

Chichester Vision

The Chichester vision was developed working in partnership, and following extensive consultation was formally adopted by CDC and WSCC in November 2017. A number of key partners in the city are involved – these include CDC, CCC, WSCC, CCCI, BID, Visit Chichester, Chichester Cathedral, University of Chichester and Chichester College.

Partners considered what they wanted the city to be, what was impacting the city and considered feedback from communities regarding what the city could be in the future. Three key themes were developed - Living: An Accessible & Attractive City; Working: A Vibrant & Growing Economy and Visiting: A Leading Visitor Destination.

The Vision is a template against new projects, policies and proposals emerging for the City Centre can be tested, guiding and influencing future economic and planning policies for the City Centre. The Vision will guide how future budgets and resources are allocated and help attract inward investment.

The Chichester Vision Delivery Steering Group meets regularly to consider required actions and progress on projects.

Chichester Vision action plan has been developed, a number of partners are leading on individual projects, some funding has been provided by CDC and other partners are contributing to the projects. The table below sets out the latest status on each of the short to medium term projects. Longer term projects identified by the Vision (which are monitored by the Growth Board) include Southern Gateway, Northern Gyrotory, West Sussex Gigabyte and West Street Pedestrianisation.

Project	Lead	What's been achieved
The Look and Feel of the City	BID	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project team set up – partners involved including CDC, CCC, WSCC.• Wayfinding options considered for city – consultant appointed.• Fingerpost audit undertaken ready for implementation into a works order.• Northgate underpass improvements undertaken.• New city map designed.• Survey of street clutter carried out, some signs removed.• Improvements made to lighting schemes at a number of locations.• Crane street planters updated.• Additional street cleaning undertaken• Painting and cleaning of lampposts
Improve Infrastructure for Cyclists	CDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit of cycle racks in city undertaken.• All cycle racks in city replaced with

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		<p>stainless steel – funded by CCC and CDC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle lanes in the city under consideration and to be included as part of the brief for engineers to design a layout for Northgate car park.
Parks and Open Spaces	CDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit of parks and open spaces in city centre undertaken. • Refurbish and repair of Coade stone statue in Priory Park undertaken • Tender exercise undertaken to undertake works to improve Priory Park. Works to begin end March 2020. • Public consultation relating to parks to be carried out from May.
Shop Fronts and Facades	CDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC applied for pooled business rate funding. • Twelve workshops run in Chichester, 95 delegates, 83 1-1 mentoring visits to businesses, 37 businesses supported. • Seven shop front grants approved - £45,000 to businesses in Chichester city. • One shop front grant in process • Feedback from businesses has included the fact that turnover has increased, businesses have increased social media coverage, improved business to business links, improvements to customer experience. Some businesses have moved from starter premises to larger and more central premises – training has provided encouragement and guidance to do this.
Welcoming Environment for Students and Young People	Chichester College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting held between University Student Union, CDC and BID to forge links • Executive Principal of Chichester College has held a meeting with staff from the college to progress the action.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of a potential event specifically for young people by the College.
Cultural Partnership	CDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting held between CDC, Chichester Festival Theatre and Pallant House Gallery to explore opportunities for developing a cultural partnership and a high level strategy.
Tourism Offer for the City	Visit Chichester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination Management Plan produced. • Tourism Action plan developed. • Chichester Tourism Guide produced and circulated. • Stakeholder engagement undertaken. • Increased social media campaigns for the city. • Hosting of Visit Chichester at the Novium Museum. • Visit Chichester Membership scheme launched, promotes city-centre located enterprise. • A number of promotional events have been held. • Re-branding exercise undertaken and to be developed further.
Programme of Events	CDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events Officer recruited by CDC. • Review of Markets and Farmers Markets undertaken. • Ice Rink introduced to Priory Park for Christmas period, resulting in increased footfall. • Public consultation undertaken to determine the level and type of events preferred, 296 responses received. • Summer Street party held in city centre. • Consultation with Chichester College and University of Chichester to determine nature of events required. • A review of street trading controls within the city centre, which will result in potential additional areas for events and markets. • CDC's Events Strategy nearing

