



EVESHAM TOWN COUNCIL



TOWN PLAN COMMITTEE

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the **TOWN PLAN COMMITTEE** will be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Evesham, on **MONDAY 16 OCTOBER 2017** at 6.30 pm, to which you are hereby summoned for the transaction of the business specified below

Admission of the Public and Media

Members of the Public and Media are welcome to attend in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting) Act 1960 Section 1.

Public Participation

Public Participation is welcomed and will be in accordance with Standing Order 3(e) to 3(j) on a matter before the Committee. It would be helpful if anyone wishing to participate would contact the Town Council on 01386 443322, email townclerk@eveshamtowncouncil.gov.uk, or in person, prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of pecuniary or other interest including requests for dispensation (if any)**
3. **Minutes of the previous meeting held 17 July 2017 including questions as to the progress of any items – minutes attached**
4. **Finance Report**
Details of expenditure by the Town Plan Committee attached
5. **Evesham Town Centre Study**
People and Places to give a presentation
6. **Wychevton District Council's Inward Investment Manger's Report**
Mr Shawn Riley's report attached
7. **Project working Group report – Transport Working Group**
Report attached
8. **Project working Group report – Anti Litter Working Group**
Verbal report to be given
9. **Town Plan Project Group**
Report attached
10. **Matters of urgency raised, for information only, at the discretion of the Chairman**
notice of which is to be given prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Stuart Carter
Town Clerk

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Committee Circulation: Cllr A P Booth, Cllr M S Goodge (Deputy Mayor), Cllr G Hale,
Cllr R S W Jones (Town Mayor), Cllr F Kaler, Cllr C Tether, Cllr Mrs J Tucker
Non Councillor co-opted members (without voting rights): Mr G O'Donnell, Mr P Staines, Mr R
Walker, Mr S Riley (Wychavon District Council)

Also circulated electronically to all other councillors for information

EVESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **TOWN PLAN COMMITTEE** held at 6.30 pm on **MONDAY 17 JULY 2017** at Evesham Town Hall, Market Place, Evesham

Those present:

Chairman: Cllr C Tether

Vice Chairman: Cllr M S Goodge (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr A P Booth, Cllr G Hale, Cllr R S W Jones (Town Mayor),
Cllr F Kaler, Cllr Mrs J Tucker

Non councillor committee members:

Mr R Walker

Officers: Mr S D Carter (Town Clerk)

Also present was Cllr J H Smith OBE, Mr A Ford (Wychavon District Council – Planning Policy Officer), Mr B Taylor (Anti Litter Group) and 6 members of the public including representatives from the Civic Society.

10. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted by Mr G O'Donnell and Mr S Riley.

11. Declarations of pecuniary or other interest (if any)

There were no declarations made under this agenda item.

12. Minutes of the previous meeting held 22 May 2017 including questions as to the progress of any items

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be adopted as a true and accurate record.

13. Co-option to the Town Plan Committee

It was proposed and seconded that Mr Patrick Staines be co-opted to the Town Plan Committee. Mr Staines was chairing the project group and it would work well having him on the committee.

There being no other nominations it was **RESOLVED** to co-opt Mr Staines onto the committee (without voting rights).

14. Finance Report

A report was circulated with the agenda detailing what the committee had spent in 2016/17. In the coming year it had a budget of £6,000 to spend. The report was **NOTED**.

15. Neighbourhood Plans

Andrew Ford, Planning Policy Officer from Wychavon District Council (WDC) gave a presentation to the committee on Neighbourhood Plans.

Mr Ford explained that the concept of Neighbourhood Plans (NP) had been around since around 2011 as part of the Localism Act. It was a planning led document which if approved becomes statutory and part of the development plan. The plan could not be used to stop development but they did put towns and parishes in a better position to fend off speculative planning applications.

Mr Ford went onto explain that the Town Council was eligible to undertake a NP and was well placed because of the work undertaken on the Town Plan. The NP could be town wide or could focus on a specific area. It gave the opportunity for towns and parishes to allocate sites for housing and other uses. He explained that in Wychavon 15 parishes and towns, including Droitwich, were undertaking or had undertaken a NP.

