

# Minutes of Smethwick Town Deal Board

**Wednesday, 15 November 2023 at 9.00 am  
at This meeting will be held online.**

**Present:** A Taylor (Chair), J Thompson (Vice-Chair), A Lewis MP, Cllr C Padda, Cllr J Uddin, Cllr P Hughes, D Holden, J Singh and L Bird.

**Also present:** A Bell, E Parkes, H Insley, J Langford, M Farid, M Wragg, R Rahim, T Lloyd and T McGovern.

## **1 Welcome and Opening Remarks**

The Chair welcomed board members to the meeting and outlined the agenda items for discussion. The meeting was quorate.

## **2 Apologies**

Apologies were received from the following board members: -

- Cllr F Shaeen
- J Wood
- S Shingadia
- G Brown
- M Wildman

## **3 Minutes from the last Local Board and Action Log**

Minutes of the last board

Board members agreed minutes of the meeting held on 7 Sept 2023 were a correct record.

Action Log

Updates recorded on the attached Action Log.



## **4** 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 and reminded members that they can contact the PMO at any time to raise comments, queries and seek clarification on discussions.

## **5** Project Reporting

The Chair invited project leads for three of the five projects to provide a detailed update for board members. A summary of the discussion includes: -

### Rolfe Street Canalside Regeneration Project

Project Lead provided an update. An update regarding site activities was provided and costs incurred to date. A demolition contractor has been appointed from an existing framework. A Planning application was submitted end of October and is currently out for Consultation. Planning determination is due at the end of the year. Demolitions are expected to take 5-6 months.

### Grove Lane Regeneration

Project Lead provided an update. CPO is currently being pursued. An update on timescales was provided and confirmation that a planning application to support the CPO would be submitted at the end of this month.

### Midland Met Learning Campus

Project Lead provided an update. Planning permission was granted on 25 October 2023. Procurement has been concluded for a Contractor which will be publicly announced in the coming weeks. Approval has been received from the NHS Trust Board for a number of items relating to procurement activities and lease/ partnership agreements.

Training providers for the new learning campus include Sandwell College, Aston University and University of Wolverhampton. Other potential partners are also being explored.

Concerns were raised regarding any potential damages and defects to the building and who would be hold responsibility. It was confirmed the Contractor would hold responsibility for anything up to 10-15 years.

### **Project Update – Reporting Period July – September 2023**

Board members received Item 5 - Smethwick Town Deal Board Reporting July – Sept 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: -

### Ron Davis Centre

Delays have occurred regarding delivery and installation of IT equipment. Despite this, learners are welcomed to the centre in the new classrooms to undertake skill sessions that

do not require IT. Most of the funding has been spent and small underspend has been allocated for retention. This will be used by the end of the financial year.

#### Rolfe Street Canalside Regeneration

Funding has been pushed back to future years to reflect the updated delivery programme. A planning application has been submitted with determination expected by end of December. Demolition contractor has been appointed from an existing framework. Once contractors are onsite, they will proceed with light works e.g. removal of small elements. Once planning determination is announced, demolition of assets will commence, subject to decision.

#### Grove Lane Regeneration

Funding has been pushed back to future years due to CPO approach. As a result, this project has been RAG rated High Risk.

#### Midland Met Learning Campus

Funding has been pushed back to future years to reflect the updated delivery programme. Despite planning permission being granted and appointment of contractor, the delivery programme has been pushed back to start on-site once determination of co-funding is known. Once co-funding from WMCA is announced/ secured, a final cost plan will be developed and on-site works are expected in January 2024.

#### Smethwick Connected

This project is ahead of schedule. Phase 4 works are expected to begin later this month as consultations have now closed. Phase 5 has been brought forward from 2024/25 and near completion. Footfall counters will be monitored over the next financial year.

## **6 Forward Plans**

Board members received an updated Forward Plan for News and Media. Key things to note included: -

- An Awards Ceremony for learners at the Ron Davis Centre is planned for Friday 17 November. Board members were informed limited tickets were remaining and members should contact the PMO should they wish to secure an invite.
- A news article would be published in due course to promote the success of planning determination and appointment of contractor for the MMLC.

## **7 Any other Business**

#### Local Plan for Smethwick

Government announced a long-term plan for towns on 23 October 2023, of which Smethwick Town has been selected for £20m investment over a 10-year period from financial years 24/25 - 34/35. It comprises of a 25% resource/ revenue and 75% capital. A brief summary of the published prospectus was presented to Board Members and included: -

The funding will be governed by 3 themes: -

1. Safety and Security of High Streets
2. Heritage and Regeneration

### 3. Transport and Connectivity

There are requirements for Towns to secure funding. This includes: -

- Long-term investment/ Regeneration Plan to be developed (Similar to Town Investment Plans that Towns Fund Programme developed)
- Establishment of a Town Board for Smethwick. Government has noted if a Town Deal Board already exists through Towns Fund, then this should be adopted for the Long-Term Plan Programme

The Government have also established a Towns Taskforce to assist Town Boards in terms of delivery.

