

# Sandwell Towns Fund Assurance Framework

DRAFT

Version	Details of changes	Approved Date	Updated by
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## Contents

<b>Section 1</b>	<b>Introduction and purpose</b>	
1.1	Local Assurance Framework	5
1.2	Sandwell Towns Fund	5
1.3	Phase 1 Town Investment Plan	6
1.4	Phase 2 Towns Fund Full Business Cases	7
1.5	Phase 3 Delivery	8
<b>Section 2</b>	<b>Transparent Decision Making</b>	
2.1	Towns Fund Governance Phases 1-2	10
2.2	Towns Fund Governance Phase 3	10
2.3	Board representatives	13
2.4	Structure and Roles	14
2.5	Stakeholder Engagement	17
2.6	Inclusion and Sustainability	18
<b>Section 3</b>	<b>Accountable Decision Making</b>	
3.1	The Accountable Body	19
3.2	Roles and responsibilities of Section 151 Officer	21
3.3	Audit and Scrutiny	22
3.4	Financial Regulations	22
<b>Section 4</b>	<b>Programme Delivery</b>	
4.1	Contract management	23
4.2	Scheme of Delegation and Project Changes	24
4.3	Monitoring and evaluation - PMO and Project Leads	25
4.4	Monitoring and Evaluation – Towns Fund Local Boards	26
4.5	Monitoring and Evaluation - DLUHC	28
4.6	Claims Process	29
4.7	Procurement	30
4.8	Recovery of Funding	30
4.9	Publications of Reports and Information	31
4.10	Government Branding	32
4.11	Risk and assurance	33
4.12	Communications and Engagement	34
4.13	Data Management and Freedom of Information	35
4.14	Consultations during delivery phase	35
<b>Section 5</b>	<b>Signatories</b>	36

## Annex

*The following is a list of Annexes referred to in this Assurance Framework. These documents are subject to change from time to time to comply with government guidance and Sandwell Councils procedures.*

Annex	Title of Annex
1.	Terms of Reference – Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard and Local Boards (Phase 1-2)
2.	Terms of Reference – Sandwell Towns Fund Local Boards (Phase 3)
3.	Board members Code of Conduct and Register of Interest
4.	Terms of Reference – Towns Fund Programme Board (Accountable Body Officers)
5.	Terms of Reference – Assurance Panel
6.	Monitoring and Assurance Framework- projects
7.	Project Approval Visit template (draft)
8.	Project Claims process and forecasting (draft)
9.	Change Process Protocol (draft)
10.	Towns Funds Joint Publicity Protocol
11.	Communications and Engagement Plan
12.	Risk Management template
13.	Assurance overview and 4 lines of defense model
14.	Objection Resolution process

## Key Abbreviations and Terminology

<b>Word/Phrase/Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>Accountable Body (AB)</b>	the Local Authority allocated as the Accountably Body to central government for the Programme or any parts thereof;
<b>Benefit Cost Ration (BCR)</b>	Benefit Cost Ratio – value for money calculation
<b>Assurance Framework</b>	this Assurance Framework Agreement;
<b>DLUHC</b>	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Department within Government responsible for the Towns Fund Programme
<b>Full Business Case (FBC)</b>	Full Business Case developed as required by funder
<b>Heads of Terms</b>	Contract with government and funding provider
<b>Internal Offer Letter</b>	Agreement between Accountable Body and SMBC projects detailing project deliverables
<b>MHCLG</b>	the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, previous department to DLUHC (Department for Communities and Local Government)
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (M&amp;E plan)</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation Plan requiring submission to government
<b>Partnership Agreement</b>	Contract with external project leads
<b>Programme Management Office (PMO)</b>	the Programme Management Office which forms part of the Accountable Body
<b>Programme</b>	The operational element of the individual programme within the Deal;
<b>Project Adjustment Request (PAR)</b>	Template to be completed to submit to DLUHC for changes to be approved
<b>SMBC</b>	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
<b>Summary Documentation</b>	Summary information extracted from the Full Business Case requiring submission to government as part of the approval process
<b>TIP</b>	Town Investment Plans, submitted to government detailing the projects

## SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

### 1.1 Assurance Framework

1.1.1 This Assurance Framework sets out how Sandwell Towns Fund Boards and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (as the Accountable Body for the Towns Fund) will undertake their roles to ensure good governance and sound use of public money with respect to the Towns Fund allocation for Sandwell.

