discuss improvements to comms, both as individual organisations and collectively. The group also discussed public meetings and the need to consider regularity, purpose, format and attendance. For each project on the Projects List (shared with members), a delivery plan will identify the appropriate engagement level and stakeholder maps for each stage of each project.</i></p> <p>Suggestion that those who commented on the Future Oswestry Plan could be contacted again for future consultations and that FOG council take expressions of interest for people who would like to be consulted in the future.</p>
<p>5. Update from Property and Development Team</p>	<p>Verbal update from Steve Law:</p> <p><i>Cambrian Railway Building</i></p> <p><i>Works are scheduled to be completed Spring 2023. SC has now taken over ownership of the building and Cambrian Heritage Railways will continue to utilise the building and report any structural issues as they emerge. The building is currently being surveyed to identify possible future uses (such as business incubator space) which will then undergo a viability analysis. SC will seek additional funding to address any viability gap due to concerns around condition. A Conservation Management Plan will apply to the building.</i></p> <p><i>Castle View Building</i></p> <p><i>SC are working to consolidate Council use of Castle View and are producing a brochure targeted at potential public sector partners (including OTC) as well as a prospectus for commercial users. Some spaces are being fitted out. FOG members asked to</i></p>
<p>6. High Street Heritage Action Zone</p>	<p>Update from Sam Jones:</p> <p><i>Capital Grant Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Property on Beatrice Street – work will be taking place in the spring as conservation officer has requested lime for the render</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Property on Church Street – Terrazzo due for delivery any day now. Work is due to begin mid Feb and should be completed in March</i> • <i>Red Lion works are ongoing and windows are on order</i> • <i>Property on Cross Street. Have discussed moving the schedule of works to progress the shop front installation</i> • <i>Shop front budget spent up with a small repurposing amount remaining. We are looking at other possible schemes that we can assist with to spend up that money.</i> <p>Public Realm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Clawdd Du – Waiting on date for installation of bollards from highways. Works due to commence in April 2023. All businesses informed that they will need to remove their bins.</i> • <i>Metal elements are slowly starting to get installed</i> <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Shopfront design guide meeting with the Civic Society went well and we are waiting to hear if they want to be involved.</i> • <i>Cultural Consortium are putting the finishing touches to Love Oswestry.</i> • <i>We are looking at how we can spend the flagship match which is a large part of our programme match.</i> • <i>Bid in to UKSPF to carry out interim evaluation of the HSHAZ and its grant mechanisms and how we can roll out a shop front scheme across North Shropshire.</i> • <i>Working on a film and a series of walk leaflets on the history of the town with the research group.</i> • <i>Finishing EOI to The National Lottery Heritage Fund to look at repurposing B Wise building.</i> • <i>A public information board will be going up on the Harris fencing outside the Llwyd mansion in the next fortnight.</i> <p>Discussion of FOG’s potential involvement with a North Shropshire-wide shopfront scheme. Potential to deliver this post-2024 with the FOG partners working together to deliver technical expertise, project management and a small amount of funding.</p>
<p>7. Delivery Plan/ Projects List</p>	<p>Verbal update from Job Bubb:</p> <p><i>The updated Projects List template has been sent to members and we now need to establish what the FOG priority is for each of these. Officer have started work on filling in the details in the project list. Once projects are scoped and agreed it will be possible to start putting together funding bids.</i></p> <p>Suggestion that the ‘Status’ column have a percentage completion and there be milestones for each project. Agreed that FOG needs to keep returning to the project matrix to review priorities. Suggestion that it is important to schedule public consultation and feasibility work as early as possible so that this work is completed before funding becomes available.</p>

Church Street	<p><i>BID has written to Helen Morgan MP asking for support on the parking in loading bays issue on Church Street.</i></p> <p><i>Ffion Horton and Alex Edwards at SC are working with Adele Nightingale at the BID and their consultants to work up the final designs for Church St and the parklets. The topographical survey is due shortly and designs will follow. Severn Trent are planning to undertake works, so the resurfacing works and the implementation of the designs will need to follow possibly May/ June.</i></p>
Cross Street	<p><i>Adele Nightingale would like to look at getting together options and designs for Cross Street as the follow up step to Church Street. This would need to consider the LCWIP proposals being for cycling along Cross Street – Rose Dovey has put in a bid for feasibility work to progress the key LCWIP schemes within Oswestry.</i></p>
Festival Square	<p><i>The Bid has put in a bid for feasibility work to prepare options and designs for the use of the square.</i></p>
20 mph	<p><i>This is currently a high priority. To be discussed with WSP as part of Connectivity Plan (Item 7).</i></p>
Signage declutter	<p><i>Following conversations with SC Traffic Engineering, the BID is considering commissioning a consultant to survey the signs (broken, redundant, overgrown etc.) and their locations/conditions/height etc. This would then then inform which items would be picked up through existing contracts and what work could be undertaken by OTC or commissioned by the BID.</i></p>
Sports Direct Alley	<p><i>No one is claiming ownership of the alley so some research is needed to conclude ownership to look at options e.g. agreed licence to undertake works, or dedication to pass on responsibility.</i></p>
Market Hall	<p><i>OTC has bid for feasibility funding to look at options for the indoor market.</i></p>
Improve bus facilities / service / routes	<p><i>Call with Zoe Mortimer (SC Car Park Supervisor) RE the bus station to discuss opportunities to provide additionality.</i></p>
Better walking and cycling links	<p>Update from Rose Dovey:</p> <p><i>The draft LCWIP and appendices was due to go to the 15 Feb Cabinet meeting with the recommendation that is approved for public consultation, however the report has been deferred to the 8 March meeting. Subject to the approval of this report, a 6-week public consultation exercise will commence mid-late March.</i></p> <p><i>The six priority schemes for Oswestry – Phase 1 of the Oswestry Cycle Network – have been put forward for UKSPF funding for feasibility and optioneering work. If this bid is not successful, funding is available through the Council’s Capability and Ambition Fund 2022/23 allocation to progress this work. Feasibility and optioneering work will commence in March 2023.</i></p>

<p>8. Future Connectivity Plan</p>	<p>Update from Andrew Watkin, WSP.</p> <p><i>WSP is currently development an engagement plan for the Oswestry Future Connectivity Plan. The public consultation will last for six weeks and will be shared with FOG ahead of its launch at the end of March 2023. It will make clear how SC has used the feedback from the Future Oswestry Plan consultation to determine the priority schemes to take forward and ask for public feedback on those schemes.</i></p> <p>Members noted that there is a crossover between the Future Connectivity Plan and FOG's existing projects therefore comms support to make clear which projects are current and which are still at the design stage.</p>
<p>9. Date of next meeting and agenda items</p>	<p>Meeting with Dean Carroll at 10am Monday 13th February 2023.</p> <p>Next FOG Updates meeting: Thursday 9th March 2023. Agenda items: Updates on the SC Corporate Estate Plan, Oswestry Innovation Park timeline, overview of housing delivery and solar PV at Maesbury tip site.</p> <p>Next FOG Projects meeting: Thursday 13th April 2023. Agenda items: Suggestions include bus station, Cambrian Railway Building and the Regal and B-Wise buildings.</p>

Actions

1	Replace 'future vision' with 'vision' in the objectives section of the FOG Partnership Agreement.	JB
2	Set up forthcoming FOG meetings using the new rotating system.	JB/RC
3	Ask Tim Collard (SC Assistant Director – Legal and Governance) to advise on the declarations of interest process for non-Councillor FOG members.	DK
4	Contact Border Counties Advertizer and Shropshire Star about featuring monthly updates from the three FOG partners.	AJ
5	Comms leads to signpost people commenting on FOG issues on the partners' pages to the official FOG Facebook group.	AN, RS, AJ
6	Plan a pilot public meeting.	JB, AN, AR, SJ, PL, RC
7	Produce a press release on the Cambrian Railway Building once survey work is complete.	SL, AJ
8	Connect any companies or organisation seeking space in Castle View with the SC Estates Team.	ALL
9	Present a financial report on HSHAZ at the next FOG meeting.	SJ
10	Andrew Watkin (WSP) to share Future Connectivity Plan slides with FOG.	AW