

**DRAFT NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP WORKING GROUP HELD ON 3<sup>rd</sup> JUNE 2019 AT 7.00PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE**



**PRESENT:** Cllr A Wilkinson (Chairman), Cllr P Barton, Cllr T Luker, Cllr R Claydon, Cllr J Turner, Cllr N Pinnegar, Mrs J Tebb (Secret Gardens Trail), Mrs J Walshe (Heritage Centre), Mrs C Sweet (Dementia Connections), Mr G Phillips (Wotton Arts Festival), Mr M Tucker (Chamber of Trade).

In Attendance: Administrator Diana Hyam

**964. Election of Chairman** It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar with all in favour that Cllr A Wilkinson be Chairman of the Town Regeneration Partnership.

**965. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mrs T McLusky, Ms S Hunt, Mr M Clarke.

**966. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations** – None

**967. Public Forum** – No public present.

**968. Notes of the Town Regeneration Partnership Meeting Held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2019** It was proposed by Cllr T Luker, seconded by Cllr P Barton that the Notes of the Town Regeneration Partnership meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February be approved as a correct record following one correction. Agreed all in favour

**969. Chairman's Report** - Cllr A Wilkinson apologised to the partnership for not submitting a report for the recent Annual Parish Assembly. This was due to family commitments and he said that he would complete a retrospective report in due course as the partnership has a lot to celebrate.

The proposed car park in Symn Lane will have 80 car parking spaces, 2 coach parking spaces and 8 electric charging points. The Town Council is considering the future control of the Chipping car park.

**970. Market at WCSF** - it was noted that Chris Hull a local trader is planning to hold a one off food market at the WCSF. If it is successful he may hold food markets in future several times a year.

**971. Up-date from recent Trader's Meeting** – Representatives Hayley Stephens and Nicola Palmer presented their proposal for a traders market in the town.

- The vision is to create a regular thriving market in the town as soon as possible to serve the local community and bring people into the town.
- A working group will be set up to research possible traders, suitable days and sites within the town centre which may involve a road closure in Market Street.
- Contact NABMA for advice and appoint a project manager.
- It is suggested that a budget of £5,000 will be needed to cover training, licencing and to research extra funding options.
- The group are planning to have a small market up and running by Spring 2020.

Following discussions the representatives were offered contact details of an officer that has experience with applications for grant funding following her work with the Heritage Centre.

Concern was raised with the closure of Market Street before the new car park in Symn Lane was operational. Requests for funding could be sought from SDC following the collation of a business plan. Grants from WTC have to be applied for so it can be considered and included the budget.

*The representatives left the meeting.*

**972. Questionnaire Results** (Cllr R Claydon gave a Power Point presentation)

From the results, the Town Council has agreed that the way forward would be to proceed with Old Town Toilets immediately and are in the process of commissioning an architect to produce plans which should be decided by July. Funding will be from Council Reserves, SDC grant of £40k and a Public Works loan of around £45K. The area would accommodate a unisex modular toilet with baby changing facilities and consideration will be given to making the unit dementia friendly. The space outside could be used for seating in a small Remembrance Garden. Building could start as early as the end of the year. The Town Market would be pursued when the new Symn Lane car park is available if there is no other market regular market in the town. The OK Path lighting requires further analysis to ascertain the real need and if it

becomes part of the “Greenway” project lighting would probably be provided by this project. Views had also been expressed by residents that WTC should not be expected to fund the whole of the lighting cost, therefore alternative funding sources would need to be explored.

### 973. Priority Action List

#### 1. Cotswold Edge Severn Vale Tourism Network - Mrs J Walshe.

- Mid- June Newsletter No 3 will include features on low cost marketing for tourism businesses.
- Advertising space in the new eating and drinking map have virtually sold out and distribution is planned for late June before the school holidays.
- Gordon Craig (SDC Councillor and Network Member) and Mike Studden now sit on the Gloucestershire Enterprise Partnership’s Tourism and Visitor Economy Group.
- A coherent investment plan for tourism is being put together to become part of the Gloucestershire Enterprise Strategy.
- The Network has recently given its support for grant applications for Cattle Country and Jenner’s House Museum.

#### 2. Stroud Market Towns Project Funding - The bid included improvements to Old Town toilets which are now going ahead so the £40K will be used for this project.

**3. Christmas Decorations and Event 2019** – It was noted that the plans to have lanterns in the main streets will not be going ahead. The 100 lanterns were originally going to be made by the Wotton Mens Shed but unfortunately it proved to be too big a task for them to manage.

Following concerns regarding insurance and health and safety issues a local contractor has been approached to quote for erecting Christmas trees in the town. The price of a tree and installing it would be £62.50 plus vat provided that 35 trees were ordered. It was suggest that perhaps splitting the costs equally between the Chamber of Trade, WTC and the trader would be a solution. However, it was thought that the traders would not find this option acceptable. Other options were suggested such as:

- Traders arrange their own trees,
- Having more lights within their window displays.
- Installing outside LED lighting to the shop facia using hooks that can be permanent and used each year. This would make it be easy to install and remove the lighting. It was suggested that a package of instructions could be put together for this self-help option if required.

Further discussions will take place on this item at the next meeting.

The Under the Edge Christmas event is well underway and no help from the WTC had been requested for administration.

*Mrs J Tebb left the meeting*

**4. Postcards** - Mrs J Walshe reported that the new postcard has been distributed to Cotswold towns, villages and places of interest and Mr M Tucker had taken a quantity of leaflets to the Gables Hotel to be put in each room for extra publicity with the corners clipped so that usage could be identified by people visiting the town. Plans are being made for another postcard for next year.

**5. Leaflets** – Mr Jeff Walshe has been working on the new leaflet and it is now reaching the final stages of proof reading and final alterations to the map being produced by Cotswold.com. Printing and distribution of the leaflet is planned for the end of June depending on the finance available at the time of printing. A sample of the leaflet was circulated to members. The Chamber of Trade are considering producing a leaflet to be funded by advertising space for local businesses. It was suggested that the chamber could collaborate with the Heritage Centre to pool resources.

**6. Town Noticeboards** - Little progress has been made as regards the town map boards. The working party is waiting for the work to be completed on the new leaflet so the map produced by Cotswold.com can be used for the artwork. Cllr A Wilkinson will obtain quotes for the use of the map and new boards. It was noted that a board would be needed for the new car park at Symn Lane.

*To be actioned by the working party.*

**7. Wotton in Bloom** – Ms S Hunt submitted a report as she was unable to attend that included the following points:

- Orders had been taken for 148 hanging baskets and 15 troughs and tubs will decorate the main streets from Old Town to the War Memorial to the Chipping.
- The tubs at the War Memorial will be planted with more sustainable plants.
- The 2 large tubs at Old Town bus stop and the NFU on the High Street, both are sponsored one by the Lions and the other by Wotton Round Table.
- Planted troughs will hang on the railings in Old Town.
- The 2 tubs at the entrances to the town supporting Bearlands Play Association will be planted along with the regenerated play area.
- The group are actively seeking a solution to the flower bed in front of the Youth Centre.

**8. Save the High Street Initiative** Mr M Tucker (Chamber of Trade) – Wotton was not successful in becoming an example town as another town was chosen that could provide extra funding. The scheme included studies into the influence of purchases made online, social media and local shopping. With acting on the results of these studies and implementing new methods of selling, sales rose by 7%. It was felt that Wotton would benefit from such a study and Mr M Tucker is pursuing the possibility of a similar study being carried out here.

**9. Cotswolds Gateway Project-** It was noted that this was being dealt with by the Footpaths Working Group and are waiting for the boards and discs for the routes to arrive.

**10. Old Town Toilets** – This item was dealt with under item 972.

**11. Leaflet Distribution** – The new leaflets will be distributed in the same way as the postcards with some going to Glide Media.

**12. Websites including My Wotton** – Cllr A Wilkinson explained that the website [www.wottonunderedge.info](http://www.wottonunderedge.info) is no longer in use. The partnership was shown an example of the site My Thornbury which has been set up. It extracts events etc from other sites including social media. This is an excellent way to find all the events that are happening in the area on one site. The creator of this site is now working on My Wotton and this will replace [www.wotton-under-edge.org](http://www.wotton-under-edge.org) and will take information from local web pages and social media. The contact details can be found on the site [www.mywotton.co.uk](http://www.mywotton.co.uk) for anyone who would like to add an event to the site or advertise.

**13. Wotton Arts Hub** – Next meeting to be held in July.

**14. Dementia Connections** – Mrs C Sweet is hoping to retire in September so the group is looking for a new champion. The group have held and attended training courses for local businesses and the Chipping Surgery are interested in having 16 people trained to a higher level. It was noted that a leaflet containing information on dementia resources and contacts is being investigated and funding would be needed to produce it. A sticker for local shops to support Dementia Friendly Wotton is also being investigated so that residents can identify places of safety and to raise awareness encouraging people to take an interest. More can be done including these indicatives to give people confidence to visit the town.

**15. Walking Festival 2019** – Mrs C Sweet estimated that at least 300 walkers over the 3 days enjoyed the organised walks in the area. It was noted that walkers came from other parts of the country including Bristol, Coventry, and Derbyshire. The event has grown each year and the organisers have received very positive feed-back. It was noted that eateries in the town along with Town Hall Teas had an increase in customers. The programme booklet was very well received and the organisers are looking at ways to raise funds for next year. To celebrate the festival it was suggested that local businesses could get involved by having window displays and involve local schools.

**16. Street Cleaning-** Cllrs T Luker and P Barton produced a report that was circulated to members at the meeting detailing the areas that were overgrown. It was noted that in many places ownership was difficult to ascertain as the responsibility could lie with a land owner, SDC, GCC or WTC. It was noted that the wall next to the Library in Ludgate Hill was going to be assessed by the GCC surveyor as it was feared to be unsafe if vegetation was removed and the seat in Wortley Road will be repaired. It was also noted that hedges and trees could not be cut back until the end of the nesting season. It was suggested that landowners would need to be identified so that requests can be made for improvements. Cllrs T Luker and P Barton will investigate the areas of concern with help from Cllr John Cordwell.

#### **974. Reports from Partners**

**a. Chamber of Trade** – Mr M Tucker has asked Ms K O’Leary CEO of SDC to reinstate surveys in the town for footfall, vacant shops and car parking. Any Government grants have strict criteria regarding surveys that has to be met when applying for grants.

**b. Heritage Centre** – Ms J Walshe.

- Visitor numbers are up this year.
- There is an increase in enquiries regarding walks in the area.
- The Centre took part in the Arts Trail with a small exhibition.
- The Centre is now promoting town events by selling tickets.
- Database. Phase 1 is complete with all artefacts listed. Phase 2 will now start detailing the location of all the artefacts on the list.
- Several small grants have been received to enable the replacement of equipment such as photocopier, projector and new horizontal filing cabinets.
- Using funds from the SDC £2,000 grant the Centre is planning to produce new walks leaflets.

**c. Beaumont Le Roger** – A report was circulated to members prior to the meeting as follows: 36 members of the Society have just returned from an enjoyable weekend spent in Beaumont le Roger which included a visit to Monet’s garden

**d. UTEA** – A report was circulated to members prior to the meeting as follows:

- The Arts Trail was organised by UTEA this year with backing from the former organisers. The event was a success with the town centre being busy but some outlining participants did not enjoy good visitor numbers.
- Wotton Spring Gardens and Open Studios event are in hand for May 2020.
- The Spring into Summer event was a great success on 30<sup>th</sup> March and will be repeated next year.
- The Edge Factor event planned for November will be replaced with a non-competitive showcase evening at the Chipping Hall.
- We are introducing a “Young and Free” scheme allocating 10 free tickets for young people at many of our events the mechanics for this will be in place to start in September.
- February 2020 we are planning a Wotton Window Wanderland from 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Feb. The plan is to decorate with light displays the street side windows of Wotton at a dark time of the year. We have secured a starter pack for £350 from a donor and will be seeking match funding from possibly the Town Council or Recreational Trust to hold workshops for all ages. Having seen this work in Bristol and other towns there is confidence that it will be well supported in Wotton.

**e. Arts Association** – Mr G Philips thanked the Town Council for the letter of thanks following the Arts Festival which was very successful over the 10 day period attracting over 1,000 visitors. Next year the association is planning a 2 week programme to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the usual finish of the Band on the hill. The association are looking at reorganising the organisation of events and intend to collaborate with UTEA in 2021. It was noted that the Classic Car Event on 14<sup>th</sup> July at Newark Park is expected to have over 100 vehicles on show.

**f. Town Hall Teas** – This year’s teas have made a good start and next year’s list is now fully booked. The teas have benefited from other events happening in the town such as the Arts Trail and Walking Festival. It is suspected that next year it will be the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Town Hall Teas this, will be clarified.

**973. Brief Reports** – Cllr J Turner commented on the High Streets Heritage Action Zones. This funding can include physical improvements to buildings, events, conversion of vacant shops etc. It is a lengthy document and the application should be made by a Principle Authority. Further investigation is needed to ascertain the criteria for applying for funding.

**974.** Date of next meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> September at 7.00pm.

Signed ..... Chairman of Town Regeneration Partnership

Date.....

*Meeting finished at 9.25pm*

DRAFT