1.1.2 The framework is underpinned by a suite of documents including terms of references, policies and procedures which sets out the structure and roles that partners will play, and the processes and policies that will apply to the decision making that is required in managing the Towns Fund programme.

Adherence to the framework should ensure:

- Accountable decision making
- Responsible use of public money including achieving value for money
- Effective monitoring and evaluation

1.1.3 The framework is jointly owned by Sandwell Towns Fund Local Boards and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) as the Accountable Body, subject to approval by SMBC Cabinet in June 2022. This Framework will be reviewed annually, and any in-year changes will be made within one calendar month or following the next Cabinet and Local Board meeting where applicable.

### 1.2 Sandwell Towns Fund Programme

#### Background

1.2.1 On 6<sup>th</sup> September 2019 it was announced that 101 Towns had been identified by Government to benefit from the Towns Fund. In Sandwell, West Bromwich, Smethwick, and Rowley Regis were identified to benefit from the Towns Fund Programme.

1.2.2 The objective of the Towns fund is to drive the economic regeneration in Towns to deliver long term economic and productive growth through;

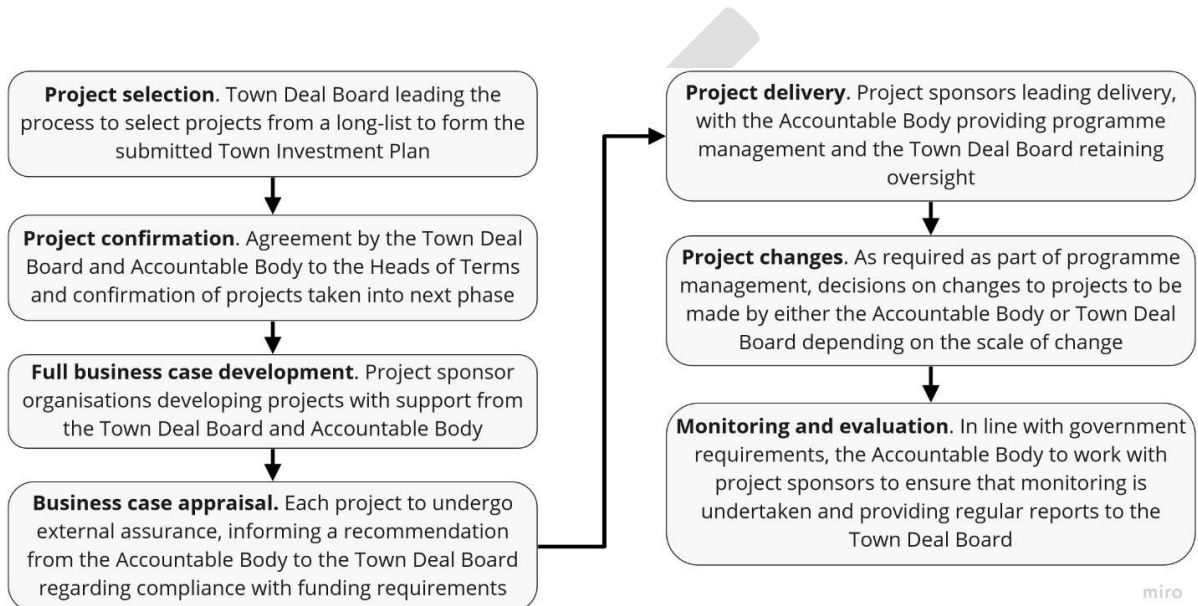
- a) Urban regeneration, planning and land use; ensuring towns are thriving places for people to live and work, including by; increasing density in town centre, strengthening local economic assets including local cultural assets; site acquisition, remediation, preparation, regeneration; and making the full use of planning tools to bring strategic direction and change.
- b) Skills and enterprise infrastructure: driving private sector investment and ensuring towns have the space to support skills and small business development.

- c) **Connectivity:** developing local transport schemes that complement regional and national networks, as well as supporting the delivery of improved digital connectivity.

The delivery process for the Towns Fund Programme was defined by three stages:

- Phase 1 Town Investment Plan - Heads of terms
- Phase 2 Full development of TIP Projects
- Phase 3 Delivery of TIP Projects.

