

KING'S LYNN TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM & REPURPOSING WORKING GROUP

Meeting Minutes

Date 1 st November 2021	Location Via MS Teams
Time 3pm	Chair Vicky Etheridge

Attendees	Apologies
Jemma Curtis Louise Godfrey Vicky Etheridge Cllr Lesley Bambridge Alistair Cox Andrew Stevenson Neil Gromett Charlie Roughton Cllr Graham Middleton Richard Morrish	

Minutes	Actions
1. Apologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None received. 	
2. Minutes of the last meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No corrections – Minutes agreed 	
3. Update on the long list <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr Bambridge started, explaining that she had done a site walk of her own but had travelled along Waterloo Street from the Rail Station to the Bus Station and to Baxter's Plain, she had noted that there were some areas of rubbish which needed clearing and the paving was uneven at the back of the shops on Dominic Square. She was pleased to see how the new flats behind the museum were progressing and mentioned that once the former Post Office site was developed the area would appear more appealing. When considering Baxter's Plain, she suggested removal of the telephone box but that the frequency of its use would need to be considered. She asked why the group were concentrating on the Rail Station. Vicky explained that rail as a means of travel should be promoted for leisure & tourism and that the Public Realm Action Plan written by Graeme Massie Architects had highlighted this as a priority route. Jemma confirmed that there were other projects within the Towns Fund which would look at possible improvements to the public realm so there are opportunities beyond this initial tranche of funding for this group to have an ongoing input. Norfolk County Council (NCC) has been in touch with the Borough Council regarding cycle storage. They have funding to put in additional cycle storage and therefore visitors to the town centre are likely to see more cycle storage installed over the coming months. Jemma mentioned 	

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<p>that there was a need for more secure cycle storage, and this was still something the group might like to consider as it's likely that NCC will only install the style of cycle racks already used elsewhere in the town.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jemma shared a presentation with the group. She asked if this captured the groups thoughts on the long list. • Richard Morrish asked about lighting and wondered if NCC had any plans to replace or upgrade the current lighting. • Jemma replied that upgrades to the lighting were being untaken at the moment and she would find out whether there were any plans to upgrade those lights along the identified priority route. • Richard said that the route from the Rail Station into the town centre was very orange at night and that there was a plan to replace these with LED lighting, he said that if the town were to transition away from traffic and more to pedestrian and cyclists, the lighting should reflect this. • Vicky agreed and asked what the plans were for upgrading the lights and whether there was scope for this to be prioritised. She mentioned that the last upgrade was 10 years ago. • Cllr Bambridge highlighted that some of the lights were NCC owned, but others were owned by the Borough Council. • Neil confirmed that as part of a refurbishment project, the council would be replacing 800 streetlights across the borough to LED lights, he said that Matthew Henry in Property Services would have the details. <p>ACTION: Jemma to discuss lighting refurbishment with Matthew Henry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jemma asked if everybody was happy with the long list, she said that items such as the artwork would still need to be determined but that a budget had been put forward as a guide. • Richard said that he had missed the discussion around vinyl's for the former Argos windows. • Jemma stated that everything discussed had been added to the long list but that there was an expectation that items may be taken off as the total budget for the long list is £350,000 but funding is only available for £300,000. She said that the list needed to capture all of the thoughts. Some items would be picked up under operational budgets. • Richard felt it was better to do some things well and leave others until a later date. 	<p>LG</p> <p>JC</p>
<p>4. Prioritisation and Appraisal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jemma had added the outcomes and outputs to the long list, these were selected from the Heads of Terms and what the Government required reporting on. These items included the amount of trees planted and the amount of paths improved. There is a need to deliver as much as possible with the funding. Jemma continued to present, explaining that she was sharing the Mott McDonald INSET appraisal which is a tool used to evaluate small to multi-million-pound projects. Each category is given a score against project objectives, affordability, and deliverability. This 	

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gives an overall score against each area of proposed works with green being the beneficial. She asked if everybody was happy with the scoring given.

