

## Cheltenham Development Task Force Board Meeting

Item 03/19

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2018 - 2.00pm – 4:30pm  
Pittville Room, Municipal offices, Cheltenham

### Open Minutes of meeting

**Present:** Graham Garbutt (Independent Chair)  
Stephen Clarke  
Tim Atkins  
Bernice Thomson  
Michael Ratcliffe  
Rohan Torkildsen  
Joyce Clifford  
Cllr Andrew McKinlay  
Cllr Nigel Moor  
Cllr Paul Baker  
Rosalind Andrews

**Other:** Jeremy Williamson  
Cllr Steve Jordan  
Tracey Crews  
Howard Barber  
Scott Tompkins  
Cliff Naylor

No.	Item	Action
62/18	<b>Apologies:</b> Diane Savory, Cllr Harman, Simon Excell, Dominic Stead, Cllr Vernon Smith, Rob Duncan, Paul Jones, Jeff Brinley, Mark Parker, Rob Vale, Dorian Wragg & Fraser Reid  Although noted that Dorian & Jeff had circulated comments concerning item 77/18	
63/18	<b>Declarations of Interest:</b> none raised	
	The Chair wished to put on record congratulations to JW for his much valued contribution to the success of the new John Lewis store in Cheltenham. JW had been instrumental in its development by initially introducing JLP to Blackrock. The Chair felt the Task Force was at a high point & relayed sincere thanks to all its members for their particular contribution to JLP now having a presence in Cheltenham.	
64/18	<b>Open Minutes of previous meeting 06/07/18</b> Open minutes – approved as accurate.	

65/18	<p><b>Open minutes Action Matrix &amp; Matters Arising</b></p> <p><b>2050</b> – letter submitted to CBC/GCC by Chair/JW</p> <p><b>West Cheltenham Parking</b> – changes around station implemented, thanks to Phil Williams (GCC), but JW noted required a little more publicity as GWR staff unfamiliar with changes</p> <p><b>Task Force Comms</b> – not progressed based on the future of CDTF</p> <p><b>Cheltenham Spa station</b> – meeting with GWR/NR on 15/10/18 picked up under item 68/18</p> <p><b>Request for Civic Society member of CDTF</b> – outstanding action; held over to October pending Task Force future discussion</p> <p>Other items were either on the agenda or actioned.</p>	
66/18	<p><b>Confirmation of confidentiality of items</b></p> <p>Agreed as proposed.</p>	
	<b>Matters for information</b>	
67/18	<p><b>Wider matters:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cheltenham BID update</b> CllrSJordan reported current focus was on devising a funding package for resource to help address town centre anti-social behavioural issues. In parallel the BID continually running &amp; promoting both retail &amp; fund-raising events. MR had suggested Kevan Blackadder become a member of the Task Force but that depended on its future.</li> <li>• <b>Place Strategy</b> TA reported on a recent governance meeting being relevant in terms of CDTF's role as part of the bigger picture in relation to cyber, delivery of the Place Strategy &amp; underlying vision of the town to help make the economy thrive.</li> </ul> <p>In the context of future opportunities and 'world class public spaces', the Chair felt it worth capturing the quality of buildings at the rear of Crescent Place looking north in the context of future development. TA acknowledged that point in light of creating a 'world class public space' which was on hold until the outcome of Boots Corner trial, but was still very much part of future plans. The Chair stressed that without a mechanism to bolt future ideas together &amp; drive things forward it won't happen, and TA noted the council could not act in isolation to deliver complex projects such as the Cyber Park; with a host of outside bodies.</p> <p>The Chair raised concerns about the existing polarity of Lower High Street &amp; the now huge change in character &amp; economic vibrancy of the area between John Lewis Partnership &amp; the Brewery – and how best to maintain transference of regeneration into the Lower High Street? HB felt a niche market was needed in terms of retail and a wider offer for the town, but it was about the breadth of offer; not just going for bog standard anchor stores, but throwing a few speciality shops into the mix. BT stated that businesses in the Lower High Street felt they'd been forgotten. There was need to take account of the increasingly large residential developments in that area. It was an important part of the town; not helped by the split in ward boundary down the middle of the road.</p>	

	<p>TC stated that a JCS retail review would be undertaken by consultants GDA, and would pick up with BT outside the meeting on her thoughts as to what would make that key part of Cheltenham flourish, moving forward. BT stressed there were already too many take-aways that made the street paving greasy &amp; dirty &amp; did not add anything to the day-time economy as most only opened at night. Businesses within the area were keen to ensure that based on the percentage of one type of business, no more take-aways be given permission to operate in that locality. CllrPBaker flagged potential use of the disused public convenience to sign-post/open up the High Street. BT questioned the decision to convert into a changing place disabled facility – was this still progressing?</p> <p><b>Action: Chair/JW to pick up conversation at next meeting.</b></p> <p>• <b>Joint Core Strategy (JCS)</b> TC reported that the JCS Review was now underway. Cheltenham &amp; Tewkesbury Borough Councils had agreed a high level 'issues &amp; options' document earlier that week. The first issue to unpick was about possibly extending the JCS timeline; past 2031 - although that will be addressed through public consultation feedback. Other issues to be considered lay around strategic sites and release of safeguarded land if appropriate within that timeframe. Tewkesbury BC had approved the Ashchurch master plan – a high level vision in terms of the JCS linked in with West Cheltenham. Eight weeks consultation from 25<sup>th</sup> November.</p> <p>Cllr Moor queried how the view of the Task Force to align the timeline to 2050, can be managed. TC advised that when the consultation goes live the Council could receive formal representation - via JW.</p> <p>MR requested that both housing &amp; infrastructure be included which the Chair agreed was critical to alignment with local plans &amp; the County's Transport Strategy. CllrSJordan stated through devolution John Baker was working on an informal spacial planning process to build a County-wide vision, which would help link local plans together. It was <b>agreed</b> that John Baker be invited to attend a future Task Force meeting.</p> <p>• <b>Cheltenham Plan</b> JC confirmed having now formally submitted the plan to the Planning Inspectorate. Wendy Burden was Cheltenham's dedicated Inspector &amp; would have the 5 year housing land issue to deal with. TC would advise the Task Force on further progress.</p> <p>• <b>GD3 bid</b> JW reported that the County's cabinet had approved 'in principle' to be sponsor of GD3 monies until early December 2018 when the proposed interventions of the £22m funding would take place.</p>	<p><b>TA</b></p> <p><b>JW</b></p> <p><b>JW</b></p> <p><b>JW</b></p> <p><b>TC</b></p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>G2050 update</b></li> </ul> <p>CllrSJordan announced that feedback from the 'Big Conversation' was due to be released. Three documents had been produced since the formal consultation concluded end of July:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document 1 - a validity framework providing a mechanism to score ideas against that come forward from the eight ambitions that may need recalibrating;</li> <li>▪ Document 2 – summarises conversations from the 'Big Conversation' itself;</li> <li>▪ Document 3 – potential delivery vehicles; no conclusions drawn as yet.</li> </ul> <p>A Concordat for the local authorities had been drafted &amp; was being considered. Names of boards also discussed, ie: Severn Vale Board - to potentially look at issues in that area, but coherent structure required to piece work streams together. An agreed task was to map new boards over the next few months.</p> <p>RT queried the relationship between 2050 &amp; the JCS, and how it might link to the local plan up until 2031. CllrSJordan believed ideas relating to future transport infrastructure as part of the County's strategic vision, needed campaigning for now for inclusion within the next local plan. Chronology as to how it linked to the new boards was still to be decided. The Chair was interested to know how uplifted land values would be used to assist transport issues. BT queried future consultation on 2050 as less than 1% of population had responded according to the Echo. By way of comparison 1,700 attended JLP's pre-opening evening event. CllrNMoor announced GCC were embarking on a local transport plan review, but a key task was to align it with 2050. He congratulated Gloucestershire University for having done a good job in orchestrating the Big Conversation and gathering helpful data.</p>	
	<b>Matters for consideration</b>	
<b>68/18</b>	<p><b>Cheltenham Spa Railway Station</b></p> <p>JW reported that whilst the forecourt project was progressing well there was little progress on the linked pedestrian/cycle path to Lansdown bridge. At a recent meeting Network Rail were supportive of the cycles to the south and pedestrians to the north proposal at Lansdown bridge but had raised two challenges:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. At the Trimnasium with a very expensive solution to send the path up and over the embankment wall – potentially making it unaffordable;</li> <li>2. Noting that NR expected either GCC or CBC to maintain the path once completed, albeit entirely on NR property.</li> </ol> <p>JW noted the need to push back on these issues as it could be argued that the car park was a relatively cheap option with costs being pushed onto the cycle link.</p> <p>Awaiting clarification from NR/GWR.</p>	<b>JW</b>

