

TOWN CENTRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Thursday 19 October 2023 at 2pm

Held via Zoom

MINUTES Pages 1-4

Present:

Accessible Stratford represented by Elizabeth Dixon
Royal Shakespeare Company represented by Rachel Sharpe and Emma Gibbons
Shakespeare Birthplace Trust represented by Tim Aucott
Shakespeare's England represented by Darren Tosh
Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council represented by Cllr R Vos
Stratford District Council represented by John Careford and Cllr George Cowcher
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 Dave Ayton-Hill, Catherine Marks and Aoife O'Gorman, also attended by Cllr Kate Rolfe and Cllr Tim Sinclair.

Clerk to the Strategic Partnership: Margo Galvin

Apologies for absence: Caroline Nash (Town Clerk), Aaron Corsi (Warwickshire County Council), Joanne Bozdognali (Stratford District Council), Rich Jones (BID/Bell Court) and Rachael North (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust)

Not present: Stephen Rumble (Warwickshire County Council), Cllr J Fradgley (Stratford District Council), Cllr L MacDonald (observer) 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 28 September 2023

It was noted that Finance should be included in the Partnership's Terms of Reference. This was discussed further under item 7 of the agenda (Strategic Partnership finance and funding).

Item 4 of minutes - correction: *Update on the proposed redevelopment of the former Edinburgh Wool Mill building, Henley Street.* It was noted that the proposed conversion will include a total of 350 seats, including a 200-seat ground-floor lecture theatre, *not* 350 seats on the first floor.

2. Matters Arising

- a. Partnership website: At the recent meeting of the Partnership website sub-group, Sam Jackson (Advent Communications) took everyone through the

new site's proposed structure and pages. The group was happy to proceed on this basis. It was felt that instead of including biographies of individual Partnership members on the site, there should be summaries of each member organisation and the name of the person representing that organisation. Sam will produce proformas for draft articles and circulate to members.

Decisions need to be made about which contact details should be included on the site and who from the Partnership should commission/approve content.

A discussion followed about the type and purpose of the content to be published on the site. Members felt that it would be difficult to generate a two-way dialogue with the public via the site given the limited resources available to the Partnership. It was agreed that the best approach would be to get the website up and running and to build it from there. Stratford in Bloom: <https://stratfordinbloom.org.uk/> and Stratford Christmas Lights <https://stratforduponavonchristmaslights.co.uk/> were suggested as useful reference sites. It was noted that, while neither site attempts to engage in dialogue with its audience, both initiatives use social media to help get their messages across.

- b. South Warwickshire Local Plan working group: John Scampion advised that the group will meet again during w/c 23 October to consider how the Partnership's work on vision and strategy can be translated into meaningful suggestions to SDC.
- c. SDC five-year plan: The Partnership will be responding to SDC's consultation survey, the deadline for which is 24 October 2023.

3. Gateway SPD Consultation

John Careford advised that SDC's draft Stratford-upon-Avon Gateway Masterplan Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is out for public consultation from Thursday 19 October to 5.00pm Friday 1 December 2023. It can be accessed at : <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning-building/stratford-upon-avon-gateway-masterplan.cfm> , together with a Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report and a Heritage, Townscape and Visual Impact screening assessment. The Strategic Partnership's response to this important consultation would be welcomed. (*The link to the consultation page on SDC's website was circulated to Partnership members after the meeting.*)

The Council is also hosting two drop-in events at Stratford-upon-Avon Library when Officers will be available to answer questions and provide more information: Thursday 26 October 1.00pm to 5.00pm and Saturday 04 November 11.00am to 2.00pm.

ACTION 1: 19.10.2023 – ALL to attend one of the Gateway Masterplan drop-in sessions at the library in Stratford and visit the Masterplan website.
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A brief discussion followed during which the following points were noted:

- The proposed plan is partly dependent on landlord Peter Warwick's willingness to sell his land. This is a challenge that needs to be overcome.
- The consultation document is a planning document that sets out the Council's aspirations. Land ownership is a separate issue, although landowners' aspirations will need to be managed.
- A demonstrable commitment to planning will be important when it comes to making funding applications for the project.
- Having a masterplan in place will be a bonus since it will be a public document with consensus behind it.

John also reminded Partners that the District Council's Consultation on the draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement: [Statement of Community Involvement | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#) will run until 5pm on Friday 3rd November. A drop-in session will be held at 10am-3pm on Monday 23rd October at the Council offices at Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford.

4. Strategy Development

Cllr Sinclair met with the Chair and the Town Clerk on 10 October to do some further work on the draft strategy document, taking on board feedback from Partnership members. The updated document was then shared on-screen for further discussion. The following points were noted:

- 24 town centre projects have been identified, of which 16 are considered to be of high benefit to the town and relatively easy to implement. All projects remain in scope, however.
- The focus is on actual projects that the Partnership wants to deliver (as opposed to strategies and policies).
- While the 16 projects are considered equally important, it was felt that 10 should be prioritised.
- Each project has been allocated a leader and supporter/s but other organisations may come on board as the project evolves.
- For each project it was felt that there should be a clear split between the client and the delivery agent.
- The Gateway/World Shakespeare project should be considered as a single project for now.

Cllr Sinclair shared a document that could be used to record the progress made on each project. This is based on a document currently used successfully by one of WCC's working groups. It was agreed to discuss this further at the November Partnership meeting.

5. Strategic Partnership finance and funding

The Town Council currently holds funds on behalf of the Partnership. These funds were contributed by various Partnership member organisations (£600 each). It was noted that those member organisations that do not generate an income were unable to contribute at that time.

Additional funding was subsequently provided by Warwickshire County Council for a new Partnership website.

The Town Clerk is currently looking into the Partnership's funding and finances with the Town Council's Responsible Finance Officer; neither individual had been in post at the time these funds were received.

The Chair advised that most of the Partnership's funds have now been spent and the Partnership needs to consider the mechanism by which member organisations can contribute further funds in the future. This will be raised at the November meeting.

It was noted that WCC would fund discrete pieces of work.

6. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The Chair thanked Cllr Sinclair for all his work on strategy development and everyone who took part in the various workshops held over the summer.

**The next meeting will take place on Thursday 23 November 2023
2pm – 4pm at Stratford Town Trust Community Hub, Venture House**

(subsequently changed to Zoom)