

Minutes of West Bromwich Town Deal Board

Monday, 19 February 2024 at 11.00 am
This meeting is held online.

Present: C Hinson (Chair), J Thompson (Vice-Chair), Cllr K Akpoteni, Cllr K Millar, Cllr P Hughes, Cllr S Harwell, D Howe, K Harris, L Hill, S Griffiths and S Howells.

Also present: A Oxley, C Burke, H Cashmore, J Langford, J Singh, L Dove, M Farid, M Wragg, R Rahim, S Chapman and T Stokes.

31 Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. The meeting was recorded as quorate.

32 Apologies

Apologies were received by the following board members: -

- Glynis Tomlinson – West Midlands Police
- Leona Bird – SCVO
- Laura Rollins – SMBC Cabinet Member
- Nicola Richards – MP West Bromwich East Constituency

33 Minutes and Action Log

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2023 were approved as a correct record. Please see attached West Bromwich Town Deal Board Action Log for updates.

34 Declarations of Interest

None Declarations of Interests were forthcoming.



35 Governance

Board Membership

As per the Terms of Reference, it is a requirement to review Town Deal Board membership annually. A number of members have been highlighted as having less than 50% attendance and were contacted to determine whether they would like to remain as a board member or if they wish to send an alternative representative.

A summary of responses was shared with those in attendance. As a result of the summary of responses, the Chair confirmed the removal of representatives from SIPS and asked the Programme Management Team to liaise with Sandwell Leisure Trust to confirm their representative for the Town Deal Board.

Action: Programme Management Office to contact Sandwell Leisure Trust (MW) to confirm details of their representative.

Scrutiny

Project Reports are presented to Sandwell Councils Scrutiny on a quarterly basis. At the recent Scrutiny meeting held on 8 February 2024, information was shared regarding Towns Fund project progress, high rag rated risks and budget pressures. In addition, detail of what action is in place to mitigate risks and what work has been undertaken to seek alternative funding where required.

36 Project Reporting

Town Hall Quarter

An updated was presented by the project lead. Since the last Board meeting, the stage 4 costing has been completed and a contractor has been appointed to complete the restoration works. They have been on-site since November 2023 and have a target completion date of 28 November 2024. Some works have been omitted and added to ensure the project remains in budget and as per timescale delivery plan. The new front entrance ramp has been omitted, but there still ground level access at the rear. If funds allow, this can be re-introduced at a later stage.

The asbestos on the chimney was queried by a member. The project lead confirmed it is being managed by the contractors. They are awaiting feasibility surveys to determine the extent of the asbestos. The project lead advised they would provide an update at the next board.

It was also asked if there are any tenants in situ whilst works are ongoing. It was confirmed there are tenants in the building and they have been

accommodated. Additionally, there are no extra tenants lined up, but future plans will welcome any new tenants once the music venue/ hub is operational.

A board member requested further information about the future usage of the Town Hall once the works are completed. The project team advised they would collate the information and feedback to board members.

Action: Information on the extent of asbestos found at the Town Hall to be shared with Board Members.

Action: Information on the future use of the Town Hall to be shared with Board Members.

Retail Diversification Project

Indoor Market

At the last Board meeting, members were informed the council terminated the contract with the chosen contractor. Since then, a revised stage 4 cost plan was undertaken in November 2023. This revised cost plan will form the basis of a re-tendering exercise. The revised cost plan has come back within budget. A design team was procured in December 2023 and have been scrutinising design engineering. Members were assured redesign wasn't with the fundamental design but more so interior i.e. door position, internal logistics etc.. The technical drawings are being revised as the existing cost plan cannot be presented to the market for the tendering exercise.

The project team are currently looking to present a report at the March Cabinet meeting to ratify the additional funding required. Subject to approval, the project would go out to tender in March/ April 2024, a contractor to be appointed in June 2024, be on-site in July 2024 and complete during Q1 2025.

Market traders have been liaised with and they have been understanding of the decisions taken.

Concerns were raised by Board Members regarding the contractor that was chosen to not proceed with Indoor Market works, as they are the lead contractor on other Towns Fund Projects. The project lead commented that as a contractor they have a good track record of delivering projects across the Midlands and the Country, and don't have the same concerns for other projects. It was also added that every project is taken on its own merit.

Acquisitions

A discussion took place regarding the acquisition of sites and the timeframes/ impacts around this. Some of the changes discussed may require DLUCH approval. Further work is required with valuations of sites prior to progressing.

Updates will be provided at the next meeting.

A member expressed concerns around disruption with businesses and BID. The project lead commented that there will be short-term disruption, but the longer-term aspiration is to re-develop these sites commercially as well as residential.

The chair reminded members that the board can discuss impact happening to BID as a result, but not about finances of the BID itself.