The key processes in the appraisal and approval of the projects are summarised as follows:



### 1.3 PHASE 1 Town Investment Plan (Completed)

1.3.1 A Towns Fund Superboard and three Local Boards were formed in January 2020 and work was commissioned to prepare TIPs for each Town which contained a vision with a set of priorities and projects in line with the guidance issued. Superboard was responsible for signing off each stage of the development of the TIPs, this included the decisions relating to the project prioritisation process and final selection of projects for inclusion in the TIP. The following projects were developed during this process:

	Project	Applicant
<b>WEST BROMWICH</b>	Digital Den	Greets Green Community Centre
	Sandwell Civil and Mechanical Engineering Centre	Sandwell College
	Urban Greening	SMBC
	Retail Diversification Programme	SMBC
	Town Hall Quarter	SMBC
	West Bromwich Connected	SMBC

<b>SMETHWICK</b>	Midland Met Learning Campus	NHS Trust
	Grove Lane Regeneration	SMBC
	Albion Family in the Park (project withdrawn following TIP submission)	The Albion Foundation
	Rolfe Street Canalside Regeneration	SMBC
	Ron Davis Centre Expansion	SMBC
	Smethwick Connected	SMBC
<b>ROWLEY REGIS</b>	Rowley Regis College- Satellite Education Hub	Sandwell College
	Canal Network Connectivity	Canal River Trust
	Britannia Park Community Hub and Greenspace Improvements	SMBC
	Blackheath Bus Interchange and Public Realm	SMBC
	Rowley Regis Connected	SMBC

1.3.2 Following the submission of the TIPs for Sandwell in October 2020, Government issued Heads of Terms for each of the Sandwell Towns in March 2021. The Heads of Terms were a conditional offer of funding of £25m for West Bromwich, £23.5m for Smethwick and £19m for Rowley Regis.

#### **1.4 PHASE 2 Towns Fund Project Business Cases (Completed)**

- 1.4.1 Following the Heads of Term Agreement, the Towns Fund Boards oversaw the development of full business cases for all the TIP projects. Towns had up to 12 months from the signing of Heads of Terms (until 24<sup>th</sup> March 22) to develop and submit full business case to DLUHC to enable release of funding.
- 1.4.2 A key component of the Business Case process was to undertake Green Book compliant Value for Money Assessments, including calculation so Benefit Cost Ratios (BCRs) for individual projects.
- 1.4.3 Independent appraisal of the business cases were carried out prior to submission to government to give the necessary assurance to the Accountable Body and Towns Fund Boards.
- 1.4.4 Where applicable, community & stakeholder consultation and engagement with the support of SMBC, took place during full business case development to ensure the community and stakeholders remained active in shaping the projects.
- 1.4.5 Following the inclusion of 17 project in the TIPs, The Albion Foundation withdrew the Albion Family in the park project in December 2021 due to a number of challenges.
- 1.4.6 The remaining 16 projects which make up the Towns Fund Programme were divided into 3 tranches for DLUHC submission and submitted to DLUHC as follows:

Project	Tranche	Approval Process	DLUHC Submission
Digital Den	1	SIU	October 21
Sandwell Civil and Mechanical Engineering Centre	2	Local Board Superboard SMBC Cabinet	January 22
Urban Greening	2		
Retail Diversification Programme	3	SIU Local Board Superboard Assurance Panel	March 2022
Town Hall Quarter	3		
West Bromwich Connected	3		
Midland Met Learning Campus	3		
Grove Lane Regeneration	3		
Rolfe Street Canalside Regeneration	3		
Ron Davis Centre Expansion	3		
Smethwick Connected	3	SIU Local Board Superboard Assurance Panel	March 2022
Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub	3		
Canal Network Connectivity	3		
Britannia Park Community Hub and Greenspace Improvements	3		
Blackheath Bus Interchange and Public Realm	3		
Rowley Regis Connected	3		

- 1.4.7 The three projects within Tranche 1 and 2 followed the original assurance process, where projects were appraised by the Councils Strategic Investment Unit prior to being approved by the Local Boards and Superboard and finally the Cabinet before submission to DLUHC.
- 1.4.8 Tranche 3 projects followed a revised assurance process. SMBC Cabinet authorised the establishment of an Assurance Panel to comprise the Director for Regeneration & Growth, the Section 151 Officer, a representative from the Strategic Investment Unit, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth and the chair of the Town Deal Board. Full Business Cases were appraised by the Council's Strategic Investment Unit and third-party consultants, agreed by Local Board and Superboard before being presented to the Assurance Panel for approval.
- 1.4.9 Once approved by Cabinet/ Assurance Panel, a project Summary Document and Monitoring and Evaluation Plan was prepared and submitted to DLUHC for review. The Summary Document contains an overview of the context within each FBC, how it has been appraised, and confirmation that key conditions from the Heads of Terms have been addressed (where applicable).



