

## Cheltenham Development Task Force Board Meeting

Item 03/20

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019 2.00pm – 4:15pm  
Pittville Room, Municipal offices, Cheltenham

### Open Minutes of meeting

**Present:** Graham Garbutt (Independent Chair)  
Bernice Thomson  
Cllr Andrew McKinlay  
Stephen Clarke  
Rob Duncan  
Rosalind Andrews  
Michael Ratcliffe  
Cllr Paul Baker  
Joyce Clifford  
Dorian Wragg

**Other:** Jeremy Williamson  
Dominic Stead  
Chris Riley  
David Oakhill  
Simon Excell  
Patrick Molyneux  
Luisa Senft-Hayward  
Colin Chick

No.	Item	Action
	The Chair welcomed Cllr Patrick Molyneux to the meeting – GCC Cabinet Member for Economy, Education and Skills providing an update under item 73/19.	
66/19	<b>Apologies:</b> <b>Members</b> - Cllr Nigel Moor, Diane Savory, Jeff Brinley, Tim Atkins & Rohan Torkildsen <b>Other</b> - Cllr Steve Jordan, Tracey Crews, Howard Barber, Paul Jones,	
67/19	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> None	
68/19	<b>Open Minutes of previous meeting 19/07/19</b> Other items picked up on action matrix and agenda; minutes agreed.	
69/19	<b>Open minutes Action Matrix &amp; Matters Arising</b> <b>47/19 Matters Arising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Indicative timetable for A4019 traffic light works – dates requested from GCC</li></ul> <b>49/19 Wider matters</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cheltenham Bid survey amendments – completed</li><li>G2050 Western Powerhouse report circulated</li></ul>	

	<p><b>51/19 Cheltenham Transport Plan phase 4 &amp; wider High Street</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JW had explored screening of 'fly-through' in empty shops</li> <li>• JW had provided a communications update based on draft images &amp; 'fly-through' shared with Cllr NM.</li> </ul> <p><b>53/19 Funding update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JW to bring update report on A46 – on agenda</li> </ul> <p><b>54/19 LTP review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GG exploring funding opportunities – update at meeting JW had invited Colin Chick to present</li> </ul> <p><b>55/19</b> Quarterly update – actioned</p>	
<b>70/19</b>	<p><b>Confirmation of confidentiality of items</b> Agreed as proposed</p>	
	<b>Matters for information</b>	
<b>71/19</b>	<p><b>Wider matters:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cheltenham BID update</b> A follow-up BID Member survey had been undertaken, targeting the 28 of 531 first respondents. Unfortunately only 5 of the 28 responded so difficult to establish whether the changes requested around Clarence Street had been successful, so the Leader offered a further meeting to the initial 28 respondents which proved constructive in picking up all the concerns raised, although some eg changes to SatNav systems, could not be dealt with until a final decision has been made on the trial.</li> </ul> <p>There would be a late night shopping event with free buses &amp; parking on 5<sup>th</sup> December.</p> <p>As per governance requirements the BID was taking on a consultant to run a new referendum at the end of its 5<sup>th</sup> year of operation.</p> <p>DO had been involved in a meeting with the BID, Civic Society and DWragg to explore with key landlords about use of retail space in town and whether that could be improved with mixed use rather than just retail. Access issues around Listed Buildings were acknowledged but a trial based around an area of the Promenade would help establish feasibility.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Joint Core Strategy &amp; Cheltenham Local Plan</b> DO reported staff had been recruited to manage development of JCS for adoption in December 2022. An initial task was to consider how they could accelerate the process. The Local plan has been considered by Council &amp; unanimously agreed. Next step was 6 week's consultation then, followed by consideration by Planning Inspectorate and hopefully adoption in March 2020.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair had met with SE/CC/CllrPMolyneux about the Transport Plan &amp; looking at ways transport &amp; housing allocations interact in line with climate emergency. It was agreed GCC needs to make public transport a key focus for housing development &amp; capture land value uplift in order to look at establishing routes for short-medium term guided buses. Consultant John Baker was meeting with leading Planning Members the following week to secure a County consensus, stressing the importance of getting political drive if serious about climate. To work successfully the Chair highlighted need for politicians nationally to develop policies to allow public transport routes to determine locations of sites and it needed to be done as part of the JCS sooner than later.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>G2050</b> John Baker is delivering a CBC Member session on 24th October to explain the Statement of Common Ground in readiness for a first meeting of the new Central Gloucestershire Growth Board (coming out of 2050 project) taking place on 5th November to discuss on-going issues about Great Western Powerhouse. JW had circulated the GWP paper raised by CllrNMoor, but raised scepticism about the Board functioning without private sector involvement. Leader CllrSJordan would represent CBC, but BT flagged there was no one at the table representing the voluntary sector. CllrAMcK highlighted there being no clear mandate or objective for the Board &amp; it largely duplicated existing structures. MR suggested prompting a review of the organisation in 12-18 months. The Chair concluded by stating that the new Board lacked added value, covered the same work as other established forums and was causing confusion as to its purpose. GFirstLEP had also raised doubts about the longevity of an extra group. GG was scheduled to meet the Leader of the County, CllrNHawthorne on 14th November to discuss further.</li> </ul>	<p><b>CC arrived 2:25pm</b></p> <p><b>GG</b></p>
72/19	<p><b>Midland Connect – item postponed</b> Linked to A46 project – progression slowed due to wider agenda, therefore seen as inappropriate to invite at this time.</p>	
73/19	<p><b>An update from GCC Cabinet Member for Economy, Education and Skills – Patrick Molyneux</b> In addition to his new GCC Cabinet Member role PM also Chaired the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) &amp; perceived the Task Force as an additional route through which GCC could work closer with District partners. His role aligned with the work John Baker was undertaking &amp; overlapped on infrastructure &amp; highways related issues under CllrNMoor's portfolio.</p>	

	<p>Education was a challenge as academies had a silo approach &amp; needed to work closer. Polarisation of attainment &amp; apprenticeships called for a more technical approach, changing the scope of the skills agenda.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed PM was welcome to attend CDTF &amp; would be sent future meeting agenda. MR expressed concern that the local University curriculum did not reflect the needs of local business which PM acknowledged having heard before. CC highlighted Coleford Library had set up an innovation lab teaching 5-7 year olds to build personal computers. The Library also now accommodated 3D printers that local businesses can use. CC felt adult education would drive IT skill sets and make sure young &amp; old could access those jobs. JC stressed challenges in secondary education especially for girls who were not being encouraged to take up IT.</p> <p>SC highlighted a gap in educational support for the 'supertech' area and there being no wider skills base to strengthen IT to address advanced manufacturing which is incredibly important. CC noted that the 'commercialisation' of education funding was not helpful. The Chair felt investment in further HE and research diversification was required to deal with the economic needs of the County. A heavy weight global brand was required to give stature in line with GCHQ so Cheltenham will lose out unless action is taken. MR stressed the importance of working more closely with the RAU and Hartpury College. JW reported that UWE (a cyber ACE) would be delivering degrees from the Gloscol site at PEW from next Sept. The Chair remained unconvinced the solution would come from within the county.</p> <p>CllrPB felt that as the University was such a massive part of the town they should be invited to give a presentation about their contribution to the town now and moving forward. JW to progress.</p>	<b>JW</b>
	<b>Matters for consideration</b>	
<b>74/19</b>	<p><b>Local Transport Plan Review update</b></p> <p>SE introduced his County colleague Luisa Senft-Hayward &amp; explained the reason for his presentation was due to the LTP needing review since adoption in 2016.</p> <p>A report would go to Cabinet in December and if approved progress to public consultation in early 2020. Changing vision in line with corporate strategy and emerging district council plan to incorporate as much sustainable growth as possible. Changes to regional, national and local policies all now amalgamated to address key issue over 3 years. Now looking to 2041 (extension of 10 years); initially up until 2031 then a further chapter to 2041 and beyond with linkages to existing plans &amp; strategies.</p> <p>The team is exploring trends in society and the need to align the review with local industrial strategy when produced. In terms of the future of transport, low emissions were top of the list, linked to carbon neutrality, with new rapid transport modes &amp; more charging points. A bid has been submitted to LEP for Cheltenham &amp; Gloucester rapid transport which the team had been asked to progress to the next stage.</p> <p>Improving walking and cycling opportunities &amp; technologies such as real time passenger info and smart phones. Shaping the way to 2041 with 80,000 new houses to be delivered in the County; the majority in the central Severn Vale between Tewkesbury, Ashchurch &amp; Stonehouse.</p>	

