

World Class Stratford Strategy Group
5-7.00 pm Friday 7 September 2007 at Elizabeth House

Notes of Meeting

Present:	Cllr Les Topham (Chair)	Stratford on Avon District Council (SDC)
	Cllr Juliet Short	- Stratford on Avon District Council
	Cllr Charles Bates	- Stratford on Avon District Council
	Trevor Askew	- Stratford on Avon District Council
	Paul J Ogden	- Stratford on Avon District Council
	Cllr Chris Saint	- Warwickshire County Council (WCC)
	Cllr George Atkinson	- Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr Jill Dill-Russell	- Warwickshire County Council
	Mandy Walker	- Warwickshire County Council (sub for John Deegan)
	Sushma Soni	- Advantage West Midlands
	Tony Brooker	- Stratford Town Management Partnership
	Mike Flowers	- Stratford Town Management Partnership
	Peter Wilson	- Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC)
	Roger Dowthwaite	- CSWP
Apologies:	Henriette Lyttle	- Advantage West Midlands
	Vikki Heywood	- Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC)
	Paul Lankester	- Stratford on Avon District Council
	John Deegan	- Warwickshire County Council
	Julie Crawshaw	- Warwickshire County Council

1. Notes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the Strategy Group meeting of 10 July 2007 were agreed as an accurate note of the meeting.

Community Forum – Ronnie Mulryne (RM), Chair of the Community Forum, updated the group regarding the meeting of 4 September 2007. It was confirmed that notes of the forum would be circulated once they were available.

RM indicated that following an introductory presentation by Paul Ogden and Susie Hargreaves (cultural specialist), the forum had discussed the future opportunities for the Cultural offer for Stratford on Avon, key points arising included:-

- Preference to work towards a year long festival encompassing a significant range and variety of events spread throughout the year
- Overall aim of lengthening the stay of visitors
- It was an opportunity to develop beyond the confines of the Shakespeare offer to embrace other cultural experiences, particularly the need to develop the family attraction activities. The river should be exploited more as a centre of activity
- The proposed steam centre and the public gardens within the town are both key opportunity themes

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Overall it was recognised that Stratford needed to work within and be a key player within the sub region. The Forum had recognised the need and opportunities for the creation of a new venue. This needed a particular group to lead on this development.

The Strategy Group then considered how best to progress the overall thoughts from both the Forum and other sources on the development of the cultural offer. The Group were reminded of the existing Events and Festivals group to which Susie Hargreaves on behalf of the Town Management Partnership was reporting. Susie was preparing a business plan for three years and there was continued scope for discussion regarding potential funding from Advantage West Midlands.

It was recognised there was need to coordinate existing resources on a county-wide basis and Mr DS Williams (WCC) should be contacted in this connection.

Concern was expressed that there are a number of related groups working on similar activities and these needed to be reviewed and the appropriate resources applied in order to ensure effective production of the business plan and the way forward on the venue. Further discussion would need to be held between SDC, WCC and STMP.

PJO /JC /
A.Cooper

2. **Development of off-street parking strategy**

Mr Rob Walsh attended the meeting on behalf of the District Council and presented a paper that had been circulated with the agenda, titled 'Project Plan for Developing Car Park Strategy'. The paper indicated the vision, the scope, the overall project team and timetable for the work. The timetable indicated a conclusion to the project in March 2008. After discussion the following reassurances were given:-

1. That the project took full account of the SDC/WCC meeting emanating from each of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees regarding discussions on the future of park and ride. Martin Gibbins of WCC was responsible for coordinating this specific but related project. It was also noted that a meeting held between SDC/WCC /STMP on 20 June agreed a number of actions and the short term ones were already being addressed. The longer term elements would be considered as part of this project and in the joint WCC / SDC scrutiny work as above.
2. The essential nature of this work was reaffirmed and the need to ensure that John Deegan is kept informed of progress due to the strategic nature of many of the outcomes, and it was noted that a member of his staff is part of the Project Group. It was recognised that the RSC parking needs warranted specific consideration as part of the overall project.