It was explained that there was no set format or template for a NP. Some could be very brief whilst others went into great detail. They could set design policies, protect green spaces, set policies that relate to the historic and natural environment.

The process of developing a NP was statutory, the draft plan had to be consulted on, any amendments could then be made, after which the plan would be submitted to WDC for a second round of consultation. WDC would then in conjunction with the Town Council appoint an independent examiner who would audit the NP to ensure it complied with national planning policy and the local planning framework. The final stage would be a referendum paid for by WDC at which 50% of those voting had to support the NP for it to be approved and become part of the planning framework.

The cost of developing NP for Evesham was hard to determine but an estimate would be in excess of £15,000. There were funding sources available including a £5,000 grant from central government if it could be demonstrated that your town was under development pressure.

Mr Ford was asked what value a NP gave that the South West Development Plan (SWDP) did not. In response he explained that NP could be more specific, more local, though many had been a rehash of local development plans. Regarding CIL monies Mr Ford explained that towns and parishes with NP in place got 25% of CIL funding, it was 15% for those without.

Mr Ford was asked to what extent a NP could be used to allocate housing in one place rather than another. Mr Ford replied by stating that in theory a NP was an update of the SWDP, you could allocate land for development but can't stop development. A NP could also specify more detailed design criteria for housing that was set out in the SWDP.

It was commented that there were no assurances that WDC would take any more notice of the Town Council if this plan were in place than they did at present. In response Mr Ford said that NP could not say no to development, but it does give the opportunity to say where development should go. It would be a statutory document so all parties would have to comply by it.

Mr Ford was asked if a NP could substitute one allocated site for another, with reference to the Abbey Road site. In reply it was stated that it could only be substituted if it could be

shown to be a better site. The NP could have a policy that included a design brief and stipulate infrastructure requirements.

Members commented that given all the development that had happened and the fact that the SWDP was now in place, there was not much point pursuing a NP at this current time. Mr Ford responded by stating that a review of the SWDP would take place in 2024 and that if a NP were in place it could influence land use planning more directly after 2024.

Mr Ford was thanked for his informative presentation.

16. Project working Group reports

(a) Transport Working Group

The Chairman Cllr Tether presented the latest report from the Transport Working Group.

The report detailed the latest on the traffic study with an update from Worcestershire County Council (WCC) which stated the following. *'As part of this process we have commissioned our consultants CH2M to build a transport model for Evesham, which will be used to test different options available to make improvements to traffic flows within the town. The development of the model is taking longer than we anticipated but we hope to have it available within the next month or so. In the meantime we will be arranging meetings with the relevant key stakeholders to discuss options that require testing and development. The Council apologise for length of time this has taken, a point that has been made to our consultants.'*

It was reported that Cycle Evesham Vale had continued to be active and now offered two social rides a month aimed particularly at getting people back on their bikes and enjoying recreational cycling. The annual Evesham Cyclefest was to be held over the 2nd and 3rd September.

The report stated that the group were as yet unaware of any specific WCC proposals for new cycle links in the town but hoped that proposals would be made in parallel with proposals for road and traffic in the Evesham Transport Study. An aspiration of the Town Plan was to have an 'Around Evesham Cycle Route'. It was recognised that the realisation of such a route would prove difficult as various places and some locations would not be suitable for joint use by walkers and cyclists. It was hoped that the interests of both groups could be served by working together and understanding the needs of both the walkers and cyclists.

Regarding National Cycle Route NCN442 Oxford to Worcester which came through Evesham it was noted that the Telegraph published an article <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health-fitness/body/forget-france-28-beautiful-bike-rides-britain/> citing the NCN442 as one of the 28 most beautiful cycle rides in Britain. This would hopefully bring more cycle tourists through the Vale. At present cyclists getting to Honeybourne from Oxford or the outskirts of Evesham from Worcester will find no signs indicating the continued route, an issue which needed to be resolved. The missing part of the route yet to be signed planned to use residential roads and some footpaths through Evesham and to cross the A46 at Badsey Lane. Cycle Evesham Vale (CEV) had again offered to sign the route according to the schedule compiled in 2016, at no cost to WCC. Cllr John Smith OBE had kindly raised it with Lynsey Keir, who had given the following response:

'The cycle routes' A46/Badsey Lane crossing point is unsuitable in its current condition to be signed as a part of the National Cycle Network (NCN). The NCN is designed to "be attractive and comfortable for the less confident cyclist – a sensible 12 year old or novice adult....". This is not the case here as the refuge is approximately 1.95m wide. The average cycle is 1.8m long, with recumbent bikes often over 2 metres. We could sign people to either side of the A46 up to this crossing point, i.e. from Port Street to Badsey Lane east, and from Honeybourne to Badsey Road west, however this would only provide partial cycle routes to either side of the A46 and leave cyclists without a crossing facility. The County Council are proceeding with intensive partnership working with Highways England and their suppliers to identify a safe and attractive solution for the Badsey Lane crossing of the A46. Current indications suggest that we may see movement on this in early June.'

It was noted that CEV was appreciative of the efforts that Cllr John Smith OBE and Lynsey Keir were making towards the completion of the route. CEV had suggested that the route be signed as suggested to either side of the A46 and that WCC continue to work with Highways England to address the issue with the refuge.

Regarding the Valley shared use link it was understood that Wychavon District Council were progressing with the design and negotiations leading to the implementation of the route which had proved to be more complicated than had been anticipated. The relocation of Boardman Bikes to The Valley increased the importance of the link.

Referring to walking, work on the implementation of the proposed boardwalk funded by New Homes Bonus was continuing. The boardwalk would be located in the marshy area on land adjacent to the river, upstream of Evesham's eastern railway bridge and would make the existing public footpath properly useable. A scheme plan was to be drawn up to meet the requirements of various parties including WDC and the Environment Agency. It was also necessary to undertake ecological and archaeological investigations before any work can be started.

With reference to bus services it was reported that The Vale Public Transport Group attended a useful meeting with First Buses regarding possible changes to the X50 and 551 services. The need to properly connect the villages west of Evesham, (e.g. Cropthorne, Fladbury, Lower Moor) to town was recognised together with a connection to the Valley. First Buses have promised to look at options and hold discussions with WCC.

A meeting with a community group who had recently set up the new Broadway Community Bus was in the process of being organised, in the hope that a similar scheme could be replicated in Evesham.

Regarding bus timetable boards and the committee's previous commitment to help fund them, it was reported that this had not progressed as WCC intended to bring in Real Time information displays at some Evesham stops though they had not specified which ones.

Finally, it was expected that Evesham railway station would have a ticket machine installed by the end of the year. In addition an Evesham Station Travel Plan had been produced by Atkins on behalf of GWR. This contained a number of important recommendations, some of which were being taken forward or were in the planning process, for example the bus shelter outside the car wash and the proposed pedestrian crossing in the High Street.

NOTED

(b) Anti Litter Working Group

Mr Bruce Taylor, a member of the Anti Litter Group updated members on their work. Mr Taylor explained that the Anti-Litter Group supported the Town Plan aiming to reduce the effects of littering and also the cost of littering. Mr Taylor emphasised the importance of having the support of both the Town Council and WDC in trying to achieve their objectives. It was explained that their strategy was structured under 3 headings, environment, education, and enforcement.

The group had recently presented to WDC's Overview and Scrutiny Committee detailing their work highlighting the importance of education and enforcement and emphasising the need for human and financial resources from WDC in order to achieve their goals.

A number of volunteer litter picks had been conducted and a list of 29 'grot spots' around town has been identified. As a result 4 of these 'grot spots' had been targeted with the objective of influencing behavior by creating a clean space, using signs to show that the area was a subject of focus, placing bins to support the work. The picks had started in June and the group was recording number of bags and number of man hours expended with the idea being that each time less is picked up and less hours expended as the message gets across to those using the area. The group plan to repeat this process at each of the 'grot spots' to show change to littering behavior.

A register of volunteers had been drawn up to be used to request support for future initiatives.

Litter bins were a priority. Maps of the location of all bins in the town had been obtained and issued to local councilors. Members were asked for feedback to confirm that the map was accurate or not, but also to recommend further locations or the relocating of bins. Cllr J H Smith OBE had purchased 3 new bins from his ward budget and these had been placed in strategic locations.

