

Minutes of West Bromwich Town Deal Board

Tuesday, 22 November 2022 at 1.00 pm
This meeting is held online.

Present: C Hinson (Chair)
J Thompson (Vice-Chair), Cllr P Hughes, Cllr K Millar, Cllr R
Randhawa, Cllr S Melia, D Howe, L Bird, L Hill, M Wildman,
S Howells and S Shingadia

Also present: A Oxley, E Parkes, J Singh, M Farid, R Rahim

11 Welcome and Opening Remarks

The chair welcomed board members to the meeting before outlining the agenda items for discussion. The chair provided rationale as to why the board meeting was extended by 30 minutes, to ensure sufficient time for discussion on the monitoring and evaluation returns prior to the submission to Government.

12 Apologies

Apologies were received from the following board members: -

- Cllr Suzanne Hartwell - Cabinet Member
- Cllr Laura Rollins - Cabinet Member
- Emma Chetcuti - Multistory
- Tanya Durham - SIPS
- Wendy Brookfield - GGCE
- Tony McGovern - SMBC Director of Regeneration and Growth



13 Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the last board

Board members agreed minutes of the Local Board meeting held on 18 July 2022 were a correct record.

Action Log

Updates recorded on the attached Action Log.

14 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.

15 Governance Arrangements

At the previous board meeting, board members discussed the Terms of Reference and Board Membership and provided feedback for the Programme Management Office to action. Board members received Items 5a - Terms of Reference and 5b - West Bromwich Town Deal Board Membership prior to the meeting.

Terms of Reference - Updates

- 4.2 – Updated process for elected members expressing interest to join the Town Deal Board
- 4.3 – Highlighting the Town Lead Member is responsible for feedback back into Ward Member meetings
- 10.4 – Board Membership would be feedback to Cabinet/ Council to ensure membership aligns with annual appointments
- 10.5 - The expectation of board members attending at least 50% of meetings per annum.

West Bromwich Town Deal Board Membership

The chair welcomed new board members to the meeting and asked them to make introductions: -

- Councillor Pam Randhawa, Greets Green and Lyng Ward Member
- Councillor Kay Millar, Hatley Heath Ward Member
- Deska Howe, West Bromwich African Caribbean Centre representative
- Mark Wildman, Sandwell Leisure Trust representative

Board members were informed since publishing meeting papers, an expression of interest has been received from a representative of Barnardo's. They will be invited to attend future meetings.

There is a vacancy for a young person representative. Unfortunately, no appointments have been made to date with support from Sandwell Council's SHAPE Youth Forum and Sandwell College due to clashes with school lessons and college lectures. Board members were asked to put forward ideas on organisations to approach to secure young person representative.

The final vacancy is for WMCA/ LEP representative. A representative has been identified for the Smethwick Town Deal Board and the Programme Management Office are currently awaiting a representative for West Bromwich and Rowley Regis.

16 Social Value and Local Spend

At the previous board meeting, a discussion took place around Social Value and Local Spend and how the Towns Fund Programme is incorporating this.

The Programme Management Office reviewed Sandwell Council's definition of Local Spend and adapted the definition for the Towns Fund Programme so that board members have a clear understanding on how procurement and social value will be reported.

Board members received Item 6a - Draft proposal Social Value and Local Spend V2 prior to the board meeting. The document details guidance for projects on what Local Spend is, how it fits with the Social Value act, how the project leads are expected to support this and the proposal for the Towns Fund Programme.

Sandwell Council's Social Value/ Local Spend is reported by West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) areas. The report lists all local authority areas included.

The proposal put forward for the Towns Fund Programme is to have a tiered priority approach: -

- Priority 1: Sandwell
- Priority 2: Black Country and Birmingham
- Priority 3: WMCA Areas
- Priority 4: National

The report also includes questions project leads should consider when undertaking procurement activities (Annex B) to encourage local spend.

Board members were asked if they wish to raise any comments or questions. The discussion included: -

A board member commented this is a really helpful framework in terms of taking forward Social Value.

A question was raised regarding the logistics where suppliers may have consultancy support that are nationally based but have a local presence and if this would be considered as Priority 1 or 3.

Board members were informed there are many suppliers that have head officers nationally but resource is locally based. Internally, this would be classified as local spend. To date, it has been challenging to obtain these figures as the council's finance system collated data off head office post codes however, the Programme Management Office are requesting further details from project leads to capture this detail manually.

Board members were advised where project leads do not achieve local spend, project leads are asked to provide the rationale as to why. This may be due to needing specialist equipment. Where this occurs, supply chain details will be requested.

A query was raised if Priority 2: Black Country and Birmingham should be separated. A discussion took place between board members to agree the best approach and it was decided to keep these areas together, given Birmingham neighbours areas of both Sandwell and Black Country, meaning a supplier could be less than 1 mile from Smethwick projects and be in Birmingham.

A question was raised if quality assurance of social value was independently verified. Board members were informed social value and local spend is not reported back to Government but is recorded at the request of the Accountable Body and board members. Monitoring and Valuation returns are reviewed by the Programme Management Office and Finance colleagues to ensure submissions include accurate information prior to presenting to board members and submitting returns to Government.

In addition, Social Value Plans have been developed with project leads with the councils Community Benefits Coordinator at Full Business Case stage to ensure procurement activities include social value targets.

Board members were informed where procurement supplies/ services/ goods cannot be sourced locally, this can be feedback to local companies to advise there is a gap in the market.

To support this, the Programme Management Team are working with the council's Business Growth Team to organise a 'Meet the Buyers' event in February 2023. This event will invite local businesses to attend and showcase upcoming opportunities for procurement, support on how they can sign up and submit applications.

A comment was made on how this is a great way to show how the Towns Fund Programme is supporting local economy. Other board members agreed.

17 Project Reporting

Board members received Item 7a - West Bromwich Town Deal Board Reporting April - September 2022 prior to the board meeting. This appendix was shared on screen during the meeting and the following was presented: -

Town Level Reporting

- A review of funding drawn down from Government to date and the spend profile against this including rationale for both advanced spend and any slippage
- Forecasted spend for the remaining 22/23 financial year (October 2022 - March 2023) and the rationale for any slippage
- Key deliverables across all projects that had been achieved in this reporting period and those forecasted for the remaining 22/23 financial year
- Confirmation was provided that despite some spend slippage, a Government Deep Dive is not applicable as the slippage is within the 40% threshold as set out in the LUF and Towns Fund Local Authority Assurance Framework issued in September 2022.

Project Level Reporting

- A review of the overall progress including progress status (complete/ on track/ delayed) and RAG Ratings for delivery, spend, risk, resource, outputs and outcomes
- Activities undertaken within the reporting period including current challenges and challenges expected in the next 6/12 months
- Progress against key milestones
- Spend against funding drawn down profile (spend to date and forecasted) including rationale for any slippage
- Spend against match funding profile (spend to date and forecasted) including rationale for any slippage
- Top 3 project level risks
- Resource implications, if applicable
- Project specific outputs, outcomes and local measures

- Procurement activities including appointed contractor details and local spend considerations

To ensure the Accountable Body and Town Deal Boards receive reporting on a regular basis to monitor project progress, expenditure and risks, it is a requirement set by the Programme Management Office that project leads must submit Monitoring, Evaluation and Claim Returns on a quarterly basis, as a minimum. However, returns to Government are only required on a 6-monthly basis.

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

Board members agreed quarterly returns to monitor progress against projects is an excellent approach and provides opportunity to monitor changes to scope and budget forecasts at the earliest opportunity.

A comment was raised regarding how useful it was to receive detailed information on spend against funding received to date, any slippages and rationale for this. The board member then asked if there were any risks to the delivery of projects within their current funding envelopes as a result of pushing back funding to future financial years given the significant cost inflation and global supply chain pressures, particularly to construction related projects.

Board members were informed projects included a contingency within their cost plans at Full Business Case Development Stage. Where projects experience issues as a result of cost inflation and exceed their budget, they may need to review the project scope to ensure delivery is within the budget allocated. A process would be followed and board members would be consulted prior to presenting options to Government.

In response to the above query relating to the two West Bromwich Towns Fund projects that are pushing back spend from 22/23 to 23/24, the Town Hall Quarter project team recently undertook a procurement exercise to appoint a construction contractor to deliver phase 1 - Preliminary Design. This activity will assist the project team to finalise costs for the full restoration and refurbishment of the Town Hall and Central Library. As the contractor is due to commence on site in April 2022, a large amount of funding (contractor payment costs) were pushed back to 23/24.

The Retail Diversification Programme funding being pushed back to 23/24 is not related to construction but is related to acquisitions of interests, therefore material inflation is less impactful.

The project that would be affected by construction cost inflation the most, Sandwell Civil and Mechanical Engineering Centre, has identified match funding opportunities and currently awaiting a response from a funding application from DfE.

Board members were reminded the Programme Management Office meet fortnightly with Sandwell's Government Advisor, who is aware of proposed slippage and rationale as to why. No concerns have been raised to date. It was agreed for Town Hall Quarter and Retail Diversification Programme project leads to attend the next board to provide a more detailed update on progress.

A question was raised regarding photo opportunities and if this is being looked at to promote projects and their progress. Board Members were informed the Programme Management Office are working closely with Sandwell Council's Press Office and all project leads to develop a News and Media forward plan, to identify key milestones and press release/ photo opportunities.

A suggestion was put forward to organise a site visit to West Bromwich Town Centre to see the Urban Greening Phase 1 works. Board members welcomed this suggestion.

The Chair thanked the Programme Management Office for presenting the detailed progress update and thanked board members for their input.

The Chair emphasised the importance to review the detailed agenda packs prior to meetings, to ensure sufficient time for discussion during meetings.

Action: PMO to invite Town Hall Quarter and Retail Diversification Programme project leads to the next board meeting in February 2022.

Action: 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.

18 Any Other Business

Regenerating Sandwell Website

A new website called 'Regenerating Sandwell' has been developed to promote the proposed, planned and approved 66 pipeline projects totalling £1.8 billion investment. This includes the 16 Towns Fund projects across West Bromwich, Smethwick and Rowley Regis. The website will be updated regularly and members can review project progress updates.

A comment was raised regarding the success of the website and how this can celebrate the good range of projects within the Towns Fund programme but also wider Sandwell.

Councillor Peter Hughes thanked Rina Rahim for her continued hard work to help deliver the Towns Fund Programme.

The Chair extended thanks to Emma Parkes for her ongoing support since the beginning of the Towns Fund Programme in 2019 and informed board members this is her last meeting before breaking up for Maternity Leave in January 2023. Board members were informed Maaria Farid would support the Town Deal Board in Emma's absence.

19 Closing Remarks

The Chair thanked board members for their attendance and contributions to the meeting and closed the meeting at 14:30.

20 West Bromwich Town Deal Board Action Log

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

Meeting ended at 2.30 pm

Contact: town_deal@sandwell.gov.uk

West Bromwich Town Deal Board Action Log

Open Actions

Date	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
22.11.22	PMO to invite Town Hall Quarter and Retail Diversification Programme project leads to the next board meeting in February 2022.	Rina/ Emma	
22.11.22	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	

Closed Actions

Date Opened	Date Closed	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
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

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