

THE SEVERN LOOP LOCAL FORUM

NOTE OF DECISIONS AND ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 20TH MAY 2015 AT THE GUILDHALL, FRANKWELL, SHREWSBURY

Responsible Officer: Tom Brettell, tom.brettell@shropshire.gov.uk Tel 01743 252482

Committee Members Present:

Shropshire Council:

Andrew Bannerman

Anne Chebsey

Shrewsbury Town Council:

Alan Townsend

In attendance:

Andy Savage, Strategic Highways & Transport Commissioner, SC

Kevin Aitken, Transport Planner (Central), SC

Mandy Beever, Team Manager, Transactional Management, IP&E Ltd

PC Kevin Roberts, WMP

George Candler, Director of Commissioning, SC

Tom Brettell, Senior Community Enablement Officer, SC

There were approximately 25 members of the public present at the meeting.

ACTION:

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Mansel Williams towards whom best wishes were expressed.

3. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Members were reminded that they must not participate in discussion or voting on any matter in which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

No interests were declared.

4. NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING & MATTERS ARISING

Agreed - Notes of the meeting held on 4th February 2015 be approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

All matters arising were covered on the agenda.

5. RESIDENTS CAR PARKING IN SHREWSBURY TOWN CENTRE

Cllr Bannerman welcomed Kevin Aitken, Transport Planner (Central), to the meeting. Kevin had been invited to discuss issues relating to residents car parking and possible solutions following the matter being raised at the last meeting. A lively and positive discussion took place:

- several years ago a scheme was introduced to allow town centre residents to have permits to park in some of the long stay car parks.
- Residents are keen to review this to look at the possibility of adding on street parking permits.
- There is a policy that allows for schemes to be implemented but there has to be a lot of consultation in advance.
- It was agreed that it was difficult to fully understand the issues or the scale of the problem without a survey- is it isolated or throughout the town?
- Some residents have tried to get information from Shropshire Council to understand how many people have taken up permits under the current system but have not received this as yet.
- Events such as the Flower Show and seasonal flooding can have a big impact on this system.
- Currently Belmont is often completely empty (1hr short stay at present).
- Residents are looking for a permanent solution.
- It will always be a fine balance as no matter what is implemented or proposed there will always be a counter view and those that don't really care. Hence the procedures around consultation.
- Residents are hoping to retain a mixture of permits and casual visitor 1 hr short stay. It was felt that this would help cut pollution currently incurred by people driving around trying to find car parking.
- It was felt that this is not just a problem in the town centre as peripheral areas such as Longden Coleham suffer similarly.
- Planning Policies that do not stipulate the provision of parking for new build or conversion are a contributory factor to this issue. There is current concern over two current conversions in Chester St that are building on current parking.
- Porthill, especially Mountfields has real problems- have looked twice at a permit scheme and the residents voted against it. There are lots of cons as well as pro's. The issue is not easily resolved.
- Coton crescent decided against a permit scheme some time ago.
- There has been a recent consultation on a potential scheme in Abbey Foregate and the results of this would be useful to look at.
- It was agreed that Kevin would undertake some research into the take up of the existing permit scheme and to feedback this and the results of the Abbey Foregate consultation to the next meeting.

**Kevin
Aitken**

6. UPDATE ON THE MARCHES LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP FUNDED TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEMES PROGRAMME

Andy Savage, Strategic Highways & Transport Commissioner at Shropshire Council gave a verbal update on the work looking at transport infrastructure schemes in Shrewsbury:

- Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP's) were set up last year. They are a collaboration of local authorities and private business partners to help economic growth in defined areas to which the Government gave funding to kick start work.
- Shropshire is part of the Marches LEP which is a partnership of Shropshire, Herefordshire and Telford and Wrekin.
- A bid has been developed for highways infrastructure projects in Shrewsbury consisting of several facets:
 - The development of the Oxon link road acting as a by-pass for Welshpool road as part of the South West Sustainable Urban Extension (SWSUE). This is also the first phase of the North West relief road.
 - A phased Town Centre integrated infrastructure package (known as Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Package – SITP which is all about how we manage traffic in and around the town. This looks at the whole town centre and how it functions.
 - Phase 1 is about how we sign and orientate people from the bypass. This will provide forward signage to direct people to the most appropriate parking solution via the appropriate routes, encouraging park and ride.
 - Phase 2 is a range of inner ring road improvements consisting of 4 schemes (English bridge gyratory, Longden road, Meole brace and Heathgates.)
 - Phase 3 is within the river loop itself and is focussed on how to make the town thrive, further discourage congestion, make the pedestrian more dominant and conserve the town's historic core. Only if you absolutely need to drive into the town centre should you do so. This will also incorporate looking at the management of on street parking and a way finding project from entry points and parking places so people can find their way around.
- The Business cases for these projects are going to LEP Board very shortly.
- In total this is a £10-12m scheme with half of the funding being requested from the LEP and the remaining funding coming from other developments in the town through Community Infrastructure Levy, Section 106 etc.
- There will be a series of stakeholder events from August onwards for people to interact with the proposals and sign up to them.
- It is anticipated that comprehensive design work will commence in January/ February 2016 followed by the procurement work.
- The aim is to complete the work in the next 5years.
- SC is hoping to use the scheduled gas works in the town to tag some of these works onto to minimise disruption.

Cllr Bannerman welcomed this very encouraging news as a huge step forward.

A discussion ensued around the following key points:

- Assurance was needed for access for disabled and it was confirmed that this will form a key part of the consultation
- The Civic society had a proposal some 40 years ago around creating parking on the periphery of the town and providing electrical vehicles to ferry in. It was confirmed that this work coincides with the tendering of the Park and Ride within which electrical vehicles are being encouraged.
- It was felt that clashes of opinion and a lack of consensus in the past had resulted in nothing happening and it was agreed that there needed to be a very clear set of objectives consulted upon to avoid this happening again.
- The primary objective for the funding bid is around economic growth and all aspects demonstrate how they will contribute to this. There will always be factions and sometimes consultation is difficult. All parties have to understand that we all may have to compromise.
- It was confirmed that cycling is very much part of the proposals.

7. LICENSING POLICY UPDATE

Mandy Beever, Team Manager, Transactional Management, IP&E Ltd gave a brief verbal update on licensing policy changes:

- From 1st June Public Protection and Planning are moving into IP&E Ltd. Mandy will retain responsibility for licensing and all front facing customer contact elements in this service.
- The new company is looking to draw everything together including planning and licensing. These services will no longer operate in organisational silos and will work in a much more joined up way.
- Currently working on new legislation whereby all taxis will have to have a minimum euro 5 pollution level.
- Premises licensing is a hot topic at present and the team are acutely aware of some of the issues in Shrewsbury Town Centre. The Out of Hours staff have a hotline for the public to contact and the officers will respond immediately to go out to witness any issues themselves. This number is 0345 678 9000 which is the switchboard number that automatically goes through to the Out of Hours Team out of office hours.
- Lots of partnership work happens with WMP, preparatory work with the University and with the trade.

PC Kevin Roberts who leads on Licensing for WMP in Shrewsbury added:

- The key aim for WMP when licensing changes came into place some years ago was to reduce crime. This has largely been achieved.
- Have developed very strong relationships with the trade including owners, licensees and staff.
- 100% of door staff are Security Industry Accredited and we are one of only five towns with this level of take up.
- The town is increasing in size including the University where WMP are working on a structured organised social programme for students. There is a 5 year future plan in place that takes account of the town's growth and includes the impact of increased footfall from other towns. WMP monitor footfall and use social media with the strong message "If sensible please come, if not do not come".
- There is a very robust system for dealing with license applications which requires a detailed business plan, operational model and information on the establishment's target audience. Every new licensee is visited and where appropriate other partners including the Fire Service are included.
- A license will not be approved until all measures that are seen fit are in place e.g. CCTV, radio systems.
- Pubwatch is a really important part of the system and the banning order that bans individuals from all premises is very effective.

A lively debate ensued:

- The difficulties in finding the balance between the night time economy and residents were recognised. It is a very fine balance as

to what is acceptable and unacceptable for residents and there is a lot of concern over late license applications.

