

Meeting Note – Garden Town Board
6.30pm, 10th September 2018
Learning Centre, Pets Corner, Town Park, Edinburgh Way, Harlow CM20 2QG

Attendance

Organisation	Councillors	Officers
East Herts DC	Cllr. Robert Brunton (Cllr. Brunton)	Liz Watts (LW) Claire Sime (CS)
Epping Forest DC	Cllr. Nigel Bedford (Cllr. Bedford) Cllr. Chris Whitbread (Cllr. Whitbread) Cllr. John Philip (Cllr. Philip)	Alison Blom-Cooper (ABC) David Coleman (DC) Derek Macnab (DM)
Harlow DC	Cllr. Danny Purton (Cllr. Purton) Chair	Julie Houston (JH) Jane Greer (JG)
Essex CC	Cllr Gagan Mohindra (Cllr. Mohindra)	David Hill (DH) Rich Cooke (RC) David Sprunt (DS)
Herts CC		Roger Flowerday (RF)
Garden Town		Sarah Pullin (SP) Trudie Baker (TB)

Organisation	Attendee
Herts LEP	Adam Wood (AW)
Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners	Alistair Macdonald (AM)

1. Welcome and introductions - Chair

Cllr. Purton welcomed all, including Alistair Macdonald of Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners who joined the meeting to present work carried out to date on the emerging Harlow Town Centre Area Action Plan.

2. Apologies – Chair

- Claire Hamilton, Garden Town Team
- Rt. Hon. Robert Halfon MP
- Mark Prisk MP
- Cllr. Kevin Bentley

- Adam Bryan, SE LEP
- Jan Hayes-Griffin, HCC
- Cllr Derrick Ashely, HCC
- Cllr Wagland, ECC

3. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising – Chair

Minutes of 23 July 2018 GT Board meeting, agreed.

4. Presentation from Allies and Morrison on the Harlow Town Centre AAP I&O consultation – Alistair Macdonald

AM presented the work that has been carried out on the AAP Issues and Options document; the document has recently been out for public consultation.

Sir Frederick Gibberd's original masterplan has been used for reference in the work; the AAP work seeks to keep and/or enhance many aspects of Gibberd's plan.

AM explained that the next stage of work is to identify a preferred option. It is anticipated that a draft AAP will be ready in early 2019, with Regulation 19 consultation expected to take place in late spring / early summer 2019.

5. GT response to Harlow Town Centre AAP Consultation for agreement – Sarah Pullin

Cllr. Purton explained that the AAP is about concepts, ideas and visions at the current stage in its development, with nothing set in stone at this point in time.

Cllr. Purton talked through the list of key points highlighted in the draft GT Board response to the AAP consultation.

SP explained that the draft consultation response was seeking to highlight issues/areas that, from a Garden Town perspective, the Board would like to see as the work progresses to the next stages. It is important to make these points at an early stage in the process, so that they can be taken on board and incorporated into the proposals.

Cllr Brunton asked if at-grade pedestrian crossings form part of the quick wins.

Cllr Bedford – expressed the view that he does not think it would be viable to implement measures to deter cars in Harlow because he felt that it would exacerbate congestion problems on the roads around Harlow.

DS explained that ECC has a detailed model that looks at traffic impacts and removal of the dual carriageways is something that is being looked at with the model.

LW asked if the Council would consider Compulsory Purchase of any land in the Town Centre. Cllr Purton explained that at the current time it is intended that delivery will be through partnership working.

AW made the point that if underpasses become redundant it will be important to come up with alternative uses for the underpasses, otherwise these can become negative spaces and highlighted the point that it's important to be aware of unforeseen consequences.

AW also noted his strong support for the point on flexible work places, as these can be made bigger/smaller/converted to other uses to meet changing needs.

6. Transport Strategy Consultation for agreement – Roger Flowerday / David Sprunt

RF explained that the conversation around roads under the previous item helps to demonstrate the need for a Transport strategy. RF encouraged the Board to read the meeting paper as a succinct summary of the key relevant matters, if anyone had not already done so.

The Transport Strategy is an important document which highlights the need to do something different in respect of travel and transport. RF explained that the Strategy sets out existing challenges and how they are likely to change in future in the context of planned growth. The Strategy introduces a transport hierarchy, with sustainable modes of travel at the top and private car travel at the bottom.

RF explained that the document currently contains a lot of 'carrots', but not many 'sticks' and that 'sticks' are needed in order to deter people from travelling by car. One of the options that could potentially be introduced as an effective 'stick' would be a workplace parking levy; this would penalise those in their cars causing the current traffic problems and would not penalise those who are not contributing to the problem.

