

Cheltenham Development Task Force Board Meeting

28/14 (i)

Friday 17th January 2014 - 2.00pm – 4:00 pm
Pittville Room, Municipal offices, Cheltenham

Open Minutes of meeting

Present: Graham Garbutt (Independent Chair)
Stephen Clarke
Cllr Will Windsor-Clive
Bernice Thomson
Robert Duncan
Michael Ratcliffe
Cllr Steve Jordan
Cllr Andrew McKinlay
Simon Excell
David Oldham
Jeff Brinley

Other: Wilf Tomaney
Jeremy Williamson
Richard Cornell
Andrew Hieron
Amanda Lawson-Smith
Mark Sheldon
David Roberts

No.	Item	Action
01/14	Apologies: Andrew North, Nigel Riglar, Dorian Wragg, Sarah Pullen, Diane Savory, Andrew Willetts, Ross Simmonds, Cllr Verson Smith & Cllr Rob Garnham	
02/14	Declarations of Interest – SE confirmed the same declarations of interest for himself and Cllr W-C as recorded at the last Board meeting (11/10/13) - as they were sponsors for projects under item 14/14 GLTB.	
03/14	Minutes of previous meeting / Matters Arising Both the minutes of the last meeting (11/10/13) plus those from the single item meeting (08/11/13) were approved as an accurate record.	
04/14	Action Matrix and Matters Arising Items were either actioned, on the agenda or updated as follows: 50/13 St Mary's – car parking issue Page 2 of the open minutes (11/10/13) - MR had raised the car parking issue at the Minster Board mtg on 20/11/13 but it remained a significant problem which he hoped JW could help address.	

	<p>43/13 LEP JW noted that MR had previously requested that a representative of the Task Force Board attend future LEP meetings. JW had noted that he and RD had offered to support the SEP process; offer acknowledged but not taken up. JW had attended a SEP briefing in November 2013 at which the LEP gave a presentation. Although feedback had been welcomed, the meeting closed before any comments could be made. JW aimed to discuss the issue with DS when the opportunity arose.</p> <p>Cllr SJ felt representation at Board level may be more effective, and the next meeting would be taking place the following week, to which RD had received an invitation to attend on behalf of the Chamber. The format of LEP meetings was due to be revised which would hopefully provide the opportunity for representations to be reviewed. MR felt pressure ought to be kept on the LEP for the Task Force being represented not just at Board level, but also at a practical level. JW reiterated that funding for many major County projects will in future be through the LEP which was why this concern had initially been raised.</p> <p>66/13 – St Mary’s consultation – feedback JW explained that RS was unable to attend the meeting, but would supply contact details of the Regional Inspector for English Heritage.</p> <p>68/13 – Risk Group “Due Regard” statement concerning Cheltenham Transport Plan – RC would keep the Equality Impact Assessment document under review; in fact it would be considered at the Risk and Accountabilities group on 20/01/1478/13 – AoB substitute for AN – GG explained that a replacement for AN was still required, and reminded Board members of his previous comment about there being a gender imbalance which this opportunity could help address. Action: any thoughts to be communicated to either JW or GG.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JW</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ALL</p>
05/14	Confirmation of confidentiality of items – agreed.	
Matters for Information		
06/14	<p>Local Enterprise Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Economic Plan <p>Cllr SJ confirmed that the 19th November deadline to produce an initial draft report by had been met, but much work was still needed to achieve a final version by 31st March. Good feedback had been received from a recent meeting of Michael Heseltine and Gregg Clark in Bristol, and formal feedback on the draft document was due from all Government Departments by the end of January.</p>	

	<p>. A Shadow Joint Committee had been proposed, which would represent all seven councils; this has yet to be formally adopted. Government is keen to see a robust process in place and a timetable would be issued the following week which includes the JCS.</p> <p>In a question by GG about the robustness of the structure due to 2015 being an election year, Cllr SJ stressed that the first funding package was due prior to the election.</p> <p>JW queried whether those projects being routed through the LEP and SEP, ie: Elmbridge, had been protected? Cllr SJ felt that as it had been mentioned as part of the bid, it probably was. SE explained that schemes until 2015 were protected. GCC would continue to liaise with the SEP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloucestershire Infrastructure Investment Fund – GIIF On DS's behalf JW provided a brief update by confirming that contractors were now on site at 2 Gloucester Road; a scheme enabled through the GIIF – so real evidence that the fund was having an impact. • Retail pathfinder No update available. 	
07/14	<p>Wider matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Core Strategy / J10 (taken as joint item) Cllr SJ confirmed that the JCS consultation process had been completed and that a draft document had been issued before Christmas. Two thousand plus responses had been received and further evidence was still being amassed including data on traffic modelling which GCC were helping to produce. A final document needs to be ready by the end of March in readiness for approval by the three Councils in the Autumn. <p>the Junction 10 works on the M5, abuts 23 hectares of employment land but this does not automatically trigger funding, so it may need to be part funded locally. The land is safe guarded from development until post 2031, but would need to be dedicated employment land if a J 10 upgrade was to be sought. The quantum of employment land at J10 varied between the JCS and SEP</p> <p>RD reported that at a LEP Infrastructure Group there was support for both J10 and the A417 missing link. He feared that although agreement may be reached now it would take another ten years for an employment growth zone to come to fruition.</p> <p>GG questioned whether the J10 issue ranked below the Missing Link /Air Balloon proposal in strategic terms?</p>	

	<p>In terms of the A417 Cllr SJ explained that the County had received agreement from all the Leaders within Gloucestershire that they were supportive of GCC approaching Government to fund a £250M scheme. GCC was keen for this to be a top priority SE stressed that the County had launched a £255M bid but that it was up to the Highways Agency and Government whether the Missing Link A417 road improvement scheme progresses in its current guise, rather than the previously argued tunnel option which would cost significantly more. SE welcomed the Task Force contributing to the bid debate, highlighting the County's website link to Appendix 13 of the draft SEP now available, entitled "strategic assessment of schemes submitted to Gloucestershire's Local Enterprise Partnership for consideration for inclusion with the emerging Strategic Economic Plan": http://www.gfirstlep.com/gfirst-LEP/Our-Priorities/Our-Vision/.</p> <p>Cllr W-C highlighted that there were two separate funding pots, so one scheme being successful didn't mean the other wouldn't be also. RD believed that whilst both improvement schemes were valid for different reasons, he believed the LEP Infrastructure Group would prioritise the Missing Link – A417 road improvements scheme, but the Task Force might see J10 as a priority. GG stressed that the J10 improvement works were not less important but should be assessed through different channels. SE stressed that the draft SEP makes clear the £255M Missing Link A417 road improvement works was a clear priority, but does not say that the J10 works are any less important. GG felt from Cheltenham's standpoint both schemes were broadly equivalent, but that J10 was a slightly higher priority as a whole. MR stressed however that J10 was more critical if looked at from a housing perspective, in terms of applications for increased housing in that area. JW suggested convening a single item meeting of the Board to fully understand the issues and provide support as necessary whilst the Sep process is on-going. SE supported this proposal.</p> <p>MR explained that Paul Fong had met with the Chamber and was feeding their views back to the LEP. There had also been discussion about an expansion to GCHQ by way of an underground tunnel rather than putting up another building on the A40. JW confirmed having been in touch with the Head of Property for GCHQ, who had identified extra space in Gloucester but of having no funds currently to develop, so having to rent office space in the meantime. Cllr SJ stressed that GCHQ were genuinely struggling for space.</p>	
<p>08/14</p>	<p>Joint Task Force, Civic Society, Architects Panel, Planning Team meeting – 7th January 2014</p> <p>GG explained that MR and SC had originally suggested this meeting to develop thoughts in terms of design quality at North Place and what could have been done differently, and proved to be a very constructive meeting and useful to talk through the issues concerned.</p>	

	<p>They went through the historic context and perceptions as North Place had evolved, and it was interesting to look at the back of the Municipal Offices and how it could be developed if a design project comes about. Cllr SJ felt it would be helpful perhaps if more could be done in terms of expertise through Planning Committee. JW favoured a joint venture approach which would provide greater opportunities to to intervene in the design process, and believed more could be done in future. SC stressed it was an on-going debate.</p>	
	<p>Matters for consideration</p>	
<p>09/14</p>	<p>Emerging High Street Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial analysis update WT had received an offer from the University of Gloucestershire's Landscape School students to work with them on this work as a project, which he would follow up. • Public realm works JW noted that following consultation with GCC it had been agreed to prioritise the High street over Promenade phase 4 given the higher footfall of this area. Phase 4 work would not be lost; it was just a case of re-focusing resource. The area fronting M&S will be carried out as a maintenance project which GCC would be running in the Summer; although a date was not yet available. The proposed vehicle route would require re-formatting the street furniture in the locality. It was hoped that if successful this would set a template for future upgrades including Boots Corner and Imperial Circus <p>Cllr SJ was very supportive of these works for the town as a whole,. WT confirmed that the recent Promenade works in front of the 131 hotel were temporary fix, to make the area safe. SC felt it would be a useful opportunity to talk to the landlords in the area about replacing railings. GG believed that there was a good argument for re-scheduling works as suggested.</p> <p>SE suggested WT speak to GCC about the damage cause by contractors during the hotel renovation, which could be an enforcement issue. JW stressed that re-slabbing the area was not a solution where vehicles crossed; a driveway was needed for vehicle access as in Imperial Gardens. GG agreed it was not a bad thing to delay works by 18 months if it meant also improving parking and the overall scheme design. Action: WT to take forward;</p>	<p>WT</p>

	<p>• Market proposal</p> <p>JW explained that Grenchurch Markets, as the market operator of the Thursday High Street / Henrietta Street market had decided to close down the event due to lack of footfall, poor visibility and the absence of traders. They have a desire to relocate to the eastern end of town along the Strand / Upper High Street Quarter of the town centre. JW had liaised with Martin Quantock, the Town Centre Manager to discuss the vibrancy of that part of town, and the council's licensing officer Louis Krog confirmed that the Henrietta Street market was the sole charter market in the town, so to relocate would mean the market would operate under the same regulatory regime of other markets. Grenchurch also run the successful farmers' market and craft market on the Promenade, but were looking for support for this proposal in terms of the wider town centre ambitions. The market planned to operate on a Saturday (rather than Thursday) and would be made up of 30 to 40 stalls from Bath Street junction to Beechwood.</p> <p>Howard Barber would need to look at the existing street furniture to ensure there is sufficient space for the stalls and activities before any such proposal can be enacted.</p> <p>Martin Quantock had previously talked to local retailers who seemed quite happy about the proposal, but would revisit the issue if the proposal moves forward.</p> <p>BT supported the idea in principle as the eastern end of town needed a boost, despite bars and cafes already being there. SC also queried what the market was going to sell, identifying Skipton market town as an example of poor market produce. SC pointed out that Bath's Christmas market is spread around the town, highlighting there are differing places where a market could be set up towards Regents Arcade from the Promenade once that area has been re-surfaced.</p> <p>MR questioned whether the German market was in the wrong place; he also questioned the quality of the market, which RD stressed was better than the markets in Germany.</p>	
Confidential items		

The public part of the meeting concluded at this point