On education the group had completed a competition in local schools for children to design posters with an anti litter message. Some of these posters had been subsequently created into large anti litter posters with 28 being placed around town.

Regarding environment and education, anti-litter campaign window stickers had been distributed to local businesses. They had been asked to sign an anti-litter campaign charter. Letters had also been sent to local supermarkets regarding litter in their car parks and the surrounding areas, and abandoned trolleys.

Mr Taylor reported that much work still needed to be done including obtaining financial support, improving engagement with the public, businesses and stakeholders such as VECTA. Developing an education programme in schools was also a priority as was improving communication and branding.

Mr Taylor was thanked for his report.

NOTED

17. Town Plan Project Group

A report was circulated detailing the establishment of a Town Plan Project Group. The group was chaired by Mr Patrick Staines and included Cllr Tether in his capacity as Chair of this committee amongst others.

The project groups' remit was explained as follows:

- Select priority projects with identifiable benefits and means of delivery.
- Ensure all projects are realistic, clearly-defined, time-bound and resourced.
- Engage members of the community to use relevant skills, knowledge and enthusiasm.
- Review and report to the TPC on all projects at review points or critical stages.
- Review, assess and report to the TPC on completed projects.
- Close down or recommend to the TPC withdrawal of support for failing projects.
- Propose to the TPC communications and events to make TP progress known to the community and engage support and involvement.

It was confirmed that the project group would report to the Town Council via this committee and have no power to spend or make policy.

It was reported that the project group had identified a number of projects which it felt were likely to be successfully taken forward considering the limited resources available. It was agreed that it was critical that the local community was engaged and the involvement of local authorities, individuals and local interest groups such as VECTA and the Civic Society be actively sought.

Individual project teams were to be formed working to the terms of its approved project proposal to allow monitoring and reviews.

The identified project areas were identified as follows:

Litter: The anti-litter group had been active over the last two years. It will continue and seek to expand its activities in terms of education, environment and enforcement.

Green Plan: The proposals contained in the Intelligently Green Framework for Evesham will be taken forward.

Information Services: The Town Plan contained many proposals for improving information that can be obtained about the town and surrounding area in terms of community facilities, support services and networks, local sports, arts, and leisure clubs.

Feasibility of a Neighbourhood Plan: It has been recognised throughout the Town Plan process that while such a plan can cover a much wider range of topics it is, unlike a Neighbourhood Plan, not a statutory document. Thought should be given to the potential of a Neighbourhood Plan and which area of the Town it would cover.

Develop a network of footpaths and cycle routes in and around Evesham: Some work on this has been carried out by the current Town Plan Transport Group. It was recognised that the efforts should be refocused and the new group would be involved with any proposals made by the Evesham Transport Study.

Improve local public transport links: Some work already done by the Transport Group, particularly the establishment of the Evesham Bus Users Group and its subsequent merger with the Pershore Group to become the Vale Public Transport Group.

Young People: Establish Young People's Panel to provide a forum for young people to represent views on town matters.

Other Tasks: The Project Group had also identified other areas that could be taken forward as 'task' groups.

It was commented that it was excellent that these headings were being worked on.

It was also commented that the Council had previously tried to establish a young people's forum but it had been very hard to sustain it. In response it was explained that members had contacted the Pershore Youth Forum and would like to pursue this kind of model, but it would probably require some sort of committee to make it work.

NOTED

18. Change of date for next meeting

A verbal report was given asking the committee to consider a change of date for the next Town Plan meeting. The People and Places team wanted to report their findings to the committee, September was too early and November was too late. It was therefore **RESOLVED** to move September's Town Plan Committee meeting to 16 October (previously scheduled for 18 September).

19. Matters of urgency raised, for information only

There were no matter brought up under this item.

NOTED

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

COUNCILLOR C TETHER
CHAIRMAN

EVESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: TOWN COUNCIL
DATE: 16 OCTOBER 2017
SUBJECT: FINANCE REPORT
REPORT BY: TOWN CLERK

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To advise Members of expenditure by the committee.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the report be noted.

