

World Class Stratford Strategy Group
1.00 pm Tuesday 3 October 2006 at Elizabeth House

Notes of Meeting

Present:	Mark Abrams	-	Advantage West Midlands (AWM)
	Sushma Soni	-	Advantage West Midlands
	Roger Dowthwaite	-	CSWP
	Trevor Askew	-	Stratford on Avon District Council (SDC)
	Paul J Ogden	-	Stratford on Avon District Council
	Cllr Juliet Short	-	Stratford on Avon District Council
	Cllr Les Topham (Chair)	-	Stratford on Avon District Council
	Tony Bird	-	Stratford Town Management Partnership
	Tony Brooker	-	Stratford Town Management Partnership
	Sue Ashley	-	Warwickshire County Council (WCC)
	Mandy Walker	-	Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr George Atkinson	-	Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr Chris Saint	-	Warwickshire County Council
Apologies:	John Deegan	-	Warwickshire County Council

1. Introduction

Councillor Topham opened the meeting and, as the new Chairman, expressed his thanks for the work of Mark Abrams and Sushma Soni in chairing and supporting the work of the WCS Strategy Group.

It was then proposed by Cllr Topham that Cllr Chris Saint be recognised as the Deputy Chairman of the WCS Strategy Group. This was agreed by all those present.

The notes of the last meeting (11 September) were then considered and agreed with the comment that Item 6(b) be expanded specifically to include reference to the purpose for an additional project management resource, as identified within the agenda papers for that meeting. It was particularly stressed that the proposed additional role would need to be independent of the key local authorities. This was agreed.

2. Notes of the last Working Group meeting

Agreed. The action arising in relation to the Strategy Group was the Working Group's request for a joint meeting to discuss and define the meaning of World Class in relation to the whole of Stratford and everything it is to offer. The principle of a joint meeting was agreed.

3. Code of Conduct

This was unanimously agreed by all present.

The Group then discussed the specific request that it should hold its meetings in public. Following debate it was agreed that this would be a significant constraint on the open and frank exchange

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of ideas, especially at the current stage of the project where innovative ideas were being suggested and debated. This request was therefore declined but it was confirmed that the notes of the Strategy Group meetings would be made public.

The make up of the Strategy Group was then considered. Following debate, it was agreed that the leaders of the Liberal Democrat Group at the District Council and the County Council should be formally invited to join the Strategy Group. Specific invitations would be actioned by the Chairman

CLlr L
Topham

4. **Urban Practitioners (UP) Briefing Paper**

All members of the Strategy Group were thanked for providing their comments, which had been circulated to all other members prior to the meeting.

The Group then discussed the key points, which had been drawn from a review of all the group members' comments into the paper entitled "High Level Summary of Responses – The Briefing Paper", and had been circulated with the agenda.

Items were discussed as follows:-

1. Movement Strategy

The Group wished it to be strongly emphasised that resolving the town's transport issues were central to achieving a World Class town. The UDF needed to strongly inform the proposed County Council's review of the Local Transport Plan (LTP). These two documents (The Movement Strategy and the LTP) needed to complement each other. Mandy Walker reconfirmed that the proposed timetable for the LTP review was now with a view to commencing in the New Year.

The general consensus was that the UDF document needed to identify the broad scope of required changes and the objectives for those changes, the evidence for their need, and also the potential for early delivery of any of the proposals. This would then enable the review of the LTP to be informed and take account of these proposals and work up the detail required.

It was agreed that the Transport & Parking Subgroup be specifically asked to identify early wins and priorities arising from the proposals in the Movement Strategy in order to help inform the LTP review.

- **Walking and Cycling**

The consensus that walking and cycling should be given a high priority and the UDF consultation process be used as a tool to demonstrate the options around priorities at an 'in principle' stage i.e. not detail.

- **Bus and Rail**

There was a need to demonstrate that the plans will meet long-term needs for the town anticipating future growth, etc. In terms

of the potential for re-opening the Honeybourne Line, the draft UDF should be consistent with current LTP policy but they should be greater information regarding the evidence to support this argument.

- Road Traffic (ring road)

It was agreed that this proposal should remain in a dotted line form in the vision document and the evidence for the need for this route be brought forward by UP.

- Road Traffic (extra river crossing)

Evidence for the need for this should be made available to enable its inclusion as a dotted line on the vision document and to help inform the County Council LTP review.

2. Public Realm Strategy

The proposals were welcomed and supported by the Group but it was that the UDF should demonstrate more clearly how the plans will create and enable better use of spaces for events and festivals.

The Public Realm Strategy should also fully integrate with the emerging work by Land Use Consultants on the Bancroft and Recreation Ground areas.

3. Development Strategy

General support for the proposals except as detailed below, specifically the Strategy Group wanted a well articulated statement of vision regarding the potential additional offer which might supplement the Shakespeare offer of the town.

- ***Bridgeway - Retail***

The Group confirmed there was no support for a major retail offer in this area and felt that the inclusion of such a significant land use would not support a key objective for this site, which is that it is a major opportunity area for provision of an additional offer for Stratford.

It was agreed that UP should be asked to investigate more rigorously options around the provision of a 5* hotel, art/cultural building, conference facility and related niche retail provision. UP should be able to demonstrate how the above proposals could be provided spatially within this area. It was recognised that further economic impact assessment would need to follow at the appropriate stage.

The Group were advised that it was already recognised that the proposals for Bridgeway/Bridgefoot are outside of current Local Plan policy i.e. cannot be adopted within a UDF as supplementary planning document, and therefore this area would need to go through a specific exercise in order to develop an Area Action Plan, which ultimately could be adopted as a Local Plan document

- ***Bridgeway – Wetlands***

There was general support for this area to be recognised of

particular benefit to local residents and for uses including nature reserve/park land.

The potential inclusion of additional wetlands should be restricted to areas, which have not been subjected to landfill.

A very practical concern was raised regarding the danger that additional wetlands area could provide the ideal habitat for supporting a greater Canada Geese population. This would need to be considered in more detail as to whether design elements can be introduced to restrict this type of use.

- ***Bridgeway – Residential***

The Group expressed concerns at the introduction of residential accommodation into the area. The Group wished the definition of individually designed villas to be clarified within any public consultation document.

The key concern was that in the event of these types of proposals proceeding that there would be clear control to ensure they are of a world class architectural nature when finally implemented.

Second- or Third-Floor Apartments over commercial and leisure developments was accepted as an increasing practice internationally and therefore supported, if there was a proven need within the UDF.

- ***Bridgeway – Leisure Centre***

The need to replace the present leisure centre was agreed. The UDF consultation should be used as a tool to seek the communities' views as to where best within the town a replacement leisure centre could be provided.

Paul Ogden agreed to liaise further with UP to identify potential sites throughout the town, which could be suitable for this type of use.

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- ***Cattle Market site***

The Group agreed that the prime objective for this site was to provide sufficient space to meet the needs of the transport interchange proposals including sufficient to allow for future growth within this sector. What remained of this site should then be identified for mixed use and/or civic hall type function replacement.

The Cattle Market was also recognised as one of a potential number of sites throughout the town, which needed to be emphasised as potentially providing office space for professional businesses to locate within the town. This would help sustain the graduate retention issue, which featured within the 2020 Vision for Stratford upon Avon.

5. Marketing and Communication

The Group briefly discussed the need for careful communication of the UDF proposals.

It was suggested that clear marketing statements were required that set out some of the key objectives for the work. This should be closely related to the concepts of product and brand development.

Paul Ogden agreed to make contact with Stratford College regarding the potential use of second year college students in support of this work.

6. Date of the next meeting

It was noted that the Group would be meeting again on 10 October at 5pm (Room 001) together with UP to debate some of the key points arising from the above and to receive an update regarding the marketing and brand work as described above.

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