- Cllr Bambridge asked to see the results for the Blackfriars Road corner.
- Vicky explained where the corner was, she said that banners of the lamp column and public artwork may not be feasible for the space due to NCC restrictions, she mentioned that planting the verges should be undertaken by the council under general maintenance.
- Cllr Bambridge said that this was a tricky area and she had herself witnessed a near collision earlier. She stated that she believed the route from the station to the walks corner needed cycle markings and that the tree stumps needed to be removed.
- Jemma explained that this corner had received a red score due to the banners as they would require consent from Amey and whilst they were happy in a principal consent would also be needed from NCC.
- Cllr Bambridge said that she could push for markings. She stated that there was sign telling cyclists to dismount but that they didn't generally. She said that the stump removal would be helpful, but that the lighting along the route needed to be improved.
- Richard agreed stating that it was a blind corner and that projects considered on the long list might have a higher scoring if improvements to cycle paths was being scored.
- Vicky stated that not everything flagged could be purchased from the Town's Fund, she asked if the long list represented group members thoughts. She hoped that the largest cost would have the biggest impact.
- Richard asked about murals.
- Jemma replied that where the opportunities for artwork had been identified, a budget had been set against it, this included artwork at the Rail Station, and this had been built into the long list of costings.
- Richard went on to ask about tree planting.
- Jemma explained that she had a meeting and site walk to look at tree planting. She said that car parking spaces cannot be reduced to replace with trees and there isn't room between bays to plant. She said it may be possible when the car park is being resurfaced to reconfigure the bay parking to incorporate some tree's but that it is problematic to do now. She continued that due to the number of cars along Blackfriars Street and the layout of the street, tree planting would be difficult but that there were two area's which would accommodate large planters with trees in. She said that the whole area around Baxter's Plain needs a comprehensive public realm scheme at a later date and that was difficult to do at the moment with the budget. Large planters could be put in place which could be moved if necessary, to incorporate into a future scheme.
- Richard agreed that tree planting in the road is difficult but not impossible at the pool.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jemma confirmed that the stump removal and tree planting was being costed by the Open Spaces Team and that the rest of the route should wait until it's resurfaced. She said that the Arboricultural officer had confirmed that to give trees enough space, parking spaces would need to be removed and that planting trees prior to resurfacing might cause damage to them.• Richard said that if nothing was being done for fear of damage, nothing would get done.• Vicky said that the people who were required to make these decisions were not in the meeting.	
<p>5. Agreed preferred scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jemma had worked up two options on how the funding would be spent, the first items were crossing cutting and town wide interventions such as the fingerposts, the second concentrated on geographical areas. Which approach should be taken needed to be agreed with the group so the preferred option could move forward. Jemma continued that the procurement process had already commenced for the fingerposts so they could be tendered quickly if needed. She said that a theme needed to be agreed on the proposed artwork, but a budget had been set aside for this, the benches were costed against placing all along the route. Purfleet Street and Rail Station were prioritised area for investment above the core scheme which included the additional cost of pop-ups, festoon lighting and an ironwork arch which was not cross cutting, but these could be add-ons to the core route.• Vicky felt that £50,000 towards the artwork wasn't a lot, she was concerned that if there wasn't enough allocated, the artwork might not be so impressive.• Andrew Stevenson felt that the cross-cutting option was the better of the two and this would apply to locations town wide and make a bigger impact.• Jemma confirmed that it would just be the fingerposts that were town wide, however benches etc would be able to be purchased for the length of the priority route as well as artwork.• Richard clarified that the fingerposts were not just for the priority route, he thought that there was a separate funding pot for this.• Jemma confirmed that the fingerpost replacement was part of the Future High Street Funds bid originally which was unsuccessful but mentioned that these could be funded under the maintenance strand of the Welcome Back Fund.• Cllr Bambridge mentioned an artist Andrew Shuman studio in Purfleet Place, he created the whalebone arch, but might be interested in other creations for the town.• Jemma said that it was a great opportunity to get local artists involved and that it could be something special. She mentioned the digital totem	

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at the entrance to the Railway Station, this is £20,000 of the budget as there is a need for power and civil works to be undertaken and if the group decided this was a 'nice to have', the money could be used on the artwork instead.