3.0 FINANCE

3.1 Members will be aware that the Committee has an allocated budget of £6,000.

3.2 In the current financial year £245 has been spent on meeting the cost of emptying the 3 new litter bins.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 These are explained in the report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Any expenditure recommendations will have to go to Council for approval.

Evesham People & Places report

Following a presentation from Chris Wade of People and Places, the Wychavon District Council Town Regeneration Panel commissioned People and Places to undertake surveys and publish a report in each of the Wychavon towns. The Pershore report is complete and is contributing to their Town Plan. The Droitwich work will take place next year after the completion of the High Street regeneration scheme.

The Evesham report is complete and it is intended to hold a stakeholder event soon. Several Town Plan committee members met with Chris Wade earlier this year, and the intention is now that Chris will present to the Town Plan committee on Monday 16th October. This will provide an insight into the results of the business and visitor surveys, the town centre audit and also the people counting technology that was used to track movement through the town.

The executive summary will be emailed to Town Plan Committee members prior to the meeting. In the meantime, if any committee members have any questions, please contact Chris Brooks at Wychavon District Council on 01386 565343 or chris.brooks@wychavon.gov.uk

Inward Investment Manager's Report

To

Evesham Town Council's Town Plan Committee 16 October 2017

1. Signage Project

- 1.1. The project to update or install 55 new signs is made up of 21 changes to pedestrian signs including new town maps and 34 changes to highway brown and parking signs. It is jointly funded by Evesham Town Council (ETC), Wychavon District Council (WDC) and Worcestershire County Council (WCC).
- 1.2. The 21 pedestrian signs were updated by WDC autumn 2016 with tourism symbols added to finger posts, defunct signs removed and six new town maps installed.
- 1.3. Staff changes at WCC led to delays in the implementation of the highways signs but this work has begun. This element of the project has been split into two phases, with signs requiring the approval of Highways England (HE) to be delivered in the second phase in 2018.
- 1.4. The roll out of the new Welcome to Evesham signs has been postponed because the signs were not up to the standard expected. WCC is addressing this issue and installation will continue once the size and image quality has been verified.
- 1.5. Highways England set more stringent requirements for tourism signage than WCC. Specifically they specify the minimum visitor numbers an attraction must receive before it can be listed on a tourism sign. For a dual carriageway HE specifies an attraction must have at least 150,000 visitors per year and 40,000 per year for a single carriageway road. This much higher threshold may be too high for some of Evesham's attractions which may necessitate reconsidering their location.
- 1.6. The location and installation time of the highway signs is set out in the table below:



Sign	Road	Description	Timing
1	The Valley	New signs replacing the signs to the Country Park / Twyford. These signs are all located on the A46, requiring HE's approval.	Phase 2
2	A44 near Chadbury	Brown Tourism Plate	Installed
3	B4624 Worcester Road	Welcome to Evesham Sign (Church)	Awaiting production
4	Worcester Rd jct with Green Hill	Directional brown sign and Station	Installed
5	A4184 High St / Albert Rd	Brown tourist sign	Installed
6	A4184 High St / Avon St	Directional Parking Sign	Installed
7	A4184 High St / Avon St	Directional Parking Sign	Installed
8	A4184 High St / Avon St	Directional Parking Sign	Installed
9	B4088 from Norton	Brown Tourism Plate	Installed
10	A4184 Green Hill jct with The Squires	Parking bay for Battlefield site	Phase 2
10A	A4184 Green Hill	Welcome to Evesham Sign (River boat)	Awaiting production
10B	A4184 Green Hill	Art Centre Tourism Sign	Awaiting Production
11	A46T (From Alcester)	Brown Tourism Plate	Phase 2
12	B4035 Badsey Road	Brown Tourism Plate	Installed
12A	B4035 Badsey Road	Welcome to Evesham Sign (Almonry)	Awaiting Production
13	B4035 Elm Road	Confirmatory sign	Installed
14	Broadway Road	Welcome to Evesham Sign (War Memorial)	Awaiting Production
15	Broadway Road A44	Brown Tourism Plate	Installed
16	B4510 Offenham Rd	Welcome to Evesham Sign (Lily Bridge)	Awaiting Production
17	Port St Jct with Burford Road	Directional Parking Sign	Installed
18	Burford Rd Jct with car park	Directional Parking Sign	Installed
19	Port Street Jct with Bridge Street	Directional Parking Sign	Installed
20	Port Street jct with Waterside	Directional Parking Sign	Installed
21	Port Street jct with Waterside	Directional Parking Sign	Installed
22	A46 Four Pools	Removal of Leisure Centre Sign	Phase 2
23	A46 from south approach	Brown Tourism Plate	Phase 2
24	A46 from south approach	Welcome to Evesham Sign (Bell Tower)	Phase 2
25	A4184 Cheltenham Rd jct with B4035 Waterside	Brown Tourist Sign	Installed
26	A4184 Abbey Rd	Directional Parking Sign	Installed
26A	A4184 Vine St Jct with Merstow Green	Directional Parking Sign	Installed
27	A4184 Vine St jct with Merstow Green	Directional Parking Sign	Installed
28	B4084 Pershore Rd	Welcome to Evesham Sign (Round House)	Awaiting Production
29	B4084 Pershore Rd	Brown Tourism Plate	Installed
30	The Link	Welcome to Evesham Sign (Abbey Arch)	Phase 2

