

EVESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **TOWN PLAN COMMITTEE** held at 6.30pm on **MONDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2015** at Evesham Town Hall, Market Place, Evesham

Those present:

Chairman: Cllr M S Goodge (Town Mayor)
Vice-Chairman Cllr C D Homer

Councillors: Cllr A P Booth (Deputy Mayor), Cllr Miss E Haynes,
Cllr R S W Jones, Cllr F Kaler (Town Mayor),
Cllr C Tether

Non councillor committee members:

Mrs S Earley, Mr G O'Donnell, Mr R Walker

Officers:

Mr S D Carter (Town Clerk)
Mr Shawn Riley (Evesham Business Partnerships Manager
WDC)

Also present were Cllrs J H Smith OBE, Mrs J E Sandalls, Mrs J Johnson, R Bowers, Mrs S Amor, 3 members of the public and 1 member of the press.

16. Election of Chairman

Cllr F Kaler had previously informed the committee of his intention to stand down as its Chairman. Nominations for Committee Chairman were therefore requested.

It was proposed and seconded that Cllr M S Goodge be appointed as the Committee Chairman. There being no further nominations it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr M S Goodge be appointed Committee Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year.

17. Election of Vice-Chairman

It was proposed and seconded that Cllr C D Homer be appointed as Committee Vice-Chairman. There being no further nominations, it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr C D Homer be appointed Committee Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year.

18. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies, all members were present.

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

There were no declarations made under this agenda item.

20. Minutes of the previous meeting held 7 September 2015 including questions as to the progress of any items

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt these minutes as a true and accurate record.

21. Transport report

Cllr C Tether updated members on the progress the transport sub group was making. He had also circulated a report with the agenda which is attached at appendix A.

With regards to the traffic survey, Cllr J H Smith OBE who is the cabinet member for Highways at Worcestershire County Council (WCC) confirmed that the cost of a traffic survey would be significant and that it would happily take financial contributions from any source

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the Town Plan did make reference to general access for people with disabilities, but not to people with visual impairments, though this had not been intentional.

Overall progress was being made, and meetings with WCC had been positive.

NOTED

22. Anti-litter and improving Evesham's public realm strategy report

Mr G O'Donnell updated Members on the progress of these strategies after they were adopted by the Town Council at its last meeting. There was to be a public launch on the 20 November at Raphael's Restaurant, to which all members would be invited along with local businesses, Council officers etc. The aim of the launch was to raise awareness of the strategies, and try to get people on board, especially local businesses. The launch was a public event, and though invitations would be sent, anybody could attend.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that as part of the strategy, schools would be engaged with, though it was highlighted that young people were no more culpable than anyone else when it came to litter.

In order to proceed with the implementation of the strategy the group asked the Committee to assign them £500 from the Town Plan budget. It was **RESOLVED** that £500 be assigned to help implement the Anti-litter and Public Realm strategies.

23. Signage Report

Shawn Riley gave a verbal update on the progress made by the signage group. He explained that there had been 2 productive meetings that involved various members from WCC, WDC, the Town Council, and the Tourist Information Centre.

A review of car parking, tourist and pedestrian or finger signs in Evesham had been undertaken by Mr Riley, Mr Ed Dursley of WCC and the Town Clerk. It had highlighted just how many tourist signs there were but also how there was a lack of consistency in the wording, for example the Almonry was referred to as the Almonry Heritage Centre on one sign, the Almonry Museum and TIC on another, something else on another. There was also no reference on any of them to the Regal Cinema. Mr Dursley suggested adding the nationally recognised symbols to the signs, for example the 'i' for Tourist Information and 'm' for museum on signs referring to the TIC and Almonry, the crossed swords symbol on

signs directing to the battlefield site, etc. It was felt that this could be rectified in a relatively short space of time.

Regarding the car parking it was noted how some of the car parks were not sign posted enough, particularly the one in Bewdley Street. Mr Dursley would be writing a report for WCC and the group hoped to present a formal report at the next meeting of the Town Plan Committee.

The group were asked to consider whether the 'Litter free Evesham' strapline that was part of the anti litter strategy could be incorporated into the Welcome to Evesham signs.

NOTED

24. High Street Charter

The Clerk verbally informed Members of the High Street Charter which had been brought up by Mr Wisbey at the last Council meeting and referred to the Town Plan Committee. The Street Charter was a toolkit produced by the RNIB to try and make town centres a more safe and welcoming place for the visually impaired and the disabled. The Charter looked to encourage business to adopt good practise regarding the location of street furniture, particularly A boards. It also looked to encourage the enforcement of street furniture such as tables and chairs that are placed in situ without the relevant permissions. Mr Wisbey encouraged the Council to adopt the Street Charter as it was a plan that facilitated access for all.

The Clerk explained that it seemed appropriate that either the signage or the transport group should look at the Street Charter and either look to produce one of their own or use it to inform their decision making and recommendations.

Members agreed that this was a good idea however, it was commented that how effective it would be would depend on how it would be policed.

Members agreed to further look into the Street Charter within the working groups and they would report back to the Committee.

NOTED

25. Update from the Town Plan working groups

There were no further specific updates.

Mr R Walker commented that the work needed to be communicated and that the committee still needed to decide how it planned to deliver the plan as a whole. Some structure was required to identify the priorities and deliver them.

It was highlighted that priorities had been identified, and each should be allocated a Champion to help deliver them.

Members agreed that a structure was required, whether that was a subgroup or some other format, the majority of the work would be done outside of the formal committee, though ultimately it all had to be reported back and approved by the Town Plan Committee and subsequently the Town Council. Members agreed to meet informally to discuss a structure in more depth with a view to reporting back to the committee.

It was highlighted that progress was being made, signage and transport being an example of this. The plan was 4 years in the making but only 5 months into the delivery process. It was highlighted that the plan had recently been adopted by Wychavon District Council as a local information source and would be used as a reference when making decisions regarding Evesham.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.25 pm.

COUNCILLOR M S GOODGE
CHAIRMAN

Town Plan – Transport

Evesham's Traffic System

Following an approach in late August, a meeting has been agreed with Worcestershire County Council to discuss Town Plan aspiration to have an independent traffic study and the possibility of an extension to the Evesham Ring Road. The date and time are being finalised and will probably be in Mid November.

Cycling

Work to develop routes has continued with the emphasis on signing the 'Missing Link' of the National Cycle Route NCN 442 which links Oxford to Worcester and generally follows the railway route. The 'Missing Link' extends from Honeybourne to the south side of Evesham and means that Evesham is yet to be connected to the National Cycle Network. A detailed survey of this route has now been carried out by volunteers and shows that it could be signed at low cost. Discussion with the County continues, to see if the signing can be implemented by volunteers (as has been done with the route from Oxford to Honeybourne through Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire) and to see which S106 funding can be used to pay for the signing.

Following discussions with Councillor John Smith and Lynsey Keir at WCC, 5 priority actions have been selected from the list of proposed improvements in the Evesham Town Plan, and we look forward to receiving feedback on progress with implementing these.

A network of five leisure routes radiating out from the Market Place has been mapped and tested. These use quiet lanes and tracks to provide safe and enjoyable cycling for all ages and abilities. Two of these have been marked out with temporary signs, and route sheets are available in imaGine. We have very positive reports from people using these routes, and plan to add to the network over time. Discussions have taken place with the Vale of Evesham Landscape project, who see this network as an excellent opportunity to give residents and visitors to the Vale access to the rich horticultural, geographical and social heritage of the Vale of Evesham. This will be included in the portfolio of projects when the funding bid is submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Public Transport

Establish Evesham Public Transport Users Group. A public meeting was proposed for the early New Year to establish a Users Group.

Bus service timetable and route information. Provision of information now rests with bus operators and Worcestershire County Council. Initiative could be taken at Town level to produce information. Increased usage should be made of new technology based on smart phones.

Integrated transport hub with integrated ticketing arrangements. This would be taken up by the Public Transport Users Group if established

Community Bus. The lack of a Community Bus in Evesham was noted. The Older People's Forum to investigate provision, working if possible with the Volunteer Centre.

Walking.

Route to connect The Valley (Evesham Country Park) to Evesham. The provision of this route was welcomed and it was felt to be important to link it properly to the station and High Street via St. Mary's Road and the footpath linking to Common Road.

Around Evesham Route. The completion of an 'Around Evesham route' was agreed to be important and would prove a good tourist attraction.

Other Walking Links. It was agreed that these be prioritised following progress with the 'Around Evesham route'. The need for better and safer A46 crossings was agreed, particularly where the public footpath crosses the bypath close to the Offenham Road development.