

## **Oswestry Town Council**

### **Report from the Town Clerk to the Meeting of the Council – Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

#### **Oswestry Masterplan**

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#### **Purpose**

To consider a contribution from the Town Council of up to £10,000 towards the development of a masterplan for Oswestry.

#### **Background**

Members will be aware, through their consideration of the notes of the Future Oswestry Group and from the briefing from the Town Clerk on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020, that consultants were being recruited (through a procurement process) to support the delivery of a masterplan for the development and growth of Oswestry. The budgeted cost for this important piece of work was £50,000, and the Town Council are asked to provide a contribution of up to £10,000. Whilst this has been supported in principle by elected Members, it requires formal determination.

#### **Future Oswestry Group and the Brief**

Elected Members receive the notes of the meetings of the Future Oswestry Group (a partnership between Oswestry Town Council, Shropshire Council and Oswestry Business Improvement District) and recognise the importance of collective work for the benefit of the town. Not least the Council have supported the Heritage Action Zone proposals and agreed, in principle, to a significant contribution to match fund any Historic England investment. Whilst no announcements have been made, the partnership is optimistic of a positive response. This scheme will see shop front improvement grants, public realm improvements, repurposing of vacant property and a transformational project.

The Masterplan work will complement the HAZ project and build on and develop other plans such as Oswestry 2020 and the Public Realm document (Townscape and Transport Group). Its outcome will be broader than previous studies because it will:

- provide a framework for sustainable development and support the Oswestry High Street Heritage Action Zone programme;
- consider the re-purposing of empty buildings and the treatment of the public realm;

- advise on an appropriate approach to transport, traffic and car parking management, and support the development of a movement and access strategy;
- consider sustainable transport and connectivity, including improved pedestrian and cycle access, and options to integrate improved public transport interchange facilities into the wider regeneration of the town and hinterland;
- feed into the proposed Traffic Regulations Review work and be supported by the current pre-feasibility work on the Sustainable Transport Study, looking at options to connect the town centre with the Railway Station at Gobowen and the Robert Jones & Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital.

Importantly, this will be developed with the involvement of local people, businesses and other stakeholders and will include a deliverable action plan with options that can be tested for commercial viability, phasing and timing. Elected Members from this Council will be involved in its development.

### Next Steps

The tender opportunity was well received in the market and strong contributions were submitted. Interviews have taken place with the involvement of the Town Clerk recognizing the importance of the Town Council's role as a principle stakeholder and contributor.

A preferred provider has been selected and due diligence is being carried out. The appointment will be made before the end of June and with the ambition for the masterplan to have been completed by the end of October 2020.

### Funding

Shropshire Council, through its One Public Estate monies, is the principle funder of this work and the Town Council's contribution is a top up.

The Council has established an earmarked reserve of £10,000 for a Town Plan and £5,000 in the 2020/21 revenue budget for a town plan. It is suggested that a better outcome could be achieved through a partnership piece of work.

### Summary

Elected Members are asked to support this piece of work and the contribution of up to £10,000 towards the development of the masterplan.

Arren Roberts  
Town Clerk