

Minutes of Smethwick Town Deal Board

**Tuesday, 23 May 2023 at 3.00 pm
at This meeting is held online.**

Present: A Taylor (Chair), J Thompson, Cllr A Lewis, Cllr F Shaeen, J Wood, Cllr P Hughes, G Brown, A Ali, Cllr J Uddin, K Harris, L Bird and R Flatley.

Also present: M Farid, C Felicio, H Insley, R Rahim, E Parkes, S Hines and T McGovern.

1 Welcome and Opening Remarks

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

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from the following board members: -

- Jenna Langford – SMBC
- Austin Bell – Project Lead
- Paul Mallon – West Midlands Police

3 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.

Action: PMO to add forward planning of the next meeting to end of the Agenda so it can be decided who is to be invited for the next meeting.

4 Declarations of Interests



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

5 Governance Arrangements

- Proposed update to Terms of Reference
- Changes to Board membership following elections

There are two suggestions for updating the Terms of Reference:

- Terms of Reference to be updated so it is clear that its required to update Register of Interest on an annual basis and any interest on an ongoing basis is reported to PMO or at the next meeting which was agreed by Board Members
- In the Scheme of Delegation project leads to inform PMO of any sunken or abortive costs of £5000 or above 10% - whichever is greater. This is referring to individual budget line and not the overall budget.

The following comments were made by Board Members:

- A percentage cannot be put on a large project and isn't viable
- Suggestions were made to have a maximum figure for larger projects i.e. £25,000 or £50,000 and a 10%/£5000 percentage for smaller projects
- A further suggestion was made to have a separate column for non-construction costs as sunken/aborted costs take place before construction, or make it clear this is applicable to all costs.

The draft will be amended to include the above suggestions and circulated to the other two Boards for further comments as there needs to be consistency across the programme. Members asked what would happen if other boards reject our suggestions. Chair confirmed they would still be able to apply the suggestions as is relevant to this board.

6 Project Reporting

Board members received Item 6a - Smethwick Town Deal Board Reporting Jan – March 2023 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: -

PMO reminded members there's a return submission due to DLUHC on 9th June 2023 for all activities up until 31st March 2023.

There is some slippage to future financial years. All outputs forecasted for 2022/23 have been achieved. The forecast spend for 2023/24 is ambitious so we need to be ensure that projects will be able to spend as this is monitored against. A DLUHC update in April following a Dec 22 submission resulted in funding being released depending on milestone rather than releasing funding up front.

Ron Davis Centre

This project has 90% completed with the build completed and just awaiting fittings which required additional funding. A site visit will be arranged for June/July and it could be a potential site for a future meeting. Classes are expected to begin from August 2023.

A board member expressed concerns regarding the local community not fully benefiting from the centre. It was added the centre focuses on specialist courses.

Action: PMO to introduce A Ali to Ron Davis Project Lead.

Rolfe Street Canalside Regeneration

There is slippage to future years which is more than 30% so RAG rated as red. There are scheduled surveys which are staggered throughout the summer. Pre-site works are due to complete and site works are to commence in Oct 2023.

Grove Lane Regeneration

Majority of the 22/23 funds has slipped into future years. There is cabinet approval for CPO proceedings and legal work has progressed. Milestones have been pushed back.

Midland Metropolitan Learning Campus

There is slippage into the next financial year. The planning application was submitted for approval in April 2023 and determination is expected in July. The project is still anticipated to start delivering training in Feb 2024.

Match funding is being sought from WMCA for the next financial year to enable building to deliver a net zero carbon facility They are also looking into alternative funding opportunities to support this.

Due to the change in circumstances the University of Wolverhampton are no longer able to commit to leasing the building, however, are still interested in using the facility. Details of this arrangement are currently being considered.

Board members were sent further information pertaining to costs as per action from last meeting.

Smethwick Connected

This project is spending on target with their spend and delivery. The Phase 2 works are ongoing currently. The project was anticipating to complete Phase 2 by April, but it's pushed back to June/July.

It was expected to have one upgrade to one cycle path this financial year and three in the next financial year. It was commented that there is significant disruption when these works were in place which incur further costs and disruption to locals. Others echoed the same concerns and comments regarding the lengthy time to complete these works. It was clarified that some of the works were related to the Accelerated scheme which had to be paused due to COVID restrictions.

The project had claimed delivery of cycle path completed by 31 March, however the milestone stated completion was June 23 due to finishing works being completed over the coming week.

Action: PMO to confirm with Project Lead whether there's formal completion of works or whether it is to be moved to align with the milestones.

A Board Member suggested it would be beneficial to have a site visit with PMO and some Board Members to meet with Contractors.

Action: PMO to organise a site visit for Smethwick Connected.

Action: Chair requested comments about Smethwick Connected to be addressed to Project Manager.

PMO informed Board Members that slippage will be reported to DLUHC at the beginning of June and invited Board Members to get in touch if they wanted any further clarification prior to submission.

Board members felt it would be useful to have details of the number of Sandwell jobs supported throughout the project delivery. PMO stated that this is not a requirement for DLUHC or the outputs monitored as part of the project delivery and may be difficult where existing contractors/frameworks are being used. The projects are required to monitor the number of temporary jobs supported overall, and the Sandwell jobs where agreed as an additional Social Value/Local Measure which are reported in the project tables.

Project leads will be informed of the request from Board members.

7 Forward Plans

DLUHC are looking to do site visits. Ron Davis will be included in the visit once they have their furniture and fittings. Other projects such as Grove Lane and Rolfe St aren't due to be included this time round. Dates will be shared with Board Members once they're aligned with DLUHC and Project Leads. Previous visits with DLUHC have been successful and beneficial for all.

There will be a press release for Ron Davis Centre once the furniture and fittings are complete. There will also be press releases to promote the Midland Metropolitan Learning Campus planning application and Smethwick Connected once the current phase is completed.

8 Any Other Business

PMO informed Board Members the next meeting in August will be rescheduled due to clashes. The new date will be sent out in due course. Additionally, there are plans to do hybrid meeting at Ron Davis Centre.

Comms have produced a signature graphic for key facts of the Regenerating Sandwell schemes and Towns Fund projects. PMO requested members to use this graphic in their signature if possible, and also use to share any press releases through their networks.

9 Closing Remarks

The Chair thanked board members for their attendance and contributions to the meeting, before closing the meeting at 16:50.

10 Smethwick Town Deal Board Action Log

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

Meeting ended at 4.50 pm

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk