

Cheltenham Development Task Force Board Meeting

Item 03/16 (i)

Friday 9th October 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
Joyce Clifford
Stephen Clarke
Michael Ratcliffe
Dorian Wragg
Ross Simmonds
Diane Savory
Bernice Thomson

Other: Jeremy Williamson
Cllr Steve Jordan
Howard Barber
Wilf Tomaney
Scott Tompkins
Fraser Reid
David Roberts
Mark Sheldon)
Martin Chandler) (for item 95/15)
Michelle Payne)

The chair noted the need to re-order the agenda given the number of external presentations.

No.	Item	Action
64/15	<p>GG welcomed Rosalind Andrews (RA) from Harrison Clark Rickerbys. It was both the Chair's and JW's recommendation that RA should replace David Oldham on the Task Force Board. Agreed.</p> <p>The Chair also wished to record thanks to all those involved, and particularly GCC for their hard work based on that day's news about John Lewis Partnership taking over Beechwood Arcade. Request was made for GCC to pass on thanks to Cllr VSmith for managing the difficult situation latterly around representation being made to County's Cabinet which had enabled such an important step forward.</p>	
62/15	<p>Apologies: Nigel Riglar, Tracey Crews, Mike Redman, Cllr Chris Nelson, Cllr Vernon Smith, Jeff Brinley, Chris Riley and Amanda Lawson-Smith.</p>	

63/15	<p>Declarations of Interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SE confirmed declarations of interest as sponsor of GLTB projects see item 69/15; also in relation to the TRO issues item 73/15. JCS update item 68/15; the Chair noted an interest as chair of a neighbourhood planning group. Connecting the physical & digital worlds – item 72/15 DS noted an interest in the company Maybe and also LEP interest in this field of work 	
65/15	<p>Minutes of previous meeting 17/07/15 Open minutes – issues of accuracy below: Page 1 (item 42/15) ‘centrifugal’ should read central. Page 2 (item 45/15 third para) affordable housing will be impacted by Government policy announcements regarding 20% discount on sales value. Page 6 (first word, fourth line up) typo “their points & comments.</p>	
	<p>Confidential minutes – approved as accurate. Matters arising: Page 1 (item 50/15) Beechwood Arcade MC confirmed having received JLP’s planning application. Page 3 (item 51/15) Cllr SJ confirmed a letter had been sent to the Director at GCHQ but no real update until SR15 announced.</p>	
66/15	<p>Action Matrix and Matters Arising JW confirmed items were either actioned, or on the agenda. Item 46/15 - JW updated having had a positive meeting with Jim Daniels (GCC) who would hold-off implementing any on-street car parking regulation changes at the railway station until 2017.</p>	
67/15	<p>Confirmation of confidentiality of items As proposed.</p>	
Matters for information		
68/15	<p>Wider matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Core Strategy Cllr SJ explained that the JCS was currently on-going, with 2 issues requested by Inspector necessitating extra work (i) Nathaniel Litchfield re-visiting employment projections with a view to finding a balance between the JCS and SEP. (ii) further traffic analysis although problems validating 2013 data had impacted on the timeline. It was anticipated that the Inspector may push back the start of the next phase to the New Year. RD explained that Nathaniel Litchfield had given a presentation to the JCS/LEP group he sat on before taking it to respective Leaders, and felt the work being done was very promising. Cllr SJ noted that the land West of Cheltenham would also be picked up in this process. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEP Strategic Economic Plan DS felt much was being covered on the Task Force agenda, but stressed the real challenge relating to the devolution debate. The spending review on 25th November would hopefully provide clarity on direction. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J10 SE reported that the group chaired by Mike Dawson (CEO Tewkesbury BC) had set up to scope and cost J10 as a 4 way junction. The modelling to be undertaken during 2016 would determine if levels of growth identified by the JCS and proposed by the LEP warranted the junction's expansion. The developers of North West Cheltenham were adamant that NW Cheltenham alone did not warrant a 4 way junction. SE confirmed that the outputs would identify how much traffic if and when a 4 way junction would be required. There would be a roundtable discussion on 22nd October for the JCS. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheltenham Plan Cllr SJ advised feedback received from the first phase of consultation had been in the hundreds rather than thousands, focussing on key sites in Cheltenham, although most interest had been focussed upon the green space around the edge of the town. In terms of sequencing Cllr SJ confirmed the Plan would follow on after the JCS determination. The interim period therefore left the authority in a somewhat vulnerable situation when trying to defend their position in relation to developers' planning applications. 	
69/15	<p>Cheltenham Spa Railway Station – update JW explained that as operator Great Western Railways would be taking the lead on the project. A meeting was scheduled for the following week between GWR and Network Rail to start planning delivery. The only element awaiting funding confirmation being the 70 extra car spaces anticipated in December from DfT. Passive provision for future platforms still existed. The cycle rail link to Lansdown Road had created an opportunity for a wider link all the way to Bishops Cleeve. SE confirmed that GCC were putting in a bid to the LEP for these cycle links which JW saw as part of a list of pipeline projects coming forward if funds came available.</p>	
70/15	<p>Public Realm update and plans JW explained that the promenade phone boxes had been removed for refurbishment before being reinstated as art installation display cabinets. The issue of differential kerb sets being incorporated as part of the improvement works relating to the High Street (between Henrietta Street and Boots corner) had also now been resolved.</p>	
71/15	<p>Enterprise Zone JW explained that an EZ was formally considered and discussions with BiS and DCLG had taken place, linked to potential development in the west of Cheltenham and the GCHQ submission to the JCS. The future impact upon retained rates allied to the devolution debate and more recent Chancellors statement meant that it had been dropped. Cllr SJ felt that GCHQ would be able to expand without the influence of an Enterprise Zone.</p>	
	Matters for consideration	

<p>72/15</p>	<p>Connecting the digital and physical worlds Polly Barnfield (OBE) CEO & Founder of Maybe* Solutions Ltd provided an informative presentation around the Maybe* Mobile App. Their research with Gloucestershire and Nottingham Universities about how people like to shop, linked to mobile technology provided retailers the opportunity to offer their customers a highly personalised retail experience in deciding what to buy. Members were told that Maybe* entertains and engages shoppers by connecting the digital and physical retail journey into one seamless social experience on their phone by giving them a place to save something they want to buy. It's also an easy way to gather and share friends and colleagues' opinions. From the retailers perspective there are an increasing plethora of technological demands. Maybe* Solutions Ltd was now working with several towns about launching a social mobile strategy enabling shoppers to connect to one social experience, which in turn gives competitive advantage to towns, by helping to drive footfall. Questions included the App's operating ability; what market share Maybe* Solutions Ltd were aiming to achieve; data security; what was wanted from CBC/Task Force in taking the development forward; what competitive advantage it would give Cheltenham? Responses - a better shopping experience for shoppers; future scale was based on the success of launching the product through offering partnership working; a £28k fee would enable CBC to engage in a "proof of concept" trial, which could then be replicated nationally.</p>	
	<p>JW felt the Maybe* App fitted in with the wider Government agenda about the future of the High Street so had prompted the presentation before further discussions with local retailers. Cllr SJ could see the advantages of being first to work in partnership with Maybe* Solutions Ltd. The Chair concluded that the Task Force were interested in helping development the full model and confirmed JW would be in touch to further negotiate.</p>	<p>JW</p>
<p>73/15</p>	<p>Cheltenham Transport Plan ST explained that since cabinet approval on 22/07/15 design work had commenced. Fraser Reid appointed to ensure that designs by Amey as contractor meet expectations. Liaison with the Gloucester Design Panel and cycling group was also taking place. A Spring start was still planned and the team were looking to break ground during January/February with the Albion Street works. JC noted a Design Panel meet on 5/11/15 to look at the current designs by a mix of disciplines. FR keen to ensure sound baseline traffic data was available on which to run a series of surveys. JW noted the need for a comprehensive communications strategy. Cllr SJ hoped that now the general election was over that the political situation would calm. Cllr SJ also suggested involving residents at an early opportunity. SE suggested that ST/FR give regular updates at future meetings. He also noted the Task Force's ability to influence decisions as had happened in relation to the TRO issue when a letter of representation changed the Cabinet's recommendation.</p>	

<p>74/15</p>	<p>Lower High Street</p> <p>BT updated on progress with the focus being Henrietta Street to Honeybourne Bridge, and the ideas borne out of consultation meetings, resulting in a public consultation on 29th September at the Bowling Club, which was well attended and very positive.</p> <p>As requested BT circulated a matrix setting out proposed enhancement schemes that now needed commitment from partners to help achieve. Matt Ayres explained how the schemes had been categorised within the matrix and the linkages running through the document. The investment for these changes had been categorised at this stage as 'low' (ie £100's), medium (ie £1000's) or high.</p> <p>Key targets included ;-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more pedestrian friendly walkways to encourage people to move further down the High Street, which included de-cluttering St George's Square through removal of railings • finding a use for the old toilet block as had happened at Cox's Meadow. • encouraging private landowners to improve shop fronts and associated parking and delivery arrangements. • Tackling community issues such as street drinking and household waste • Creating a local identity and community involvement with potential for a 'Friends of Cheltenham High Street' being established <p>BT was looking to set up smaller action groups in taking this and other aspects of work forward.</p> <p>RD stressed the importance of supporting the project in improving that element of the town.</p> <p>The toilet block in St George's Square was an obvious improvement but it was potentially the hardest in terms of dealing with British Telecom regarding the removal of surplus phone-boxes. HB had been given a quote of £28k by British Telecom for the removal of those three and a further two by the Brewery. JW felt the potential loss of revenue from advertisements was likely the issue for British Telecom and suggested support from the County's Highways Team might help strengthen further negotiations.</p> <p>The Chair acknowledged a large number of schemes were shown as low cost but suggested further analysis was necessary to avoid potential conflicts of priority as well as better identify the costs for each scheme that the partners and Board could sign up to. Action: MA to produce a costed and prioritised plan for the next meeting.</p>	<p>MA</p>
<p>75/15</p>	<p>Business Plan update</p> <p>JW had received limited comments on the previously circulated plan, so the plan was agreed for adoption, acknowledging that it was a rolling document.</p>	