	<p>Highways England was funding a super-highway cycle route running from Gloucester &amp; terminating at Benhall. GD3 funding could potentially extend the route into the Railway Station so everything finally joined up.</p> <p>As CBC &amp; GCC are aligned in achieving this TA felt they should join forces to push for a satisfactory conclusion, particularly in light of future development at West Cheltenham. CllrNMoor would speak with Phil Williams at the County to help support CBC in achieving a way forward.</p>	<b>CllrNM</b>
<b>69/18</b>	<p><b>Cheltenham Transport Plan phase 4</b></p> <p>ST stated from a Highways Authority perspective that the trial continues with data collected from 27 monitoring sites being used for consultation feedback. The 3 key themes emerging related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Blue Badge spaces</b> - highly publicised around those outside M&amp;S no longer being available despite other measures being in place;</li> <li>• <b>Unloading for businesses</b> – most if not all being solvable if existing facilities used to better effect, especially if Clarence St/Parade enabled vehicles to escape without using Boots Corner;</li> <li>• <b>Traffic flows</b> - over the summer traffic had been dissipated around Boots Corner which seems to be following what the modelling had predicted.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps</b></p> <p>CBC Overview &amp; Scrutiny meeting scheduled 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018. A report will be taken back to the TRO Committee in February. The TRO Committee had asked for a report to go back within 10 months of the trial. The Committee would then need to recommend to GCC's Cabinet or Management Team whether to reject the scheme, adopt it as is (but perhaps with caveats), or make further changes &amp; extend the trial for a further period.</p> <p>JW highlighted the £4.9m LSTF funding which had both economic outputs and transport implications &amp; the need to think about taking a paper to a special CBC meeting early 2019 to consider the economic case. That meeting could equally consider likely TRO recommendations if known but only endorse not approve them.</p> <p>This approach would be similar to that adopted previously whereby CBC made their decision and position explicit before any consideration by GCC.</p> <p>Noted that a demonstration had been organised by a Deliveroo driver; claiming his freedom of speech was being infringed by the trial. St Gregory's School also blaming Boots Corner trial for traffic congestion, although there has been an on-going issue relating to drop-off and pick-up over several years. GCC/CBC to meet the school.</p> <p>From Stagecoach's perspective bus patronage was up by 2% each week (c4000 individual journeys) – press release circulated - and the Brewery had 15% more footfall (and improved lettings) since the temporary closure of Boots Corner.</p>	<b>JW/ST</b>

	<p>Most recent data showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• car travel - down 85%</li> <li>• footfall - up 84% across Boots Corner itself</li> <li>• cycling - up 200%</li> <li>• seated pedestrians - up 19%</li> <li>• wheelchair users - up 55% in the area</li> </ul> <p>Impact quite interesting as the LSTF's funding was to encourage &amp; support modal shift which is now occurring.</p> <p>ST noted that GCC were looking at traffic signals across Cheltenham &amp; Gloucester as some corridors were under significant pressure &amp; needed review and potential long term investment. For Cheltenham this was the north/west corridor - St Margaret's/Brewery. ST took note of known issues around St George's St and St James' St. Until performance overall could be addressed on-going work continued to improve current performance. Longer term ST felt signage may need to change if Boots Corner were to close permanently in order to discourage the concept of a clock-work traffic network still being in place.</p> <p>CllrAMcKinlay had anticipated more traffic congestion, especially on the opening day of JLP, so praised GCC for a remarkably good design that he felt would hold up well. He added all four phases had worked &amp; where issues had been flagged workable solutions had been found. CllrPBaker felt a news release was needed as it was all very positive, and suggested speaking with Boots for views from their customers on what's happening.</p> <p>To combat negative media BT suggested the revenue from fines be reinvested on roads &amp; pavements in Ambrose St &amp; St George's St areas, where people were being affected. JW acknowledged media coverage had been challenging, but Mark Owen had written a positive piece in Punchline on behalf of Stagecoach. Some coverage had been a little disingenuous eg a business claiming to be relocating because of the trial when in fact it had gone on the market a month before the trial started.</p> <p>Overall the Chair felt there were grounds for optimism, now that real data was becoming available.</p> <p>TA highlighted the major impact this scheme would have on defining the structure of the town, so stressed the need for the Borough Council to give GCC support in their decision making &amp; confidence in making it happen. With an 85% drop in vehicles going through Boots Corner; people now owned that space. For something that had been a life-times work for the Task Force TA stressed the importance of getting behind the County with support to ensure the scheme was successful. TR felt it was a courageous move to make such a difficult decision but praised what he believed to be an excellent scheme which needed to be sold in a positive light. CllrNMoor believed broadening the case to enable the TRO Committee to get a holistic view of the benefits around an empirical case would be very helpful and was given comfort knowing the Borough Council was stepping up to the plate. <b>Action:</b> further comments back to JW.</p>	<p>JW</p>
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<b>70/18</b>	<b>Quarterly update</b> Draft tabled that JW asked for comments on. ST to feedback on the Cheltenham Transport Plan. Any other feedback requested soonest.	<b>All</b>
<b>71/18</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b> In response to MR's query about the future of House of Fraser, JW explained how Canada Life were landlords to several House of Fraser units and negotiations were proving difficult. Its future would largely depend on how the town functions post Boots Corner trial & the impact of JLP. The Chair believed House of Fraser would struggle without significant investment, and CllrSJordan highlighted an existing conversation as to what would happen with that space if House of Fraser were to go.  TA reported that Council that Monday had approved £100m for housing investment outside the HRA cap on other housing initiatives. From December CBH could deliver other aspects of the housing spectrum.  TA also noted the launch of a public consultation exercise around a £9 congestion charge for vehicles going in to Bath.	
	<b>Future meeting dates</b> <b>To confirm date &amp; time of next meetings</b> Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> January 2019 Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> April 2019 Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> July 2019 Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2019 <b>All 2:00pm at the Municipal Offices, Cheltenham</b>	
	<b>Confidential items</b>	

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