

Minutes of West Bromwich Town Deal Board

Monday, 18 July 2022 at 1.00 pm
This meeting is held online

Present: C Hinson (Chair)
J Thompson (Vice-Chair), Cllr K Carmichael, Cllr S Hartwell,
Cllr R Rollins, Cllr S Melia, G Tomlinson, L Bird and W
Brookfield

Also present: J Singh, SMBC Regeneration Town Lead for West Bromwich
R Rahim, SMBC Towns Fund Programme Manager
T McGovern, SMBC Director, Regeneration and Growth
J Bakewell, Note Taker

1 Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and made opening remarks, thanking board members for their continued time and commitment.

Board Members were informed the remaining three projects were recently approved by government with funding to start being released over the next couple of months for the remaining three projects.

The Chair welcomed new members including those joining from the now disbanded Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard. Jude Thompson will act as Vice Chair for all three Town Deal Board to ensure continuity and consistency and also monitor areas such as local spend.

Board Members were advised the West Bromwich Town Deal Board has several vacancies, which will be discussed later in today's meeting



2 Apologies

Apologies were received by the following Board Members: -

- Emma Chetcuti, Multistory
- Councillor Peter Hughes, SMBC Cabinet Member Regeneration and Growth
- Nicola Richards, MP West Bromwich East Constituency
- Sandeep Shingadia, Transport for West Midlands
- Shane Ward, West Bromwich African Caribbean Centre

Apologies were received by the following SMBC Support Officers: -

- Alex Oxley, SMBC Senior Planning Officer
- Emma Parkes, SMBC Towns Fund Programme Officer
- Jane Lillystone, SMBC Neighbourhoods
- Simone Hines, SMBC S151 Officer
- Surjit Tour, SMBC Monitoring Officer

3 Minutes from the last Local Board meeting

Board members agreed minutes of the Local Board meeting held on 15 February 2022 were a correct record. There were no open action on the Action log from the previous board.

4 Declarations of Interest

The Chair asked board members to raise any declarations of interests. None were forthcoming. The chair asked board members to raise any declarations during discussions should they need to.

5 Governance Arrangements

Following submission of project summary documentation to government in March 2022, the Towns Fund Programme Management Office reviewed the Terms of Reference for Town Deal Boards. This was to ensure they were fit for purpose for Towns Fund Programme Phase 3 - Delivery and that they met the governance responsibilities set out by government.

A Towns Fund Phase 3 Governance Proposals document was circulated to the Sandwell Superboard Chair, Local Board Chairs and Board Members for consultation in April 2022. In May 2022, SMBC Cabinet approved the

Governance Arrangements for Phase 3 and as a result, the Sandwell Superboard (Town Deal Board) structure was replaced by the three Local Boards who inherit Superboard responsibilities, each becoming Town Deal Boards. This also meant Superboard members would transfer to the new Town Deal Boards.

A list of responsibilities set out by government and updates made to the Terms of Reference were presented to board members. These include: -

DLUHC Guidance for Town Deal Boards during Phase 3

- The Town Deal Board should ensure an element of independent 'on-the-ground' monitoring of the deal delivery and act as a 'critical friend' throughout the programme lifecycle
- The Accountable Body should ensure regular catch ups with the Town Deal Board to enable the board to see through the town vision, take ownership of their proposed projects and provide a level of accountability
- The Town Deal Board should have an ongoing role and sight of decisions, the nature and degree of which should be agreed locally

Terms of Reference

The Phase 3 Terms of Reference were approved by Cabinet in May 2022.

Additional items included in the Terms of Reference include: -

- Written Procedure for urgent decisions
- Inclusion of S151 Officer / Representative
- Objections following consultations
- Scheme of Delegation
- Compliance with Council's policies and procedures
- Membership to be reviewed annually
- Updated Board Membership Structure

Board Membership and Meetings

In addition to approving Terms of Reference in May 2022, SMBC Cabinet approved the Town Deal Boards membership structure.

Where there are vacancies for identified organisations as per the agreed Board Membership, representatives would be identified and appointed to in line with their own governance procedures, in consultation with the Chair of the Board.

Where there are vacancies for young person representatives, individuals would be identified and appointed to via Sandwell Council's Youth Service in consultation with the Chair of the Board.

G Tomlinson confirmed they will attend as representative from West Midlands Police.

The Chair sought a decision from Board Members if they support the existing arrangements where Ward Members are briefed at their Town Meetings, or if they wished to invite an additional Ward Member to attend Board meetings. Cllr Laura Rollins, SMBC Deputy Town Lead confirmed she will attend the Town Deal Board in joint capacity and feedback to Ward Members.

The Chair informed the board there were some members that did not attend the historic Local Board meetings, being absent for all/ absent for at least 5 meetings that were scheduled. The Chair sought views from Board Members if organisations should be approached where low/ no attendance has been recorded to seek their interest to continue as a Board Members. This was agreed.

The Town Deal Board will next meet in November 2022 to review April - September claim and reporting period and then continue to meet on a quarterly basis, possibly more frequently in an urgent decision is required.

Town Deal Boards will be in place until March 2026 and representatives are required to attend 50% of meetings as a minimum per year.

Actions agreed: -

- Board Members to consider organisations who may be interested in joining the Town Deal Board where vacancies are identified.
- Programme Management Office to approach organisations with low/ no attendance to see if they wish to continue their involvement.
- Terms of Reference to be updated to include 50% attendance annually is mandatory and would trigger individual board member review.

6 Code of Conduct and Register of Interests

As the Accountable Body for the Towns Fund Programme, Sandwell Council has a statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct. The code of conduct sets out the expectations placed on all members of the Town Deal Board.

Board members were informed the Code of Conduct and Register of Interest Forms were updated following SMBC Cabinet approval of governance arrangements. Updates included the removal of 'Superboard' reference and updated Title of Town Deal Boards.

Following completion, the Programme Management Office would forward documentation to the council's Monitoring Officer. Documentation would also be published in the public domain on the council's committee management system.

Board Members were informed one return would cover attendance for multiple Town Deal Boards. It was also confirmed SMBC Councillors do not require to submit a return as the council already hold their Code of Conduct and Declarations of Interests.

Actions agreed: -

- Programme Management Office to circulate Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interest forms to board members.
- Board Members to complete, sign and return Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interest forms by 26 August 2022. Board Members to contact PMO if clarification is required

7 Programme Updates

Since the submission of project Summary Documentation in March 2022, officers have completed a number of activities to ensure governance and delivery arrangements are in place whilst awaiting government approval. An overview of activities undertaken were shared with the board.

- Governance arrangements approved by SMBC Cabinet: This includes the delegated authority to make any changes to the make-up of Town Deal Boards, by the Director of Regeneration in consultation with a Governance Officer.
- SMBC Cabinet Approval for Procurement Activities: This approval allows all SMBC projects to proceed with procurement requirements without having to go to Cabinet for approval which would delay the process to fit within Cabinet timelines.
- Assurance Framework: This framework details the policies and procedures in place for the management of the programme and individual projects. This includes, Risk, Changes, Claims process and Reporting mechanisms. The framework will be updated as and when required to ensure it is fit for purpose and to provide assurance to the Town Deal Board, Accountable Body and Projects in the management of the programme.

Approved Financial Profiles

Drawdown Financial Profiles have been confirmed by government. This profile outlines when projects require funding from government.

The three projects approved by Government in 2021/22 have incurred spend as per their agreed financial profiles. For projects not approved in 2021/22, spend has incurred utilising 5% advanced funding pot received in September 2021. This has funded works required prior to government approval.

Following approval of the remaining three projects, funding is expected in August 2022.

Ongoing financial profile updates have been requested by DLUCH. Officers are currently in the process of reviewing the financial profile to see if projects forecast underspend/ overspend in 2022/23 financial year due to the later approval from government.