<p>Top strategic issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A417 missing link – a half-billion pound scheme;</li> <li>• M5 J10 four-ways West of Cheltenham – a quarter billion pound scheme bid submitted - decision anticipated by end of 2019;</li> <li>• J9 A46 – garden town status;</li> <li>• West Cheltenham Cyber Project - £22 million to address existing infrastructure deficits to enable future cyber park;</li> <li>• Transport terminals – maximise audience consultation &amp; transport operators using low emission vehicles. In addition to existing P&amp;R at Arle Court, Waterwells &amp; the Racecourse plan proposing 6 interchange hubs between the following chosen areas to address pinch points &amp; future growth areas: M5 J10, A46 Shurdington, Elmbridge - West of Gloucester, M5 J11A and M5 J12 – all chosen as address pinch points/future growth areas;</li> <li>• Strengthening of cycling network within the county. Ultimate vision to enable cycling network between Tewkesbury &amp; Bishops Cleeve, Quedgeley &amp; Cirencester by 2041.</li> </ul> <p>All dependent on potential GFirstLEP funding, and successful correlation of GCC committed £150M Highways related funding.</p> <p>Future Metro rail also key – half-hourly service between Bristol to Gloucester &amp; hourly service to London for both Cheltenham &amp; Gloucester. GCC had commissioned a rail investment study to ensure the County has an economic strategy for rail. GCC aim to work with partners to deliver as wide a strategy as possible &amp; encourage CBC/stakeholders to be involved in the consultation.</p> <p>SE confirmed that guided buses on dedicated routes were part of current thinking for between Gloucester &amp; Cheltenham initially. It was noted that there was a need to identify routes urgently for planning purposes.</p> <p>RD stressed the volume of housing in Bishops Cleeve warranted an interchange rather than just a car park at the Racecourse. LS-H stated further investigation was needed. CC aware of the issue and a bid had gone to GFirstLEP focusing on linking the centre of Gloucester &amp; Cheltenham through to Bishops Cleeve &amp; Quedgeley. How to thread through urban network would be a real challenge due to cost of land. CllrPBaker stated it was a missed opportunity not to have a transport hub with the new development at Arle Court. Also no mention of protecting key routes for public transport as key to keeping bus priority all the way through. SE highlighted £22M funding allocated for transport improvement scheme west of Cheltenham would be used to buy land/ demolish existing building &amp; extend P&amp;R in due course. J10 HIF funding if successful would be spent on decking P&amp;R.</p> <p>SE asked that CDTF provide a comprehensive response once the LTP goes out to public consultation. The Chair acknowledged as very important &amp; wished GCC all success in moving the ideas forward.</p>	<p><b>JW</b></p>
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<p>75/19</p>	<p><b>Cheltenham Transport Plan phase 4 and wider High Street proposals</b></p> <p>JW tabled a report which was similar to the cabinet report to be published next week. CBC's Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> November to consider a recommendation requesting that the trial be made permanent or to abandon the trial. A Press Briefing would take place on 22/10/19. Cabinet recommendation to support the existing trial be made permanent, will go to the TRO on 11<sup>th</sup> December, 10am at St Paul's Church. Leader, CllrSJordan will represent CBC as sponsor &amp; has invited others who have previously supported the scheme and trial to support permanent closure. These include Rupert Cox of Stagecoach having seen a 4.3% growth in bus use since the trial started; Tom Beasley (Active Glos) believed it to be a key instrument in getting people out of their cars; Hon. Alderman Bill Bullingham, and Nicholas King. Others yet to respond</p> <p>The TRO Committee will be made up of 8 Councillors making recommendation in turn for Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> December.</p> <p>JW talked to the tabled paper noting that the phased approach had meant that the agenda concerning climate change had risen in importance and that CBC/GCC aligned with national government sustainable transport position. This is allied to solid evidence of modal shift including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A fall in town wide traffic movements c20%</li> <li>• Pedestrian footfall at Boots Corner itself up 124%, cyclists 185%; wheelchair /mobility scooter use up 125%</li> <li>• Stagecoach claiming an extra 270,000 passengers pa or 4.3% growth against a national decline of c2%</li> </ul> <p>Conversely the town's economic performance remained solid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town wide footfall was holding up against a general fall.</li> <li>• The Literature Festival claims to have had its best single attendance ever.</li> <li>• The brewery was 91% let and had rising footfall</li> <li>• The town centre vacancy rate is 8% but nationally 12%</li> <li>• Cheltenham is losing national occupiers but still attracting newcomers</li> <li>• Investment remains positive – Quadrangle, 111-1117 High Street, proposed Boxpark</li> <li>• Air quality data collected by Environmental Health showed a benign position; a general fall in NO<sub>2</sub> over a 10 year period and no spikes (up or down) during the Boots Corner trial.</li> </ul> <p>Traffic congestion and the remaining air quality hotspot along Poole Way (A4019) had not changed, but GCC had committed last January to funding of up to £1M for traffic light synchronisation / improvements from 2020.</p> <p>The BID survey specifically focussed upon the phase 4 trial had responses from only 28 out of 531 members so perhaps not as critical an issue as some have maintained.</p>	
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	<p>CR reported there having latterly been less emotion shown about the Boots Corner trial but the County's Leader, Cllr Mark Hawthorne had raised some concerns that should be addressed by the report. The Chair was scheduled to meet Cllr Hawthorne on 13<sup>th</sup> November.</p> <p>CllrAMcK reported that he had been misquoted by the media as having said on radio there had been an arrangement or 'deal' with the Brewery regarding the STF funding but that was clearly untrue, as CBC do not have the 'power' to make TRO decisions. However, in terms of available data alone, he felt that there was a comprehensive case for going ahead &amp; making the Order.</p> <p>CllrPBaker felt it important that the trial should not be politicised.</p> <p>JW highlighted that others would have opportunity to speak after the Leader so asked for feedback on anyone else the Board felt hadn't already been represented. Proposals to JW.</p>	All
76/19	<p><b>Local Industrial Strategy</b></p> <p>JW made a presentation on behalf of DS who was unable to attend. The Chair noted responses to draft LIS required by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019. The evidence outlined significant challenges (eg affordable housing, job vacancy rates) which GFirstLEP are hoping to use the LIS to address. It had been very effective gathering evidence through local partners and young people engagement. JW to arrange sub-group comprising MR/RD/GG/JW to meet the following week to discuss response by end October.</p>	JW
77/19	<p><b>A417 consultation</b></p> <p>JW talked to paper previously circulated and confirmed that TF had previously submitted a letter of support for route option 30 but now Highways England requesting a response on 3 alternative link options. JW to arrange sub-group (same as above) to also discuss response on behalf of CDTF.</p>	JW
78/19	<p><b>Cheltenham Spa Station – progress update</b></p> <p>JW confirmed significant slippage by Contractors on site, but unable to influence as directly engaged by GWR. Delivery target now unachievable but works continuing and CllrSJordan &amp; JW in conversation with Network Rail concerning maintenance for cycle route to Lansdown Bridge, which will connect to A40 cycle upgrade as part of GD3 funding.</p>	
79/19	<p><b>Funding update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>GD3</b> – covered during meeting</li> <li>• <b>Garden Communities</b> - initiation meeting with Homes England on 11<sup>th</sup> November &amp; further meeting that afternoon with Severn Trent Water, Tewkesbury BC &amp; Homes England</li> <li>• <b>J10 HIF bid</b> – submitted in March &amp; still 'alive'</li> </ul>	
80/19	<p><b>Quarterly update</b></p> <p>Tabled for comments by week ending 25<sup>th</sup> October. SE flagged incorrect date of GCC Cabinet - 17<sup>th</sup> not 18<sup>th</sup> December.</p>	All