2. Tourism Marketing

- 2.1. The design for the Evesham Town Guide is in full flow with Areca Design utilising their vast experience in brochure design to produce a visually captivating publication with an entirely new look. A number of adverts have been acquired which is a significant contributor to the finance of the project. By working in partnership with the Almonry Museum, Areca Design has been provided with the content and will now be incorporating this into their design template.
- 2.2. The complementary project running parallel to this is that of the Augmented Reality App – funded through s106 monies. The App's foundations have been built and are ready for the content to go into it. This will come from a combination of the town guide content but also specific content including that of 'triggers'.
- 2.3. The 'triggers' will be images that activate the augmented reality sections. The working committee for the project will be meeting to discuss the detail of these. A variety of video and pictures of Evesham's events are being pulled together to be incorporated into the app too.
- 2.4. The winter months will allow for a review and refresh of the Visit Evesham website's content, to compliment the new Town Guide and reflect on the success stories of the last year. The package put together to produce the new Town Guide, included a refresh and data cleanse of the business directory. Again, this will take place during the winter months ready for a spring launch of the new guide in preparation for the tourism season of 2018.

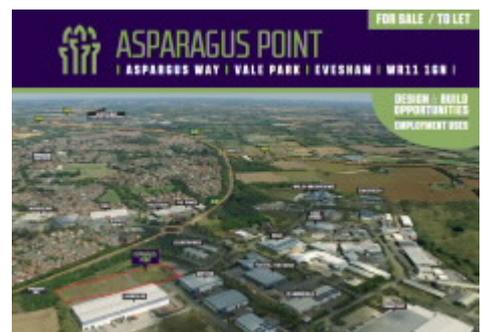
3. Inward Investment

3.1. Vale Business Park is the preferred location for new businesses looking to grow in or relocate to south Worcestershire. Interest in the park has grown since the installation of Super Fast Broadband across the site thanks to the Superfast Worcestershire project lead by WCC. WDC has improved the appearance to the entrance sign and WCC are acting to restrict parking on the exit lanes of the park at peak times.



3.2. More than 130 businesses are currently located at Vale Business Park including: Prima Fruit, suppliers of exotic produce to Waitrose, which has extended their operation by ,588sqm; Robert Welch, designers of fine cutlery has just completed their brand new 3,500sqm distribution and archive centre; and Rotec Engineering has built a 1,800sqm manufacturing unit to include an Engineering Academy.

3.3. These examples demonstrate the diverse nature of employment opportunities currently found at Vale Park. However, we are finding that employers are struggling to recruit local staff to fill vacancies, there is particularly a dearth of qualified HGV and C class drivers resulting in a heavy reliance on recruiting staff from the EU.



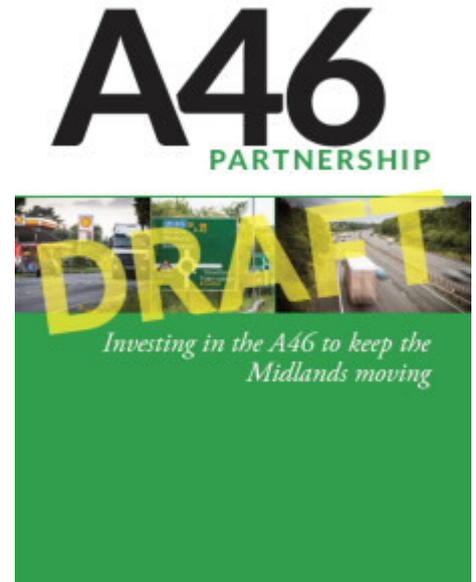
3.4. Interest from potential occupiers can be frustrated by the lack of built space with typical demand ranging from 1,000sqm to 10,000sqm. To respond to this WDC has entered into a joint venture with local developers Chase Commercial to bring forward development on 11 hectares of land owned by the council at the rear of the park. Chase will undertake speculative

development to ensure space is available when needed. In addition to this Westbridge is promoting a 1 hectare site on Crab Apple Way and Hortons are preparing to submit a planning application to build a 1.16 hectare site on Asparagus Way.

4. A46

4.1. There has been some speculation about what the review of the A46 by Highways England in partnership with District and County Councils located along the route may entail. To respond to this speculation and hopefully allay fears people may have about speculative solutions the A46 Partnership is preparing a prospectus that will explain the purpose of the review, the processes involved and the times scales over which this process will run. A draft version is near completion and it is envisaged that the final version will be ready for publication by the end of the year.

4.2. Midlands Connect is commissioning a study to understand how congestion across the midlands is likely to grow in coming years. WCC and WDC have contributed to its cost to ensure the section of the A46 around Evesham is included in the Midlands Connect detailed study. This is because the A46 is increasingly used as a diversion route if there are problems on the M5 and M42. It may also become increasingly attractive to users travelling between the south west and north east as the motorways around Birmingham become more congested.



5. Riverside Shopping Centre

- 5.1. Contracts have been exchanged for a local property company to purchase the struggling Riverside Shopping Centre ahead of exploring what can be done to bring the town centre asset back to life.
- 5.2. Stratford-upon-Avon based Chase Commercial Ltd and its funding partners are now considering what options are available to regenerate the ailing Riverside and help revitalise the heart of Evesham town centre.
- 5.3. The centre has been owned by a London based Pension Fund for a considerable time, who have managed the asset from afar. As a local company, Chase Commercial Ltd knows Evesham and is well aware the centre is presently at a very low ebb, having been in steady decline for a number of years. Its aim is to inject new life into the shopping centre and make it more attractive to both occupiers and visitors alike, which will in turn benefit both the high street and the town as a whole.
- 5.4. Julian Meredith, director at Chase Commercial Ltd has stated that the current construction of the new Waitrose supermarket shows the potential that Evesham town centre holds. "We are very much looking forward to exploring what we can do to Riverside but we also recognise that this will not happen overnight and therefore no immediate changes will be seen."

Town Plan Committee, for 16th October 2017 – Transport Report

Roads and Traffic

Members will be aware of the situation regarding the Evesham Traffic Study carried out on behalf of Worcestershire County Council. Any update available will be reported to the meeting and it is hoped that the list of various options to be tested may be made available.

Cycling

One of the outcomes of the Evesham Traffic Study is most probably a need for a modal shift for shorter journeys away from the private motor car towards cycling and walking. It is understood meetings have recently been held involving the County Council, Wychavon District Council and Cycle Evesham Vale towards the provision of cycle routes and facilities in the area and Robin Walker will be present at the meeting to provide further details.

Bruce Taylor has undertaken to prepare a guide to the routes that cyclists can use at the moment to get around town and he plans to complete this in the spring.

Vale Public Transport Group

Members will be aware that the Vale Public Transport Group (VPTG) has been formed from a merger of the Pershore Public Transport Group with the Evesham Bus Users Group. The Pershore Group was originally stated by Pershore Town Councillors who then contacted the Parish Councils surrounding the town.

Work will now commence to extend the area covered by the VPTG by inviting those parishes to the north, east and west of Evesham to join the group. In this way the needs of those villages can be taken on board, for example Childswickham, which has recently lost a bus service.

