

Future Oswestry Meeting - Updates meeting

Note of meeting held Thursday 13th July 2023 at Oswestry Guildhall

Partners	Oswestry Town Council (OTC)	Shropshire Council (SC)	Oswestry BID	Community Representatives
In attendance	Cllr Duncan Kerr Cllr Robert Macey	Tracy Darke Steve Law Cllr Mike Isherwood Andy Wigley Joe Bubb Samantha Jones Rose Dovey Ffion Horton	Adele Nightingale Tim Morris	Peter Lloyd Craig Marston
Welcome and apologies	Arren Roberts	Cllr Chris Schofield		
1. Notes of the last meeting	Meeting notes were agreed.			
2. Declarations of interest	None.			
3. Governance	<p>Discussed the appointment of rotating Chair and Deputy Chair to be from the same partner. In the absence of the SC member representative at this point in the meeting this will be deferred.</p> <p>JB currently reviewing Partnership Agreement. Document needs to be future proofed and signed off by partners.</p> <p>FOG members noted that the first two-year term of the Community Representatives will end in October.</p> <p>Members discussed possibility of evening meetings to accommodate attendance by Chair.</p>			
4. High Street Heritage Action Zone	<p>Update from Sam Jones.</p> <p><i>Capital Grant Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Work on current schemes that have been passed by the HSHAZ board have been completed.</i> • <i>We are working with 3 final properties to get schemes passed and completed by the end of the project.</i> • <i>Unsuccessful for UKSPF bid (to continue HSHAZ for another year and develop similar schemes in other northern market towns). They would like us to reapply. This time we would have the evidence of the HSHAZ report. Resubmit in August 2023. Rural fund coming up too (excludes Shrewsbury).</i> • <i>We were unsuccessful in the recent UKSPF bid to continue HSHAZ for another year and develop similar schemes in other northern market towns. However, we have been asked to reapply in the next round (August 2023- when we will have the evidence of the HSHAZ report). The UKSPF Rural Fund is also coming up (this excludes Shrewsbury).</i> 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Historic England scheduled for next week. They are keen to continue working with us on the HSHAZ project. <p><i>Public Realm</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clawdd Du – Bin store in on order. Just awaiting installation date. • Metal elements have been delayed again due to illness however all elements are back and have been powder coated so just require installation. I am in regular contact with the contractor to get this completed. • Wisteria on Cae Glas park will be re-assessed next month and if no improvement will be replaced. <p><i>Flagship</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on National Lottery Heritage Fund bid for funding to employ a business expert to work with OTC and its members to look at end uses as well as funding for repairs. • Meeting with Historic England to look at HAR funding for repairs as well. • Working group set up to work on progressing the repair programme. • Text written for banners for new hoarding. Currently with designers. • Carrying out desk-based research with research group on history of Llwyd Mansion. <p><i>Other</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKSPF bids in for main programme and cultural consortium continuation. • Meeting with HE to look at possibility of other collaborative projects in Shropshire.
<p>5. Update from Property and Development Team</p>	<p>Verbal update from Steve Law.</p> <p><i>Former Morrisons Site</i></p> <p>Consultation on car park has concluded. We are in position to move forward and resolve the commercial deal for the future of the site.</p> <p><i>Castle View</i></p> <p>SC is actively implementing plans to consolidate own staff use into much smaller area and is actively marketing asset. Some interest so far.</p> <p><i>Cambrian Heritage Building</i></p> <p>PSG Property Services Group are working on issues with the corbels at high level. The ultimate aim is to drop the scaffolding. Press release needed to explain challenges from repairs perspective. SC committed to finalising conservation management plan. Cambrian Railways Trust are interested in taking a greater role in the building moving forward. Option appraisal work has started and interest from the Cambrian Railways Trust will be factored in.</p>
<p>6. Church Street</p>	<p>Verbal update from Tracy Darke:</p> <p>SC has established a working group on Church Street. SC is conscious of the monthly hire cost of road hogs. These were installed initially as a Covid precaution but do also enhance road safety.</p> <p>Three options are under discussion:</p>