The chair queried with the project lead about timescale/ cut off point about descopeing. The project lead confirmed this was presented to the Council's Regeneration Programme Board. It is currently at the options appraisal stage and does not require decision from this board yet but will at a future stage.

Demolitions

A planning application has been submitted for the demolition of the former Wilkos site which is due to be determined at the end of March. The project lead confirmed they are looking to get access for pre-demo surveys in next couple of weeks.

The chair added the acquisition of the former Wilkos site and opening that part of the town to metro far outweighs the impact to the traders.

The Chair thanked both project leads for their contributions and updates.

Project Reporting Update

R Rahim provided an update on the project progress and monitoring information for the period of October 2023 – December 2023.

Digital Den

Digital Den is a completed project and is now reporting on outputs and outcomes. Monitoring information was shared with Board Members.

Central St Michaels Sandwell Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Centre

This is a completed project which has been operational since September 2023. An opening ceremony has been arranged for March.

Board members received an update against progress, risks, outputs and outcomes. The project lead commented it's more appropriate to report on outputs on an annual basis as learners and staff are recruited throughout the year. The stage 2 plan for the rear of the centre, which will be going to board in March so more development is expected in the next 12 months. Both students and teachers are happy with the building.

Urban Greening

This project is a low-risk project which is ahead of schedule. The majority of the capital programme works has completed. They are now concentrating on delivering the Cultural Programme Plan (will be recirculated to members). There is a small part of capital remaining which has been pushed forward to the next financial year. This aims to cover any items or expenditure which will arise for maintaining. The revenue element has been reprofiled to the end of the programme. The chair expressed it would be good to have some footfall figures as there has been an increase in footfall.

Town Hall Quarter

This project is ongoing-delayed. This is primarily because delivery and spend is behind schedule. They are expecting spend to escalate now that they're onsite. Looking to obtain sub-contractor details for social value and local spend.

Retail Diversification Programme

This project is ongoing-delayed. Slippage has pushed funding to future years. Current progress has already been mentioned by the project lead. The milestones have been updated and finances have also been reprofiled.

West Bromwich Connected

This project is progressing well, although there is some delay to Phase 3 due to objections from the public consultation. This will be going to cabinet at the end of February 24 and subject to sign off, will start in March 2024 and complete August 2024. The remaining schemes will start Springtime.

Action: PMO to circulate Urban Greening Cultural Programme Plan to Board Members.

Town Level Summary

There will be £2.2m drawdown from Towns Fund by end of the current financial year. A large amount of spend has been forecasted for the next financial year. The next financial year is a key year to ensure we have spend progressing. Following that there is 1 year left before the end of the programme.

There is 4% slippage for West Bromwich which is within the 40% slippage threshold. As part of the accountable body reporting process, we have to carry forward the variance and report reasons as to why. Deliverables are on target to spend and achieve outcomes. These will be updated should projects revise their target delivery outputs.

Spend summary will be updated further at the next board meeting. The Social Value team are working with Project Leads and Contractors to attain info on

local spend. Red risks have been reported to DLUHC as previously mentioned.

The Chair thanked R Rahim for her contribution and updates.

37 Forward Plans

The Press Release and Media Forward Plan was shared with Board Members as part of the agenda pack. This included: -

- Upcoming ceremony for Central St Michaels Sandwell Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Centre in March.
- There are workshops planned by Multistory as part of the Cultural Programme for Urban Greening.

The following Press releases will be planned for the following milestones: -

- Acquisition of the former Wilko site once confirmed
- Town Hall Quarter in mid-year on current progress

Board Members were reminded to contact the Programme Management Office if they have any questions/ queries or if they'd like to have a site visit arranged.

38 Any other Business

None were forthcoming.

39 Closing Remarks

Chair thanked all and closed the meeting at 12:25.

40 Action Log - West Bromwich Town Deal Board

Contact: town_deal@sandwell.gov.uk

West Bromwich Town Deal Board Action Log

Open Actions

Date	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
19.02.24	Programme Management Office to contact Sandwell Leisure Trust (MW) to confirm details of their representative.	RR/MF	
19.02.24	Information on the extent of asbestos found at the Town Hall to be shared with Board Members.	L Dove	
19.02.24	Information on the future use of the Town Hall to be shared with Board Members.	L Dove	
19.02.24	PMO to circulate Urban Greening Cultural Programme Plan to Board Members.	RR/MF	
29.08.23	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
09.11.23	19.02.24	PMO to circulate Herald Publication to Board Members	PMO	Completed
09.11.23	19.02.24	PMO to circulate updated programme plan.	PMO	Completed
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

Closed Actions

Date Opened	Date Closed	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
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	PMO	Complete

Closed Actions

Date Opened	Date Closed	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
		Declaration of Interest forms to board members.		
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

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