

Minutes of Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard

Tuesday, 3 May 2022 at 4.00 pm
Meeting not open to the public

50/21 Welcome and Opening Remarks

Jude Thompson welcomed attendees to the meeting of the Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard.

Present:

- Jude Thompson, Chair of Sandwell Superboard
- Chris Hinson, West Bromwich Local Board Chair
- Adrian Eggington, Rowley Regis Local Board Chair
- James Morris MP, Halesowen and Rowley Constituency
- Simon Griffiths (on behalf of Graham Pennington), Sandwell College
- Sandeep Shingadia, TfWM
- Keeley Bevington, WMP

SMBC Officers:

- Tony McGovern, Director of Regeneration and Growth
- Jenna Langford, Regeneration Manager
- Rina Rahim, Towns Fund Programme Manager
- Hayley Insley, Planning Regeneration Team Leader
- Alex Oxley, Senior Planning Regeneration Officer
- Santokh Singh, Neighbourhood Engagement Manager



51/21 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from the following Superboard members:

- Nicola Richards, MP West Bromwich East Constituency
- Mark Davis, SCVO
- Graham Pennington, Sandwell College
- Kim Bromley Derry, SMBC
- Cllr Maria Crompton, SMBC
- Cllr Kerrie Carmichael, SMBC

52/21 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 17 February 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

53/21 Declarations of Interests

No new declarations of interest were received.

Existing and continued declarations from previous meetings:

- Adrian Eggington – Interest in Shaftesbury House site so will refrain from discussion with regards Sandwell Civil and Mechanical Engineering Campus, West Bromwich
- Nicola Richards MP – Trustee of the Albion Foundation
- Alan Taylor – in relation to any matters relating to Sandwell College
- Geoff Layer – in relation to any matters relating to University of Wolverhampton
- Graham Pennington – in relation to any matters relating to Sandwell College

54/21 Towns Fund Programme Phase 3 Delivery (Reporting)

Rina Rahim presented an overview of the progress of all projects within the Towns Fund programme. All projects are currently RAG rated green.

As the programme moves forward into delivery stages the accountable body will be required to report on progress at 6 monthly intervals. Project leads will be required to report at quarterly intervals to feed into this overall reporting structure.

Further information on the content of project highlight reports will be shared in due course.

The draft proposed reporting timeline was presented and is part of the agenda pack. This has not yet been finalised and will be communicated to project leads when complete.

Accountable body have secured relevant resource within SMBC Finance to ensure appropriate level of support and are also in the process of developing an assurance framework. This will be presented to Cabinet in June 2022 for approval and will subsequently be shared with boards and project leads.

Question from James Morris MP - Blackheath Bus Interchange is RAG rated green. Is this project still being developed or has that process now concluded?

Rina Rahim advised that, yes, the project is still in development, specifically around design elements and work is ongoing. However, the project summary document has still been presented to DLUHC for approval. Any material changes or amendments that have not been previously agreed at Local/Superboard will go back to Rowley Regis Local Board for approval before any drawdown of funding.

55/21 Towns Fund Programme Governance Structure

Jude introduced Rina Rahim to deliver a presentation on the proposed governance restructure.

Rina provided the board with an overview of the existing arrangements and rationale, which served a specific purpose in the development phase given the number of towns and need for oversight.

It is proposed, however, that as the programme moves into delivery phases that the Local Boards would inherit responsibilities of the Superboard and the Superboard be disbanded to streamline the governance process and devolve decision making power to local stakeholders.

Full details of the proposal can be found in the agenda papers circulated in advance of the meeting.

These proposals have been consulted and agreed with Local Board chairs and with the accountable body.

Most stakeholders on Superboard are already members of their respective Local Boards and will have an open invite to attend any other Local Board meeting should they wish.

There are a few membership considerations being worked on by the accountable body including how the LEP are represented. TfWM are not currently represented on Local Boards so will need to sit on all three if wanting complete input across the three towns. TfWM provisionally allocated as members for all three Local Boards. Practicalities to be confirmed with TfWM. Accountable body are finalising membership details.

Acknowledgment that there may be conflicts of interest, which will need to be managed at a local level and members who have a conflict may need to be excluded from certain agenda items.

Question from James Morris MP – Superboard currently has voting rights and allows for democratic decision making. Will Local Boards be run in the same way from this point onward?

Rina Rahim advised that, yes, all rights will be inherited by Local Boards and therefore voting on issues will be required.

DLUHC have been consulted on the changes and are happy with the proposals.

Vote: To receive and agree the proposed changes to Towns Fund governance whereby Local Boards will inherit Superboard responsibility and Superboard will be disbanded henceforth.

Vote passed unanimously.

56/21 Any Other Business

No AOB raised by board members.

57/21 Closing Remarks

Jude Thompson thanked Superboard members, acknowledging this as the last meeting of the Superboard. Member input has been integral in submission of proposals to DLUHC and moving the projects forward to delivery.

Tony McGovern also offered thanks to Jude for his role as Chair of Superboard and commended him for his work championing local projects and issues.

Meeting ended at 4.45 pm

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