	<p>1 (Temporary): Install the planters and remove the hoggs. 2 (Semi-permanent): Buildouts, tarmacking and installing planters which will last 10-20 years. This option is with HSHAZ and BID budget. 3 (Permanent): Cost in excess of £1 million due to drainage works.</p> <p>Members discussed the three options. SC will have further discussions around surfacing options with FOG partners including differentiation of parking and loading bays. Concerns were discussed regarding delay in delivering this project and the safety of the seats/planters being place on the carriageway. A follow up meeting has been arranged.</p> <p>Update on M&Co Building. Some M&Co stores may be retained and reopened. If the building is put for sale then BID will link up potential investors.</p>
<p>7. Future Connectivity Plan</p>	<p>Verbal update from Ffion Horton.</p> <p><i>Future Connectivity Plan report due from WSP very soon. FOG will need to agree which 'champion project' it would like to move forward and seek funding for. WSP will contact OTC and BID to arrange a call to walk through options which will then go into the Place Plan.</i></p> <p><i>Highways are considering the Draft Local Plan and how infrastructure schemes can support upcoming development. Objective is to install new infrastructure schemes ahead of development taking place.</i></p> <p>Agreement that this approach fits in the with FOG's project prioritisation work. Discussion of potential rail link from Gobowen to Oswestry; this would be a transformative project increasing GVA, creating jobs and creating a vital link to the orthopaedic hospital. This issue was raised in the Commons by Helen Morgan MP. Awaiting Government decision on whether this scheme will progress.</p>
<p>8. Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)</p>	<p>Verbal update from Rose Dovey.</p> <p><i>6 week consultation ended 16th June. 84 responses from Oswestry and Gobowen. Schools consultation ended last week and we are expecting more responses. Top 3 concerns were poor maintained surfaces, lack of footways and high traffic speeds.</i></p>
<p>9. Festival Square</p>	<p>Verbal update from Adele Nightingale.</p> <p><i>First draft of the Festival Square Feasibility Study Report has been sent to members and will also be sent to the BID board. The report identifies next steps, including possibly applying to the UKSPF for public realm improvements. This project is a major chance to enhance this part town and feedback overwhelmingly shows that the public does not want Festival Square to be 'just a car park'. Compromises will be required, such as maintaining some parking spaces and loading access for shops.</i></p> <p>Internal discussions needed on potential reduction in car park revenue and how boosted economic development may be able to offset this.</p>
<p>10. Bus Station</p>	<p>Verbal update from Andy Wigley</p>

	<i>The planning application for the removal of the canopy has been given permission (planning reference 23/O1628/FUL). Quotes are being sought for the repainting of the posts and fencing.</i>
11. Signage Audit	Verbal update from Joe Bubb. <i>Instruction received to remove temporary signs. This will either be done by SC's inhouse team or by developers where required.</i>
12. Communications	Update from Alice James: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Second bimonthly FOG update was released at the start of June and picked up by local press:</i> https://newsroom.shropshire.gov.uk/2023/03/update-future-oswestry-partnership/ • <i>Next scheduled update is for end of July. I'll be contacting SC officers soon for content.</i> • <i>Hoping to release something in the near future re: bridge – awaiting more info and timeline from Andy Moreton.</i> <p>Comms needed on progress of the Mile End footbridge. Footbridge is currently on site and installation will be October. Ramps are being fabricated and will follow on. The footbridge should be completely finished by February. SC is looking at public rights of way options prior to the opening of the Innovation Park.</p>
13. Engagement	Members agreed that more direct communication with the public is needed. A public meeting/networking event will be planned.
14. Date of next meeting and agenda items	Thursday 10 th August 2023 (Projects meeting) Thursday 14 th September 2023 (Updates meeting) Members to vote on procedure for appointing Deputy Chair.

Actions

1	Poll members on availability for evening meetings.	MI/JB/RC
2	Send members photos of planters and benches for Church Street.	SJ
3	Send consultants' report on Oswestry/Gobowen railway link to members when available.	AN
4	Send members report on the LCWIP consultation when available.	RD
6	Issue comms on progress of Mile End footbridge.	AJ/J
7	Supply update of housing and 5-year land supply.	JB
8	E-mail members to discuss potential dates for FOG public meeting/networking event.	JB