

Overview & Scrutiny Task Group Meeting Notes



| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Review topic | Date of Meeting |
| Lichfield City Centre Masterplan – Car Parking | 21 Oct 2021 |

| Attendance | Venue |
|---|--------------|
| <p>Members: Ball (Chair) Checkland Cross Warburton Pullen (Cabinet Member)</p> <p>Apologies: Baker (Vice Chair)</p> <p>Officers: Helen Bielby Simon Humble David Moore Christine Lewis</p> <p>Witnesses: Stephen Crichton from Gleeds (Project Manager) Neil Chapman from Austin-Smith:Lord (Architects).</p> | Virtual |

| Areas Discussed |
|--|
| <p>The Cabinet Member introduced both the Car Parking Strategy and Public Realm Strategy and reported that with the latter, it was a thematic approach and not for action straight away but a clear direction where the council wants to end up at. It was reported that the more immediate hope was how public would move around the city. Regarding the car parking strategy, it was hoped that views could be given on the mix and the parking behaviour that would come out of the strategy was correct and a customer experience was as useful and easy as possible. It was noted that the Council was writing to schools with a competition to get pupils suggestions for the BRS site and what priorities they had to help futureproof and aid conversations within families around the district. The Task Group was pleased that there would be a youth voice feeding into the project. There was some concern that a path had already started to be followed however it would help the Council to understand their needs and wants to feed in. There was a thought that it should go wider and include college and university students within the area. It was agreed that other areas outside the BRS site were not at a point to include in this competition.</p> |

Public Realm Strategy

The Chair wished to focus on whether the strategy was deliverable, suitable, fit for purpose and value for money (however it was noted that this would be difficult to consider at this point).

The Task Group felt that the document was well put together and representative for what was needed for the city. It gave a full picture and the order of proposals were sensible however could contradict some of the actions in the car parking strategy. There were some comments on the details however it was agreed that those discussions should be for a later meeting and this meeting was to discuss the principles of the strategy.

Pedestrianisation was discussed and it was felt that it could be widened to include Upper St John's Street and Tamworth Street. There was support for limiting the number into the city to encourage the use of public transport or to be more active.

Seating was also considered and it was felt that there could be more in the city centre.

Comments from Cllr Baker were submitted in her absence including trees and substrate, geology and water table, waterways and subsiding pavements and roads.

The deletion of a circular walk around Minster Pool was supported by Members but there were some concerns on the idea of a floating stage on the pool as the practicalities may not be there.

All were in agreement that the strategy should be for the resident as well as the visitor to the city.

Officers and the consultants were grateful for the comments received. It was agreed that the strategy could proceed to the project board and then Cabinet.

Car Parking Strategy

The Task Group were pleased to receive this version of the Car Park Strategy and felt it was more comprehensive and clearer. Again the focus of discussion was agreed to be around whether the strategy would be deliverable, identify efficiencies, produces the right level and type of projects, service improvements and value for money.

There were some thought that some operational details were needed to ensure that the strategy was deliverable etc. It was noted that the action plan would lay out those operational matters. It was also reported that there was still areas that the car parking staff needed to feed into as it would impact on them.

Capacity in the car parks were discussed and it was noted that figures pre covid showed that there was significant capacity in some car parks especially the multi-storey car parks. It was then reported that post lockdown, there had not been the predicted rush back in cars as expected.

Priorities of actions were considered and it was noted that the Cabinet Member had requested that more work be undertaken to make it as realistic as possible.

Charging was discussed and there were concerns that neighbouring areas should be monitored closely. It was also felt that one payment app across Staffordshire would be helpful and the most useful for visitors/residents. The task group were happy to see the introduction of ANPR for charging. It was asked if regular users and residents could have an account to further ease of use.

It was felt that zoning should be considered and many people would park dependent on where they enter the city from. This along with how to divert people away from the city centre and any impact on blue badge parkers. It was noted that this linked to the Public Realm Strategy. It was reported that there would be a feasibility of full pedestrianisation of the city centre which was being developed with Staffordshire County Council and would be considered by the task group however that was on street parking where this strategy was off street.

It was asked if Lower Sandford Street car park had been considered and whether it could be pedestrianised with another access point. It was noted it was mentioned in the Public Realm Strategy. It was agreed that this could be looked into further.

Overall, the task group were happy for the strategy to proceed to the project board and then Cabinet.

Outcomes

That the Strategy be referred to the project board however be considered as more a review and evaluation document.

Further Work Required/Next Steps:

To proceed to the project board and Cabinet.