

West Bromwich Town Deal Local Board Meeting Notes

Details: Tuesday 15 February 2022 | 15:00 | Microsoft Teams Meeting

Local Board Member/ Representative Attendees:

Chris Hinson – Sandwell Business Ambassador (Chair)
Danielle Hawthorne – Young Persons Representative
Simon Griffiths – Sandwell College
Jane Bailey – Sandwell College

Roland Barret-Price – Sandwell College
Lisa Hill – West Bromwich BID
Shane Ward – West Bromwich African Caribbean Centre
Wendy Brookfield – Greets Green Community Enterprise

Superboard Members and SMBC Cabinet Members Attendees:

Jude Thompson, Chair of Sandwell Superboard
MP Nicola Richards – Sandwell Superboard Member

Councillor Jackie Taylor

Attending in Support:

Alex Oxley - SMBC Retail Diversification Programme
Project Lead
Andy Miller – SMBC Walking and Cycling Project Lead
Emma Parkes – Towns Fund PMO
Jane Lillystone - SMBC Neighbourhoods/ Town Hall
Quarter Project Lead
Joshua Singh - SMBC Regeneration

Jenna Langford – SMBC Regeneration Manager
Kelly Thomas - SMBC Employment Strategy and Partnership
Mark Evans – SMBC Town Hall Quarter Project Representative
Santokh Singh – SMBC Neighbourhoods
Rina Rahim, Towns Fund Programme Manager

Apologies Received:

Leona Bird – SCVO
Luke Tyler – YMCA

Tony McGovern – SMBC Director of Regeneration and Growth
Tariq Karim – SMBC Youth Service
Rob Lake - Albion Foundation

Absent:

Andrew Bent – The GAP Centre
Andrew Lawley - Sandwell & West Birmingham CCG
Chris Hilton – SMBC Land and Asset Management
Emma Chetcuti (CEO) – Multistory

Monica Shafaq (CEO) – Kaleidoscope Councillor Steve Melia –
SMBC Town Lead Member
Councillor Kacey Akpoteni – SMBC Deputy Town Lead Member
Councillor Elizabeth Giles – SMBC Deputy Town Lead Member

Where the meeting notes make reference to commercially sensitive material this will be indicated next to the agenda item. A version of the minutes with commercially sensitive content redacted can be made available.

Ref.	Description	Officer to Action
1.0	Welcome and Opening Remarks The Chair will welcome attendees to the meeting and make opening remarks.	Chris Hinson
1.1	The chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and outlined the agenda items for discussion, of which focused on receiving and agreeing Full Business Cases for Town Hall Quarter Project, Retail Diversification Programme and West Bromwich Connected.	

Ref.	Description	Officer to Action
1.2	The Chair introduced Rina Rahim, Towns Fund Programme Manager. Rina was appointed in October 2021 and started employment on 31 January 2022. Rina will manage the programme through Phase 3 - Delivery.	
2.0	<p>Declarations of Interests The Chair will ask Local Board members for declarations of interests.</p>	Chris Hinson
2.1	<p><u>Declarations of Interests</u> No declarations of interest were raised.</p>	
2.3	The Chair asked local board members to raise any declarations of interests during discussions should they need to.	
3.0	<p>Minutes and Action Log To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2022 as a correct record and to review outstanding actions recorded on the action log.</p>	Chris Hinson
3.1	<p><u>Minutes of the previous meeting held 18 January 2022</u> Local Board Members agreed minutes are of an accurate record.</p>	
3.2	<p><u>Action Log</u> Updates recorded on the attached action log.</p>	
4.0	<p>Town Hall Quarter Full Business Case To receive final draft of the Full Business Case Documentation. Local Board to make any final input / comment and make recommendation to Superboard to agree FBC.</p>	Jane Lillystone/ Mark Evans
4.1	The Town Hall Quarter Full Business Case and supporting documentation were circulated prior to the meeting. A high-level summary of the Full Business Case was presented to Local Board Members. The key points included: -	
4.2	Throughout January and February 2022, the Full Business Case was amended to clearly demonstrate the Towns Fund grant would invest in Phase 1 - Renovation and Restoration of the Town Hall and Central Library and that Phases 2 and 3 (Demolition of out-buildings and extension) would be subject to Cabinet approval and identification of match funding.	
4.3	The project unlocks the potential for the Town Hall and Central Library to become a community hub, providing opportunity for shared service delivery and multi-agency partnership working whilst increasing the cultural arts offer.	
4.4	The project aligns to the wider regeneration of West Bromwich High Street and West Bromwich Masterplan, including an initial Cultural Action Zone (CAZ).	
4.5	Images were presented to Local Board Members to show the existing deterioration and decay of the Town Hall and Central Library, including photos of the works currently underway on the Town Hall Bell Tower.	
4.6	The Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) calculation for this project is 1.7 - 2.66. The project offers an acceptable level of value for money with an 'acceptable' BCR score of 1.7 when considered in isolation of future phases. A higher BCR of 2.66 is estimated where Phase 1 is considered alongside planned future delivery of phases 2 and 3.	

Ref.	Description	Officer to Action
4.7	Project risks have been identified are being proactively managed through regular risk review and escalation. The key risks were outlined to Local Board Members.	
4.8	The total project value is £7.558m consisting £6.93m Towns Fund and £0.628m match funding.	
4.9	The project is managed by Sandwell Council and a project board and workstreams have been established to deliver and monitor the project.	
4.10	<p>Consultation (online, face to face, workshops) have demonstrated clear demand for the project. Consultation with tenants currently located within Town Hall and Elected Members continue.</p> <p>Discussions have been held with Think Local (Sandwell Council Service) regarding social value to identify opportunities such as apprenticeships, local economy and labour opportunities.</p>	
4.11	An initial funding plan has been completed that seeks opportunities for future funding for phases 2 and 3, both of which are subject to Cabinet approval. Should approval be sought, further discussions would take place with external funders.	
4.12	Local Board Members were asked to provide comments and raise queries. The discussion included: -	
4.13	A comment was made regarding the project scale and that restoration and refurbishment of the Town Hall and Central Library is at a large scale but desperately needed.	
4.14	A question was asked if there would be contingency funding available for the maintenance of buildings once works are completed. Local Board Members were advised an assessment has been conducted as part of the Economic Case for the consideration of the Full Business Case. Currently, both buildings are maintained by SMBC Property Maintenance budget that covers statutory requirements and reactive repairs. It was suggested the works completed via Towns Fund would result in a lot of the needed maintenance requirements to reduce significantly.	
4.15	Discussions were held to explore the possibility of a sinking fund for both Town Hall and Central Library. Further discussions would be required during construction phase. Thoughts have also been considered around Heritage Trust opportunities.	
4.16	It is hoped the Towns Fund investment would enable the opportunity to generate more income via room hire, events, etc. throughout both day and evening, to sustain the buildings and improve the night time economy within West Bromwich.	
4.17	Another Local Board Member enforced the need to ensure maintenance budgets are available.	
4.18	A question was asked regarding the building located next to the Town Hall (Court Area) and if there were plans for this. Local Board Members were advised this building is not within Towns Fund Scope however is within the Town Hall Quarter allocation via West Bromwich Masterplan, therefore regeneration of this area would be picked up via business as usual by Regeneration and Growth.	
4.19	Agreed. Town Hall Quarter Full Business Case agreed and recommended to Superboard for agreement.	

Ref.	Description	Officer to Action
5.0	<p>Retail Diversification Programme Full Business Case To receive final draft of the Full Business Case Documentation. Local Board to make any final input / comment and make recommendation to Superboard to agree FBC.</p>	Alex Oxley
5.1	<p>The Retail Diversification Programme Full Business Case and supporting documentation were circulated prior to the meeting. A high-level summary of the Full Business Case was presented to Local Board Members. The key points included: -</p>	
5.2	<p>The project will deliver comprehensive regeneration and transformation of the West Bromwich retail submarket through major site assembly and demolition works. A map of the project area/ selected sites were shared with Local Board Members.</p>	
5.3	<p>The project aims to diversify floor space and has a focus on food, beverage and leisure to encourage public into the town centre and make West Bromwich a better place to live, work and visit. The project scope also includes the relocation and renovation of a new indoor market, as requested by current market traders.</p>	
5.4	<p>The Full Business Case relies heavily on the strategic case as the Towns Fund investment will unlock the transformation change for West Bromwich. Whilst a number of outputs and outcomes associated to this project have been identified, they have been organised into direct and indirect benefits. Details of the outputs and outcomes were shared with Local Board Members.</p>	
5.5	<p>Consultation feedback was shared with Local Board Members and has demonstrated clear demand for the investment by residents and businesses.</p>	
5.6	<p>The Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) calculation for this project is 1.05. Whilst this calculation is acceptable for Full Business Case development, it suggests the project does not offer good value for money. This is due to the project being high value (£) with the least amount of direct benefits. However, when indirect outputs are delivered the BCR calculation would increase.</p>	
5.7	<p>Project risks have been identified are being proactively managed through regular risk review and escalation. The key risks were outlined to Local Board Members.</p>	
5.8	<p>An update was provided to Local Board Members regarding negotiations.</p>	
5.9	<p>An outline project plan was presented to Local Board Members, however is dependent on negotiations and funding received by DLUHC.</p>	
5.10	<p>The total project value is £13m consisting 100% Towns Fund. A grant of £1.3 million under a JV Agreement with WMCA was originally included in the project to demolish and remediate a significant SMBC site, the Bull Street Multi-storey car park situated at a key position within the town. This co-funding was spent as planned. However, in refining the scope of the Retail Diversification Programme, the car park was removed from the red-line boundary area. While the scheme is still highly complementary, it was determined to remove the co-funding from the Retail Diversification Programme for caution.</p>	
5.11	<p>Since the circulation of the Full Business Case, further legal costs were identified that were not previously considered. To ensure project costs are within the Towns Fund Ask, the project team have reviewed costs associated to the new indoor market. Originally, the costs included a proposal to install a full wet market,</p>	

Ref.	Description	Officer to Action
5.12	<p>however upon reflection this is not necessary, therefore funds have been transferred to cover identified legal costs.</p> <p>Procurement for this project will be phased, using existing frameworks for demolition and open tender for new indoor market works. A social value and employment skills plan has been completed which will inform targets to be included as part of contract evaluation.</p>	
5.13	<p>Local Board Members were asked to provide comments and raise queries. The discussion included: -</p>	
5.14	<p>Clarification was sought that the indoor market would still relocate to the old Argos site on the High Street and if works would be completed by 2022. Local Board Members were informed the location is correct, however timescales are more likely to be end of 2023/ early 2024. Should Government approve the project, procurement for works would commence 2022.</p>	
5.15	<p>The Chair commented on the scale of this project and understood it has several challenges and key elements that are dependent on negotiations. The Chair thanked the project lead for their hard work to date.</p>	
5.16	<p>Agreed. Retail Diversification Programme Full Business Case agreed and recommended to Superboard for agreement.</p>	
6.0	<p>West Bromwich Connected Full Business Case To receive final draft of the Full Business Case Documentation. Local Board to make any final input / comment and make recommendation to Superboard to agree FBC.</p>	<p>Andy Miller</p>
6.1	<p>The West Bromwich Connected Full Business Case and supporting documentation were circulated prior to the meeting. A high-level summary of the Full Business Case was presented to Local Board Members. The key points included: -</p>	
6.2	<p>West Bromwich is a strategic centre for Sandwell with good connectivity between Sandwell towns, however does not accommodate short distance connectivity.</p>	
6.3	<p>The project aims to encourage a greater proportion of trips to be undertaken by non-car modes and achieve an uplift in the number of people using active travel modes within West Bromwich but also the wider borough and region to assist in reducing congestion, poor air quality, and other health inequalities.</p>	
6.4	<p>The Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) calculation for this project is 2.41, meaning this scheme offers high value for money. The calculation was conducted using AMAT Tool.</p>	
6.5	<p>Project risks have been identified are being proactively managed through regular risk review and escalation. The key risks were outlined to Local Board Members.</p>	
6.6	<p>The total project value is £1.51m consisting 100% Towns Fund. Maintenance of the project will be funded via the existing Highways Revenue Budget.</p>	
6.7	<p>Procurement will proceed via existing frameworks. Each phase of the project is due to be procured separately.</p>	

Ref.	Description	Officer to Action
6.8	Local Board Members were asked to provide comments and raise queries. No comments were forthcoming.	
6.9	Agreed. West Bromwich Connected Full Business Case agreed and recommended to Superboard for agreement.	
7.0	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>7.1 <u>Digital Den Project Update</u> Local Board Members were informed DLUHC confirmed funding for the Digital Den project would be released for this project late February 2022.</p> <p>7.2 Project Lead, Wendy Brookfield confirmed delivery would begin immediately to try and achieve spend by this financial year. Wendy advised funding was expected to be received in December 2021, therefore recommend larger projects should be mindful in regard to delivery timescales should funding be released later by DLUHC.</p> <p>7.3 <u>West Bromwich Connected</u> Project Lead, Andy Miller thanked Local Board Members for their patience as project information was brought to the board at a later date compared to other projects. The Chair acknowledged the resource issues within the project team and thanked Andy and the project team for working hard to finalise the Full Business Case within timescales.</p> <p>7.4 <u>Closing Remarks</u> The chair thanked all Local Board Members, project leads, and officers supporting the programme for their hard work to develop and shape Full Business Cases for all six projects.</p> <p>7.5 The Chair reflected on the progress made since March 2021 and summarised the successful journey, emphasising how the Town Fund projects will benefit Sandwell and West Bromwich.</p>	All
8.0	<p>Date of next meeting To be arranged.</p> <p>8.1 The Chair confirmed all Full Business Cases have been presented to Local Board, therefore subject to Superboard Agreement and Assurance Panel sign off for the remaining projects, project summary documents would be prepared and submitted to DLUHC.</p> <p>8.2 Local Board Members were informed the PMO are unaware when a response would be received from DLUHC. As a result, the Chair confirmed an update would be circulated to Local Board Members via email confirming the submissions to DLUHC and Local Board meetings would be diarised once a response has been received from DLUHC.</p>	Information Only