

# **TOWN CENTRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP MEETING**

**Thursday 23 November 2023 at 2pm**

Held via Zoom

## **MINUTES Pages 1-5**

### **Present:**

**Accessible Stratford** represented by Elizabeth Dixon

**Royal Shakespeare Company** represented by Rachel Sharpe

**Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council** represented by Cllr R Vos, Caroline Nash (Vice Chair) and Cllr Lindsay MacDonald (Observer)

**Stratford District Council** represented by John Careford

**The Stratford Society** represented by John Scampion

**Stratford Town Trust** represented by Sara Aspley (Chair)

**Town Transport Group** represented by Colin Stewart

**Warwickshire County Council** represented by Aaron Corsi and Aoife O'Gorman, also attended by Cllr Kate Rolfe and Cllr Tim Sinclair.

**Clerk to the Strategic Partnership:** Margo Galvin

**Also in attendance:** Andy List representing the Stratford Cycle Forum.

**Apologies for absence:** Dave Ayton-Hill and Catherine Marks, (Warwickshire County Council), Joanne Bozdognali and Cllrs J Fradgley and G Cowcher (Stratford District Council), Darren Tosh (Shakespeare's England), Rich Jones (BID/Bell Court), Tim Aucott (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust) and Emma Gibbons (RSC).

**Not present:** Stephen Rumble (Warwickshire County Council) and Sam Jackson (Advent Communications) who will now attend future meetings on an as-needed basis.

### **1. Actions and Minutes from the meeting held on 19 October 2023**

The only action from the meeting was for Partnership members to attend the Gateway Masterplan drop-in session at the Library, if possible.

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October were approved.

### **2. Matters Arising**

There were none.

### **3. Strategy Development**

Cllr Sinclair has updated the 'Strategic Projects Progress Log', which is now ready to use. This working document lists all 24 Partnership priority projects and should allow the Partnership to focus on certain ones at each meeting, as well as keep a note of progress. It will change at / after each Strategic Partnership meeting.

Cllr Sinclair and Rachel Sharpe have produced a draft matrix to help SDC understand which of the Partnership's 24 projects fit within the eight areas of their South Warwickshire Local Plan (SWLP). The matrix will be discussed at the next SWLP working group meeting when it is hoped any changes will be agreed. At this point it will become a final document that SDC can use. The document is not yet ready to share beyond the Partnership as not all members have seen it. An update should be provided at the December Partnership meeting.

Cllr Sinclair commented that the Partnership's strategy document (currently a PowerPoint presentation) should be worked up into a more visual format that can eventually be shared with the local community and consulted on. It was suggested that it could be hosted on the new proposed Partnership website, although it was acknowledged that a website would not be accessible for everyone. The original plan had been to produce a printed prospectus, but it was now felt that this would be expensive and would quickly go out of date. It was noted that lessons learned from the NDP could be applied to the consultation on the Partnership's strategy.

It was agreed that the Partnership's strategy should not be tied to the SWLP, although it should dovetail with it. Once it has been agreed how synergy can be achieved, the Partnership will be able to share its strategy publicly.

### **4. SWLP Working Group**

It was noted that the minutes of the SWLP's second meeting had been circulated to Partnership members as an interim report. A more detailed report will be presented in the new year after the group's next meeting (scheduled for January).

John Scampion advised that the deadline for responses to the SWLP's preferred options consultation has been pushed back to summer/autumn 2024. John Careford advised that there will be further engagement before that, probably pre-Easter. The SWLP is to be implemented in 2027 and will run until 2050.

The consultation is an opportunity for the Partnership to ensure that the key outputs from its vision workshops are included in the Local Plan. As noted above, Cllr Sinclair and Emma Gibbons have drafted a matrix to show how the Partnership's priority projects might align with SDC's SWLP. The working group will review this at its January meeting. The group will then recommend to the Partnership which of its projects should be included in the SWLP.

A discussion then followed about the need for the Partnership to consider longer-term planning as parts of its SWLP response, given that the Local Plan runs from

2027 to 2050 and this timescale is likely to outrun the lifetime of most of the Partnership's 24 priority projects. It was agreed that the Partnership should think strategically while working on projects that deliver change for the town in the more immediate future.

**ACTION 1: 23.11.2023 – SWLP working group** to consider the points discussed at this meeting and develop a set of statements to be incorporated into the SWLP consultation documents. A progress update to be provided at the February Partnership meeting and a final report in March.