## 1.5 PHASE 3 Delivery (Current Stage)

1.5.1 Once Government approval has been received following submission of Summary documentation, projects will draw down funding and commence delivery. Delivery of individual projects will continue to be overseen by the Towns Fund Local Boards in partnership with the Accountable Body.

1.5.2 The Accountable Body will be responsible for the day-to-day delivery and operational decisions for the Towns Fund programme. The Board will be responsible for overseeing delivery of the programme, monitoring and evaluation of the individual projects and compliance with the Heads of Terms Agreement with government.

1.5.3 The Programme Management Office (PMO) will have responsibility for day-to-day decisions and delivery of the TIP projects:

- The PMO office will be supported by appointed project managers and other economic development and regeneration specialists, including legal, finance and communication specialists.
- Each TIP project will be led by an appointed Lead who will work with a Project Delivery Group made up of relevant internal and external stakeholders for the project.
- The Towns Fund Programme Manager/ PMO Team will provide update reports to the Programme Board, Local Boards, Cabinet, DLUHC and any Scrutiny Boards where applicable.
- Programme decisions will require final approval by SMBC Cabinet unless delegated authority has been authorised.

**The Programme Management Office will be responsible for following work areas;**

- Day to day responsibility for the management and administration of the Towns Fund programme
- Overseeing the delivery of all TIP projects
- Ensuring that projects remain state aid compliant - overseeing appropriate due diligence (whether internal or external)
- Drafting funding agreements letters/contracts, where appropriate (approved by SMBCs legal department)
- Communicating as required with private sector partners and any individual grant beneficiaries
- Performance managing any external grant awards, monitoring milestones, outputs and the terms and conditions
- Claim, drawdown, defray and account for funds from DLUHC
- Liaising with DLUHC/Towns Fund Delivery Team to ensure they receive monitoring updates and progress reports as required
- Supporting third party project teams in their delivery of Towns Fund projects, monitoring progress where appropriate through a grant agreement

- Reporting on Towns Fund progress to SMBC's internal Board, Portfolio Holders, Scrutiny and Cabinet
- Implementation and delivery of the Communication Plan

## **SECTION 2 TRANSPARENT DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard and Local Boards (Phase 1 and 2)**

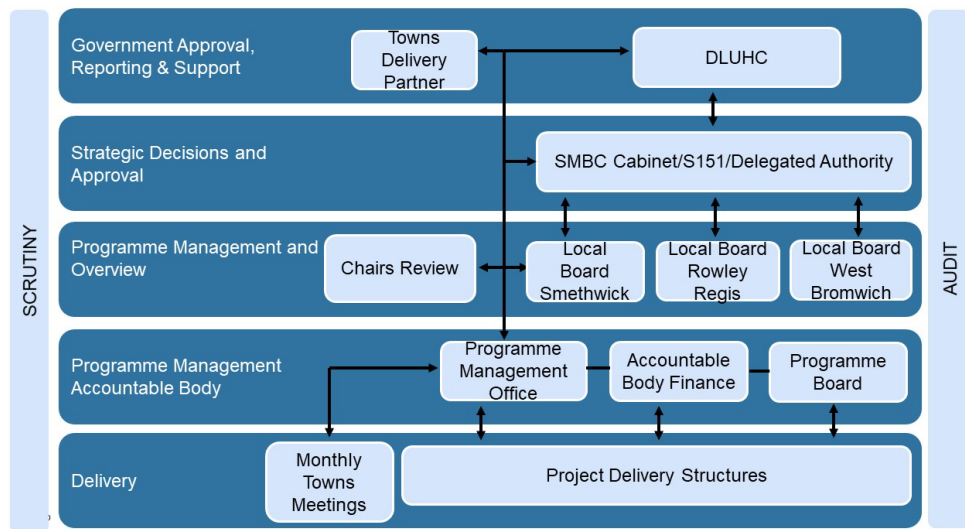
- 2.1.1 The Towns Fund Superboard adopted the role of a senior strategic body working in partnership with SMBC. It provided strategic direction to the development and implementation of the Towns Investment Plans for Sandwell.
- 2.1.2 Specifically, the Boards were the vehicle through which the vision and strategy for the town was defined ensuring diversity in its engagement with local communities and businesses. The three Local Boards (Rowley Regis, Smethwick and West Bromwich) were constituted as working groups of the Superboard and had a remit to influence the Towns Fund Programme and to form part of the assurance mechanisms to ensure that project delivery remains in keeping with the Vision and objectives outlined in the Town Investment Plan.
- 2.1.3 As working groups of the Superboard, Local Boards committed to developing projects and through their recommendations and reports, influenced the programme and project direction to support the Towns Fund Superboard.

