

Chichester Vision

Review of Public Consultation held during February and March 2017

This paper provides a brief summary of the (draft) Public Consultation Analysis and the key items for discussion, set out in five sections as follows:

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Section 1 - Headline Summary:

- **472 responses** were received to the online survey between 3rd February and 19th March 2017
- **70.5%** of respondents are Chichester residents, **23.3%** work in Chichester, **13.3%** are visitors to Chichester, **6.6%** represent a business operating in Chichester and **12.2%** said 'other'
- **48.7%** of respondents are female and **46.7%** are male. **4.6%** preferred not to disclose their gender
- **93%** of respondents provided their home postcode and **90%** of these are in Chichester District. **30%** provided their work postcode if located in Chichester
- **88.6%** of respondents have read the consultation draft of the Chichester Vision
- The table below shows the breakdown of responses by age group.

Age Group	% Respondents (Number)
Under 16	9.1% (42)
16 – 24	3.5% (16)
25 - 34	8.0% (37)
35 - 44	13.9% (64)

Age Group	% Respondents (Number)
45 – 54	14.5% (67)
55 – 64	19.3% (89)
65+	26.4% (122)
Prefer not to say	5.4% (25)

- The majority of respondents (**83.6%**) are regular visitors to the city centre with most being those who live or work here - Nearly half visit Chichester City Centre daily, (**49.5%**) and just over one third (**34.1%**) visit weekly
- The top three things that respondents love about Chichester are shopping, places to eat and drink, and pedestrianised streets, closely followed by parks and gardens, the theatre, Chichester Cathedral and the environment

- Traffic in the centre is an issue and there is high demand for further pedestrianisation in the city centre. Attractive streets and open spaces were favourable for the vast majority, and retaining graduates and building a skilled workforce were also high on the list
- The most common answers when asked what respondents would change about Chichester are
 - to reduce traffic and pollution in the city centre
 - to support independent businesses
 - to provide safe and more diverse evening culture
 - for the city to have a variety of year-round entertainment for all ages
- Over three-quarters of respondents agreed with the over-arching Vision statement and there was agreement across the board for each of the supporting initiatives and ambitions under the three individual themes

The following statements under each of the themes are ranked in order of importance, with the figures in brackets showing the combined percentage of those stating 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree'

Living - An Accessible and Attractive City

- 1.** Have attractive streets and open spaces (**93.3%**)
- 2.** Be easily accessible with less traffic, further pedestrianisation and good public transport (**86.4%**)
- 3.** Give higher priority to walking/cycling and provide access for the elderly and less able (**83.4%**)
- 4.** Create an environment that is welcoming to students and young people, while enhancing life for older people (**81.8%**)
- 5.** Be a smart city centre that is digitally connected, ensuring access to digital services to support residents, businesses and visitors (**79.6%**)
- 6.** Encourage more city centre living with a range of accommodation for all demographics (**60%**)

The most common open comments for this theme mirror the aims above. There were a number of comments regarding car parks in Chichester and ensuring there are enough, as they are essential in supporting less able residents and visitors.

Working - A Vibrant and Growing Economy

1. Retain graduates and develop a skilled workforce to meet the needs of the city's economy (**84.3%**)
2. Make better and more efficient use of public sector land (**80.4%**)
3. Pursue development opportunities and take a co-ordinated approach to new development (**79.6%**)
4. Attract and retain businesses from a wide range of high-earning sectors (**78.7%**)
5. Be a centre of learning and harness the knowledge of skilled and professional retirees (**76.9%**)

The top open comments for this theme mirror the aims above and there were a lot of comments regarding the need to support independent businesses.

Visiting; A Leading Visitor Destination

1. Be a vibrant city offering high quality arts, heritage, cultural and leisure opportunities (**88.6%**)
2. Have a vibrant evening and night-time economy where people find a range of activities (**76.5%**)
3. Offer the best retail experience in the South (**70.3%**)

Again, the top open comments mirror these aims. There was a high volume of respondents who said they would like a safe and diverse evening culture with shops and cultural attractions remaining open later, interesting street-lighting, more 'café culture', and other types of entertainment such as comedy clubs and acoustic music events, plus later public transport services.

The Vision Statement

'Your Vision is for Chichester City Centre to be:

Attractive, distinctive, and successful ... Embracing its heritage and creating opportunity for all, Chichester will be an inspiring and welcoming city at the heart of one of the UK's leading visitor destinations'

- **76.2%** said they agree with the over-arching Vision statement, **12.7%** do not agree and **11%** of respondents were unsure

- When asked for any further thoughts, comments or ideas, a third of those who responded to this open question said Chichester should be a green city with reduced traffic and priority for cyclists and pedestrians
- The other top comments were that the city gateways need improvement and that change should be sympathetic to Chichester's character with a balance of family friendly activity and night-life

Responses via Letter and Email and Social Media

The top comments from the additional written feedback were in line with the rest of the report findings

Section 2 - Applying the Key Consultation Feedback to the Vision

The consultation responses provide clear support for the Vision as it stands. They show that respondents agree with the Vision statement, each of the themes, and each of the supporting ambitions and initiatives.

The additional comments, thoughts, changes and ideas suggested and offered by respondents reconfirm that all of the key items are supported, and (in no particular order) reference the following items and issues:

- Traffic - Too much traffic/pollution in the City Centre
- Make Chichester a green city with reduced traffic and priority for pedestrians and cyclists
- Regeneration of public transport – greener, improve connectivity and provide later services
- Improve car parks and introduce park & ride for less able residents and visitors
- More pedestrianised streets and pedestrianised areas
- Public realm – improve surfaces and reduction of clutter
- More greenery, more trees and flowers, plus artworks/sculptures – interesting public space and outdoor performance and art areas
- Provide varied affordable housing in the city centre
- Social and physical infrastructure is needed for new developments to support all types of residents
- City centre living balanced with business accommodation
- Better use of and new facilities in parks and gardens
- Improved high speed broadband and mobile
- Change needs to be in sympathy with the character of the city, sustainable, with appropriate infrastructure, and with a balance of heritage, family friendly activity and nightlife
- Improve the city gateways, including Chichester Gate and the bus and railway stations
- Shopping – strong support for independent shops

- Business – expand range of business sectors and support independent businesses and start-ups
- Balance of shops and food and drink establishments
- Provision of a safe and diverse evening economy and nightlife
- Variety of year-round entertainment for all ages – including festivals and events, and attractive and flexible indoor and outdoor spaces
- Affordable and accessible arts and culture
- Improve tourism coordination
- More family friendly and resident focussed – too many empty properties
- Better facilities for the u 30s – make Chichester more attractive for younger people to live and work here

Thus, we could take the view that, subject to updating wording, the existing text should simply form the final Vision.

However, in light of some of the additional comments from respondents the text will be strengthened and amplified in places.

Section 3 – Issues to Consider

Among the many and various consultation responses there are a few conflicts. While the number of respondents taking conflicting views is generally less than 10%, I felt it worth highlighting some of these to ensure we have given them due consideration:

1. Over three quarters of respondents agree with the over-arching Vision statement. However, the open comments reveal that a small number of respondents feel the statement is too vague and did not want to commit without enough information
2. There is strong support for reduction in traffic and pollution, more greenery, more pedestrianisation, better space for pedestrians and cyclists, and so on. However, the open comments reveal that a small number of respondents (7.6%) say bus services through the city should be retained. Similarly, a small number of respondents (8.9%) say that city centre car parks should be retained
3. There is strong support for independent shops and businesses, but the open comments reveal that a small number of respondents (6.6%) feel that Chichester shouldn't aim to offer the 'best retail experience in the South'
4. There is strong support for development of the evening and night-time economy, with this being in the top three things people would like to have in Chichester. The open comments reveal that a very small number of respondents (1%) do not want night-time activities in the City Centre
5. Similarly, there is strong support for development of the visitor economy and to attract more visitors. However, the open comments again reveal that a very small

number of respondents (2.1%) feel Chichester should not seek to be a leading UK visitor destination.

Section 4 – Additional Items

The consultation provided very few, if any, really new or imaginative ideas, suggestions or initiatives.

However, there are items which have been raised as having insufficient prominence in the Vision or which, in some cases, are missing from the Vision altogether:

- **Health and wellbeing** in terms of the City as a place to live and work
- **Sport** – The Vision currently makes no mention of sport
- **The Cathedral** – It has been pointed out that the Cathedral is only referenced a limited number of times
- **Homelessness, rough sleepers and support to vulnerable people** – These are not referenced in the current Vision
- **Police and presence of authority** – This is not directly referenced in the current Vision

The Vision's principal aim is to articulate a clear 'Vision' for the City from an economic and planning policy viewpoint. However, these items will be acknowledged and referenced in the final document.

Section 5 – Summary

The current 'consultation draft' of the Vision has been well received. The consultation responses provide a clear steer that the ambitions and aspirations set out in the document are welcomed and agreed by a high majority – generally well in excess of three-quarters – of respondents.

The Vision document is now being revised to:

- reflect any revisions required under sections 1 to 3 above
- update the text to reflect that this is now the final document
- include a wider range of images and illustrations to amplify the text
- provide a stronger 'promotional' feel to the document

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