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		completion.
Chichester's Retail Offer	BID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC completed a retail study. • CDC submitted bid to Government's High Street Fund. • BID held informal meetings with a shoppers group along with major and independent retailers have been undertaken. • Project team set up between BID, CDC and Chichester Chamber of Commerce. • CDC led Countdown to Christmas Campaign to help support Chichester high street, over £1.1million people reached by CDC posts alone.
Evening and Night-time Economy	Previously BID, now CDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation to Vision Delivery Steering Group to consider the evening and night time economy and Purple Flag principle. • Audit of Evening and Night Time Economy currently being undertaken by CDC to set the baseline.
Enhancement of the Public Realm - Pavements	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC arranged meeting between WSCC and City Council to discuss concerns. • CDC and City Council both allocated £8,000 each to update a feasibility study to consider pavements and roads in the city centre. • WSCC have applied for funds to support the improvement of pavements and roads in the city centre.
Northgate Car Park	CDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget agreed to support the work to consider options for Northgate car park.
West Street Pedestrianisation	Chichester Cathedral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder workshops undertaken by WSCC • Chichester Sustainable Transport Package and Chichester Vision Study Stage 1 reports issued. Reports identify a number of traffic interventions and re-allocation of road space in West Street.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £20,000 budget secured by WSCC for progression of feasibility study relating to West Street.
Short Stay Car Parks	CDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultant appointed for updated Parking Strategy. Final Report due May 2020.
Public Sector Premises	WSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £50,000 budget allocated to feasibility options for WSCC premises.
'Smart City' Strategy	CDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract signed with City Fibre. New fibre introduced across the city.
Business Incubation Hub	University of Chichester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-working space introduced in Crane Street – part funded by CDC. CDC has developed a Pop-up shop initiative in 2 premises in Crane Street.
Hornet, St Pancras and Market Avenue Car Park	CDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chichester Sustainable Transport Package and Chichester Vision Study Stage 1 reports issued. Whilst the report did not identify the Hornet, St Pancras and Market Avenue Car Park as high priority by WSCC, this location will be considered as part of the review of the Parking Strategy by CDC.

All partners have been contacted to seek feedback on the current position and their potential level of support to projects in the future, with a summary of feedback as below:

1. What do you consider the strengths of the Vision are?

Bringing lots of partners together.

That so many organisations had input into the development of the Vision and the partners who signed up to it.

The overall aims are well articulated and the action plan has been clear.

Sets the direction of travel without being too prescriptive. Respects the city's heritage, celebrates what makes the city special but recognises the need to attract new audiences. The three themes are logical and well presented.

Good opportunity to have a variety of partners working together to achieve a shared goal.

Strong framework from which to form defined actions.

Identifiable 'brand' or 'banner' under which covers interlinking areas and themes.

It's good to have a single forum to discuss the range of areas and subjects listed to improve our District and environment.

2. What are the weaknesses of the Vision?

Lack of money and lack of action. The ideas in the Vision document are such a long way from becoming reality. Too much talk and not enough action.

Lack of leadership, commitment and delivery amongst the partner organisations, some of whom seem to work against the Vision at times.

Some of the original partner representatives have moved on with seemingly little by way of handover within their organisations.

It is not the fault of the Vision but the delivery has suffered from lack of funding. Chichester has not been well served by government programmes such as the FHSF and I have concerns that we won't be top of the list post Covid either.

Again, not the fault of the Vision but timing has played its part. The High Street struggles have increased at a pace and now we have the Covid emergency.

Although the BID is on the steering group, there is not a lot of direct involvement of Chichester high street businesses. This is part of a bigger issue in Chichester about the lack of businesses willing to step forward to take a lead. They are happy to suggest initiatives for others to carry out but rarely offer to organise. The BID has also suffered from this.

On one hand I understand the scope being limited to the city centre. This probably prevented the project from becoming too unwieldy. However there can sometimes be criticism of CDC for being Chichester centric so perhaps a districtwide approach could have been considered at the outset to ensure consistency while recognising the unique characteristics of different areas e.g. Selsey, Midhurst, Petworth, South Downs and surrounding villages.

For me the main weakness was that the action plan was produced without adequate stakeholder engagement. Actions were allocated and approved without stakeholder knowledge. Consultation should have been carried out with partners and actions agreed collaboratively to ensure a realistic and achievable action plan.

Lots of organisations talking about things but limited resource or commitment to actually lead or deliver themselves.

Challenges in having an 'all encompassing' document can lead to lack of clarity and focus.

Need for continuity from partners has proved difficult – possibly other agendas prevent true 'partnership' working?

It might help to have some sort of managing executive group to drive things forward and with some sort of discretionary spending authority so it can invest in and support specific areas it feels will make a big difference to the overall strategy.

As this forum is very Chichester centric, which it should be, it needs to find an appropriate way to engage with organisations like Visit Chichester's The Great Sussex Way™ which is seeking to help the whole district. There really needs to be a focus for Chichester City to relate in the same way that towns like Midhurst, Petworth, Selsey and the Witterings are relating to it. It may be that focus comes via the BID, or it's a new coordination forum within the Vision?

3. Do you consider the frequency of the Vision steering group meetings are suitable?

Organisations or groups that push things through usually meet weekly in my experience.

There is at times a disconnect between the Vision and the action plan. As a result a number of actions and particularly the timescales were unrealistic from the outset.

Yes

Perhaps 2 key meetings a year with a short update every 90 days if needed. The reporting function should support proactive action management action by a management group supporting all projects.

4. Are the lead organisations correct for the projects?

Yes.

Yes and no. The BID is the right lead for the projects it has been given but they have not been able to drive those projects.

Ideally, WSCC should lead the West Street pedestrianisation project as so much of this falls within their authority.

CDC have ended up leading on the Evening Economy but in most cities with a BID, it would be the BID who would lead.

Consider how to get the City Council to own some of the projects?

Yes I believe so. The question is perhaps whether the correct people from those organisations are involved?

Partners to take on more delivery rather than expecting CDC to lead and deliver on all of the projects

Difficult to comment. Visit Chichester, particularly with its new lead brand The Great Sussex Way™ could make a significant contribution to the overall picture but needs a collective focus to be really successful. We must all own a bit of each project on the list and ensure our efforts amplify the whole.

5. Should any other organisations be involved to assist with the Vision?

Community groups. The community has done such a lot during Covid to support the vulnerable so opening this up more widely would be key. Design Collective. Charity sector. More grassroots.

Possibly the LEP

Commercial Landlords

None that I can think of but this may change as specific projects develop

Student representative (in addition to College/Uni reps)

I think unity of purpose would provide best value for all engaged.

6. What actions will your organisation be undertaking regarding Recovery following Covid 19?

Post Covid I would like to continue to support residents via the Mayor's Hardship fund, I would like to put in an application for funding to help people get online who were left without internet access when the library closed. I would like to get a community space for my residents to repair, share, meet, print documents and support each other and develop innovative ideas. I would also like to start regular garage sales in front gardens and also sociable Sundays where people meet on their community streets like we did on VE Day.

The High Street Recovery Team will lead on this for CDC.

It is likely that we will be focussing on three things – delivery of core services, cost reduction and income generation.

Visit Chichester has a new brand The Great Sussex Way™. We want a major launch in the Autumn, as soon as we are allowed to engage more widely. It's an exciting prospect and hope all will support it.

7. Will you still be able to commit to the Vision moving forward? Any issues re Actions / Resources / Finances?

Yes I hope so. I would like to support the vision by promoting pop up cycle lanes, one way twittens and streets, removal of on street parking to enable people to have enough space to socially distance themselves outside busy shops where there are narrow pavements. I would like to support widening pavements and using pavement space for cafes and restaurants to re-open in the fresh air like in Vilnius. DfT in theory should be supporting this.

This is probably a discussion for higher up the chain i.e. SLT level. As things stand at the moment it is likely to be a low priority for my service area, which will be focussing on the areas noted in the question 6.

Yes

Yes, will support as best we can.

8. Do you feel the actions / projects should change in terms of the Vision moving forward? Any gaps in projects?

More projects for bringing people together to do things and experience Chichester without having to shop or buy things. More art, more open streets where people can walk and cycle safely. The public spaces between our streets are relatively safe as they are in the open air where the virus can be broken down by sun and wind. I would like to support more food producers to sell in the open air – Guildford has supported its food stall through the whole of the lockdown by keeping the market open and not charging the stall holders. We need to support our markets to start up again as they are essential for local food production and bring life and vibrancy to the city. I would like to support more repair, recycle and share projects as people will have less money post lockdown if they have lost their jobs. I would like there to be much more community activity to promote mental health and reach out more to local neighbours. I would like there to be much more support for the homeless – so we continue this Housing First policy and don't put the vulnerable back on the streets post lockdown.

Should be reviewed in the light of Covid recovery plans. There may be opportunities coming out of recovery which synergise with the Vision – pedestrian areas, reduced traffic, cycling etc.

Post Covid, businesses are going to have many calls on their tight finances and they will not be looking at shop fronts so we need to be realistic about this project in the immediate term

Yes, if the Vision is to proceed I would suggest a review of the action plan and proper stakeholder engagement to set realistic and achievable actions... recognising they may be modest in the circumstances as a reduction in funds is inevitable.

Yes, think this should focus more on the needs of the changing high street. This will not be fully understood until the recovery from lockdown.

Retail Offer may well look very different 'post Covid19', with possibly less focus on retail?

The changes to working arrangements following Covid19 may present additional opportunities for the consideration of Public Sector Premises.

Chichester now included in CityFibre's next 'smart city' phase.

Clear central support and direction with discretionary funding for the management team to amplify specific areas. No funding capability and each simply focuses on its own area without looking to the wider collective good.

9. What should the priorities be to assist with Recovery following Covid 19?

Infrastructure to encourage sustainable transport.

Support to ensure that people are given access to resilient food chains, support to residents who require food.

Digital exclusion: access could/should be woven into something like a community hub, unfortunately our library (wonderful though it is) does not lend itself to being developed into such. This comes back to our idea of a community hub/meeting space/repair cafe etc as a space for local charities/community outreach, we made a good start with the space on north street on market days, but this needs to translate into a building (easily accessible). There will possibly be such a space that we could consider going forward.

Support to vulnerable communities, support to the volunteer groups which have increased during the pandemic.

Encouraging better participation in community life to enable community groups who have developed as a result of the crisis to continue.

Consideration of a survey of local residents to determine what they would like to see going forward in response to the pandemic.

Emphasis of greening on the built environment.

Traffic reduction and enabling more cycling.

Safe streets, community cohesion – lots of community events (that are free or very low cost), meal vouchers to key workers to say thank you and promote local restaurants.

Re-using empty shops creatively at no cost as this will boost innovation and entrepreneurship – examples from London show this.

Look at the opportunities which might present themselves in a post Covid environment – will the Vision be able to take more of the public with it when the harder to implement projects move forward – eg West Street.

It's very difficult to say what things will be like post Covid. Perhaps play to Chichester's strengths; built heritage, access to coast and countryside. A day or short break destination – domestic tourism. Worry less about fingerpost design and ensure what assets we do have are attractive and well maintained.

Identifying what people want and need from the changing High Street especially with changing shopping habits following Covid-19, people changing ideas about what is important and also addressing peoples anxieties around returning to busy and interactive lifestyles. Once this is known we should support individual business, specific sectors or themes where needed to support this.

We must invest in local businesses to re-generate wealth and feel good factor for the area. We will be competing with other areas close to London so clear focused investment to create maximum impact will give us a competitive advantage.

It is generally agreed that time will be required during the country's recovery period before events can actually take place. This will be a constant rolling assessment and will be guided by central government.

Our main priority should be to encourage events back in to the district and support the organisers to be able to do so. We will also need to build confidence to get visitors attending events again, although this will sit with the organisers, we will have a responsibility to stipulate what events need to be doing along the lines of relevant social distancing.

Chichester District Council recognises the benefits of establishing a coordinated approach to a programme of events, acknowledging the opportunities associated with hosting events and the benefits these can bring to the district. Events can provide significant benefits whether socially or culturally and act as catalysts to stimulate tourism and economic growth by showcasing the destination and attracting visitors from outside the area. A positive experience for an attendee at an event can prompt them to become a destination advocate.

The Council's new Events Strategy acknowledges events can help boost the local economy by encouraging tourist visits and local people to stay local; raise the profile of an area, highlighting the unique features and benefits; enhance community pride and togetherness.

The Visit Chichester Destination Management Plan 2019-2023 (DMP) also highlights the benefits of events, promoting events-based tourism as a source of delivering local economic and social benefits that outweigh their cost.

10. Do you have any other comments you wish to make?

People are looking for fun, cheery, exciting and different projects to cheer us all up. Bring in artists and independents eg Design Collective to make sure our vision going forward is fresh, forward looking and innovative.

We don't want same old, same old. We want the new normal to be better, cleaner, greener, more friendly, more sustainable and open to new ideas. Other towns and cities are pulling forward their plans for school streets, community streets and low traffic neighbourhoods, pop up cycle lanes being built and key worker corridors has been put in in Leicester to help nurses and doctors cycle to the hospital. Pop-up, temporary changes to roads (eg removal of on street parking) to make sure that pavements are wide enough for people. (2/3rds of pavements in London are under 2m and I expect that ours are similar). More communal gardening and wildflower areas to boost our links with nature. More allotments and more for mental health.

No, other than the repeat the need for central management to ensure extra intellectual and financial resource can be focused on where it's needed. Otherwise this becomes a talking shop rather than an action committee.