## **5. Strategic Partnership response to SDC's four-year plan and consultation processes consultation**

John Scampion advised that, after consideration, the Partnership had not submitted a response to the four-year plan consultation because it was felt that this was geared more towards individuals than organisations. It had, however, responded to the processes consultation on the basis that many of the processes were sound, noting the importance of the consultor interacting with respondents.

## **6. Cycle parking in the town centre**

Andy List (Stratford Cycle Forum) presented the findings of the Forum's recent survey into the town centre's cycle parking facilities (presentation attached to these minutes). The research identified 12 parking locations in Henley Street, Rother Market, Bridge Street and High Street, with each area offering scope for additional spaces, for example at Birthplace Trust sites.

The Forum acknowledged that, while new bike racks could be easily purchased and installed in the town centre, this would require both budget and local authority support to co-ordinate the process. The Town Transport Group supports the plan to provide additional facilities, and Cllrs Tim Sinclair and Jenny Fradgley are considering allocating some of their discretionary budget to the initiative. It was suggested that other organisations, such as SDC and the Town Trust, might consider offering land for extra parking spaces.

### **A Q&A session followed and the following points were discussed:**

Cycle parking at the Recreation Ground: there was concern that there did not appear to be any cycle parking at the Rec. Cllr Rolfe emailed Tony Perks at SDC asking for clarification. It was quickly confirmed that there are some cycle racks at the far end of the Rec next to the 'toy-town' cycle track. The Cycle Forum will suggest locations for additional cycle racks.

Costs: The provision of additional racks will depend on funding. The cost of bike racks is c£5k which includes supply, delivery and installation. Cheaper options are available.

Warwickshire County Council contacts: Aaron Corsi suggested that the Cycle Forum update Alison Kennedy and Tim Snazell (Safe and Active Travel team) on

its plans (Andy List will action). Cllr Sinclair has shared the Cycle Forum's presentation with Alison.

Further County support: Cllr Sinclair advised that a member of Stephen Rumble's team is currently working on cycle parking provision across the county. Cllr Sinclair chairs the Cycle Liaison Group at County and he will ensure this topic is given full consideration.

Number of cycle spaces in car parks: Andy List will check to see if there are any guidelines about this. It was noted that the Town Trust operates two car parks and the Chair will investigate opportunities for providing racks at these sites. She will also investigate providing racks at the Fisherman's Car Park (this had been part of the original Riverside scheme but was removed as a cost reduction measure). Cllr MacDonald commented that there are two sets of four racks at the Leisure Centre, which is not enough.

Other needs: John Scampion commented that the proposals were good but that a lot more work was needed to improve cycling routes into the town centre as soon as possible. For further discussion is needed on the design and timing of current WCC schemes.

Co-ordination and follow up: the Cycle Forum will prepare a list of existing and potential sites which can be used to review opportunities and progress.

## **7. Strategic Partnership finance and funding**

The Chair, Deputy Chair and Aaron Corsi are currently reviewing Partnership finances, with a particular focus on the proposed new Partnership website.

It was noted that some of the Partnership member organisations had contributed £600 around 18 months ago and this money is almost used up. The Town Clerk will advise which organisations contributed. The Chair proposed setting up a budget so that the Partnership can better understand its likely spend over a given period; it is hoped this will be presented at the January Partnership meeting. It was noted that not all member organisations have an income and therefore cannot contribute funds.

It was agreed that a spend profile should be created to ensure that members who do contribute funds can see how the money is being spent. Additionally, regular finance updates should be provided to Partnership members.

## **8. Any Other Business**

**8.1 Arts and Culture plan for the town:** Rachel Sharpe (RSC) had had a conversation with Rachael North (SBT) and Claire Hickey, Arts Officer, Heritage & Culture, Warwickshire County Council. Claire is conducting some research and will facilitate a planning session for Rachel S and Rachael N. Rachel S will also speak to People Make it Work who are supporting the RSC on a transformational project to understand its work on town centre strategies to see if there is any

useful research available. She will provide an update to the Partnership after Christmas.

**8.2 Levelling Up round 3:** Aaron Corsi noted that this had taken place and there was no funding for Stratford.

**8.3 Request to present by the Marron Group:** The Marron Group have asked to attend a Partnership meeting to speak about a development they are working on with the Deeley Group at the Stratford Park & Ride site. Cllr Sinclair will make further enquiries as the P&R site falls within his ward. It was agreed that the Marron Group should be invited to attend the January Partnership meeting.

**The next meeting will take place on  
Thursday 14 December 2023 2pm – 4pm via Zoom  
(meeting subsequently cancelled)**