

TOWN CENTRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Thursday 29 September 2022 at 2pm

Held remotely on Zoom

MINUTES Pages 1-4

Present:

Accessible Stratford represented by Elizabeth Dixon

Royal Shakespeare Company represented by Rachel Sharpe and Emma Gibbons

Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council represented by the Mayor, Cllr Gill Cleeve, Cllr Richard Vos, also attended by the Town Clerk, Caroline Nash

Stratforward BID – represented by Diane Mansell

Stratford District Council – represented by John Careford and Cllr Matt Jennings

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, Catherine Marks, and also attended by Stephen Rumble. Cllr Kate Rolfe and Cllr Tim Sinclair joined the meeting later.

Advent Communications represented by Sam Jackson

Clerk to the Strategic Partnership: Margo Galvin

Apologies for absence: Tim Aucott (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust), Helen Peters (Shakespeare's England), Adam Dent (Advent Communications) and Cllr J Fradgley.

Not present: Cllr Tony Jackson, John Stacey (Bell Court)

1. Welcomes

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, her first since taking over from Geraldine Collinge.

2. Actions and Minutes from the meeting held on 28 July 2022

Action 1: 28.07.22 - Stephen Rumble advised that he would circulate the Transport Options Assessment report to the group.

Action 2: 28.07.22 - John Careford will circulate the notes from the last WMCA workshop.

Correction to minute item 7: Future of the Strategic Partnership. John Scampion noted that this item could imply that the LUF funding, if achieved, could be used to fund the full-time post to develop the Strategic Partnership business

plan. This is not the case. The Committee Clerk will adjust the minutes accordingly.

The minutes were then approved.

3. Levelling Up Fund submission update

Stephen Rumble advised that the bid was submitted in early August and the result is expected in the autumn. Competition for funding is expected to be fierce due to the high level of submissions this time round.

Public consultation - analysis of quantitative feedback from the survey was completed and included in the bid submission. Analysis of the qualitative feedback is currently underway. It is hoped that this can be shared at the October Strategic Partnership meeting.

4. Future of the Strategic Partnership

It was noted that Leamington has recently appointed Mark Lee as the first independent Chair of the Leamington Transformation Board. His post has been entirely funded by Warwick District Council. Sara has spoken to the Leader of WDC, Cllr Andrew Day, about Stratford's plans for a Transformation Board, and he is very open to sharing his insights. She will liaise with John Careford and Catherine Marks to arrange a meeting with him and some of the Board members.

The Leamington Transformation Board consists of elected members, with an independent Chair whose post is funded by Future High streets funding. It brings three Councils together and has delegated powers to make decisions. Below the board, there is a technical group/advisory board which brings together a wider set of stakeholders whose expertise can be drawn on as required. This appears to be the equivalent of the Stratford Strategic Partnership. Smaller project groups are in place to deliver specific projects. Leamington has also appointed a consultant to manage much of the legwork.

Catherine Marks advised that she attends the Leamington Transformation Board and will be happy to share information and thoughts on what they are doing and how the Board was created.

The future of the Strategic Partnership in Stratford had been discussed at the July Partnership meeting and an agreement to accept Geraldine Collinge's proposed structure had been reached in principle. However, this needs further consideration before anything can be confirmed, and clarity is also needed around how the structure would work with/without funding. Funding remains a major issue for the Partnership.

It was noted that a series of Investment Workshops, initiated by Geraldine, has been running in tandem with the Strategic Partnership meetings to explore ways of generating investment outside of the Levelling Up Funding. The question

remains: how does Stratford convince investors that the town has a plan for delivering projects?

Cllr Vos commented that the Partnership should become more action-oriented, with projects identified and fully specified and a project manager appointed to drive business planning and funding applications. John Careford reminded the meeting that the Partnership had previously agreed to set out Stratford's vision, themes and priority projects in a prospectus that would help attract investment into the town. Cllr Sinclair's vision session work will feed into this prospectus.

It was noted that there will be local elections in Stratford in May 2023. Therefore, there is a risk that some of the current Strategic Partnership members may not be re-elected and expertise will be lost.

5. Vision session update – Cllr Tim Sinclair

Cllr Sinclair shared his updated document *A Strategy for Stratford*, which he had first presented to the Partnership in June. The document sets out the outcomes of the vision sessions he had facilitated, including four areas of delivery that had been identified: Creativity and the Arts; Evolving the Town Centre, Ensuring Ease of Movement and Creating a Vibrant Town. Four two-hour ideas workshops will now be held over the next four months to identify priority projects for each of these themes. Outputs from these sessions will be brought back to the Partnership for agreement. Each workshop will comprise Strategic Partnership members plus invited guests from outside the group. Cllr Sinclair will allocate members to the different groups. Anyone wishing to swap groups should let him know by Friday 7th October. The first ideas workshop is proposed for October, before the next Strategic Partnership meeting (date/time/venue to be confirmed).

Rachel Sharpe (RSC) and Diane Mansell (BID) advised that their respective organisations are currently working on their business plans and timescales are tight. Therefore, it would be very helpful if the Strategic Partnership can complete its ideas work as soon as possible so that the outcomes can be factored into their planning.

Overall, there was a positive response to Cllr Sinclair's strategy document. The Chair commented that the document should reflect the vision and mission outlined in the Strategic Partnership's original Terms of Reference. This needs to be checked.

<p>Action 1: 29.09.2022 - Committee Clerk to assist with setting up four ideas workshops from October to January (dates/venues).</p>

6. Communications – Sam Jackson (Advert Communications)

The press release about the Levelling Up Fund submission had been widely covered by the media. Advent will liaise with Stephen Rumble about communicating the result when this is announced in the autumn.

Communications in the pipeline:

- Press release to announce Sara's role as Strategic Partnership Chair
- Progress the new Strategic Partnership website with Advent, Sara Aspley and Margo Galvin
- Vision sessions press release inviting public's feedback (after they have all taken place)

7. Transport update – Colin Stewart

Colin provided an overview of the Town Transport Group's activities over recent months. He noted that LTP4 had been published recently. This is very high level with no detail and no long-term Transport plan included for Stratford, despite a promise that the town would be included and the Transport Group having contributed proposals. The Strategic Partnership needs to push for a Stratford Transport plan and to take the lead. It was suggested that a consultant be appointed to help with this.

York was cited as an exemplar for having a long-term transport plan and Partnership members were encouraged to look at what the city had achieved.

8. Format of future Strategic Partnership meetings

The Strategic Partnership was formed during lockdown and since then all meetings have been held via Zoom. It is now proposed that some of the meetings are held face to face or as hybrid meetings.

<p>Action 2: 29.09.2022 - The Chair and Committee Clerk will look at scheduling face to face meetings and investigate potential venues, including the Town Hall and the District Council offices (Elizabeth House).</p>
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9. Any other Business

Action: Cllr Sinclair was asked to circulate his Vision session slides.

*The next meeting of the Strategic Partnership will be on
Thursday October 27 at 2pm at Stratford District Council and online via Teams
(details to be provided)*