

Burton upon Trent Town Deal Board Minutes

19th March 2021

Board Members Present

Ben Robinson	Chair
Cllr Duncan Goodfellow	East Staffordshire BC
Cllr George Allen	East Staffordshire BC
Cllr Bev Ashcroft	East Staffordshire BC
Cllr Philip White	Staffordshire CC
Cllr Julia Jessel	Staffordshire CC
Mick Clifford	Burton Civic Society
Peter Hardingham	Formerly Octagon Shopping Centre
John McKiernan	Parish Council Representative
Dennis Fletcher	Parish Council Representative
Chris Plant	Chamber of Commerce
Kate Griffiths	Member of Parliament
Valerie Burton	Burton Civic Society

In Attendance

Andy O'Brien	East Staffordshire BC
Thomas Deery	East Staffordshire BC
Wayne Mortiboys	Staffordshire CC
Catherine Mann	Staffordshire CC

Apologies

David Chadfield	Coopers Square Shopping Centre
Shaïd Hussain	Business and Community Representative

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1	Welcome and Apologies	The Chair welcomed the Board to the meeting and noted that there were apologies from David Chadfield. Apologies from Shaïd Hussain apologies were also picked up after the meeting.		
2	Minutes of Monday 7 th December 2020 Town Deal Board meeting and Matters Arising	<p>The minutes of the meeting were approved.</p> <p>The Chair used this opportunity to highlight the size of the opportunity available to the town through the £22.8m it could access and that he was aware of the some of the public response to the Library proposal in particular. The Chair confirmed that a specific Facebook page for the Towns Fund would be set up to help share information about the next steps for the Towns Fund and to encourage direct engage. The Chair also confirmed that it was important for the Board to share their views in the debates at the meeting, but that the Board has collective responsibility for the Town Investment Plan.</p> <p>Board Members shared their views, thoughts and concerns about various proposals within the Town Investment Plan. It was accepted that Board Members would support all proposals going</p>		

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		<p>through the business case process but that if they would reserve the right to support any projects at the end of that process, once more information is available about each of the proposals. They agreed that at the moment, no decisions have been made as to whether any project will be supported beyond the business case stage. AOB also confirmed that as Officers of the Accountable Body, AOB and TD would not be involved in any decision the Board would make on whether to support any specific project in the future as they are impartial to the process and separate to the Board and its decision making.</p> <p>Under Matters Arising, the Chair invited CM to present on the 21st Century Library Offer. CM confirmed that she is the Libraries and Arts Manager at SCC, working in the Libraries service for 21 years and as a Head of Service for 10 years. CM provided an overview of the library offer in Staffordshire and confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCC have been transforming their library service since 2013/2014 to address changing patterns of use, demographics, societal changes, and the need to deliver savings. • Since 2013, the library service budget has reduced by 41%. • 27 libraries in Staffordshire have transferred to community management and none have closed in that time. • The library services delivers support in the themes of health and wellbeing, reading, information and digital, and culture and creativity. • During COVID-19, the library service has shifted into more digital and virtual engagement with user. • SCC has relocated 3 libraries into new buildings with a view to modernise the offer of the services in those areas (Stafford, Newcastle, and Lichfield). A main driver for these relocations was to improve footfall in and around the library areas, with the Lichfield relocation increasing footfall, membership, and use significantly, despite moving further away from the car parks. • Comparisons are made between the Lichfield relocation and the Burton proposal as these are both high quality civic and cultural assets that the library services would occupy. • There were examples given of more flexible spaces created in the Lichfield library, such as the flexible shelving that can be moved to create meeting and performance space within the library. • Lichfield library has seen a particular increase in the number of young people using the facility since the move and creation of dedicated space for teens and children. • The Burton Market Hall is smaller than the existing library, but is almost twice the size of the Lichfield library. The proposal would see state of the art facilities transform the Market Hall with community spaces and functions, with a modernised library service. 		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next steps for SCC would be a number of public engagement events in the summer where people will be able to have their say on the proposals and help to shape future services, which is critical. This includes consultation with existing library users and potential new users. • SCC would look at what could be done to revamp the existing library building if the relocation proposal is not supported by the Board. Both buildings are aging and in need of investment if they are to stay as their current use. • The meeting rooms in the proposed facility would be more flexible and able to cater to community and business needs, particularly using appropriate ground floor extensions off the side of the Market Hall, subject to planning. <p>It was also confirmed that the proposal was made in the Town Investment Plan under the theme of hidden heritage and so part of the proposal is to improve a heritage building in the Market Hall. This is the confirmed strategy of the Board and why the funding has been attracted from the Towns Fund. It was suggested that an investment into the existing library might not be acceptable under the Government's expectations for the Towns Fund, as it is not a heritage building. As such, if this is required, alternative sources of funding would need to be explored.</p>		
3	Forward Plan 21/22	<p>The Chair invited TD to present a summary of the next steps over 2021/22. TD confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The primary purpose of the next 12 months is to assess the feasibility, viability and value for money of all 7 projects. • The first milestone is to agree the standard Heads of Terms, in which Government has confirmed that it is happy for all proposed projects to be assessed using a local assurance framework. This means that ESBC will rely upon its existing framework to technically evaluate business cases. • The assurance framework will be separate to the Towns Fund work. There is an important role for the S151 Officer in approving business cases, this Officer has not been involved in the Towns Fund work to date and so is independent of the Board already. • If a business case is approved, the Board will need to submit a summary document to Government by the end of the 12 months. If it is not approved, the Board will need to consider the implications for that project or the funding. • It may be appropriate to identify 1-2 Board members to act as delegated Leads on behalf of the Board for each project, to ensure ongoing oversight of the development of business cases. • 2 months after agreeing the Heads of Terms, the Board must submit to Government 		

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		<p>project confirmation forms. These set out which projects are being taken forward to business case stage and how much Towns Funding is proposed for each project, subject to the business case. This also confirms the Capital and Revenue split for programme and projects and how any Heads of Terms conditions will be met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each business case will be led by the sponsor organisation, which is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project C (University) – University of Wolverhampton; • Project D (High Street) – ESBC; • Project E (Library/Market Hall) – SCC; • Project F (Washlands Bridge) – SCC; • Project G (Canal Towpath) – Canals and Rivers Trust; • Project H (Cycle Routes) – SCC; • Project J (College Specialist Offer) – Burton and South Derbyshire College. • The business case stage is a HM Treasury Green Book process and an appropriate local business case template is being drafted, with support from the Towns Fund Delivery Partner. • The local template will place a greater emphasis on the public consultation element. Project Sponsors will be required to consider and address consultation comments already received in October 2020, which are published online, and undertake further consultation with the public in 2021. This is an important part of the process and all comments should be considered. • Project Change requests can be submitted to Government in-year for any changes to the financial profile of the projects, deviations from conditions, or if it's considered unviable. There needs to be clear justification and evidence for this but there is no guarantee that Government will allowed any released funding to be reallocated. This would be considered at the time. • The Town Deal Summary Document is submitted at the end of the 12 months, confirming the assurance process that has been applied, delivery plans, monitoring and evaluation plans, and public sector equalities duty analysis for programme and projects. This will be in March 2022. The Summary Documents are signed by the Town Deal Board Chair and the Council's Chief Executive and/or S151 Officer. <p>It was also confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Heads of Terms provide an envelope for the 7 projects listed in the annex to the terms, rather than the summary list earlier in the document. • All Project Sponsors must undertake further consultation, even if the October 2020 response comments were addressed or were all positive. Every comment is important, 		

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		in both previous and future consultation, and Sponsors must show that these have been taken into account.		
4	Town Deal Heads of Terms	<p>The Chair invited AOB to present on the Heads of Terms. AOB confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annex in the Heads of Terms identifies what Government expects the outputs and outcomes for each proposal to be. • There is a conditions column and only one project with a specific condition. The High Street project, which requires a detailed delivery plan to be provided along with quantified outputs and outcomes. This is because this project is very conceptual at the moment, subject to further development. Each project will have a delivery plan, but Government is particularly interested in this one. • There is also a column for ‘fast tracked’ projects, which are the Towpath, Cycle Network, and College proposal. This means that Government agrees that these proposals could be accelerated and up and running the fasted, subject to business case. • There are general conditions in every Heads of Terms around assurance, public sector equalities, and TIP improvements. <p>It was noted that not all of the projects were mentioned at the beginning of the Heads of Terms document. It was stated that MHCLG have confirmed that the agreed list is that which is included in the document annex and that the earlier list is not exclusive.</p>		
5	Next meeting	A provisional next meeting date of 14 th May 2020 was agreed, to be via Zoom.		
6	Any Other Business	<p>VB raised a question about the use of the new Facebook page in terms of its purpose. It was confirmed that this was to share information to the public and that existing communication methods with the Board directly would continue.</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>		