

CABINET

7 October 2019

Present: Mayor (Chair)

Councillors K Collett, S Johnson, I Sharpe, M Watkin and T Williams

Also present: Councillor A Grimston
Councillor N Bell

Officers: Managing Director
Group Head of Transformation
Interim Group Head of Place Shaping
Head of Legal Services
Watford 2020 Programme Manager
Business Transformation Project Manager
Mayor's Political Assistant
Senior Democratic Services Officer
Democratic Services Manager

25 Apologies for absence

No apologies had been received.

26 Disclosure of interests (if any)

There were no disclosures of interest.

27 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2019 were submitted and signed.

28 Conduct of meeting

Councillor Bell spoke on behalf of the Labour Group.

There were no changes to the order of the agenda.

Watford High Street (North) and Cultural Hub Masterplan Progress Report

The Mayor introduced the report and explained that the proposed phase three, with regards to road layout, would be looked at as part of the review of the long term wider town centre transport network, working with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). The Mayor thanked the Group Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications and the Place Shaping team for their work.

Councillor Sharpe commented that there had been a healthy response to consultation and it had been discussed in the Watford Observer. Overall responses to the proposals had been positive. This area of the town needed a boost and there were opportunities for improvement. The Masterplan set out a route for doing something special and would give this area of the town its own identity. The phase three elements had been met with scepticism, however, the proposals were over a long term. There was increasing concern about climate change and the council had declared a climate emergency, therefore, the only option was to take steps to boost more sustainable modes of transport.

In response to a question from Councillor Bell, the Mayor explained that phase three was part of the original consultation but would not be happening immediately, it would be in 15-20 years' time. The underpass would still be looked at and the road as a whole would be considered as part of the work the council was doing around transport. The Managing Director commented there was a need for a wider highways review in terms of connectivity in the town centre. The council was working with HCC on solutions for Watford's transport post Metropolitan Line Extension.

The Managing Director commented that a constructive response had been received from HCC which was included in section 6.12 of the report. The next stages of delivering the scheme would be to engage with a wide range of stakeholders and land owners. Groups would be set up for both and the stakeholders would also include key cultural partners. Subject to agreement by Cabinet, the council would look to appoint a development partner by the start of 2021 and begin delivery. There was a strong programme board led by the Interim Group Head of Place Shaping.

Councillor Bell asked a question about previous schemes for developing the museum and the Managing Director explained that the Heritage Lottery Fund bid had been to extend the museum. Unfortunately the cost of the proposals were unaffordable and the council had committed to looking for other options to improve the museum setting. There would be a full soft market test, proper cost assessment and feasibility which would come back to Cabinet with a cost plan. The Mayor commented that the Friends of Watford Museum were positive

about the proposals and the council would be working with them to shape plans from the outset.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the interim results of the consultation and engagement on the draft Watford High Street (North) and Cultural Hub Masterplan
2. Delegates to the Managing Director in consultation with the Mayor and the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Development the authority to make required minor changes to the Masterplan document in line with the findings from the consultation
3. Agrees that the proposal to remove the underpass on Rickmansworth Road be taken out from the final Masterplan and that the Council should work with the County Council to look at the wider town centre transport network as a separate project
4. Notes the proposed governance structure to take forward implementation of the masterplan area
5. Notes that a detailed budget for taking forward the Masterplan will be presented in the forthcoming 2020/21 budget process once a fuller cost assessment has been undertaken
6. Approves the next steps on implementing delivery of the masterplan
7. Approves in principle that the council offices should be re-provided within the phase 1 masterplan area
8. Agrees to take forward a detailed feasibility for the new Museum to relocate into the Phase 1 Masterplan area and notes that other cultural development will also be pursued in line with the Council's Cultural Strategy
9. Notes that the proposed changes to the Avenue Car Park gyratory are to remain, subject to further work with the county council.

Exclusion of press & public

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of proceedings, that if members of the public were present during consideration of the item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Section 100(1) Schedule 12A of the Act for the reasons stated in the reports.

31 **Watford 2020: Transport and Infrastructure Detailed Design and Full Business Case**

A report of the Business Transformation Project Manager was received and the Group Head of Transformation responded to questions.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet approves the proposed future design for Transport and Infrastructure and the Parking Service, and the Full Business Case and Implementation Plan for the proposed designs.

Mayor

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm
and finished at 7.20 pm