

Cheltenham Development Task Force Board Meeting

42/15 (i)

Friday 24th April 2015 - 2.00pm – 4:00 pm
Pittville Room, Municipal offices, Cheltenham

Open Minutes of meeting

Present: Graham Garbutt (Independent Chair)
Cllr Andrew McKinlay
Cllr Will Windsor-Clive
Simon Excell (sub for Nigel Riglar)
Andrew North
Robert Duncan
Stephen Clarke
Ross Simmonds
Joyce Clifford

Other: Jeremy Williamson
Cllr Steve Jordan
Howard Barber
Wilf Tomaney
Scott Tompkins
Chris Riley
Tracey Crews
Helen Down

No.	Item	Action
20/15	Apologies: Cllr Vernon Smith, Jeff Brinley, Nigel Riglar, Howard Barber, Diane Savory, David Roberts, David Oldham, Bernice Thomson, Dorian Wragg, Mike Redman, Michael Ratcliffe, Cllr Chris Nelson and Amanda Lawson-Smith.	
21/15	Declarations of Interest – Cllr W-C and S Excell confirmed the same declarations of interest as recorded previously as sponsors of GLTB projects see item 26/15. In light of the JCS update item 25/15 the Chair noted an interest as he chairs a neighbourhood planning group.	
22/15	Minutes of previous meeting 23/01/15 Page 3: Open minutes – Cllr SJ made correction to the last sentence of paragraph 3 under the LEP item 8/15 “only the Local Plan was looking at non-strategic sites”. Both the Open and Confidential minutes were otherwise approved.	
23/15	Action Matrix and Matters Arising Items were either actioned, or on the agenda.	
24/15	Confirmation of confidentiality of items	
	Matters for information	

<p>25/15</p>	<p>Wider matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Core Strategy <p>Cllr SJ confirmed the examination would start on 19th May with a detailed timetable published, although some concern over whether sufficient time was being allowed for specific sites. TC explained the first stage of the 2 staged process would be from 19th May - end June and that employment land would be dealt with on 9th June. Stage 2 would be during July and looking at site specific details. A final determination by the inspector was anticipated towards the end of the year, assuming the process is not extended. At this stage it was not possible to gauge whether the reserved dates would allow sufficient flexibility for scrutiny. In response to query by the Chair about any of the sites being contentious, TC explained there was much public opposition to some of the strategic allocations, therefore all were sensitive.</p> <p>Cllr SJ felt it worth mentioning about the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) process in terms of the Cabinet having agreed a public consultation on CIL at the end of May then for the Local Plan consultation to go out in June/July, incorporating the Economic Development Strategy for encapsulation in phase 1 of the Local Plan. The Chair highlighted that a demand on the CIL could be Junction 10. SE confirmed the County was the key infrastructure provider for transport and that it had some reservations.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEP Strategic Economic Plan <p>Cllr SJ confirmed the growth deal was now sealed, and that a process of assessment would determine what happens next on new projects. JW flagged that one project was to have a “retail lab” located in Cheltenham which would help support both digital technology and entrepreneurial business start-ups. The location was currently being debated with the LEP but JW hoped to provide a further update in July.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J10 <p>SE explained that maintenance work was on-going and on schedule. Planned closures took place in March as scheduled and works are due to complete by Christmas.</p> <p>A meeting took place with the LEP on 26th March to consider if they would be willing to pay for traffic modelling to establish if an all ways arrangement at J10 was achievable. GCC still awaiting the LEP's feedback and funding commitment before any modelling work can proceed.</p> <p>In the JCS, c150 hectares of land to the East of J10 was safe-guarded for future use.</p>	

	<p>Following various comments the Chair noted that unless a formal commitment is made the quantum of employment land may not align with the amount of housing being allocated. J10 was an important aspect of that equation, but acknowledged AN's point about the JCS concluding there was enough planned in to meet the economic needs of the County without additional employment land at J10. However, AN believed the JCS team would be happy to look at future evidence to extend J10. JW felt that key in terms of timing was the de minimis land allocation which Highways England would say we need to develop this junction. The modelling work GCC had offered to undertake would yield this output.</p> <p>Cllr SJ explained how notionally Tewkesbury BC might have taken the lead on J10 as well as J9, but as that had not occurred there was an opportunity to consider collectively what is required. RD was certain that Bloor's had already undertaken a significant level of traffic modelling.</p> <p>In response to JW's comment about needing a mechanism and/or champion to take the SEP from document to implementation plan, RD thought it was a Tewkesbury BC led project. AN felt this was an issue that ought to be included in a planning document for sufficient employment land but that it should not compromise the JCS process. Ideally the next step was for the LEP to provide some funding to enable the County to undertake modelling works. Action: the Chair asked Cllr SJ, AN and RD to use their contacts with the LEP to relay that message on behalf of the Task Force.</p>	<p>SJ/AN /RD</p>
<p>26/15</p>	<p>Cheltenham Spa Railway Station – update JW confirmed that DfT funding for the Cycle-Rail link had been secured which would provide for connections from Lansdown Road. Network Rail would be consulting with the disability group that Howard Barber has created over the Access for All improvements, which was solid evidence of progress. In terms of timescales, final bids need to be with the Local Transport Board by late August.</p>	
<p>Matters for consideration</p>		
<p>27/15</p>	<p>Cheltenham Transport Plan • Position update Scott Tompkins provided an update.</p> <p>The TRO was deferred on 4th February as the County's Cabinet wished further information before making a final decision. Specifically officers were asked to come back with an implementation timetable for experimental work at Boots Corner. GCC anticipated going back to Cabinet on either 12th June or 22nd July. During that period no progress can be made on the CTP work, so it's likely the Autumn start time will be moved back to accommodate delays. Once the TRO is agreed ST will start looking at planning drawings of the inner ring road, which he hoped to have on the ground by Summer 2016.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bath Road safety scheme <p>ST explained the trial held earlier in the year was purely looking at suggested safety improvements by narrowing the carriageway to improve pedestrian traffic; however using traffic cones and temporary traffic signals creates an effect different from any final implemented scheme. The trial experienced problems with the temporary traffic signals causing localised delays bringing the trial to an early conclusion. If a scheme were proposed for implementation the Cabinet report would recommend the CTP and inner ring road changes (including Boots Corner) to be completed first, as impacts on the infrastructure would need designing accordingly. In response to the Chair's query about the timescale of delaying implementation of the scheme, ST felt that the accident history was down to the unusual combination of off peak vehicle speeds and pedestrian behaviour in relation to pubs and clubs in that vicinity. Whilst there is no way to control pedestrians' actions vehicle speeds can be reduced to minimise the severity of accidents taking place.</p> <p>In terms of pedestrian movement during the Bath Road trial, CR explained that the controlled crossing had been driven by disabled groups, however reports from pedestrians claimed it made crossing more difficult.</p> <p>In response to a query by Cllr SJ about the Boots Corner proposal, JW provided assurance that the disability groups would be the key drivers in making the design of that space work, and that recent articles in the Echo were based on assumptions not reality.</p> <p>Action: ST to forward a copy of the summary paper prepared for GCC's Cabinet to JW for sharing.</p>	<p>ST (2:45 left)</p>
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<p>28/15</p>	<p>Lower High Street Helen Down, from CBC 'positive participation partnerships' attended for this item. The Chair spoke to the background paper to this item which identified two key options.</p> <p>A development plan requires local forum representation formally recognised by CBC but would allow the area to have its own plan and potentially opens funding as part of the Localism Legislation. Although this gives certain status there were constraints to this option. An alternative way forward was to set up sub-group of the Task Force who would liaise with the locality in order to work through the issues talked about at the last meeting of the Group. Transport, parking and conservation issues around shop-fronts were all interesting issues that a plan based on sound engagement and analysis of the local area would help address. Comments provided by RS previously would also be taken on board.</p> <p>The next stage was to determine who from the Task Force would form a sub-group, and the following names were proposed – BThomson, MRatcliffe, SClarke, JClifford, CRiley and RDuncan. Cllr SJordan believed Cllr John Rawson would also be interested. JW felt BT's involvement was key and that she would want to co-ordinate the debate as to which local groups would be most fruitful for the area. As this would be the starting point of the process Helen Down's involvement would also be critical.</p>	
	<p>TC pointed out that capacity issues within the Policy team meant they could not commit time to the project until the Summer. WT could allocate some of his team's time and was happy to contact the Uni about potential involvement.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JW to pass on names to BT of interested candidates; • BT to arrange initial meeting of this group as well as consult with Ward Members; • WT to contact University about possible involvement. 	<p>JW/ BT WT</p>

<p>29/15</p>	<p>Athey Consulting Economic Development Report JW recapped briefly on TC's comprehensive review of the document. Broad-brush notes were taken rather than formal minutes (attached) raising questions that came out of the debate.</p> <p>Cllr SJ explained that the consultants' report forms part of the Local Plan, and MRedman was currently working on a discussion paper for cabinet. Once a discussion paper was issued SJ would circulate to the Task Force.</p> <p>The Chair highlighted the need to get the BIS involved with the potential at GCHQ. RD highlighted Worcestershire's LEP were looking to push the cyber security agenda including spin offs from GCHQ. Worcestershire LEP had sites available sites and were in a position to deliver so the Chair stressed time was of the essence. SC felt the Task Force was one mechanism but it was also about getting the right calibre of people to drive such an initiative.</p> <p>AN referred to the consideration given to this item by the Risk & Accountability group given that the report references the Task Force a number of times. The sub-group discussed the approach to delivering this work with the capacity available. The report suggests a number of areas where the Task Force might have a role beyond the Borough boundary, ie with TBC and GCC which again they felt may cause capacity issues. Under minute number 11/15 of the sub-group minutes AN explained its advice that items A-F were appropriate for the Task Force to have a role in. In relation to item G the view was that the Task Force might contribute but should not take the lead. Item H would be in collaboration with TBC so not for the Task Force. Other projects mentioned under item I, were important to Cheltenham but outside of the Borough's boundaries.</p> <p>These points AN queried what could be done by the Task Force that fitted within its geographical boundary. He suggested the Group's Business Plan might give steer as to whether issues A-F could be picked up in light of GCHQ and cyber-security related opportunities.</p> <p>Agreed that all of these points to be reviewed as part of the business plan update.</p> <p>RD suggested the Task Force could input into the LEP, but that the roles were for the LEP rather than the Task Force. JW stressed that the LEP should be co-ordinating structures to deliver some if not all of the work.</p>	<p>SJ</p>
	<p>The Chair queried whether the Task Force should be drawn in to fill the vacuum if issues like J10 are not being addressed, regardless of available funding. AN intended taking his views back to the LEP and would also mention that the Task Force had discussed the issue. JW felt feedback on a collective basis would be most effective.</p> <p>Action: JW to re-visit the Business Plan and boundary issues for discussion at the next meeting.</p>	<p>AN JW</p>
	<p>Confidential items</p>	