### **2.2 Governance for Phase 3 Delivery**

- 2.2.1 The governance model of the Superboard being supported by three Local Boards has been effective to date allowing the development of projects to FBC stage through robust due diligence and assurance processes. This structure has best served the projects in ensuring that due diligence was undertaken to submit summary documentation by 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022.
- 2.2.2 MHCLG Guidance (Dec 2020 and April 2021) sets out the following requirements of the Boards and the Council:
- Phase 3 of the Programme (project delivery) - that the Towns Fund Board should ensure an element of independent 'on-the-ground' monitoring of the deal delivery and act as a 'critical friend' throughout the programme lifecycle;
  - Through project delivery, ensure regular catch ups with the Towns Fund Board to enable the board to see through the town vision, take ownership of their proposed projects and provide a level of accountability.
  - The Towns Fund Board should have an ongoing role and sight of decisions, the nature and degree of which should be agreed locally.

- 2.2.3 This Towns Fund Assurance Framework will stipulate the roles and responsibilities of partners, Boards and the Accountable Body as well as the processes required to deliver the Towns Fund Programme successfully throughout the delivery phase. This will also include mechanisms on continuing reports to the Towns Fund Boards by way of highlight reports including progress towards finance, outcomes, milestones as well as project change requests, risk management and any other programme related matters.
- 2.2.4 To best serve the efficient reporting throughout the delivery phase, an updated governance structure was approved at Cabinet on 18 May 2022. The structural changes enables the Local Boards to inherit the Superboard responsibilities with ongoing delivery and progress being managed by the Local Boards. The changes for Phase 3 will include the following:
- Superboard members will be transferred over to the Local Boards as appropriate to ensure continuation of representation of key stakeholders.
  - Inclusion of Elected Member representation on the Local Boards
  - Update of Cabinet members roles required as the structure has changed since June 2021
  - Cabinet members will continue to have an open invitation to Local Boards.
  - S151/delegated representative to have an open invitation to ensure compliance on behalf of Accountable Body.
  - Chairs of Local Boards will convene regularly for collaboration and consistency of approach.
  - Ongoing quarterly reports to be presented to the Elected Members Towns Meetings.
  - Superboard structure no longer being active.
  - Ongoing quarterly reports will be presented to the Economy, Skills, Environment and Transportation Scrutiny Board to provide assurance that the programme is proceeding in line with Government requirements and agreed local assurance processes.

The revised structure is shown below:



2.2.5 Members of the Local Boards will continue to work within the guidance issued by government and will always demonstrate the highest standards of conduct. Any third party involved with the Local Boards or who is providing a service to the Sandwell Towns Fund Board will be made aware they are expected to act within the governance system and that their conduct is expected to be consistent with the standards applicable to members of the Local Boards.

2.2.7 As per the Towns Fund Prospectus, the Government expect that Towns Fund Boards align with governance and policies of the Accountable Body (SMBC). This includes whistle blowing, conflicts of interest and complaints. Details on such policies can be found on the Sandwell Towns Fund Website.

2.2.8 SMBC expects employees and its members to adhere to the seven Nolan Principles of public life. Therefore, members of the Local Boards are expected to adhere to those same principles of:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

2.2.9 Each Board Member and Substitute Board Member is required to adhere to the Terms of Reference and submit a signed version of the Register of Interest and Code of Conduct before formal membership is given. A copy of the Register of Interest, Terms of Reference, and Codes of Conduct are included within Annexes 1, 2 and 3 of this document. Completed forms are submitted on the SMBC Towns Fund Website, as Accountable Body, under the list of Board representatives.

- 2.2.10 In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, Sandwell Towns Fund Board meetings may be held in person or virtually, as required. The same governance rules apply to meetings that are held virtually.

