

BICESTER STRATEGIC DELIVERY BOARD - NOTES – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

MEETING: Bicester Strategic Delivery Board DATE AND TIME: 4 February 2021 at 10:30am VENUE: Virtual Teams meeting		Board Members: Cllr Barry Wood (CDC) (Chairman) Cllr Ian Hudspeth (OCC) Cllr Colin Clarke (CDC) Cllr Richard Mould (BTC) Cllr Lynn Pratt (CDC) Cllr Jason Slaymaker (BTC) Cllr Lawrie Stratford (OCC) Cllr Michael Waine (OCC)		David Crook (Homes England) Robert Jolley (Cherwell District Council (CDC)) Graham Perryman (Bicester Chamber of Commerce) Rosie Rowe (NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)) Lyndon Robinson (Bicester Vision) Attendance as required (MHCLG)	
	TOPIC	PURPOSE		Action	
1.	Apologies	Received from Cllr Ian Hudspeth, Cllr Ian Corkin attending in place; Cllr Lawrie Stratford, Cllr Les Sibley attending in place; Cllr Jason Slaymaker.			
2.	Notes of previous meeting and matters arising	The notes of 29 July 2020 were agreed with updates in agenda items below.			
Governance					
3.	Recommendations following the review of the SDB	<p>Dean Fischer, interim Bicester Delivery Manager, gave a presentation and presented the circulated report on the Review of the SDB.</p> <p>The purpose of the review is the need for greater scrutiny and control of the Garden Town Programme and the funding received to date.</p> <p>The report summarises the extensive work carried out to date by the Task and Finish Group, including the consultation with Board Members, one to one meetings, and best practice discussions with Aylesbury Garden Town and Harlow & Gilston Garden Town as recommended by Homes England. Recommendations on the way forward and the new governance are also set out in the report including the Board's name change; for the governance to be split into 3 layers: strategic, operational, and tactical; and that there is a clear delineation across the demand and supply process. Suggested changes to membership include the reduction in the number of councillors on the board and the invitation to OxLEP to sit on the Board for oversight on county wide business issues. Support will continue to be provided by the Bicester</p>			

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		<p>Delivery Team and OCC officers.</p> <p>Subject to consultation feedback received from Board members by 26 February, the new governance will come into effect from 1 April 2021.</p> <p>Action: All Board members to review the proposed new governance and submit any feedback to Dean.Fischer@cherwell-dc.gov.uk by 26 February 2021.</p>	<p>All Board Members</p>
<p>Development and Investment</p>			
<p>4.</p>	<p>Update on the Bicester Town Centre Task Group work</p>	<p>Robert Jolley, Assistant Director – Growth & Economy, introduced the verbal update and presentation on progress to date on the (i) Grimsey event and town centre work; (ii) Reopening High Streets Safely Fund (RHSS); and (iii) a joint project with OxLEP and other districts on the ‘Meanwhile Uses’ programme</p> <p>Grimsey event and town centre work – following the event on 19 November 2019, six ‘foundation stones’, critical to the delivery of the vision and outline plan, were agreed: single delivery vehicle; investment; strategic spine; community hub; communication and brand identity; and planning policies. To enable the outline plan to happen, seven pledges of action were made by attendees at the event on 19 November and these pledges will be followed up at the next Grimsey event in March along with progressing a detailed plan and plans for engaging with the public. It is proposed that this work will then be fed into the SDB for future reporting.</p> <p>RHSS (Reopening High Streets Safely Fund) – is an HM Government (HMG) COVID-19 national recovery initiative with the aim of delivery additional measures for a safer trading environment for businesses and customers in high streets and CDC has been allocated £133,843 from ERDF funds under the RHSS scheme.</p> <p>Progress to date includes a signed funding agreement from HMG; meetings taking place with stakeholders; and progressing the procurement process for the agreed 5 of 6 projects. The deadline for procurement and payment is end June 2021. Once commissioned from June 2021, the projects will run for a maximum period of 12 months.</p> <p>‘Meanwhile’ Use project – OxLEP delegated responsibility to Oxford City Council (also the</p>	

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		<p>accountable body) for an Oxfordshire system-wide operation. A 12 month scheme to take current vacant retail units in town centres and put them to good use on a temporary/meanwhile use. Progress to date includes the procurement of a specialist meanwhile operator contracted to lead on the project; and from 77 units across the district, 16 have been identified for Bicester, with 9 potential occupiers identified within Cherwell to date.</p> <p>Capital funding is only available for 12 months with project delivery to be completed by January 2022. It is expected that the project will continue for at least another two years, until January 2024, in order to realise the benefits of the upfront injection of funds.</p> <p>A discussion was held on the town centre and Cllr Corkin asked if the town was oversubscribed for retail premises.</p> <p>Action: as part of the Economic Recovery Planning (ERP) project with OxLEP, RJ to enquire whether further research into the relationship between retail and market towns (including Bicester) could be commissioned.</p>	<p>RJ</p>
<p>Garden Town</p>			
<p>5.</p>	<p>Programme update</p>	<p>A report and presentation on the progress of the Garden Town (GT) Programme was given by Dean Fischer, interim Bicester Delivery Manager.</p> <p>Good progress is being made on all capital projects. A tighter programme regime has been introduced and Homes England are being kept up to date with progress to ensure the release of additional funds to deliver the schemes at pace.</p> <p>Work is progressing on branding to improve the communication and engagement with the public and stakeholders.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked the team for the ongoing work.</p> <p>Action: due to agenda time constraints, any questions or feedback to be forwarded to Dean.Fischer@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, after the meeting.</p>	<p>All Board Members</p>
<p>Healthy Bicester</p>			