- Technically the law allows for 24hr drinking 7 days a week. In Shrewsbury there have been applications to go beyond 3 am but these have not been agreed.
- The national trend in drinking is that people go out later -1030/1100 and drink through into the early hours. This is then backed up by taxis, train times.
- Shrewsbury has a very dense population in the town centre. This has been encouraged by planning policy allowing new developments and conversions of commercial buildings into residential property.
- Finding the balance is the key. The legislation dictates that any application must be looked at and is subject to a 21 day consultation period. If objections are raised during this period these will be looked in relation to the 4 key objectives:
 - 1 Prevention of crime and disorder
 - 2 Public Safety
 - 3 The prevention of public nuisance
 - 4 The protection of children from harm
- If the application causes concern against these it will go to the licensing hearing.
- There is intensive consultation with the applicant throughout the process with the aim to reach a compromise before the hearing. Officers often act as the middle men but they cannot deviate from the legislation which can often lead to frustration from residents
- If a license application is accepted and the licensee breaches it they will be subject to review.
- A BBC programme aired today highlights the various states of alcohol consumption and how often the problem for residents is much before the crime and disorder kicks in, principally the noise
- The Licensing act is clear- premises can't serve someone who is intoxicated.
- The noise element can often down to individuals' hearing that is impaired by loud venues and causes them to speak much more loudly when they exit the venue.
- Concern was raised as to who and when the decision had been made that Shrewsbury is a night time economy and whether the residents were consulted on this.
- Cllr Bannerman confirmed that there has to be a balance and there are solutions, the question is how we manage this legally. The 2003 Licensing Act changed everything and potentially MP's may need to be lobbied to bring about change.
- There are many venues that cause no trouble at all but there are some that cause lots of problems mainly around noise from music. The key issue for residents is not being able to get to sleep- this is a basic human right that cannot be ignored.
- Lots of meetings have taken place with residents groups and where issues are being encountered it is really important that residents contact the Out of Hours Team to gather evidence. The 0345 678 9000 number goes straight to this team out of hours and it is crucial that residents report incidents at the time so the team can witness it as it happens. Currently SC are not getting these calls.

- Cllr Chebsey encouraged people to contact this number reflecting on the experiences she's had recently where she had faced lots of problems with events at the WM Show ground but recently the team have been brilliant and have worked hard with the event organisers to overcome issues.
- It was felt that Shrewsbury was almost unique in that we have a very dense population in an area that has a lot of licensed premises which is very different to most cities. We must all look at how we manage this.
- The EU Government have recently issued guidance around a quiet period between 11pm and 7am. The old licensing system gave residents a period of peace that the new system does not.
- Problems relating to alcohol are vast and a big drain on the public purse.
- The issue of inappropriate cycling in the town centre including cyclists without lights was raised again and PC Roberts agreed to discuss this further with the town centre officers.

**PC KEV
ROBERTS**

8. UPDATE ON SWIMMING IN SHREWSBURY

George Candler, Director of Commissioning at Shropshire Council and the lead officer for the work to look at options for future swimming provision updated the meeting on the progress of the work (presentation slides are appended):

- Shropshire Council have been working with Leisure Experts, Strategic Leisure to look in detail at the options for providing sustainable swimming solutions for the town.
- The options for swimming that are being consulted upon are:
 - Refurbishment of the existing facility (£2.3m)
 - Upgrade of the existing facility (£12.8m)
 - New build on the existing site (£10.9m)
 - New build on land at Clayton Way, Oxon (£10.6m)
 - New build on land off Ellesmere Road (£10.9m)
 - New build at Shrewsbury Sports Village (£9m)
 - New build on land at Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology (£10.6- £10.9m)
- Public consultation on these options starts on 28th May and runs for 4 months until the 25th September.
- The consultation is largely web based using survey monkey but will consist of lots of conversation with key groups, meetings and organisations.
- The results will form part of a cabinet report for a decision on a preferred option by the end of the calendar year
- It was confirmed that Shropshire Council absolutely don't have a preferred option.

9. HAVE YOUR SAY

- An update was requested on the Stew. It was confirmed that there are hearings in July and then December in order to give sufficient

time for all issues to be considered. It was confirmed that the University had been taken into account.

- Concern was raised over graffiti, urination and defecation in Belmont bank. A lot of work has happened to tackle graffiti and any incidents of urination/ defecation were asked to be reported.
- It was confirmed that the owner of the old Bank shop had been contacted in relation to finding a future owner and to take measures to secure the front area of the property
- Concerns over the lack of food shopping/ eating facilities in Frankwell for University students were raised. It was confirmed that there will be a refectory in the Guildhall and that market forces may lead to other facilities opening
- A query was raised over the influence of the Severn Loop Forum to which the response was the influence over officers and Councillors was strong as was the ability to raise issues, take these forward and report back.
- The issue of “studentification” was raised and it was confirmed that work was well underway to take measures around planning to minimise any impact of houses of multiple occupation. Cllr Alan Mosley is taking this forward and SC Cabinet have considered and recognised this issue. It was agreed that this would be an item for discussion at the next meeting.

Cllr Bannerman thanked everyone for their attendance, particularly the officers.

The meeting closed at 9:05pm.

Councillor Andrew Bannerman.

Signed:

Chairman

Date: