

Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard

20 October 2020 at 1.30pm

Present: Jude Thompson, Black Country Chamber of Commerce (Chair)
Tom Hawley, Homes England
Geoff Layer, Local Enterprise Partnership
Dilip Awtani, Liberty Group
Chris Hinson, Local Board Chair- West Bromwich
Alan Taylor, Local Board Chair- Smethwick
Adrian Eggington, Local Board Chair- Rowley Regis
James Morris, MP Halesowen and Rowley Regis
Nicola Richards, MP West Bromwich East
Shaun Bailey, MP West Bromwich West
Graham Pennington, Sandwell College
Mark Davis, SCVO
Geoff Foster, SCVO
Cllr Maria Crompton, Sandwell MBC
Sandeep Shingadia, Transport for West Midlands
Gareth Bradford, West Midlands Combined Authority

SMBC Officers: David Stevens, Chief Executive
Tammy Stokes, Interim Director - Regeneration and Growth
Surjit Tour, Director - Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Rebecca Jenkins, Towns Fund Programme Manager
Alex Oxley, Planning Regeneration Support Officer
Joshua Singh, Planning Regeneration Officer
Alan Reynolds, Senior Planner
Hayley Insley, Planning Regeneration Team Leader
Tariq Karim, Area Manager Youth Service
Santokh Singh, Neighbourhood Engagement Manager

Also present: Samantha Hadley, James Morris MP's Office
Armani Akbar-Roy, Arcadis
Scott Chapman, Nicola Richards MP's Office
Ben Lucas, Metrodynamics
Gail Harris, Shaun Bailey MP's Office

20/20 **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting of the Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard.

21/20 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from the following Superboard members:-

Josh Jordan, Sandwell Youth Parliament
Karen Woolley, Federation of Small Businesses

22/20 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

23/20 **Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations of interests were made at the meeting.

Geoff Layer – in relation to any matters relating to University of Wolverhampton;
Graham Pennington – in relation to any matters relating to Sandwell College;

In addition to the existing and continued declarations from previous meetings:

Alan Taylor – in relation to any matters relating to Sandwell College;
Tom Hawley – as Homes England was sometimes asked by other Government Departments for feedback on applications and submissions.

24/20 **Approval of Town Investment Plans (TIP's)**

The Chairs of each of the Rowley Regis, Smethwick and West Bromwich Towns Fund Local Boards, presented an overview of their Town Investment Plans for the approval of the Superboard. TIP's were circulated to board members in advance of the meeting.

Adrian Eggington- Rowley Regis Local Board Chair presented an overview of the Rowley Regis TIP including the key priorities, opportunities and rationale. Brief overview of the selected projects which have been approved by Superboard on the October 2nd meeting.

Questions on the Rowley Regis TIP were invited by the Chair but none forthcoming.

Alan Taylor, Local Board Chair – Smethwick, provided an overview of the Smethwick TIP which summarised the evidence of need, the TIP priorities identified as a result of evidence, selected projects and opportunities.

The Chair sought questions pertaining to the Smethwick TIP.

John Spellar MP raised several points for clarity:

1. Details requested on the ambitions to provide high quality homes in order to attract and retain staff working at the MMH.
2. Further clarity was sought on the wider aspirations of the Grove Lane Regeneration project as this is a large area of brownfield land that will require extensive redevelopment. There is also a need to ensure good quality development partners.
3. Clarity was sought on the impact of the Regeneration in the Park project on existing park users.
4. Support in principal for cycle routes but questioning the need for the temporary cycle route along the A457 Tollhouse Way.
5. Finally, clarity was sought on the Chances Glasswork shortlisted project.

Alan Taylor advised the Superboard that:

1. Research has been conducted on this matter and a mixed use, tenure and value offer will be delivered in line with identified demand.
2. The Grove Lane project is a large-scale regeneration project for which the £25m is not sufficient to deliver in its entirety. By stimulating the initial investment, it is hoped further high-quality organic regeneration will occur.
3. Any work in the park is additive to existing offer and should only provide further scope for community space. Further consultation will be drawn out in the next phase of consultation.
4. Aforementioned cycle lane has been installed with Emergency Active Travel Funds as a result of COVID-19. These are being monitored and adapted as needed by transport staff.
5. The Chances project has not progressed through the project prioritisation process and therefore is not being taken for consideration within the TIP. It has, however, been added to the pipeline of future projects for consideration as a local board.

Dilip Awtani sought clarity on the number of jobs/learners that were being generated as a result of the TIP interventions. The board were advised that the TIP will provide:

Places for over 1,000 students studying qualifications from grades 3-7. This includes:

- Nursing school: 300 nursing places
- ACP Programme: 50 ACP per annum.
- Satellite School of Pharmacy: 30 places per annum
- Learning works > 400 people per annum
- College of Health Professions: 500 learners per annum 6,000 sqm of training space (rising to 8000 sqm in phase 2)

Chris Hinson, Local Board Chair – West Bromwich, presented an overview of the West Bromwich TIP. This summarised the local evidence base, the town priorities, strategy, selected projects and rationale.

Feedback on the West Bromwich TIP was sought but none forthcoming.

The Chair thanked the Local Board Chairs for their presentations and reiterated the amount of work that is still required to achieve ultimate agreement with MHCLG.

The Chair paid tribute to recently deceased Rowley Regis Councillor Chris Tranter.

Agreed to receive and approve the Town Investment Plans for Rowley Regis, Smethwick and West Bromwich for submission and to authorise the Interim Director – Regeneration and Growth to make minor amendments prior to submission, if required, in consultation with the Chair of the Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard.

25/20 **Update on Towns Fund Timelines**

Rebecca Jenkins, Towns Fund Programme Manager provided an update on the Timelines for submission of the Town Investment Plans (TIPs). The next steps have been included as additional information within the meeting documentation.

26/20 **Closing Comments**

Tammy Stokes, Interim Director of Regeneration and Growth, reiterated the importance of today's TIP approvals and commended the board on the level of cross-sector partnership working which has allowed for the development of strong TIPs across the three towns. Paid thanks to the Jude, Adrian, Chris and Alan as the Superboard and Local Board Chairs respectively.

Cllr Maria Crompton, Deputy Leader of the Council, commended the board on the level of professionalism and the high quality of work to date and thanked in advance for continued efforts.

The Chair also thanked officers from SMBC and associated teams that have been working at a town and governance level to ensure the efficient completion of work to a tight schedule.

Meeting ended at 2.25pm.