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6.	Programme update	<p>Rosie Rowe, Healthy Place Shaping Lead, presented the report and Appendices on the progress of the Healthy Bicester Programme.</p> <p>RR indicated very supportive of the proposed restructuring and alignment of the Healthy Place Shaping (HPS) work that contributes to the delivery of the Garden Town objectives to create a healthy and sustainable community.</p> <p>The report updates on current priorities during COVID-19 and the lockdown and acknowledges the great response from the public. Future priorities are also identified from the challenges that the pandemic has highlighted, ie lower physical activity, social isolated and increased mental health problems.</p> <p>Appendix A shows the results of the Bicester Healthy Lives study; Appendix B: Top performing @HealthyBicester Facebook posts (October 2020 to January 2021); and Appendix C is a summary Theory of Change diagram which demonstrates the complexity of improving health and wellbeing by seeking to change the wider determinants of health.</p> <p>The Chairman highlighted that the Health New Town accreditation was not easily awarded or straightforward to retain and there is a lot of good work in this project which contributes to the whole system approach.</p> <p>Action: due to agenda time constraints, any questions or feedback to be forwarded to Rosie.Rowe@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, after the meeting.</p>	All Board Members
Infrastructure			
7.	<p>Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) NW Bicester Rail Underbridges and realignment of A4095 Howes Lane b) Oxford Cambridge Expressway c) London Road Level Crossing 	<p>Jacqui Cox, Infrastructure Locality Lead, OCC, presented the report.</p> <p>NW Bicester Rail Underbridges and realignment of A4095 Howes Lane – on track for Easter 2021 track possession. The aim of this project is to realign the existing A4095 along Howes Lane and the western end of Lords Lane in line with the new underbridge below the railway line near Bucknell Road/A4095 junction. This will provide an important strategic link for the town and sustainable connections through to the North West Bicester strategic development allocation. Funding will be used to deliver an interim scheme ahead of the development sites progressing, to ensure that there is a road in place once the bridge has been completed.</p> <p>Oxford Cambridge Expressway – no updates given.</p>	

<p>d) A41 Scheme e) Misc.</p>		<p>London Road Level Crossing – following the Government announcement for further funding towards the continuation of the East West rail line, this means that at least the Oxford Bletchley section is expected to be up and running by 2025. This year is noted as a critical time to look at mitigation packages for the crossing. East West Rail Company are likely to be starting to engage with members and the communities from Spring 2021</p> <p>A41 Scheme – OCC have recently commissioned Steer to undertake a study to find at least two preferred options for the Local Plan and OCC connectivity by end May 2021.</p> <p>England’s Economic Heartland (EEH) – have been developing a Transport Strategy for the region. Feedback received from a consultation on the draft strategy, between 14 July – 6 October 2020, will be shared with EEH’s Member-led Strategic Transport Forum on 5th February, with an aim to publish the finalised strategy by the end of February 2021. One area of feedback most notable is that the strategy should be more ambitious on decarbonisation. The final strategy will now include an explicit reference to aim to achieve net-zero by 2040, with an absolute date of no later than 2050.</p> <p>Market Square/town centre - OCC officers are looking to commission an urban design consultancy to consider the options for an enhanced mixed-use space for this key part of the town centre and the transport elements that would feed into this. The project brief is currently being drafted, with the aim to complete this phase of the work by the end of the Summer with a preferred option to take forward into the design process.</p> <p>South West Bicester Active Travel Measures – a route to connect south west Bicester with the town centre for active and healthy travel modes is being funded by the LEP, based on the Government’s Active Travel Fund initiative. A key stakeholder workshop was held during December and the scheme is now out to public consultation to present the package of measures and receive any detailed comments or feedback.</p> <p>The majority of the scheme needs to be delivered by the end of March, which means that the formal Traffic Regulation Order consultations for the proposed 20mph, Causeway restrictions, crossings and footpath conversions are therefore taking place concurrently with the wider consultation, and notices have had to be published to prepare for the construction phase.</p>	
		<p>Incremental planning permissions and the impact on highways – Member concern was raised prior to the meeting re a number of sites coming forward within close proximity. JC advised that The National Planning Policy Framework requires that development sites are considered on their own merits and there are assessment tests to ensure planning requirements are reasonable. Where there are a number of sites coming forward within close proximity, such as</p>	

		<p>along the A41 corridor, this can result in piecemeal delivery of highway infrastructure. The only ways to combat this are either to have a masterplan and Supplementary Planning Guidance in place to cover a number of neighbouring sites or have a very detailed transport strategy that the developers contribute towards.</p> <p>The Chairman acknowledged and thank Jacqui Cox for the update on the large programme of work coming together at pace and the connectivity between the projects is key. Also noted that the railway project is a real success story and the funding secured to make this happen has been a vindication of the Garden Town programme.</p> <p>Cllr Pratt highlighted that communication will be key with the wider public for the Easter 2021 rail bridge work. Noted that a joint press release between OCC, CDC and Network Rail will be issued shortly.</p> <p>The Board noted the report.</p>	
8.	Press release summary and agreed communication messages	<p>A report of Bicester press releases for October 2020 to January 2020 was previously circulated with the report pack.</p> <p>Action: the Chairman requested the Board to delegate the outcome of this item to himself, Robert Jolley and Victoria Walton, Communication and Marketing Executive to decide on the three communication messages from this meeting.</p>	Cllr Wood/ Robert Jolley/ Victoria Walton
9.	Any Other Business	Due to the time constraint on the agenda, the Chairman moved to end the meeting and this item was not discussed.	
	Date of next meetings	2021 date: 18 March. Venue: Virtual online by MS Teams	