

TOWN CENTRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Thursday 15th December 2022 at 2pm

Held via Zoom

MINUTES Pages 1-5

Present:

Accessible Stratford represented by Elizabeth Dixon

Bell Court represented by Holly Woodhead

Royal Shakespeare Company represented by Emma Gibbons

Shakespeare Birthplace Trust represented by Rachael O'Connor-Boyd

Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council represented by the Town Clerk and Cllr Richard Vos

Stratford District Council attended by Cllr Jenny Fradgley

Stratford Town Trust represented by Sara Aspley (Chair)

The Stratford Society represented by John Scampion (Vice Chair)

Town Transport Group represented by Colin Stewart

Warwickshire County Council represented by Aaron Corsi, and also attended by Cllr Tim Sinclair.

Clerk to the Strategic Partnership: Margo Galvin

Apologies for absence: Dave Ayton-Hill, Catherine Marks, Cllr Kate Rolfe, John Careford, Cllr Anne Parry, (Stratford District Council), Cllr Gill Cleeve and Cllr Tony Jackson (Stratford Town Council), Tim Aucott (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust), John Stacey (Bell Court), Helen Peters (Shakespeare's England), Dianne Mansell (Stratford BID), Sam Jackson and Adam Dent (Advent Communications), Rachel Sharpe (RSC)

Not present: Stephen Rumble (WCC), Joanne Bozdoganli (SDC) Rachel Sharpe (RSC)

1. Actions and Minutes from the meeting held on 24th November 2022

Action 2: 24.11.22 - NDP: Caroline Nash has spoken to the Town Council's Planning Consultant and SDC about the NDP. The consultant regularly reviews the plan and has advised that it is in line with the current National Planning Policy Framework, and that a full review of the NDP would be premature at this stage.

The Chair reminded Partnership members to familiarise themselves with the NDP.

Action 5: 24.11.22 – The Chair and Committee Clerk had discussed future Strategic Partnership meeting dates and calendar invites had been sent out. Meetings will be monthly (except for August, when there will be no meeting) and

will be held mainly via Zoom. It is proposed that there will be quarterly in-person meetings.

There were no other matters arising from the previous minutes, which were approved.

2. LUF update

The Chair had spoken to Dave Ayton-Hill who advised that there is still no news regarding the LUF decision. It is likely that the announcement will be made after Christmas.

The Chair advised that the local authorities have received notification of the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) awards and an update should be available soon. STT has applied for funding in relation to a property in the centre of the town. If the bid is successful this project could come forward to the Strategic Partnership and would be a great opportunity for the town.

Cllr Sinclair commented that the districts and boroughs are running the SPF process for the first time and WCC is supporting them in this. Aaron Corsi noted that SDC is taking a strategic approach to the SPF and providing flexibility on how the money will be allocated i.e. creating 'pots' of money that organisations can bid for. The Chair commented that it would be helpful if organisations collaborated on project bids as there is likely to be some cross-over.

3. Feedback from Workshop 3: 'Great Vibe' held on 6th December – Cllr Tim Sinclair

Cllr Sinclair presented the latest iteration of the presentation *Identifying Major Strategic Projects for Stratford*, which had been updated to incorporate outputs from the 'Great Vibe' session held on 6th December. A change of wording was made in the *Great Vibe, a Fun Place* section on the *Key Themes* slide which now reads: 'Create a vibrant town with a more inclusive and playful approach ...'

Over 100 points were raised in this session and these have been distilled into eight main areas. Topic 5: (Provide a sufficient quantity and quality of Changing Place toilets and public toilets) received a lot of support during the session. This was discussed further, with Partnership members agreeing that another Changing Place toilet is needed in the town centre in addition to the current one at the Leisure Centre (funded by WCC). It was noted that John Stacey has allocated space at Bell Court for a Changing Place toilet but funding of c£20k is required to realise the project. Only SDC can apply for this funding and it is hoped that they have done so; an announcement on this is due in December.

Cllr Sinclair advised that the final workshop will take place on 10th January and will discuss Transport. He has met with the Town Transport Group (TTG) which has many good ideas. The workshop will appraise these, together with the ideas raised in the previous workshops, and consider how everything can be 'joined up'.

Action 1: 15.12.22 – Committee Clerk to circulate the latest version of the Vision workshop slides to all.

4. Town Transport update – Colin Stewart

LTTP4: A response to the Partnership's letter to Cllr Izzi Seccombe had been received from Dave Ayton-Hill. This advised that the LLTP was intended to be high level and that local actions plans will come out of this. WCC will be happy to support Stratford in this but cannot provide funding.

The Greenway: Colin Stewart advised that work has started on draining and re-surfacing the Greenway with an all-weather surface. Cllr Fradgley advised that S106 money is being used for this work and WCC has also contributed funding.

Tiddington Road/Clopton Bridge traffic lights: The TTG has been pushing for alternatives to the proposed scheme and awaits feedback. In the meantime, WCC has issued a press release stating the scheme is on hold and that nothing will happen before 2024. John Scampion thanked the TTG for their work on this. The Chair also thanked Cllrs Fradgley and Rolfe for their efforts.

West Midlands rail investment strategy: Colin Stewart advised that the WM Rail Executive will be attending the TTG February meeting to discuss the new rail investment strategy and the possible effect on Stratford. Colin will report back to the Partnership.

DfT-funded cycling projects/pilot schemes in Leamington: Aaron Corsi advised that there is some DfT-funded work taking place in Leamington to look at cycle routes and priorities (similar to the London Borough of Waltham Forest 'Mini Holland' scheme – see [Five Years of Enjoy Waltham Forest - YouTube](#)). Over the next two years, some DfT funding may become available across the wider area. Cllr Fradgley noted there will be a report about the Mini Holland scheme at the next Cycle Forum. The Forum has been pushing the case for Stratford to receive funding if/when the money comes forward.

5. Future structure of the Strategic Partnership

John Scampion provided an update on a positive and helpful meeting that he and the Chair attended with Mark Lee and Mark Brightburn (who works for Warwick District Council) to discuss the Leamington Transformation Board. The key points are summarised below:

Vision: As discussed at the November Strategic Partnership meeting, Leamington has a good vision document which was created by Warwick District Council (WDC) 4-5 years ago. The vision was adopted after public consultation. Leamington's Transformation Board was established this year to realise this vision and is the initiative of WDC with the full support of the Leader of WDC and County.

Funding: Leamington actively seeks funding and has successfully achieved funds from various sources including the Future of the High Street fund and the West Midlands Combined Authority. Having secured Future of the High Street funding, WDC formed the Transformation Board to manage projects through a transformation framework. Leamington has also submitted a bid for LUF money.

Transformation Board structure: The Board has nine members, all of whom are local authority members. The Chair, Mark Lee, is independent and his post is funded by WDC. They work with Mark Brightburn at WDC who manages the operational side of things. Although the Board is not yet fully established, it does have a constitution and a purpose. It has an advisory board consisting of the town's various organisations, but they don't have a place on the Board. The Chair of the advisory board will be able to attend the main Board meetings but won't be able to participate. Both WCC and WDC provide support in kind to the Board.

Conclusion: The Leamington Transformation Board structure is very different to what Stratford currently has and might achieve in the future. Further research into how other towns have set up Transformation Boards or similar would be useful. Strong political leadership will be essential to the future success of Stratford's Strategic Partnership/Transformation Board.

Action 2: 15.12.22: Emma Gibbons to research East Anglia; John Scampion: Kendal; Aaron Corsi and Catherine Marks: Nuneaton; Dave Ayton-Hill: Shrewsbury; Colin Stewart to research best practice with his former colleagues.

Comments and questions:

Colin Stewart has done some research into the High Street fund and noted that having a Town Board was a prerequisite of achieving funding. He will circulate further information to Partnership members.

It is unclear why the Leamington Board only has one independent member (the Chair). Aaron Corsi advised that the Board's membership had been decided by WDC and the Board is weighted in WDC's favour for decision-making. It was noted that the Future High Streets fund is time-limited and the money must be spent within a deadline, which may account for the Board's structure.

Aaron Corsi circulated two useful links:

Town Fund role description: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/towns-fund-supplementary-guidance-for-town-deal-boards>

LGA report on Cornerstones of Culture: www.local.gov.uk/topics/culture-tourism-leisure-and-sport/cornerstones-culture

Support from WCC: The Chair had a very productive meeting with Catherine Marks at WCC. WCC is keen to offer the Strategic Partnership support from Catherine's team and, in January, she will allocate one new member of her staff to work with the Partnership. It was suggested this person could help develop the brief for the new vision document and that they be invited to attend the January

Strategic Partnership meeting as an observer. There may also be some funding from WCC for small projects. The Chair noted that, now the Partnership has strong support from County, there is a strong argument to put to SDC for their support in the new year.

Rachel Sharpe had run an Open Space event '*What is the point of Creative Placemaking?*'. Thirty-five organisations from across the UK attended. The report should make interesting reading and Rachel offered to provide an update at the next meeting.

Action 3: 15.12.22: Committee Clerk to include '*What is the point of Creative Placemaking?*' update to the January agenda.

Action 4: 15.12.22: Committee Clerk to circulate the December meeting minutes before Christmas and provide a link to the Zoom recording.

Action: 5: 15.12.22: Committee Clerk to research venues for the February in-person meeting.

6. Communications

As no one from Advent Communications was able to attend the meeting there was no communications update. It was noted that funds have been allocated for Advent to develop a new Strategic Partnership website. However, there is currently insufficient content available for the new site. This will be followed up with Advent in the new year.

7. Any Other Business

The Chair thanked members for their work during 2022 and wished everyone a Happy Christmas.

*The next meeting of the Strategic Partnership will be on
Thursday 19 January 2023 at 2pm via Zoom.*