- Vicky agreed that a digital sign was necessary but wondered if the funding could be found elsewhere.
- Jemma said that Network Rail had advised they had no additional money in their budget to be able to fund it.
- Richard wasn't clear what the digital sign was so Vicky explained and said that it could be used to promote events etc.
- Jemma stated that it could be combined with fingerposts, but it was important to make a decision on the approach to the funding first and the details could be determined at a later date.
- Cllr Bambridge thought that the digital signs were expensive and mentioned that if there were more interpretation boards around the town you would get more for your money.
- Jemma said that the interpretation boards were great for giving you the history of where you were but that the digital signs could be more versatile and programmed with information such as upcoming events and that the £20,000 budget was a 'worse case'.
- Richard thought that the front of the Railway Station needed a feature landmark rather than a digital sign, something that says 'you have arrived'.
- Vicky replied that the detail was open to a later discussion but for now as decision was required on option 1 or 2 as an approach to the funding.
- Alistair Cox stated that pre-covid the annual footfall out of the station was 900,000 people a year and something digital would provide more opportunity to promote / provide information about the town.
- Charlie Roughton asked whether it would be possible to sell advertising space, the sign could still be informative, but you would re-coup some of the cost.
- Richard suggested sheltered seating and a digital sign opposite the station on the other side of the entrance to the car park.
- Vicky asked if the group were leaning more towards the first option with cross cutting interventions and asked if somebody else should be funding some of the interventions.
- Jemma said that there was nothing to cover the cost from elsewhere at the moment but other funding sources could be explored i.e. Arts Council, National Lottery
- Andrew said that the interventions needed to happen regardless of who paid for them and that if it made a difference to the town, it should be done now. He said that option 1 is a larger project but this could make a noticeable difference and larger impact on the town.
- All agreed that option 1 with the cross-cutting interventions was the better of the two ideas.

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<p>6. Next steps – Business Case</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jemma told the group that visualisations were being commissioned. An architect had offered to do the visuals, not only for the group but for wider communications also. The wider communications and engagement should be done by the end of this month. The intention is to inform people of the proposals based on previous consultation feedback and engage them on ideas and themes of the proposed artwork.• Vicky confirmed that the visualisations were due to be completed by the next meeting on the 15th. She thought it would be good for the group to discuss for sign off before it goes onto the Town Deal Board.• Jemma said that she was in the process of writing the business case now but that it needs a lot of input. She hopes to have a draft for the 15th November so that the group can comment on it at the next meeting. It is proposed to take it to the Regeneration and Development Panel on the 7th December before taking it to the Town Deal Board on the 15th December for the final sign off and submission at the beginning of January. The funding should be released in March for spending. Post meeting note: 15th November meeting rescheduled to 23rd November.• Vicky asked the group if they were happy for Jemma to take forward the business case with the visuals to follow at the next meeting• Richard was concerned as there is a lot still in the air regarding details, specifications etc of benches, artists, he asked when the development/design stage was happening.• Vicky said the most important was to get the funding secured and then sort the details. She said once the business case had been submitted and the funding released the specifications could be developed.• Jemma said that the Welcome Back Fund needed to be spent by the 31st March 2022 so the fingerposts could be purchased prior to the Towns Fund being released and planters etc could be agreed prior to receiving the funding. Louise Godfrey had been doing work to get costings to inform the business case.• Richard believes that there isn't a clear vision yet.• Vicky replied that the Graeme Massie Public realm Action Plan set out a vision and had identified a palette that the group knew what they wanted just not the detail.• Charlie offered to host an event where local artists etc could be invited an informal, relaxed meeting to gauge interest in the Artwork element of the project.• Jemma thanked Charlie and said it would be good – ACTION: agree date for creative evening• Vicky confirmed that herself, Jemma and Louise will provide Waterlands with the specifications for the visualisation but not go into too much	

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<p>detail of what things might look like, this should help give a bigger picture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jemma shared an example of Waterlands work, saying that the visuals would be sketchy, loose ideas and that one would be commissioned for the rail station and one for Purfleet Street.• Jemma said that there was a need to get an OS layout plan prepared for consents but that these weren't good for wider engagement as difficult to interpret what these look like visually.• Vicky said there was a long way to go in a short space of time.• Vicky thought that the visuals will help to move things along and then the detail can be developed, if more sketches were needed after the Waterland visuals, it would be great for Richard to do them.	JC/CR
Meeting closed at 16:38	

DRAFT