## 2.3 Board Representatives

- 2.3.1 The Local Boards comprise of private and public businesses and bodies throughout the three towns and is the vehicle through which the vision and strategy for the town is defined.
- 2.3.2 The primary role of the Local Boards is to provide strong and visible leadership for Sandwell, challenging partners to increase their ambition of what can be achieved collectively and acting as advocates for the town.
- 2.3.3 Since inception in early 2020, Sandwell Towns Fund Boards have agreed a vision for Sandwell and sought to maximise the opportunities for growth; including, the development of a well evidenced Town Investment Plans which sets out clear understanding of the area, focusing on its assets, opportunities and challenges.
- 2.3.4 As the Towns Fund Programme serves three towns in Sandwell, Local Boards were set up as working groups of the Superboard to deliver phases 1 and 2 of the programme. As mentioned in Section 3 Governance, the Local boards will inherit the responsibilities of the Superboard to ensure that programme reporting is effective during the delivery phase. The Board representatives for Phase 3 will comprise:
- **Chair and Co-Chair** - The posts will lead and facilitate the Board providing strategic direction. Each role will be independent in its own right and at least one role will be held by a private sector representative. To enable the Board to proceed at least one of the two Chairs must be in attendance at the Local Board meetings The Chair and Vice-Chair will be voted in on an annual basis.
  - **Board Members** - Representatives from the public and private sector including local business, Higher Education, Further Education, community voluntary services, health, elected members. Board Membership will be reviewed annually. Any decision made by the Chair must be formally ratified by the rest of the Board Members at the next meeting. There may be one vote per organisation.
  - **Substitute Board Members** - Substitute members from organisations will be entitled to attend Board meetings and vote when a Board Member is not available. Substitute members are required to follow the governance process.
  - **Advisors** - Advisors are invited by Board Members and participate in the meetings but have no voting rights or ability to make decisions on behalf of the Board.
  - **S151 Officer** – SMBC is the Accountable Body for the Towns Funds Boards.

The Council's S151 Officer will ensure compliance with all necessary financial regulations, in order to protect the accountable body and ensure proper administration of all financial affairs.

## 2.4 Structure and Roles during Phase 3 – Delivery

2.4.1 The two key bodies with responsibilities to develop and deliver the Towns Fund are Sandwell Towns Fund Boards and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC), the latter being the Accountable Body for the Towns Fund. Detailed guidance was provided by government in December 2020 and updated in April 2021 on the respective roles of these bodies (see section 4.10 of the guidance). This framework has been developed in line with this guidance, though it was focused more on the development of the Town Investment Plan than the totality of the Towns Fund programme. Looking to the phases of the programme beyond the Town Investment Plan, more recent guidance summarises the roles as follows:

- *The Accountable Body (as identified in the Town Investment Plan) will be accountable for implementing the Towns Fund Programme. The Towns Fund Board should have an ongoing role and have sight of decisions as projects are developed in more detail or possible changes are made. The nature and degree of the Board's oversight should be agreed locally.*
- *Locally, ultimate decision-making responsibility will lie with the accountable body, but the Towns Fund Board Chair will be a signatory to the Summary Document and should make decisions in partnership and collaboration with the Towns Fund Board*

*(Towns Fund guidance (stage two): business case development, Dec 2020 section 2.4-2.5)*

2.4.2 The governance structure and roles have been defined throughout the different phases of the Towns Fund Programme to ensure that the responsibilities have been effectively discharged.

2.4.3 The Local Boards have been integral in the development of the projects throughout Phase 1 and 2 and will continue to have an ongoing involvement in Phase 3 delivery stage. To enable day to day programme management and decision making, the Local Boards have inherited the responsibilities from the Superboard and will be responsible for the delivery of the programme, ensuring compliance of Heads of Terms. The Boards Terms of Reference have been updated to align with the delivery phase and details the responsibilities and policies to deal with challenges faced in the delivery stages.

2.4.4 Overarching responsibility for steering and overseeing Sandwell Towns Fund programme lies with the Sandwell Towns Local Boards. As the Towns Fund progresses, some work may be delegated to specific sub-boards or panels. These sub-boards will be chaired by a member of the Local Boards who will report back on the sub-board activity.

