

Minutes of Smethwick Town Deal Board

Tuesday, 29 November 2022 at 4.30 pm
This meeting is held online.

Present: A Taylor (Chair), Cllr P Hughes, Cllr A Lewis, Cllr J Uddin, Cllr Z Ahmed, G Brown, J Singh, J Wood, R Flatley, S Saudagar and S Shingadia

Also present: C Felicio, E Parkes, H Insley, M Farid, R Rahim

11 Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed board members to the meeting before outlining the agenda items for discussion. Following the appointment of new board members, the chair asked all attendees to introduce themselves.

12 Apologies

Apologies were received from the following board members: -

- Councillor Farut Shaeen – Smethwick Town Lead Member
- John Spellar – MP Warley Constituency
- Jude Thompson - Vice Chair
- Leona Bird – SCVO
- Samantha Partridge – West Midlands Police
- Simone Hines – Sandwell Council’s Section 151 Officer
- Tim Steele - Black Country LEP
- Tony McGovern – Director of Regeneration and Growth



13 Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the last board

Board members agreed minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2022 were a correct record.

Action Log

Updates recorded on the attached Action Log.

14 Declarations of Interest

The Chair asked board members to raise any declarations of interests. One declaration was raised: -

- Councillor Jalal Uddin - Declared an interest as an independent governor for Sandwell College, given their participation with the Midland Met Learning Campus project.

The Chair asked board members to raise any declarations during discussions should they need to.

15 Governance Arrangements

The chair summarised the discussion held at the previous board meeting, where board members discussed the Terms of Reference and Board Membership and provided feedback for the Programme Management Office to action. Board members received Items 5a - Terms of Reference and 5b - Smethwick Town Deal Board Membership prior to the meeting.

Terms of Reference – Updates

- 4.2 – Updated process for elected members expressing interest to join the Town Deal Board
- 4.3 – Highlighting the Town Lead Member (Councillor Shaeen) is responsible for feedback back into Ward Member meetings
- 10.4 – Board Membership would be feedback to Cabinet/ Council to ensure membership aligns with annual appointments
- 10.5 - The expectation of board members attending at least 50% of meetings per annum.

A board member raised their concern regarding the absence of decision makers, particularly those from Sandwell Council. Board members were

reminded the Town Deal Board is an independent committee, as per DLUHC guidance, and Sandwell Council officers attend in a supporting capacity.

Despite this, the Programme Management Office understood the importance for executive officers to attend board meetings. It was agreed at least one Director/ executive officer should be in attendance and this would be reported back to Sandwell Council's Executive Office.

Action: PMO to feedback concerns regarding the absence of director/ executive officers and ensure at least one executive officer is in attendance at future meetings.

16 Social Value and Local Spend

At the previous board meeting, a discussion took place around Social Value and Local Spend and how the Towns Fund Programme is incorporating this.

The Programme Management Office reviewed Sandwell Council's definition of Local Spend and adapted the definition for the Towns Fund Programme so that board members have a clear understanding on how procurement and social value will be reported.

Board members received Item 6a - Draft proposal Social Value and Local Spend V2 prior to the board meeting. The document details guidance for projects on what Local Spend is, how it fits with the Social Value act, how the project leads are expected to support this and the proposal for the Towns Fund Programme.

Sandwell Council's Social Value/ Local Spend is reported by West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) areas. The report lists all local authority areas included.

The proposal put forward for the Towns Fund Programme is to have a tiered priority approach: -

- Sandwell
- Birmingham & Black Country
- Other West Midlands Combined Authority Area
- National

The report also includes questions project leads should consider when undertaking procurement activities (Annex B) to encourage local spend.

The proposal was presented to West Bromwich and Rowley Regis Town Deal Boards, who were both supportive of the approach, however requested to see the rationale should procurement be classified as a 3 or 4 (suppliers from

beyond Black Country and beyond were used) and the type of procurement approach undertaken (open tender/ framework).

Smethwick Town Deal Board members were asked to provide comments/ raise queries. The discussion included:-

A comment was made how the proposal and tiered/ prioritised approach is a good step forward, however to ensure the framework is successful, close monitoring is required.

A second comment was made regarding the need to monitor projects closely, in particular the need to enforce penalties should targets not be achieved.

In response to the second comment, Board Members were reminded contractors who are assigned to Frameworks have already gone through assessment criteria and as a result, new local spend/ social value targets cannot be enforced. Where projects undertake open tenders/ quotes, social value will be incorporated as per project social value plans. However, where they are not met by the contractor, the project lead and social value co-ordinator will investigate and re-negotiate where possible.

A suggestion was put forward to review national frameworks and to encourage local suppliers to apply /register on frameworks used by the Council. Board members were informed this is a wider piece of work that would need to be led on by Procurement Services, however the Programme Management Office are helping to organise a 'Meet the Buyers' event in March 2023, where local suppliers/ businesses can attend and view upcoming opportunities for procurement, get support on how they can sign up and submit applications.

The Project Management Office confirmed they are working closely with project leads and social value co-ordinator to get involved at an early stage with the contractors to set out the targets which need to be achieved. There is nothing in the contracts to suggest there would be a penalty if these aren't met; members suggested it should be mentioned in the contract.

The chair thanked board members for the discussion and suggested there may be value in looking at the local procurement approach across all towns, to ensure there is consistency, for both Sandwell Council led and external partner led projects. The chair emphasised the importance of this as the practicalities for such an approach is common for all three towns.

Action: Cllr Peter Hughes to feedback comments raised by Board Members to SMBC Procurement Services and to seek input regarding what can/ cannot be done in regard to penalising contractors should social value not be met.

17 Project Reporting

Projects are asked to report on a quarterly basis as there is a requirement to report back to government on a 6-monthly basis with the next report being due to be submitted mid-December.

Board members received Item 7a - Smethwick Town Deal Board Reporting April - September 2022 prior to the board meeting. This appendix was shared on screen during the meeting and the following was presented: -

Town Level Reporting:

- A review of funding drawn down from Government to date and the spend profile against this including rationale for both advanced spend and any slippage
- Forecasted spend for the remaining 22/23 financial year (October 2022 - March 2023) and the rationale for any slippage
- Key deliverables across all projects that had been achieved in this reporting period and those forecasted for the remaining 22/23 financial year
- Confirmation was provided that despite some spend slippage, a Government Deep Dive is not applicable as the slippage is within the 40% threshold as set out in the LUF and Towns Fund Local Authority Assurance Framework issued in September 2022.

Project Level Reporting:

- A review of the overall progress including progress status (complete/ on track/ delayed) and RAG Ratings for delivery, spend, risk, resource, outputs and outcomes
- Activities undertaken within the reporting period including current challenges and challenges expected in the next 6/12 months
- Progress against key milestones
- Spend against funding drawn down profile (spend to date and forecasted) including rationale for any slippage
- Spend against match funding profile (spend to date and forecasted) including rationale for any slippage
- Top 3 project level risks
- Resource implications, if applicable
- Project specific outputs, outcomes and local measures
- Procurement activities including appointed contractor details and local spend considerations

To ensure the Accountable Body and Town Deal Boards receive reporting on a regular basis to monitor project progress, expenditure and risks, it is a requirement set by the Programme Management Office that project leads must submit Monitoring, Evaluation and Claim Returns on a quarterly basis, as a minimum. However, returns to Government are only required on a 6 monthly basis. The first return is due by 16 December 2022.

The following discussions were held as a result of the information presented: -

A board member requested to see a breakdown of activities against the spend to date for the Midland Met Learning Campus. It was advised the project lead for Midland Met Learning Campus would be invited to attend the next board meeting to go through the project in detail, but in the meantime the PMO will report back to board members.

A board member requested further details regarding the change of scope to the Midland Met Learning Campus project. Clarification was provided to board members that no project changes had been made. The amendment noted within the report to board members related to the change of architects used to design the building for the project.

A question was raised whether a target was set for local spend for the Ron Davis Centre Expansion project. Board members were informed there were no targets set for local spend for the project, but there are targets set for social value. The social value co-ordinator continues to work with the contractor to extract the information of local suppliers being used.

A number of board members expressed their concerns regarding local spend; they felt their suggestions and recommendations raised at previous board meetings have not been taken onboard.

A board member notified the board of comments raised by tenants of Smethwick Enterprise Centre regarding insufficient support to relocate. The Programme Management Office confirmed tenants had been given prior notice and the project team are seeking alternative accommodation for tenants in addition to compensation costs.

A query was raised if any of the projects had made any changes. The Programme Management Office confirmed the only changes made to projects is the delivery approach for the Grove Lane Regeneration project.

Action: PMO to request detailed activities against spend for the Midland Met Learning Campus project and report back to Town Deal Board members.

Action: PMO to invite Midland Met Learning Campus project lead to attend the next Town Deal Board meeting.

18 Any Other Business

Regenerating Sandwell Website

A new website called 'Regenerating Sandwell' has been developed to promote the proposed, planned and approved 66 pipeline projects totalling £1.8 billion investment. This includes the 16 Towns Fund projects across West Bromwich, Smethwick and Rowley Regis. The website will be updated regularly and members can review project progress updates.

Board Meeting Duration

A board member suggested the duration of meetings should be extended to two hours. The Chair agreed with this suggestion.

Action: PMO to update future meeting appointments to a duration of two hours.

19 Closing Remarks

The Chair thanked board members for their attendance and contributions to the meeting and closed the meeting at 18:01.

20 Smethwick Town Deal Board Action Log

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

Meeting ended at 6.01 pm

Contact: town_deal@sandwell.gov.uk

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Rowley Regis Town Deal Board Action Log

Open Actions

Date	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
24.11.22	Kelly Thomas to liaise with Chair of Young Leavers Programme and explore interests from Sandwell Council apprentices to see if they wish to join the Town Deal Board for Rowley Regis, West Bromwich and Smethwick.	Kelly Thomas	
24.11.22	Board members to contact the Programme Management Office with details of incentives on offer to help create a package for young people to encourage their commitment to the Town Deal Board. (town_deal@sandwell.gov.uk)	All Board Members	

Closed Actions

Date Opened	Date Closed	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
08.07.22	24.11.22	PMO to contact board members to confirm their interest to continue as a board member.	R Rahim/ E Parkes	Complete
08.07.22	24.11.22	Terms of Reference to be updated to include 50% attendance annually is mandatory and would trigger individual board member review.	R Rahim/ E Parkes	Complete
08.07.22	24.11.22	Jude Thompson to contact relevant individuals at BCC to explore potential membership suggestions.	J Thompson	Complete
08.07.22	24.11.22	Debbie Downs to also review from a WMP perspective to understand whether they have any local contacts.	D Downs	Complete
08.07.22	24.11.22	PMO to circulate short survey to capture board member preference on board meeting day/ time.	R Rahim/ E Parkes	Complete

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