PJO

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The group requested that consideration be given to providing greater opportunity for private sector input to the project and that the group be kept informed as to progress. It was agreed that project progress would be an agenda item for the next meeting.

TA / RW

3. Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge

Mandy Walker circulated a draft consultation proposal for the project. The consultation paper identified two stages of consultation i) pre planning application consultation with key stakeholders and ii) wider consultation as part of the statutory formal planning process once a planning application was made. With regard to timing, it was anticipated that the consultation work would take place between September and December enabling a planning submission in January, following a report back to the Community Forum and the Strategy Group.

Following discussion, the Strategy Group made the point that it must be very open as to the stakeholders' consultation process to avoid accusations that it has been skewed to particular stakeholder groups. It is recognised that the proposals would lead to a qualitative rather than quantitative result. The group were keen to see that the County, District and the Town Council committees were engaged within this pre-consultation process. WCC were asked to consider a single exhibition e.g. at Elizabeth House, on the proposals.

MW

Overall there needs to be a wide buy-in to the consultation process which therefore needs to be clearly explained from the outset. Mandy Walker agreed to consider these points and circulate a revised version of the proposed consultation strategy as soon as possible.

4. Leisure Centre Access Road

Mandy Walker presented a verbal update on the scheme indicating that there were currently two potential impediments to progress:

1. One was a legal issue with regard to the County Council's power to deliver the scheme using 106 funds. To use 106 the road would need to be dedicated as public highway ie could not be a private road. WCC had written to the Town Trust who were considering the matter. WCC would follow up with the Town Trust and hopefully resolve.

PJO asked that WCC do all they can to explain to the Town Trust the reasoning for this.

2. The cost of the proposals. had risen from the approximately £500,000 anticipated in the phase 1 award with AWM to a figure now approaching £800,000. A value for money study was in the process of being considered which may indicate a poor value for money result from the road in traffic terms. The Strategy Group considered that there were other substantial benefits to this

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proposal and therefore stressed the need for its delivery as early as possible.	
The Strategy Group wished to see a full update on this from WCC at its next meeting when it hoped that good progress would have been made.	JC/RN
5. UDF/Vision document – Launch proposals Paul Ogden gave a brief outline of the current proposals, which owing to WCC now anticipating to endorse the UDF at its late September Cabinet meeting, would take place in the middle of October. It was pleasing to report that the Town Trust was willing to work alongside this launch which would hopefully illustrate how one key proposal eg. the Rother Street triangle, was already being actively considered. The launch would include a brief presentation by Urban Practitioners and supported by leading stakeholders from the Strategy Group. The Chairman updated the Group regarding his recent approaches to potential 'patrons of WCS'	
6. Action Plan Paul Ogden updated the group on the revised action plan which aimed to take account of the views of the last meeting of the Strategy Group. In discussing the revised plans the following comments were made:-	
1. item 11 –Waterfront Masterplan. The description needed to be revised so as to clearly indicate this was for schemes which were not part of the current works.	PJO
2. item 23 – Stannalls Bridge. It was requested that AWM be added to the potential funding sources for this scheme.	PJO
3. item 21 – reference within it to a specific art feature should be deleted as unnecessary. It was also recognised that extra effort needed to be in place to ensure completion of the existing armillary scheme as a matter of urgency between SDC and WCC.	PJO
It was recognised that the present form of the Action Plan as requested by the Strategy Group served the purpose of demonstrating the overall way that the UDF could be implemented and progressed towards World Class Stratford. It was also recognised however, that in terms of indicating how the proposals would benefit the visitor economy, it could be represented against the key headings of: Modernising the current offer Diversifying the offer and Supporting the business visitor. It was agreed that Sushma and colleagues from AWM would be meeting with Paul Ogden and Julie Crawshaw and could develop this approach further.	
7. Dates of future meetings: These were agreed as the 8 November 2007 and 16 January 2008. Following requests the dates for 2008 for 26 March, 7 May and 12	PJO

November would need to be reviewed in the light of key stakeholders now not being available. Alternative dates would be researched and circulated to members of Strategy Group.

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