Bus Services - Evesham to Pershore

The VPTG has continued to have meeting with First Midland regarding changes to the X50m 382, 550 and 551. The emphasis for Evesham has been to restore direct connections between the town with Fladbury and Lower Moor.

First Midland Red has now agreed to changes which are to be commenced on 16th October. The hourly X50 will become more direct and no longer pass through Charlton and Cropthorne. The 51 and 52 will together operate on a two hourly basis and serve Charlton, Cropthorne, Fladbury, Lower Moor and Wyre Piddle between Evesham and Pershore.

Three public meetings were held to publicise the changes, answer questions and hear comments, two at Pershore on 3/10/2017 and one in Evesham on 6/10/2017. These meetings were chaired by the VPTG and attended by representatives of First Midland.

The meetings showed that it is essential for changes to bus services to be properly published and much needs to be done to inform the public in general when and where buses run. It is hoped that the VPTG can work with the County Council to improve the information provided in order to maximise bus usage and deter further bus services being cut.

Community Bus

The Evesham Community Bus Association (EBCA), lead by Hein van der Steen, Rotary Club has now become a formally constituted group. The group remains hopeful that the model of

organising the use of existing mini buses on a collective basis will be successful and is looking to the Vale Volunteer Centre to provide assistance in booking the buses on an ongoing basis.

There are still a number of matters to be resolved EBCA is active is assessing demand for mini buses and finding out which groups in and near the town already have mini buses and may want to join in the scheme.

Evesham Station Opening Hours.

The VPTG has suggested that the Evesham Station ticket office hours should be extended. At the moment ticket office only opens in the morning, as follows:

Monday - Friday 05:20 - 12:30, Saturday 06:15 - 12:30, Sunday Closed

When the ticket office is closed the other facilities on the station, the toilets, waiting room, etc, are all locked out of use.

Evesham as by far the largest town on the line between Worcester and Oxford had until fairly recently an afternoon shift. This is important so that the station can offer a full booking and ticketing service, up to date passenger information especially when trains are subject to regular delays and/or cancellation, reduces the potential for ticket less travel on the line, offers assistance and easier access to trains for the larger numbers of disabled people travelling (and avoids delays caused when the conductor has this extra duty) and offers waiting and toilet facilities throughout the day. For the reasons quoted here a ticket machine can only be part of the solution.

There are staffing issues at Evesham and this has meant that the station has been closed throughout the day during the summer on a number of occasions when the regular member of staff is on leave. In addition, disturbingly, Great Western Railway has stated there is "no business case" for an afternoon shift at Evesham.

Stations on the current London Midland network such as Great Malvern, Droitwich Spa and Malvern Link all have afternoon shifts with booking office hours laid down under agreements with the Department for Transport.

It is therefore suggested that the Town Council should formally contact Great Western Railways asking that Evesham Station should be provided with improved staffing levels and extended hours for the station serving the largest town on the line between Worcester and Oxford.

Report prepared by Colin Tether

Town Plan Committee, for 16th October 2017 – Project Group

The Project Group has continued to meet with the following results:

Provide Publicity on the Town Plan. It is recognised that many people will not be aware of the Town Plan (particularly in the new estates) and that it is an ongoing plan which should continue to develop and deliver improvements to the town over the years. A series of posters have been developed which are planned to be displayed in the town. These will be available to view at the meeting and comments will be welcomed.

Communications Post. The Project Group feels there is an urgent need for assistance with communication, especially by social media. It is felt that this is a part time post and to attract the right person and show commitment, some remuneration will be necessary. It is suggested that some of the Town Plan budget could be put aside for this purpose, say £1,000 in the first instance.

Evesham Conservation Area Project

This project, to improve the historic buildings within Evesham's Conservation Area together with other aspects of the area has received attention by the Civic Society, VECTA and the Town Council. The project team is ready to be launched and will include Cllr Kaler and Cllr Barlow.

Young People

Cllr Mrs Tucker has undertaken to lead a team aimed at the Town Plan aspiration of increasing young people's involvement in the town. Cllr Mrs Tucker will give a verbal report on approaching the schools on the matter.