

Local Economy and Parking Policy Development Advisory Group
10 JULY 2019

Present: Councillors: Paul Clarke (Chairman), John Blackall, Roy Cornell, Richard Landeryou, Gordon Lindsay, John Milne, Colin Minto, Mike Morgan, Jack Saheid and Belinda Walters

Apologies: Councillors: Tony Hogben

Also Present: Councillors: Peter Burgess, Ruth Fletcher and Frances Haigh

1 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes from the meeting held on 9 April were received by the Group. The Director of Place advised that one statement in minute number 29 'Gigabit Project' was no longer correct; the project was being rolled out within the district as stated, but businesses would not be able to link into it.

2 **DIGITAL SIGNAGE PROJECT REPORT**

The Corporate Project Manager gave a presentation to the Group on the installation of digital signage for rural car parks in the district. The Cabinet Member had approved the project, which was largely funded by the Rural Development Programme for England.

The signs will support the Council's Visitor Economy strategy and provide a positive welcome with interactive screens giving comprehensive information for the casual visitor. The signs would be controlled through a web-based remote management system so information could be updated centrally.

In response to questions from the Group, it was confirmed that the Council would own the screens with minimal ongoing costs including the software licence and electricity supply. Parish Councils and Community Partnerships would provide content information and be able to announce community events and activities. Regular cleaning of the digital screens will be required and options are being considered.

- The Corporate Project Manager asked Members to contact him with any ideas of visitor attractions in the district that could be included.

The Cabinet Member stated that if the initial project were successful, there could be scope in the future for identifying funding to expand the scheme to other locations within Horsham Town.

The Group were supportive of the project.

3 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - KEY PROJECTS**

The Cabinet Member introduced the Head of Economic Development who gave a presentation to the Group outlining the key projects undertaken by the department:

Employment Land To increase affordable space for businesses across the district with a view to helping current businesses and encouraging businesses from outside the district. The Group noted the key sites for new employment land including North of Horsham and the Novartis site.

Local Enterprise Apprenticeship Platform In 2017/18 and 2018/19 a number of grants were awarded to local businesses. Funding has been secured to continue this scheme for a further two years.

Journey to Work This is an externally funded scheme, working with the Job Centre, to help jobseekers find work. Last year the scheme helped over a dozen individuals find employment.

Pulborough Wild Art A four-kilometre walk along Pulborough High Street to RSPB Pulborough Brooks, funded by the EU. The trail includes sculptures inspired by nature and information points. Its official launch will be on 30 July.

Horsham Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) Cabinet had approved funding to progress the BID process in January 2019. This is a business led partnership, already operating in a number of towns, where a small contribution of business rates is used on town centre improvements. Consultation would take place soon with a ballot of local businesses scheduled for next spring.

Events Programme A programme of events (eg Piazza Italia, Americarna, Caribbean Festival, Frenchfest) which bring a large footfall to the town centre thus benefitting local businesses.

4 **PARKING - KEY PROJECTS**

The Cabinet Member introduced the Head of Parking who gave a presentation to the Group giving an overview of the department and key projects being undertaken:

ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) Work was underway to secure a new and improved ticketless system. This would be installed in Piries Place car park in the first instance and rolled out the other main car parks; Swan Walk, Forum and Pavilions. The Group were reassured that transfer to the new system should be straightforward for customers.

CCTV project The current CCTV operating in the town centre car parks needed updating. A new digital cloud-based system was to be secured.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points This was a county-wide project to ensure consistency of approach that intended to support the national network. Suitable sites were being identified, including eight charging points in Piries Place car park.

- In response to concerns, the Head of Parking agreed to request that WSCC adopts a policy of not using on-street sites for charging points.
- The Group discussed the need for government action to secure a standard approach for the whole country. The Head of Parking would discuss the possibility of lobbying the government with the leading Director.

Welcome Zone project To create a better environment in car park areas that transition from parking spaces to shopping areas, with information points, better lighting and décor.

The department was also analysing current use of parking spaces at different locations throughout the town with a view to refining the council's parking strategy.

5 **PIRIES PLACE - CAR PARK PRICING REVIEW**

The Cabinet Member reminded the Group that Cabinet had approved the renovation of Piries Place car park in March 2018, and that the business case had assumed an increase in tariffs.

The Head of Parking advised that because of the changes to Piries Place, including a new cinema and hotel, the type of use was likely to change, with less short-stay parking now that Waitrose had gone. The car park would be easier to use with wider spaces, toilet facilities, including disabled facilities, and an elevator.

Because of these changes, it was difficult to predict what tariff bands and levels were most appropriate. An interim set of tariffs, in line with charges in the main town centre car parks, was therefore proposed. These would be reviewed after six months. It was noted that there was no charge for parking after 8.00pm in the interim tariffs, though this would be reconsidered as part of the review.

- In response to comments from the Group, the Head of Parking agreed to look at how best to apply tariffs to the electric charging spaces.

The Group were supportive of this approach and noted that a report on the proposed interim tariffs would be considered by Cabinet on 25 July, followed by public consultation from 1 August if approved.

6 **FORWARD PLAN EXTRACT FOR THE LOCAL ECONOMY PORTFOLIO**

The forward plan extract was noted.

The meeting closed at 7.28 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN