

Folkestone Town Centre Working Group

Held at: Zoom - remote meeting

Date: Monday, 28 March 2022

Present: Councillors Laura Davison, David Monk, Tim Prater and Lesley Whybrow

Apologies for Absence

Officers Present: Ewan Green (Director of Place), Katharine Harvey (Chief Economic Development Officer), Ellen Joyce (Democratic Services Trainee), Rod Lean (Chief Officer - Place & Growth), Sue Lewis (Committee Services Officer), Llywelyn Lloyd (Chief Planning Officer), Fred Miller (Transportation Lead Specialist) and Lorraine Smith (Economic Development Senior Specialist)

Others Present:

8. **Declarations of interest**

The were no declarations of interest at the meeting.

9. **Minutes**

The minutes for the meeting held on 12 May 2021 were agreed and the minutes for the meeting held 2 September 2021 were noted.

10. **Presentation by external speakers**

Holly Lewis, We Made That, presented an updated to members with regards to the six priority projects identified in the Folkestone Place Plan which was shaped and developed through extensive public engagement.

The priority projects were:

- Station Arrival and Connections;
- Improved Gateway to the Town Centre and Bouverie Square;
- Sandgate Road and Town Centre Public Realm;

- F51 Environs and Payers Park;
- Harbour Line and Tram Road;
- Sunny Sands.

Options for potential Project Packages that may be included in a round 2 Levelling Up Fund application were outlined as:

- Town Centre Gateway;
- Connections To and Through;
- Leisure Routes;
- All except the Gateway Project.

Members requested and noted the following:

- A breakdown of the representatives at the focus groups.
- Accessible Toilets – checking that changes to toilets reflect issues raised during the Place Plan consultation.
- Wayfinding Project – to ensure better proposal than similar projects used in the past that did not work.
- Bus Station Configuration – ensuring it will encourage the use of public transport with enough stands and facilities for use.
- Multi-storey car park Tram Road – need for more work in line with Town Centre Parking Review, funding for project, concerns were expressed that another multi-storey car park could be unused like current privately owned car park due to safety fears at night.
- Dover Road closure next to F51 – possible concerns from residents regarding access.
- Park and Ride – better scheme is required that the previous one with options for pick-ups/drop offs at Harbour Arm, bus station and F51.
- More engagement needed with younger population with regards to proposals.
- The need to hold further more frequent working group meetings due to deadline for proposals.

Ewan Green advised members that the presentation was a brief introduction to items and further detail will be brought to members for consideration at the next meeting.

11. **Town Centre Parking Review**

Presentation from Fred Miller to members.

Objectives to the Parking Review:

- To understand the current level of parking provision and the extent to which this is meeting the current needs of Folkestone Town Centre
- To determine the implications of new developments underway or proposed for Folkestone Town Centre.

Timetable:

- Car Park Demand Surveys – w/c 18th April or 25th April
- Online Parking User Survey – to be launched in early April for 4 weeks
- Face-to-Face Intercept Survey – to be undertaken w/c 18th April or 25th April
- Workshops – w/c 25th May and w/c 25th June but flexible and subject to align with LUF bid timetable

Members raised the following points:

- Timeframes – worries that response rates will be low as surveys are to be conducted around the Easter breaks.
- Disabled Parking – to be included in review.
- East Cliff – CPZ to be included in review.
- Bicycle Parking – to be included in review.
- Town Plan – survey results will look to work in tandem with the Place Plan
- Electric Charging Points – to be included in review.
- That action plan and outcomes to be brought back to working group.

12. **Strategic Project Update**

Ewan Green updated members on a number of projects currently being worked on by the team, with a view to fully updating members at the next meeting.

Introduced Rod Lean – Chief Officer Place & Growth – who will be leading the work on the development of Folca 2.

Rod Lean – Advised members that he is currently working with advisors to assess the potential development options for Folca. This advice is important as it will provide a view on what types of uses will be both attractive to the development market, but also add value to the overall offer within the town centre.

Members requested updates on the following items:

- Vinyls being removed from Folca – Lorraine Smith advised that a place message is being installed with QR codes and images/updates for the district as current vinyls have been in situ for over 2 years. Works are due to be completed by the end of the current week or the following week depending on the needs of the vaccination centre.
- Heritage Streetlighting Project update – Lorraine Smith advised this is in the final stage of design and costing and an update on this and timescales will be brought to the next meeting. The opportunity to install electric car charging points in the lighting columns may not be possible but will investigate options for on street charging bollards.
- Will there be public engagement regarding the use of Folca

13. **Future meetings schedule**

11.30am on 12 May 2022