

Minutes of West Bromwich Town Deal Board

Tuesday, 29 August 2023 at 1.00 pm
This meeting is held online.

Present: C Hinson (Chair), J Thompson (Vice-Chair), Cllr P Hughes, N Richards MP and S Shingadia

Also present: A Oxley, J Singh S Chapman and R Rahim.

11 Welcome and Opening Remarks

The chair welcomed board members to the meeting before outlining the agenda items for discussion.

12 Apologies

Apologies were received from the following board members: -

- Cllr Kacey Akpotoni – Town Lead Member
- Cllr R Randhawa – Deputy Town Lead
- Cllr S Hartwell
- Cllr L Rollins
- Cllr Kay Miller
- D Howe – West Bromwich African Caribbean Centre
- G Tomlinson – West Midlands Police
- L Bird - SCVO
- L Hill – West Bromwich BID
- M Wildman – Sandwell Leisure Trust
- S Howell – NHS Trust
- T Derham – SIPS
- W Brookfield – Greets Green Community Enterprise



Apologies were received from Sandwell Council support officers: -

- J Langford – Regeneration Manager
- K Harris – Education and Employment
- L Dove – Assistant Director for Assets and Land
- B Arnold – Interim Director of Finance

13 Minutes from the last Local Board

Minutes

Board members agreed minutes of the Local Board meeting held on 16 May 2023 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

Following the discussion at the last Town Deal Board, the Terms of Reference was updated and recirculated to board members as part of the agenda pack for the meeting. The chair confirmed the changes made to the Scheme of Delegation is now implemented.

In addition, the West Bromwich Town Deal Board Membership list was updated to reflect new members of the board.

16 Project Reporting

The Chair introduced this item by confirming the approach to discussion, which was to split this item into two sections: Change Requests and Project Progress.

Change Requests

Sandwell Civil and Mechanical Engineering Centre (Sandwell MEC) - The Programme Management Team received a request from Sandwell College to change the title of the project to 'The central St Michaels Advanced Centre for STEM Education and Training'.

The Chair confirmed this request was circulated to board members via email mid-August and no objections were received. The chair asked board members if they wish to raise any comments before accepting this change request.

A comment was raised regarding the length of the project title and that personally, the simplicity of 'Sandwell MEC' is more preferable. The board member considered the new project title may mean a lot to Sandwell College and questioned if this change is relevant and appeals to external audience or internal college staff.

The Chair agreed with the board member and commented that it's a shame Sandwell is no longer in the title, or no reference to West Bromwich.

An additional board member agreed with the opinions that the new title is lengthy and that the facility should have a short title to ensure it is memorable.

Board members were advised the change of name reflects what Sandwell College will offer at this facility as this would not solely be civil and mechanical engineering. As a result, the project title would now include STEM to include this element.

Agreed: Programme Management Office to feedback comments to Sandwell College, request Sandwell College reconsider the new project title to shorten the title and for 'Sandwell' to be included in the title and return to a future board meeting to vote on the projects title.

Action: 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.

Action: Joshua Singh to seek additional information on the curriculum offer from Sandwell College and feedback to board members.

Retail Diversification Programme - This change request was considered at an exception meeting held on Friday 11 August. All board members were invited to attend this meeting, where 7 board members attended, discussed the change request and voted to accept/ decline the change request.

The Chair confirmed that board members accepted the change request and invited project lead, Alex Oxley to provide a summary to all board members. This included:

- Overview of the projects aims and objectives; Indoor market, strategic acquisition and demolition
- A site map of the proposed acquisition plan as per the FBC
- A site map, rationale and benefits of the newly proposed acquisition plan
- Updates deliverables, outputs and outcomes

The Chair thanked Alex for presenting and for his continued hard work. The chair then asked board members to raise any questions and/ or comments.

Councillor Peter Hughes asked the note taker to record his thanks to Alex for the hard work, not only on this project but other capital projects he is responsible for. Councillor Hughes commented how well Alex is presenting and navigating himself through challenging projects and that very good solutions have been found to ensure this project is successful.

A question was raised regarding an update on the new indoor market element. Board members were informed the cost plan received in March 2023 was significantly higher than identified in Towns Fund budget. A number of enabling works are progressing to identify a final cost plan which can be expected mid-September.

Planning approval has been granted for the development. Internal works i.e. asbestos removal has completed. The next key milestone is to receive the final cost plan and formally confirm through a Cabinet report where additional funds will be met.

Agreed: Programme Management Office to submit a Project Adjustment Request to DLUHC for Retail Diversification Programme project.

Urban Greening Project Update

The Chair requested an update on the Urban Greening project before moving onto Monitoring and Evaluation updates and invited project lead, Joshua Singh to update board members.

Board members were informed Phase 2 is almost complete with contractors removing construction fencing in due course. Planting was completed and has been in place for several weeks. Seating will be installed in the upcoming weeks.

Additional outputs were assigned to the project following installation of the pocket park. This was decided by the project team; rather than tarmacking an area, to create a park green space working with Sandwell College and their foundation learning team who will in essence take on the ownership of this space, adding it to their curriculum around the design and manufacturing of items e.g. Bird box.

A small budget remains and as a result the project team will be looking at what additional deliverables can be implemented. The project has been well received and the town has seen increased footfall.

The cultural programme is in full force and Multistory is hosting an event on 28 September 2023 - meadow planting in West Bromwich's community garden (behind Primark).

The chair commented on how much this project has improved the Town Centre and how it's great to see the improvements come to life in a relatively short time.

