

Minutes of Smethwick Town Deal Board

**Tuesday, 28 February 2023 at 3.00 pm
at This meeting is held online.**

Present: A Taylor (Chair)
Cllr Lewis, Cllr Piper, Cllr Shaeen, Cllr Hughes and J Wood

Also present: M Farid, C Felicio, H Insley, R Rahim, T McGovern, A Jukes,
A Bell.

21 Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed board members to the meeting before outlining the agenda items for discussion. The meeting was quorate.

22 Apologies

Apologies were received from the following board members: -

- Jenna Langford – SMBC
- Sandeep Shingadia – TFWM
- Gareth Brown – Raglan Road Church
- Mark Wildman – Sandwell Leisure Trust
- Cllr Jalal Uddin – Elected Member
- Cllr Zahoor Ahmed – Elected Member

23 Minutes and Action Log

Minutes



Board members agreed minutes of the meeting held on 29 Nov 2022 were a correct record.

Action Log

Updates recorded on the attached Action Log.

24 **Declarations of Interests**

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

25 **Governance Arrangements**

A meeting took place with PMO and SHAPE colleagues where suggestions were made to update young people during the SHAPE forums. The PMO will liaise with Shape Forum and also promote the Towns Fund Projects amongst existing young people's forums. Engagement with young people on specific projects of interest such as Britannia Park (Rowley Regis) will encourage participation in other Towns Fund and future projects. SHAPE is holding a conference in June where PMO and other reps have been invited to engage with young people and build relationships. In addition, board meetings times can be revised to suit young people.

A board member commented if a young member was to come onboard then it needs to be a supportive experience for them.

With regards to the WMCA vacancy, the PMO informed Board members WMCA receive updates pertaining to Towns Fund programme on other platforms and consideration was required whether this vacancy should remain or be removed. In addition, it was also proposed to remove the Black Country LEP vacancy as from March onwards the organisation will cease to exist.

Board members discussed and agreed that as the Black Country LEP was closing, then a rep from WMCA with the specific skills and knowledge would be beneficial.

Action: PMO to approach colleagues at WMCA for a suitable rep.

26 **Social Value and Local Spend**

Board members received Item 6a - Draft proposal Social Value and Local Spend V3 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.

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 draft guidance has been updated following comments from all Towns Funds Boards to provide further clarification on prioritising local spend and social value as part of procurement.

Updates include:

- Projects to provide details on supplier location, approach and rationale for choosing that supplier if not Sandwell/Black Country/Birmingham based.
- Monitoring of Social Value targets agreed with contractors.
- Compliance with SMBC Contract procurement guidelines.

The Programme Management Office reassured board members the projects are required to implement social value within any procurement process required. Where existing frameworks are used, projects will be required to engage with contractors to capture this information.

A board member expressed their concerns regarding penalties if contractors don't meet the targets for local spend. PMO confirmed there aren't any penalties built into the guidance document at present and advice from SMBC procurement representative was that this was not currently incorporated into procurement contracts. There's no framework which legally requires social value and if there's no binding contractually, there's no penalty liable. Historically, there has been resource issue in monitoring targets set, however, moving forward, work is currently being undertaken to ensure that Towns Fund projects incorporate targets into the tender specification and monitor this throughout the contract.

Action: Local Spend and Social Value to remain as an agenda item.

27 Project Reporting

Board members received Item 7a - Smethwick Town Deal Board Reporting October - December 2022 prior to the board meeting. This appendix was shared on screen to provide an update on project progress.

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

There is some slippage but is within 40% threshold set by DLUHC.

Midland Metropolitan Learning Campus

Project lead provided an update on project progress. There is slippage into the next financial year. The planning application will be submitted end of March

and full consideration is expected end of Q3 2023. The RIBA 3 design has also commenced with the architect. It was added that they are looking to procure main construction contracts which will commence in March and should have it procured by mid-year.

The design has been rationalised which has resulted in losing the top floor, re-organisation of the communication space but the original educational space has been unaffected. The benefit of doing so is to remain closer to the original budget and quicker to build. The biggest challenge will be cost inflation and match funding.

There are concerns with parking as this is a car-free development. There are conversations being held with WMCA, TFWM, Sandwell Council and Birmingham City Council looking at bus provisions and how to connect cycle lanes which already exist as part of the hospital development. The WMCA have developed a business plan for a mobility hub near the site. Fortnightly meetings are held with WMCA regarding gap funding. This project is on their pipeline. The timing of the planning application is key currently. Discussion around offering and agreeing other outputs in addition to Towns Fund outputs was taking place. A board member queried the timeframe of gap funding decision. Project lead commented the WMCA have regular investment board meetings and it was crucial to have the submission at the correct time as there is limited opportunity for resubmitting funding bids.

A board member expressed their concern on governance of the project and the additional costs incurred. Discussions took place around the reasons for changing the architects and whether this was value for money. The project lead explained that this was the correct decision at the time enabling progressing the project rather than incurring additional costs not adding value. Board members felt the approval process requires reviewing to ensure members are aware of significant changes before costs are incurred.

Action: MMLC to provide further information pertaining to costs to board members.

Action: PMO to look at assurance and come forward with a proposal regarding lowering threshold for board approval.

Ron Davis Centre

This project is on target and will complete by end of March with classrooms being operational after Easter. A board member queried if there will be a public opening. There will be an open day and the centre will be potentially be used to host a future board meeting. Further details will be shared with members regarding open day.

Rolfe Street Canalside Regeneration

Tenants have now left the site and is now in vacant possession. There are some outstanding surveys which have to be completed in March due to seasonal factors and site works are due to commence in Aug 2023. The unknown ground conditions could potentially increase remediation costs.

Grove Lane Regeneration

There is slippage of the whole amount into future years. CPO proceedings have been approved by Cabinet. Subsequently this will affect the time frame and will be costly also adding 12-18 months onto the process. DLUHC have been kept updated from the outset so they are aware of the challenges and will continue to be kept updated.

Smethwick Connected

This project is progressing ahead of schedule. All connected projects require footfall figures being submitted to DLUHC, so working with project leads to have installation of counters so footfall data is being monitored. Baseline data was requested to better understand the current usage as board member expressed concerns regarding lack of use of cycling route.

Action: PMO to circulate baseline footfall data.

28 Forward Plans

The PMO presented the updated forward plans detailing upcoming consultations, press releases and site visits. These will be updated periodically and circulated to board members to promote where applicable.

There is regular correspondence between PMO and project leads where details of consultations are shared and will be circulated to board members for promoting amongst networks. A visit to Ron Davis Centre can potentially double up as a location for the next board meeting.

29 Any Other Business

None.

30 Closing Remarks

The Chair thanked board members for their attendance and contributions to the meeting, before closing the meeting at 16:59.

31 Smethwick Town Deal Board Action Log

Meeting ended at 4:59pm

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