

## Cheltenham Development Task Force Board Meeting

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2012 - 2.00pm – 4:15 pm  
Pittville Room, Municipal offices, Cheltenham

Item 25/12 (i)

### Open Minutes of meeting

**Present:** Graham Garbutt (Independent Chair)  
Michael Ratcliffe  
Stephen Clarke  
John Rawson  
Diane Savory  
Andrew North  
Dorian Wragg  
Bernice Thomson  
David Oldham  
Robert Duncan  
Andrew Willets  
Tim Cooper  
Sarah Pullen nee Irvine

**Other:** Steve Jordan  
Amanda Lawson-Smith  
Wilf Tomaney  
Jeremy Williamson  
Mark Sheldon

No.	Item	Action
01/12	<b>Apologies:</b> Cllr Chas Fellows, Cllr Antonia Noble, Andrew Vines & Nigel Riglar	
02/12	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> – none.	
03/12	<b>Minutes of previous meeting (14/10/11)</b> – the minutes were approved for accuracy and content. They included a copy of the notes used by Adam Lillywhite in his presentation prior to the meeting.	
04/12	<b>Action Matrix and Matters Arising</b> Updates noted as follows.  66/11 North Place & Portland street. A paper had been submitted to Cabinet recommending Augur Buchler as preferred bidder.  67/11 Accommodation Strategy – SE had been asked to consider the implications of future use changes and whether the Development Framework excluded A1 retail usage on site. As SE was not present, AL-S would clarify the situation on behalf of the County.  69/11 St Mary's churchyard. First draft of leaflet tabled for discussion later in meeting.  71/11 Public Realm Group. Confirmed that additional internal resource had been proposed in draft budget.	AL-S
05/12	<b>Confirmation of confidentiality of items</b> – agreed.	

<p><b>06/12</b></p>	<p><b>Local Enterprise Partnership</b> DS updated on the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) <b>General</b> - the six monthly update held at Oxstalls prior to Christmas was well received; good progress was being made by the LEP and its sector groups.</li> <li>(ii) <b>Growing Places fund</b> - £5.6 million Government funding was being provided for which GCC would be the accounting body. Currently working closely with the Homes &amp; Communities Agency to achieve best possible scheme combination. Hoping to receive Ministerial approval by the beginning of February for around 15 potential projects. Process for prioritisation not yet determined.</li> <li>(iii) <b>Retail pathfinder proposals linked to Mary Portas review</b> - quite an accolade to get Pathfinder status for LEP. JW has active role in Retail Group. LEP will receive funding to help take forward retail related improvements which fits in with the aims of the Cheltenham Development Task Force. Agreed further discussions to take place between LEP and Task Force.</li> </ul>	<p>JW/DS</p>
<p><b>07/12</b></p>	<p><b>Update from Highways &amp; transport group</b> AL-S tabled a paper providing updates on:</p> <p><b>LSTF</b> Although unsuccessful in the first round GCC were encouraged to re-submit a bid on 24<sup>th</sup> February after Cabinet sign-off on 1<sup>st</sup> February. Having been involved in the first bid round GCC were grateful for the assessment provided by Lynn Sloman as a 'critical friend'. Although asked to consider the second tranche she would not be judging the Gloucestershire submission. An economic study had been carried out regarding both the Boots Corner scheme and Kings Quarter, Gloucester. A DfT meeting had taken place in December 2011 and a Ministerial meeting with Norman Baker was scheduled for Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup> January. If the bid is successful GCC would be looking to close Boots Corner to through traffic by mid financial year 2013/14, pending detailed consultation.</p> <p><b>AQMA (Air Quality Monitoring Area)</b> CBC have declared the whole town centre an AQMA. GCC had been given 18 months to submit an action plan to Defra. GCC now working to reduce nitrate dioxide to acceptable levels. CBC is leading the process and the first Steering Group meeting with GCC had been held that week. AL-S highlighted the fact that as the LSTF scheme was largely based around Boots Corner Scheme reduced emissions would help achieve mode shift.</p> <p><b>St Margaret's Junction Efficiency Trial</b> Looking to start the trial Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> – Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> March (the week after Race Week) and would involve temporary 'removal' of signals between Monson Avenue and Matalan. Consultation takes place mid February. Glos Highways would be leading with SKM Colin Buchanan providing support and monitoring. The scheme would cost £35k.</p>	

	<p>RD asked how the Elbridge Transport Scheme improved the AQMA. AL-S explained how a commercially run bus service between Elmbridge Court and Arle Court would provide alternatives to private motor vehicle.</p>	
<p><b>08/12</b></p>	<p><b>Presentation on Promenade (East) works and Ormond Place proposals</b></p> <p>WT explained proposals for the Promenade including palette of materials, critically York Stone, funding provided via CBC (£145k) and also timescales for delivery.</p> <p>WT explained how the scheme would enhance the east side of the Promenade from LK Bennett's to Beards as the next phase following on from the Imperial Square scheme; but matching the higher grade surface materials from Cavendish House pedestrianised zone. Between Ormond Place and Imperial Square tree pits would be tidied using bonded gravel to match the York Stone giving the effect of an avenue. Also bus stops will be shuffled around to give a clearer space centred on the Cenotaph. To improve the disabled crossing point in Ormond Place a dropped kerb will be put in aligned to the one opposite. Traffic Orders will be put in place stopping taxis from blocking the dropped kerb alongside the Taxi Rank.</p> <p>SC asked whether thought had been given to removing the bus stops altogether in that area as it was the main architectural street in Cheltenham. JW confirmed it had been considered but as the heaviest trafficked space in the County with local buses (14-16 per hour) running from the 4 bus bays, removal was not an option. GG also reinforced the need to encourage public transport.</p> <p>AN felt upgrading one side of the Promenade may look a little odd. JW explained the intention was for two further phases of work to the West of the Promenade fronting the Long Gardens and then opposite Imperial Gardens. However future works were reliant on County funding.</p> <p>WT then introduced Andy Bell of Bell Associates (based in London) who had been working with Canada Life for a year, and explained how Regent Arcade had come up with a scheme to remodel the Southern entrance together with ideas to improve the pedestrian movement from the Promenade to that entrance.</p> <p>Andy Bell felt the current arrangement looked shabby and that Ormond Place looked like a secondary side street with no physical enticement to go down there. Further to meetings with Ian Crohill, Karen Radford, Wilf Tomany and Jeremy Williamson he was therefore proposing to maintain vehicular movement along Regent Street but changing the priority to 'pedestrian' through narrowing the street through its intersection with Ormond Place, introducing speed humps, contemporary street furniture and using York Stone sets (to the same specification as the Promenade) for its surface.</p> <p>Design boards were circulated showing a back lit glass panel above the side entrance to the Regent Arcade with textured pedestrian surfaces to aid those with partial sight, similar to mixed use facility areas now in Gloucester. JW highlighted that part of the proposal was to improve visibility to the Arcade so consideration as to where</p>	

	<p>the flower seller could be moved to needed to be picked up as a caveat of the scheme. Having met 50% of the Ormond Place tenants Andy Bell had received 100% support.</p> <p>SC raised concerns as to how cyclists and pedestrians would be separated. SI(P) also pointed out that cars turning in Ormond Place could be quite dangerous. Andy Bell was looking at only allowing turning further down Regent Street, though BT highlighted the need for people to drop off at the Theatre.</p> <p>GG pointed out that as cars drive fast along Regent Street a change to pedestrian priority would need to be well signed. WT stressed that demarcations would be made for people to use if they chose to, however BT highlighted that shared space was the way forward.</p> <p>It was agreed that WT would look at turning / pick up issues in discussion with the Everyman Theatre.</p> <p>Cllr JR felt this was a significant piece of good news and asked when it was likely to be in the public domain. Andy Bell anticipated a planning application being submitted in or around April time so envisaged a public statement being made then, although no works would begin until the Regent Arcade High Street frontage had been completed.</p> <p>MS asked if Canada Life were prepared to fund whole scheme? Andy Bell believed that to be the case in principle, but consideration needed to be given as to who and how it could be maintained.</p> <p>JW noted that as the discussion had very quickly focused upon the minutiae, it was implicit that the Task Force were solidly in favour of the broader proposal. In support of this JW to issue a letter of support to John Forward.</p>	<p>WT</p> <p>JW</p>
<p><b>09/12</b></p>	<p><b>Brewery phase 2</b></p> <p>Bob Martin (of Martin Commercial) and Jeff Roberts (of Roberts Limbrick) spoke to updated scheme proposals which had gone public earlier in the week via the Echo.</p> <p>Jeff Roberts confirmed having met with key Councillors, Civic Society etc in addition to several pre-application meetings with the planners prior to a two day consultancy period currently taking place. The proposed scheme had received very positive support and thanks were extended to SI(P) for the excellent media coverage she had helped provide. The development had a mixed commercial and residential use which was critical in making the scheme viable. Key challenges at this stage however related to certain key tenants who want to continue to trade from the site during the build phase.</p> <p>The main driver for NFU was to add value to the Brewery site by creating a good quality investment which makes both financial sense for the long term and improves connectivity to the Brewery and North Place car park scheme. A hotel (around 104 room space) on the site would create added value and Martin Commercial had talked to a number of operators who had expressed serious interest. The Planning Application they were looking to submit in February would include 34 apartments which they felt added vitality to the retail, leisure and hotel elements of the development.</p>	

	<p>Overall good progress was being made but certain leaseholder negotiations were proving troublesome.</p> <p>GG asked what contingency had been made for possible failure of lease negotiations? Bob Martin explained that he was hopeful that either CBC or the Task Force might be enlisted to assist in promoting the importance of the scheme to the town.</p> <p>GG also questioned what the impact of closing Habitat had been? Bob Martin had been disappointed as they were key anchor tenants, but footfall had been one of their concerns which reinforced the need for a link through the Brewery to retailers fronting St Margarets.</p>	
10/12	<p><b>Cheltenham Spa concept statement</b></p> <p>JW/WT spoke to papers previously circulated. Members were advised of the forthcoming rail franchise bidding round and the opportunity that this potentially provided for Cheltenham to advise on ambitions for the train station.</p> <p>As noted the concept statement has no planning status but has been prepared to provide a framework for discussion.</p> <p>JW was looking for endorsement by the Chamber of Commerce and Civic Society providing local support rather than just the Council.</p> <p>MR highlighted that the Ultra Light Railway team had a number of issues they wanted to raise and asked that a meeting be arranged with both JW and Cllr JR. SC confirmed the Civic Society would provide feedback.</p> <p>Cllr JR felt it would be useful to get the views of specialists; not just bidders and to involve the Junior Transport Minister to allow potential for feedback to franchisees as to what bidders would provide. Looking for significant improvements not impractical proposals – ie a great opportunity to improve the pedestrian route of the station along the Honeybourne Line.</p> <p>RD expressed concerns about the local traders, in that if facilities at the station were too good it would close down the local delicatessen. He also highlighted the £5 a day car parking charge was cheaper than most, resulting in people parking there but not using the station.</p> <p>GG felt a more compelling illustration for the concept statement was needed. JW asked if all comments and feedback could be with him / WT by the end of January.</p>	ALL
	The public part of the meeting concluded at this point.	