This review will prove to be beneficial as it is envisaged an annual performance review will be undertaken by Government against profiled spend and projects should prevent having large underspend.

Spend to date will be shared with Board Members at future meetings with commentary on the overall project progress to date.

As per the Change Request Process outlined within the Assurance Framework, any financial profile changes between years above 250k will be approved by S151 Officer and the Town Deal Board Chair prior to submission to government. Where there is a decrease/ increase requested from projects, these can be presented to Board Members for reallocation. However, a written procedure is in place if such decisions are required to be made swiftly.

Approved Mandatory Outputs/ Outcomes

Board Members received details of the mandatory and individual project level outputs and outcomes that projects will report on. Projects have been requested to forecast these by financial years to indicate when these will be achieved within the programme. Board Members were reminded some outcomes would not be achieved until later on in the programme. Any outputs claimed will be verified by the Accountable Body prior to release of funds and will be reported back to government.

Approved Local Measures

Projects also committed to delivering Local Measures and will be required to report on these throughout the claims process.

Social Value

Projects have committed to delivering Social Value measures and will be required to report on these throughout the claims process. Further works around the definition of Local Spend will be undertaken so that projects and Board members are aware of what Local Spend is (radius).

West Bromwich Programme Update

Each quarter, projects are required to RAG rate aspects of their project progress which will be reported on a 6-monthly basis to government. These will be reviewed and agreed with Project leads prior to submission. This information will be presented to Board Members with commentary on the project activities over the last quarter as a summary. The top 3 risks from each project will be reported to Board Members.

8 Any Other Business

An update was provided on the activities associated with the Urban Greening Project and Retail Diversification Programme. The update included: -

Urban Greening Project

- Phase 1 works scheduled for August – December 2022. This will include works down both sides of High Street to repair and renew the existing defect paving along Princess Parade, removal of old market stalls, excavation works, lighting upgrades and new benches.
- Temporary Road Closure is required. This will be communicated with local Businesses.
- Quotes received to repair the Fountain are higher than expected. Options are being considered including the relocation to Dartmouth Park.
- Funding arrangements are being explored with Arts Council, Wildlife Trust
- Evening lighting solutions are being explored for the High Street
- Local base approach being taken to planting solutions
- Project team are keen for local community and volunteer groups to be involved
- Maintenance plan: ringfenced funding available for next 3 to 5 years

Retail Diversification Programme (Indoor Market Element)

- Design Team have suggested joint procurement exercise
- Design works going out to tender this month
- Need to ensure procurement costs fit with budget
- Residents / stall holders kept informed
- Timescale for completion 12 to 16 months

- West Bromwich Master Plan suggested incorporating a food hub as a driver to increase footfall
- Increase in fabric retailers / tailors taking over empty units
- Project Team would like to involve Sandwell College regarding youth markets and engaging youth sector entrepreneurship

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be scheduled for November 2022 (W/C 21 November or 28 November 2022).

Actions agreed: -

- Programme Management Office to circulate short survey to capture board member preference on board meeting day/ time.

9 Closing Remarks

The Chair thanked board members for their attendance and summarised the actions agreed during the meeting.

The Chair closed the meeting at 13:55

10 West Bromwich Town Deal Board Action Log

A record of open and closed actions agreed during West Bromwich Town Deal Board meetings.

Meeting ended at 1.55 pm

Contact: town_deal@sandwell.gov.uk

West Bromwich Town Deal Board Action Log

Open Actions			
Date	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
18.07.22	Board Members to consider organisations who may be interested in joining the Town Deal Board where vacancies are identified.	All Board Members	
18.07.22	Programme Management Office to approach organisations with low/ no attendance to see if they wish to continue their involvement	PMO	
18.07.22	Terms of Reference to be updated to include 50% attendance annually is mandatory and would trigger individual board member review.	PMO	
18.07.22	Programme Management Office to circulate Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interest forms to board members.	PMO	
18.07.22	Board Members to complete, sign and return Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interest forms by 26 August 2022. Board Members to contact PMO if clarification is required.	All Board members	
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