

# Pershore Place Board Minutes

Held at held at White's Logistics on Wednesday 24th January 2024 at 3pm

## Board members present

Darren Eden - Chair

Michael Hodges – Vice Chair & Lead, Key Change Zone, North High Street/Retail Market and Other Sites

Dave Cave – Lead, Movement Strategy, Vehicles, Parking and Road Strategy

Branwen Bingle – Communities Officer (Central), Wychavon District Council

Angela Taylor – Board Secretary / Pershore Place Officer, Wychavon District Council

Dan Boatright – Special Advisor, PTC, WDC, WCC

Richard Tisdall – Special Advisor

## Visitors present

Nicki Quarterman – PA for Darren Eden

Megan Salacinski– Wychavon District Council

## Apologies

Michael Amies – Special Advisor, Pershore Town Plan /PMTP

Jilly Oxlade-Arnott – Retail and Business

Sam Tarran – Lead, Movement Strategy, Public Transport/Cycling and Pedestrian

Steve Knight – Place Project Manager, Wychavon District Council

## Welcome including guests to the meeting

Darren welcomed everyone to the meeting after a very interesting tour of White's Logistics by Mick Pegg. Darren informed the board that Dave Cave has now left the board and we give our thanks to him for his contributions over the past 18 months. Dave is being replaced by Richard Tisdall who joins us to bring his wealth of expertise as a landscape architect and his special focus on wellbeing.

## Apologies for absence and declaration of interests

Apologies - see above. There were no declaration of interests.

## Minutes/notes from the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

## Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda

None.

## General discussion on our priorities/aspirations for 2024

The board held a general discussion regarding the projects that had been undertaken so far.

### **The projects that have gone well**

Town centre conservation wall brackets, flags and Christmas tree project

Pershore Georgian Christmas Fayre

Christmas lights enhancement in Pershore town centre

Library Garden – but not enough publicity was given to this

Angela asked who is responsible for publicity? There seems to be some confusion around this and it needs clarifying.

Michael H asked if we need publicity? Darren Eden said he is quite relaxed about not seeking publicity about the place boards involvement and successes but stated that this should not be confused with our work being open and transparent which is important. Branwen pointed out that we are still limited in our networks so there is a danger of us seeming like a closed shop without publicity. The board agreed that we should look for opportunities to raise the profile of the board in the future and we should also use our social media channels more.

It was agreed that the two-minute promotional video of the Christmas market was fabulous and this was quite widely shared and was well received.

### **Priorities for the Pershore Place Board for 2024**

The board discussed the various project and work streams that we are currently engaged with and decided that for 2024 we will place major focus on the following:

- Enhancing Pershore Town Centre Programme
- A new green space/public park for Pershore project
- Pershore Marina Project
- Pershore Events and Festivals Association (PEFA)
- Pershore Local Produce Market (to form part of PEFA)

### **Smaller items to be considered for the coming year:**

Michael H asked - could the Place Board facilitate watering of the hanging baskets within the town which are provided by the Town Council? Angela suggested

approaching Pershore College? The cost of undertaking the watering is between £4-7K. Darren agreed to pick up a conversation with Pershore Town Clerk on this issue.

Michael H asked if we knew where High Green was as it is listed in the National Trust book? It is near Croome although the relationship between Pershore and Croome is non-existent. It was suggested that perhaps we could have a Place Board Meeting at Croome. Angela to reach out to them to try and arrange this. MH feels there may be a future opportunity to open a NT trust shop in Pershore. Branwen suggested approaching the Church Conservation Trust to try and make that link to bring in Croome.

Darren updated the board on the major projects being worked on by the place boards in Droitwich and Evesham and to extracts from the minutes of the WDC Town Centre Advisory Panel. It was noted that the panel had extended thanks to the three place boards for the achievements being made within the three towns. Evesham are focusing on making the most of the river setting and supporting a people friendly High Street. They are also looking at a 'Love Evesham' day. Evesham Place Board are also placing a focus on the Riverside Shopping Centre and solar lighting in Abbey Park.

Droitwich Place Board have done a festoon lighting project within the town centre and are looking at a street art project. Their Lido project is focusing on bringing this back to life and Droitwich are also looking at a project to improve St. Andrews Square.

## Update on current projects of the board

### **Pershore Marina Project**

Michael Hodges reminded the board on the current position with this project following the production of the Phase 1 commissioned by the place board and produced by CBRE.

It was noted that the Phase 1 report (Economic Impact Assessment) concluded that there would be a significant positive impact on the Pershore town centre economy by the addition on a marina within a 10-minute walk from the Pershore town hall (town centre).

Michael H reminded the board that potential locations for a potential marina for Pershore were specifically excluded from the Phase 1 report so as to focus on the more strategic economic import of such a facility on the town centre and not where such a facility might be located.

Given the positive outcome of the economic impact assessment CBRE are recommending a Phase 2 report that would proceed to identify and consider the strengths and weaknesses of potential sites for a marina in Pershore using the criteria of being within a 10 minute walk from Pershore town hall.

It was noted that while it was excluded from the Phase 1 report, CBRE had identified 7 potential sites for a marina. Three of these sites are the King George's Field site behind the Pershore Leisure Centre and the sites ether side of the main road on the

eastern side of Pershore, between the end of Bridge Street and the Pershore bridges. Michael commented that he, Darren and the town clerk have a meeting in the diary to discuss the potential King George's Field site possibility further.

Dan mentioned that he believed a lot of the connection for the Pershore people with the river is around nature and wildlife so careful management of the proposal to the people of Pershore will be required.

The proposed Phase 2 report by CBRE would be to talk to the owners of the 7 potential sites identified and to provide a cost estimate in acquiring each potential site and the cost of constructing a marina on each site. The cost for this report would be c£12k. The report would furnish the board with a more informed view on whether each of the potential sites contained realistic potential for development of a marina at that side. Following receipt of a Phase 2 report the board would then have reliable information on both the economic impact of the creation of a marina within a 10 minute walk from Pershore town centre and also which, if any, suitable sites exist which could locate a marina for the Pershore. Dan and Branwen felt there should be a public consultation before the Phase 2 report is commissioned. Michael H informed the board that he felt that until potential sites were known for a potential marina it was too early to embark on a public consultation.

As time was short it was decided to continue with a discussion on the project until the next meeting of the board.

### **Pershore Flags and Christmas Tree Project**

Angela reminded the board that while the flags project had been a success in the town centre there had been an issue with the flags wrapping around the flag poles. Angela showed the board showed a weighted flag prototype that has been prepared by local retailer 'Nellie's' to stop them curling around the wall mounted poles. We will carry out a trial of the amended design before rolling this out to all of the 60 flags for the town centre.

Darren commented that ahead of the 2024 Christmas season we will seek to procure some suitable solar powered lights to illuminate the wall mounted trees. It was agreed that it was not feasible to install power supplies to each tree.

### **Pershore Georgian Christmas Fayre**

The board agreed that the inaugural Pershore Georgian Christmas Fayre was a great success. The event was well supported, enjoyed a good level of local business sponsored and has generated a healthy surplus in the region of £4,000.00 towards next year's event. A wash up meeting of the fayre's delivery group is in the diary in a couple of weeks' time.

### **Enhancing Pershore Town Centre Programme**

Discussion of this item was deferred to the next meeting owing to time constraints.

### **Protocol for the Temporary Closure of Broad Street for Events**

Discussion of this item was deferred to the next meeting owing to time constraints.

## **Pershore Events and Festivals Association (PEFA)**

Darren reminded the board as to the scoping work that had been undertaken into the creation of a events and festivals association for Pershore comprising local volunteers and leaders of the major community focused events and festivals that take place throughout the town.

Angela and Darren are meeting with the Chairs of the various existing events and festivals in Pershore (including the Carnival, Plum Festival, Christmas Fayre and Pershore Midsummer Brass) next week to present the concept and to discuss establishing the association which will help share volunteers, kit, health and safety, marketing, etc.

It was noted that PEFA would take a lead on establishing the new Pershore Local Produce Market where we have been successful in securing grant funding to establish the market.

Angela and Darren will report back on the outcome of the meeting at the February meeting of the board.

## **Pershore Local Produce Market**

Discussion of this item was deferred to the next meeting owing to time constraints.

## **Pershore Additional Green Space/Park Project**

Darren updated the board in Michael Amies absence on the work to seek to create an additional significant open/green space or public park area for the town.

There is potential for us to negotiate using Mrs Partridge's land between the end of Bridge Street and Pershore Bridges (north side) for public benefit. Darren, Michael A and Michael H have had a productive initial meeting with Mrs Partridge. She does not want it developed in a formal way but would be happy for it to be used for some form of 'public good' while retaining her ownership of the site. Mrs. Partridge was enthusiastic about this.

We discussed the potential for a new small parkland area, with walkways, traditional tree planting, an (existing) orchard area enhancement, wild flowers and a pedestrian bridge over the grassed gulley together with possibly for a cycleway and wheelchair access.

Darren has written to WDC to establish if they would be prepared to maintain such a new public space after creation and the initial feedback is that they would be supportive of this in principal but with some reservations and caution. Richard said we would need to carefully manage the flood aspect of the site. The next stage is to arrange another meeting with Mrs Partridge and get legal advice from Wychavon on contractual arrangements required along with planning.

## **Update from WDC Town Centre Advisory Panel and UKSPF**

Covered above.

## **AOB**

None. Darren gave our grateful thanks to Whites Logistics and Mick Pegg for their warm welcome and hospitality.

## **Date of next meeting**

Next meeting to take place on Wednesday 14th February 2024 at The Banking Hall, Pershore. 3pm.