<p><b>81/19</b></p>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>BT reported that the mausoleum off the High Street in Winston Churchill Gardens had been leased until end of March 2020 to a martial arts company for low rent but the local community wanted to see it used for community use rather than commercial use. The park behind has Green Flag status so suggested putting glass doors in so see through the building to the park. Group looking at green spaces in LHS so Townscape team involved in discussions with Property about the building. The Chair felt it useful to see the proposal circulated with the minutes and MR stated the Chamber would help support.</p> <p>BT requested update on the toilet block in St George’s Square as years since closure &amp; proposal of different use, but understand potentially a ‘changing place’ location. Considered by many as a blot on the landscape, between High Street &amp; Lower High Street. MR suggested it be one of the next areas to look at in terms of traffic congestion as demolition of the toilet block would give more space but this was countered by CR who agreed that improving that area was key but not necessarily dominating it by traffic.</p> <p>BT asked for the issue to be prioritised, as the toilet block could be made into something useful. RD felt financial issues should determine its use. The Chair suggested BT note ideas so it could be looked at strategically as part of the road network. CllrPBaker saw it as a project involving townscape to draw up some ideas.</p> <p>JW to liaise with Townscape team.</p> <p>BE had held meetings with GCC about parking on the Ambrose/Lower High St corner, but told no funding available for TRO so would not be considered. CllrAMcK stated once Boots Corner complete GCC would have ability to address issues down Lower High Street. He supported in principle but needed to look at in detail.</p>	<p><b>SE left 4:55pm</b></p> <p><b>JW</b></p> <p><b>JW</b></p>
	<p><b>Future meeting dates</b>  Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2020  Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020  <b>All 2:00pm at the Municipal Offices, Cheltenham</b></p>	<p><b>All</b></p>