**Action: PMO to forward Government prospectus to Board Members.**

The Chair queried which other local towns have been granted this funding. It was confirmed Darlaston, Dudley and Bilston.

A concern was raised regarding the funding allocation, that £20m over a 10-year period isn't a huge amount. It was highlighted the revenue will go towards investment in CCTV, safety, community projects etc. and engagement with local communities would take place to seek what community level projects are desired.

Board Members were asked for their view on the proposal for the Town Deal Board to be utilised for the Long Term Plan Programme. This would result in the board being reviewed to ensure membership is sufficient for both programmes.

Board members agreed to this approach. The Chair agreed that Board Membership would need to be reviewed.

A comment was raised regarding input of Sandwell Business Ambassadors and that their membership on both boards would be grateful. The Chair agreed to explore this.

## **8 Closing Remarks**

The Chair thanked board members for their attendance and contributions to the meeting.

Meeting closed at 10:37.

## **9 Smethwick Town Deal Board Action Log**

Meeting ended at 10.37 am

Contact: [town\\_deal@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:town_deal@sandwell.gov.uk)

## Smethwick Town Deal Board Action Log

### Open Actions

Date	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
15.11.23	PMO to forward Government Prospectus to Board Members	PMO	
07.09.23	Programme Management Office to look into Birmingham's Active Travel (cycle) delivery plans that link to the new Hospital and timescales and report this back to the board.	R Rahim	Ongoing

### Closed Actions

Date Raised	Date Closed	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
7.9.23	15.11.23	Programme Management Office to collate original FBC costs and costs to date for Midland Met Learning Campus design works and share this with board members.	R Rahim	Complete
7.9.23	15.11.23	Councillor Hughes to email key contacts and board members to seek interest and support for an active travel campaign, to promote the Smethwick Connected project.	Cllr P Hughes	Completed – Cllr Hughes emailed Active Travel team with elected members now attending the working group
28.2.23	15.11.23	PMO to circulate baseline footfall data for Smethwick Connected	PMO	Complete.
23.5.23	07.09.23	PMO to add forward planning of the next meeting to the end of the Agenda so it can be decided who is to be invited for the next meeting.	PMO	Completed – on Agenda for 7 September 2022 and ongoing
23.5.23	07.09.23	Introduce A Ali to Ron Davis Centre Project Lead.	PMO	Completed
23.5.23	07.09.23	PMO to confirm whether Smethwick Connected Phase 2 formal completion of works or whether it is to be moved to align with the milestones.	PMO/Rina Rahim	Completed – milestone changed to formal completion June 2023
23.5.23	07.09.23	PMO to organise a site visit for Smethwick Connected.	PMO	Completed – undertaken on 11 <sup>th</sup> August
23.5.23	07.09.23	PMO to share concerns/comments with Project Manager for Smethwick Connected.	PMO/Rina Rahim	Completed – updated Project Lead with concerns

## Closed Actions

Date Raised	Date Closed	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
28.2.23	23.5.23	MMLC to provide further information pertaining to costs to board members.	Project Lead – Austin Bell via PMO	Circulated to Board Members.
28.2.23	23.5.23	PMO to look at assurance and come forward with a proposal regarding lowering threshold for board approval.	Rina Rahim	Update provided at Board Meeting 23.5.23
28.2.23	23.5.23	PMO to approach WMCA for Board representative.	Rina Rahim/ Maaria Farid	WMCA will attend Board as when required. Forward planning to be picked up at the end of each meeting to decide who is to be invited at the next meeting.
29.11.22	23.5.23	PMO to request detailed activities against spend for the Midland Met Learning Campus project and report back to Town Deal Board members.	Rina Rahim/ Maaria Farid	Update provided at Board meeting 23.5.23.
29.11.22	28.2.23	PMO to feedback concerns regarding the absence of director/ executive officers and ensure at least one executive officer is in attendance at future meetings.	Rina Rahim/ Emma Parkes	Raised concern to director/executive officers
29.11.22	28.2.23	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.	Cllr P Hughes	Updated provided at Board meeting 28.2.23
29.11.22	28.2.23	PMO to request detailed activities against spend for the Midland Met Learning Campus project and report back to Town Deal Board members.	Rina Rahim/ Emma Parkes	Response emailed separately. Project update to be provided at Board meeting.
29.11.22	28.2.23	PMO to invite Midland Met Learning Campus project lead to attend the next Town Deal Board meeting.	Emma Parkes	Completed
29.11.22	28.2.23	PMO to update future meeting appointments to a duration of two hours.	Emma Parkes	Completed
28.06.22	29.11.22	PMO to contact board members to confirm their interest to continue as a board member.	R Rahim/ E Parkes	Complete
28.06.22	29.11.22	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
28.06.22	29.11.22	PMO to circulate short survey to capture board member preference on board meeting day/ time.	R Rahim/ E Parkes	Complete