

Dewsbury Town Board Minutes

Meeting 18th March 2021

1. Item Attendees and Apologies

Attendees: Robert Norreys – Chair (RN), Cllr Cathy Scott (CS), Bruce Bird (BB), Nancy Barrett (NB); Mark Eastwood (ME); Martin Hathaway (MH) (until 17:55), Martyn Broadest (MB); Peter Mason (PM); Marie Gilluley (MG); (HW); Martin Walsh (MW); Heather Waddington; Paul Burnett (PB),

Officer Support from Kirklees Council: Simon Taylor; Peter Thompson; Chris Duffill;

Formal apologies received:

Charles Smith (CS), Cllr Pandor

To Note – No BEIS/Town Hub representation as TIP is still in assessment period.

2. Declaration of Interest

No new declarations were declared.

3. Minutes from previous meeting – paper circulated

Minutes from the 14th January 2021, were previously circulated and agreed.

- **Agreed:** Minutes to now be published on web site

4. Actions from the last meeting

These are dealt with under the following items.

5. Town Investment Plan Update

Verbal Update from ST - 42 of the 45 TIPs recently approved were in tranche 2 & 2A which were submitted prior to Christmas 2021. Nothing heard formally from Government and nothing negative. Expectation is that a decision will be announced in next tranche. Uncertain when announcement might be; but will be either before 'purdah' or after elections.

6. Capacity Funding

Following a request from Government that had a short turnaround time, the Council has submitted a bid for £120,000 of delivery grant to support development of business plans. No decision has yet been made.

7. Business Case Procurement & Assurance

PT took the Board through the paper.

The Board:

- **Agreed** that Avison Young should be retained to support negotiation of the Heads of Terms, if required.
- **Agreed** that KC officers to start the procurement exercise to bring on board consultants to deliver the business case stage investment process.
- **Agreed** that remaining and any future capacity funds (See item 6) would be put to this.

8. Recruitment of Permanent Chair

ST gave a verbal update on the progress of the chair recruitment process in line with the previous Board decision. Gatenby Sanderson (GS) have been appointed to handle the recruitment of the Chair. Some board Members raised an issue of the need to undertake this process.

At the meeting it was highlighted that the Terms of Reference for the Board states that Kirklees Council as the responsible authority needs to make the formal appointment. ST indicated that the Board can be involved in that process. ST also agreed to report board views back to the Strategic Director.

Action: ST to forward GS contact details to Board members so members can put forward any suggestions directly to Philip Emms at GS. Looking to finish search in April and make an appointment after elections in May.

Action: Agreed that ST would forward a package of information including the detailed programme and requirements for recruitment of the Board Chair. If there are any queries Board members to go back to ST.

9. Town Board Communication Strategy

RN raised the issue of the Boards view on communication and general awareness of the TIP and the Board. General discussion by Board members on the matter covering matters including provision of information to the community, engagement and consultation with the community. View expressed that public awareness of the Town Deal in Dewsbury is low and needs to be improved. Another view was that emphasis should be on the projects and regeneration, selling the benefits, with the Board in more of a back room role.

MB noted that Comms will require funding and is something the board will benefit from going forward, therefore consideration should be given to collectively look to contribute and not just rely on Council funding. MB made offer of the Comms expertise & would potentially contribute funds from Connect to contribute to a Board Comms Strategy. Others also offered resource towards Comms work through the meetings chat which included NB, BB, MG.

Action: ST to Email Board members to ascertain the extent of interest in pooling resources to develop a Dewsbury Board communications strategy/plan.

10. Building Social Value

CD described what the Council is already doing in trying to maximise local economic and social impact of the programme. The Council is currently looking to refresh its procurement policies to get more and wider benefits from the capital projects. This would involve local labour, local purchasing, upskilling and apprenticeships. Also project on construction skills as part of the Town Deal but will take a while to get this established. Need to take action early on. View is that this needs to be done on a programme basis.

Action: CD to continue discussions with members of Board separately

11. Forward Planning – Items for future Discussion

- Town Centre Living Aspirations
- Project Matters
- Governance –to review the future role of the Board.
- Future Delegation to Chair
- TIP Implementation Plan

Action: Board members to contact ST with any suggestions for future items.

12. A.O.B

Importance to discuss and progress work items outside formal Board meetings.

- **Agreed** that those Board members involved in the groups e.g. Comms and Social Value would keep the rest of the Board informed.

BB – raised the importance of maintaining momentum during the long breaks between meetings enforced by local elections purdah. BB suggested using Teams as a way forward for online working

- Agreed that officers would examine how the work of the board can be enabled between using Teams

13. Next Meeting

Next meeting to be organised and will take place as soon as possible after elections in May. It was noted that to be quorate the Board will need to have an elected member present.