RF explained that the intention is for the Strategy to undergo consultation, then the Strategy will be updated as appropriate and will come back to the Board for endorsement. The Strategy will then go to each of the GT Authorities for formal endorsement as a material planning consideration. The Strategy will be embedded into the masterplanning process for the strategic sites.

Cllr. Purton said there needs to be some qualification of walking and cycling within the hierarchy, because some people are not able to walk or cycle. Cllr Purton also wanted qualification to make clear that walking is only an option for shorter journeys, so that people are not led to believe there is an unrealistic expectation for them to walk or cycle long journeys. DS advised that, looking at statistics, 3 – 5 miles is acceptable for most people to cycle – this distance works very well for the Garden Town.

Cllr. Purton stated that he did not agree with the reference to 'longer term' in the last sentence on page 1 of the meeting paper (and equivalent sentence within the draft Transport Strategy) and asked officers to amend this to refer to the 'shorter term'.

ACTION: amend wording in draft Strategy to reflect Cllr Purton's comments, as above.

Cllr Mohindra noted his endorsement of the prioritisation of walking and cycling.

DECISION – The Board agreed to go out to consultation on the draft Transport Strategy for the Garden Town.

7. Strategic Masterplans briefing note for noting – David Coleman

DC presented the guidance note and explained that it relates only to Epping Forest and Harlow Districts, and does not include the Gilston area.

The guidance note has been circulated to officers and developers and Epping Forest District Council Cabinet will formally endorse the document.

The document does not introduce anything new, but supplements information that is already available. It is not intended to be prescriptive, but is intended to ensure consistency when producing documents and to provide clarity to developers on what is expected from them.

Cllr. Purton asked a question about community involvement. DC explained that officers will be working very closely with the Parish Council at North Weald for Latton Priory and that engagement with existing residents of Harlow and those further afield, will be crucial.

RF highlighted the fact that this is a significant commitment and requires a lot of involvement. DC agreed that the commitment will be substantial and explained that PPAs are to be put in place to fund the work required. The authorities are looking at how to pool resources effectively in order to avoid duplication of work or staff.

8. Rapid Transit System – Cllr Purton

Cllr. Purton explained that the aim of this report is to lay out Harlow's aspiration for the sustainable transport corridors, particularly the rapid transit element of the corridors. The recommendation is to incorporate this idea into the Garden Town Sustainable Transport workstream.

DM asked if there was a need to amend the Harlow Town Centre AAP response to incorporate the route shown on the plan within the report. Cllr Purton advised that he is due to meet with Allies and Morrison in the near future and would pick the matter up then.

RF highlighted concern with the proposed alignment around a river crossing within the report which shows a different crossing point to any of the work that has been looked at so far. Related to this, RF also highlighted that there is a need to be mindful that a HIF bid is being worked-up and that the proposals in the meeting paper do not align with the HIF proposals.

DECISION – Agreed that officers incorporate this proposal into the Garden Town Sustainable Transport workstream to explore the proposal further.

9. GT Director's Progress report – Claire Hamilton

In Claire's absence SP gave a verbal update on some of the key areas of progress since the last Board meeting:

- a) S106 legal advisors have been appointed, or in the process of being appointed – Weightmans.
- b) A joint inception meeting was held for the Garden Town Infrastructure Plan and Viability Study on 8th August and work is underway. The consultants are due to jointly meet with the promoter/developers of the Garden Town sites on 26th September to have a high level discussion and to begin the conversations about infrastructure and viability.
- c) As discussed under Agenda Item 6, a draft Transport Strategy has been prepared for consultation and is due to go to the Quality Review Panel in October.
- d) The final draft of the Water Cycle Study was received at the end of last week and this will be brought to the October Board meeting.
- e) The Spatial Vision and Design Charter were due to come to this meeting for Board endorsement, officers went through the comments and proposed changes received through the consultation process, and some final refinements are being made, meaning that these documents will now be brought to the November meeting for endorsement.
- f) The Resident Information Document that came to the Board has been finalised, subject to one further amendment to the GT plan. This will be circulated and some printed copies will be made available.
- g) A strategic masterplanning briefing note has been prepared, as discussed under Agenda Item 7.

- h) An interim mitigation strategy has been prepared for the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation –which was taken to the Co-op Board meeting this evening.
- i) A stewardship brief was prepared and has been published for tender.

10. Activities coming up in the next month – All

SP reminded the Board that a Delivery Model Seminar will be held on Wednesday 19th September 2018, starting at 6.30pm.

11. A.O.B.

The group sent their best wishes to Claire Hamilton who gave her apologies as she was unwell.

12. Dates of next meetings

- o 18:30, Monday 15th October. Venue tbc.
- o 19.30, Monday 12th November. Venue tbc.