The Chair reminded board members that the Regenerating Sandwell website that hosts updates on Towns Fund projects in addition to wider Regenerating Sandwell projects. A video has been published promoting the Urban Greening project progress for both phase 1 and phase 2.

A suggestion was raised to utilise the underspend to create green walls where there are unappealing walls in the town centre. In addition, West Bromwich BID purchase hanging baskets for the town centre and it was suggested the underspend could supplement those.

Both suggestions were noted and the project lead agreed to take these away and look into further. There may be opportunity to support local businesses too with underspend. additional deliverables would be presented to board members for agreement.

A comment was raised on how the Towns Fund projects together contributes to building a momentum of wider regeneration for the town and Sandwell.

Action: Joshua Singh to consider utilising underspend to create green walls on unappealing walls within the town centre or supplementing West Bromwich BID hanging baskets.

Project Reporting

To receive an update on project progress and monitoring information for the period of April – June 2023.

Board members received Item 6 - West Bromwich Town Deal Board Reporting April – June 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: -

A comment was raised by the Urban Greening project lead that linked back to a previous comment raised regarding to momentum, that due to publicity of Towns Funds a number of enquiries have been received from local business and organisations seeking opportunity to get involved in the project and upcoming opportunities across the borough. This then supports the social value element for Sandwell.

Board members were informed Birmingham University would be completing a piece of work around the Urban Greening project, including data collection with regards to tree health, biodiversity etc.

A suggestion was put forward to have a dedicated page for Social Value on the Regenerating Sandwell website, detailing the achievements through project delivery. Board members were informed there is work being done to capture social value achievements for Towns Fund projects, amalgamating and promoting this aspect however there is ambition to do this on a wider spectrum for wider regeneration projects across the Regeneration pipeline.

The Chair supported this suggestion and requested that colleagues supporting work around Social Value to be invited to future board meetings.

The Chair asked the Programme Management Office if tenants of West Bromwich Town Hall were aware of the project delays and if they had any concerns, or if the delays affected their businesses. Board members were informed regular tenant meetings and updates take place with the project team.

The above question was asked again for indoor market stall holders. Board members were informed regular meetings take place with market traders and updates regarding the latest programme is scheduled for September 2023.

Action: Karen and Michael to be invited to Town Deal Boards to represent Social Value.

17 Forward Plans

DLUHC Site Visit

A site visit was held with Sandwell's DLUHC Advisor and their Central Team managing the Towns Fund Programme in June. This was their second visit to

Sandwell following a visit held in 2022. Our DLUHC advisor who visited in 2022 attended and could see the progress made within the year. Board members were also invited to attend.

Sandwell MEC will be the first construction project to be completed not only for West Bromwich Towns Fund but across the three towns.

A number of DLUHC officers were unable to attend and as a result, a further visit will be arranged in due course. The visit may focus on Smethwick or Rowley Regis however West Bromwich board members will be invited.

Press Release Forward Plan

The Press release forward plan schedule was shared with board members in the meeting's agenda pack. Site visits may be arranged around these.

Promoting Projects

The Programme Management Office and Press Office are discussing options to utilise hoardings to promote projects. Details will be shared with board members in due course and board members were encouraged to share ideas on how best to promote projects.

A meeting has been scheduled with the SHAPE Forum for October 2023 and a request was made for a board member to attend to promote the projects with the Programme Management Team.

Action: Board members to express their interest to attend the SHAPE Forum meeting on 19 October 2023 to promote Towns Fund projects.

18 Any other Business

A request was made for the Town Hall Quarter project lead and West Bromwich Connected project lead to attend to present a detailed progress update.

A suggestion was raised to host a hybrid MS Teams/ In person meeting. This was welcomed by board members. Programme Management Office advised they would liaise with Sandwell College to find a suitable venue.

A suggestion was made for college students to attend the next meeting and open the invite for them to get involved with project work to support their studies. This would be subject to college approval. Board members were informed discussions have been held with Sandwell College on how to encourage involvement from students. The Programme Management Office will develop a creative document to present project details so they can understand how they can support projects (construction, administration, planning etc.) to help identify which curriculum department might have students that are interested.

Action: PMO to invite Town Hall Quarter and West Bromwich Connected project leads to attend the November meeting.

Action: PMO to liaise with Sandwell College on the opportunity to host hybrid meeting at Sandwell MEC facility.

Action: Invite college students to attend the February board meeting after AOB to discuss projects and how they can get involved, subject to college approval.

19 Closing Remarks

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

Meeting closed at 2:30pm

20 West Bromwich Town Deal Board Action Log

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

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
29 August 2023	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	
29 August 2023	Joshua Singh to seek additional information on the curriculum offer from Sandwell College and feedback to board members.	Joshua Singh	
29 August 2023	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	
29 August 2023	Karen and Michael to be invited to Town Deal Boards to represent Social Value.	Rina Rahim	
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	
29 August 2023	PMO to invite Town Hall Quarter and West Bromwich Connected project leads to attend the November meeting.	Rina Rahim	
29 August 2023	PMO to liaise with Sandwell College on the opportunity to host hybrid meeting at Sandwell MEC facility.	Rina Rahim	
29 August 2023	Invite college students to attend the February board meeting after AOB to discuss projects and how they can get involved, subject to college approval.	Rina Rahim	
16 May 2023	Chair to arrange a meeting with Project Lead and Business Ambassadors.	Chair	Chair confirmed Nicy Morgan is liaising with the College for dates.

Closed Actions

Date Opened	Date Closed	Description	Responsible Officer(s)	Update
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	Completed
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	Completed
21.02.23	16.05.23	PMO to extend future meetings to 2 hours.	PMO	Completed
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