

Minutes of West Bromwich Town Deal Board

**Thursday, 9 November 2023 at 2.00 pm
at This meeting is held online.**

Present: C Hinson (Chair), J Thompson, Cllr K Millar, Cllr S Hartwell, Cllr P Hughes, L Hill, K Harris, S Shingadia, S Griffiths and W Brookfield.

Also present: A Miller, A Oxley, C Burke, E Parkes, J Langford, M Farid, M Wragg, R Rahim, S Chapman, T Lloyd, T McGovern and W Moore.

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: -

- Cllr K Akpoteni
- Cllr L Rollins
- Cllr P Randhawa
- Deska Howe
- Glyn Tomlinson - WMP
- Leona Bird – SCVO
- Mark Wildman – SMBC
- Nicola Richards MP
- Shokat Lal – SMBC
- Stephen Howells
- Tanya Derham – SIPS

Other apologies received: -

- Brendan Arnold – S151 Officer
- Luke Dove – SMBC
- Joshua Singh – SMBC

23 Minutes of the previous Town Deal Board



Board members agreed minutes of the Local Board meeting held on 29 Aug 2023 were a correct record.

Action Log

Updates recorded on the attached Action Log.

24 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.

25 Project Updates

Project Updates

West Bromwich Connected

Project Lead provided an update on the following programmes: -

- Phase 1 – Beeches Road to Sandwell Valley via Europa Avenue Cycle Route is complete.
- Phase 2 - West Bromwich Inner Ringway Pedestrian Link is complete.
- Phase 3 - West Bromwich Town Centre to Beeches Rd & Roebuck Lane via High St Cycle Route detailed design complete and consultation planned for Nov/ Dec 2023.
- Phase 4 - West Bromwich Town Centre to Birmingham Canal via Spon Lane Cycle Route topographic surveys are underway.
- Phase 5 - Hill Top to Walsall Canal via Bagnall Street Cycle Route topographical surveys are underway.

A board member enquired whether the Canal and River Trust are completing any works at the end of the canals as both ends are connected. The National Cycle Network 81 was resurfaced in 2018. Walsall Canal has been partially resurfaced, but there are ongoing works with Canal and River Trust to secure funding for further resurfacing.

Town Hall Quarter

Rina Rahim provided an update on behalf of the project lead. This included: -

- An update on project costs following receipt of the Final Cost Plan from the contractor
- Elements that have been impacted as a result of the Final Cost Plan
- Removal of the access ramp to the front of the building considering the cost constraints. The building continues to be DDA compliant at the rear of the building.
- Next steps and timescales for the project

The Chair expressed a lot of effort goes into these projects and thanked all for their input. Cllr P Hughes agreed with this statement.

RDP

The Project Lead provided an update on progress. This included:

- An update on the appointment of a construction contractor following receipt of the Final Cost Plan
 - Confirmation that market traders have been consulted regarding the changes required and subsequent delay to the delivery programme
 - Revised delivery timescales for the overall project, including acquisition and demolition programme.
- **Indoor Market Element**
The proposed delivery programme is currently an optimistic programme to achieve completion by Dec 2024. As a result, the delivery programme may need to be reviewed and some elements may have to be re-designed.

A discussion took place regarding the revised approach to appoint an alternative contractor following receipt of final cost plan. A comment was raised regarding the need to include a 10% contingency allowance and that this needs to be factored into the Indoor Market Element budget.

The Chair reiterated that the costs and works completed to date will be re-used so no funding has been lost. It was queried whether the council or the contractor own the designs. Confirmation was provided that the council own the designs.

The Chair added the current indoor market isn't fit for purpose, so it is vital for this project to go ahead.

The Chair asked if the removal of the first floor new indoor market would impact the project outputs and require a PAR. Board members were advised this would not impact the project in any way, as this was not included in the FBC and was added as an additional scope following the changes made to the acquisition strategy.

- **Acquisitions**
An update was provided on the project acquisition strategy. Board members were reminded that this information is confidential and must not be shared outside of the Town Deal Board.
- **Demolitions**
Demolitions cannot start until Acquisitions are fully completed. There has been a request sent to the contractors for revised fee costs due to change in market prices.

26 Project Reporting

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

The returns to DLUHC are due by 4 December 2023. The returns require The Town Deal Board Chair and Section 151 Officer approval before they can be submitted to DLUHC. Following their review, DLUHC may contact Towns should an assurance review be required.

Digital Den

Status: Complete

The Digital Den continue to deliver courses and outputs are being monitored. One of the areas the project is looking to expand to is to have young people's provision such as homework clubs or other which may be of interest to young people. External funding is continuously being explored as courses are delivered by third party providers. The only risk for this project is for output delivery.

Central St Michaels Sandwell Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Centre

Status: Complete

The new campus is operating and welcomed students in September 2023. An opening ceremony is planned for the new year. All of the Towns Fund grant has been utilised. The match funding from DFE has been moved to future years. Currently verifying the number of construction jobs with the College. The learner information will be captured in Q3/4 as the College has just opened. Social value outcomes are also awaiting confirmation.

The Project Lead added everything is going well, both staff and students are pleased and emphasised the importance of opening in line with the academic year.

It was queried whether the College will have an annual enrolment or more frequent. Project Lead commented that the current focus has been on an initial roll out in line with the academic calendar but are looking to have another intake in January 2024.

Urban Greening

Status: Complete with Cultural Programme ongoing

Phase 2 is complete. The Cultural Programme have sent out an updated programme plan which can be circulated to Board Members.

Action: PMO to circulate updated programme plan.

The outputs are being delivered as per the Full Business Case. The number of trees planted is 26, where it was 33 but this will remain as they could be planted at a later stage. The outcomes will be delivered in this financial year.

University of Birmingham have secured funding to run an evaluation project on the benefits/disbenefits of the new Urban Greening area. Complete the survey here: [BBSRC Survey – Urban Greening Project](#)

It was added that Joshua Singh has been shortlisted for Young Planner of the Year for his work on this project. Congratulations were passed onto Joshua.

The board were informed of a recent traders meeting and the discussions and concerns raised by business owners. The businesses have requested a working group to be set up with regular meetings. A meeting for December will be scheduled.

Town Hall Quarter

DLUHC have been made aware of the delays to the project. Milestones, financial forecasts and outputs will be pushed back to reflect the delay.

RDP

DLUHC have been made aware of the delays to the project. Milestones, financial forecasts and outputs will be pushed back to reflect the delay. Additional match funding is required, and a report will be going to Cabinet in due course

West Bromwich Connected

This project has a slight delay due to the consultation process. The project is still expected to be delivered within budget. The outputs planned to date have been achieved.

27 Communications Forward Plan

Cllr Hughes will be visiting Digital Den to meet and speak to learners later this month.

The Herald Publication has been released which has a specific page for Regeneration projects.

Action: PMO to circulate Herald Publication to board members.

28 Any Other Business

DLUHC attending Town Deal Board - The councils DLUHC advisor has expressed their interest in attending the next board meeting. Members welcomed their interest and agreed they should receive an invite to the February board.

Cllr Hughes thanked Tony McGovern and other SMBC officers for their works whilst juggling resources and projects.

29 Closing Remarks

The Chair informed board members of Tony McGovern departure from the council and thanked Tony for his support and wished him the very best for the future.

The Chair thanked board members for their attendance and contributions to the meeting. Meeting closed at 16:00.

30 West Bromwich Town Deal Action Log

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

Meeting ended at 4.00 pm

Contact: town_deal@sandwell.gov.uk

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West Bromwich Town Deal Board Action Log

Open Actions

Date	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
9 Nov 2023	PMO to circulate Herald Publication to board members.	PMO	
9 Nov 2023	PMO to circulate updated programme plan.	PMO	
29 August 2023	Board members to express their interest to attend the SHAPE Forum meeting on 19 October 2023 to promote Towns Fund projects.	All Board Members	Ongoing

Closed Actions

Date Opened	Date Closed	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
29.08.23	9.11.23	PMO to liaise with Sandwell College on the opportunity to host hybrid meeting at Sandwell MEC facility.	Rina Rahim	Completed
29.08.23	9.11.23	PMO to invite Town Hall Quarter and West Bromwich Connected project leads to attend the November meeting.	Rina Rahim	Completed
29.08.23	9.11.23	PMO to feedback comments to Sandwell College re. Change of project title and seek consideration to review the new title and include 'Sandwell' in the title.	Rina Rahim	Complete
29.08.23	9.11.23	Joshua Singh to seek additional information on the curriculum offer from Sandwell College and feedback to board members.	Joshua Singh	Complete
29.08.23	9.11.23	Joshua Singh to consider utilising underspend to create green walls on unappealing walls within the town centre or supplementing West Bromwich BID hanging baskets.	Joshua Singh	Complete
29.08.23	9.11.23	Karen and Michael to be invited to Town Deal Boards to represent Social Value.	Rina Rahim	Complete

16.05.23	9.11.23	Chair to arrange a meeting with Project Lead and Business Ambassadors.	Chair	Complete
16.05.23	29.08.23	Project Lead/PMO to set a date for site visit and send invite to Board Members	Joshua Singh/PMO	Complete
21.02.23	16.05.23	PMO to explore further regarding displayed exhibitions for project update/progress in West Bromwich and how to promote that further.	PMO	Complete
21.02.23	16.05.23	Agenda item for the next board meeting for Town Hall Quarter project lead to provide a more detailed update.	Rina / Maaria	Complete
21.02.23	16.05.23	PMO to extend future meetings to 2 hours.	PMO	Complete
21.02.23	16.05.23	PMO to circulate forward plans to members.	PMO	Completed – uploaded on Mod.gov
22.11.22	21.02.23	PMO to invite Town Hall Quarter and Retail Diversification Programme project leads to the next board meeting in February 2022.	Rina/ Emma	Complete
22.11.22	21.02.23	Programme Management Office and West Bromwich BID to organise a site visit to West Bromwich Town Centre to see the Urban Greening Phase 1 works.	Rina/ Emma/ Lisa Hill	Complete
18.07.22	22.11.22	Board Members to consider organisations who may be interested in joining the Town Deal Board where vacancies are identified.	All Board Members	Complete
18.07.22	22.11.22	Programme Management Office to approach organisations with low/ no attendance to see if they wish to continue their involvement	PMO	Complete
18.07.22	22.11.22	Terms of Reference to be updated to include 50% attendance annually is mandatory and would trigger individual board member review.	PMO	Complete
18.07.22	22.11.22	Programme Management Office to circulate Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interest forms to board members.	PMO	Complete
18.07.22	22.11.22	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	Complete
18.07.22	22.11.22	Programme Management Office to circulate short survey to capture board member preference on board meeting day/ time.	PMO	Complete