2.4.5 More detail on the respective roles of the groups in the diagram are included within subsequent sections as key activities and processes are described. However, with a focus on phases during the submission of the Town Investment Plan and Business cases, the roles in brief are:

Towns Fund Boards	
Sandwell Town Fund Superboard (Phase 1 and Phase 2)	Working in partnership with SMBC as the Accountable Body, Towns Fund Superboard provided strategic direction to the development and implementation of Sandwell Towns Fund. The Board had a critical role to play in ensuring a strong and diverse voice from Sandwell communities and stakeholders brought the discussions and decisions on the Towns Fund.
Local Boards (Phase 1 and 2)	The three Local Boards (Rowley Regis, Smethwick and West Bromwich) were constituted as working groups of the Superboard to influence the Towns Fund Programme and projects and to form part of the assurance mechanisms to ensure that project delivery remains in keeping with the Vision and objectives outlined in the Town Investment Plan. Responsibilities of the Local Boards included helping develop full business cases with project leads in line and providing critical challenge where required
Local Boards (Phase 3)	Local Boards will inherit Superboard responsibilities to have continued input into the delivery phase of projects benefitting from local knowledge. Monitoring progress towards programme delivery including agreeing project adjustment requests and ensuring compliance with Heads of Terms, making recommendations to Cabinet/Delegated authority where required.
Accountable Body	
SMBC Cabinet	As the Accountable Body for the Towns Fund, SMBC will have a range of responsibilities as set out in the next section. The role of its Cabinet will be to ensure that resources and arrangements are in place to discharge those accountable body responsibilities. It will be the senior decision-making body within the Council regarding the Towns Fund Programme, though it may choose to delegate decisions for example to S151 Officer, Director of Regeneration & Growth or Cabinet member in consultation with the Towns Funds Boards/Chair. Decisions taken by Cabinet will be subject to scrutiny through the existing SMBCs Scrutiny process.
Strategic Investment Unit	The Councils Financial Regulations states that all bids for external funding must be appraised by

	<p>Strategic Finance prior to being submitted. The SIU under this proposal, with the support of the external consultants have prepared 16 Business Cases for approval.</p>
<p>Assurance Panel</p>	<p>Due to the number of projects requiring Cabinet approval, Cabinet approved the establishment of an Assurance Panel consisting of the Chair of the Superboard, S151 Officer, Director of Regeneration and Growth. Delegated authority was approved for the Assurance Panel to review and approve the 13 project business cases in Tranche 3 prior to submission to DLUHC.</p> <p>The Panel provided assurance that the projects were a strategic fit; support a compelling case for change; maximise public value; are commercially viable; are affordable and funding and can be achieved successfully by the organisation and its partners.</p> <p>Terms of Reference for the Assurance Panel are detailed in Annex 5.</p>
<p>Towns Fund Programme Board (Accountable Body Officers Group)</p>	<p>The Towns Fund Accountable Body Officers Group consisted of Project leads and the PMO to support the development of full business cases during Phase 2. It also included department and external consultants who are critical to the delivery of the programme including Legal, Finance, Governance, Procurement, Communications.</p> <p>This provided a further line of assurance within the council with regard to the managing of public money as the Towns Fund programme forms part of the council's wider Capital Programme.</p> <p>During Phase 3, the Board will be revert to being the Programme Board and will review the Terms of Reference and ensure that its is fit for purpose. Having such a platform provides a route for escalation of project management issues and risks within the programme. The Board is run in line with the wider project and programme methodologies in place within the council. Where applicable, it will also provide regular updates to the Sandwell Towns Fund Board. The Terms of Reference for the Accountable Body Officer are included at Annex 4.</p>



Towns Fund Programme Management Office	The Programme Management Office has been established in order to provide the dedicated resources required to manage the programme and ensure the council can fulfil its role as the Accountable Body. It includes a Towns Fund Programme Manager and a Programme Support Officer responsible for the delivery of the Programme. The team will also provide secretariat support to the Sandwell Towns Fund Superboards, Local Boards and the Programme Board
Accountable Body Finance Support	The Claims Monitoring Officer will process and verify claims submitted to the Accountable Body ensuring compliance with the funding requirements prior to the payment of Towns Funds. The Claims Monitoring Officer will work closely with the PMO in collating information for monitoring returns submission which require Section 151 Officer sign off
<b>External</b>	
DLUHC	DLUHC is the lead government department for the Towns Fund. The accountable body will provide regular reports to DLUHC on implementation of the Towns Fund.
Towns Fund Delivery Partner	The Towns Fund Delivery Partner has been appointed by government to support all towns in their work to develop Towns Funds. The TFDP will also provide advice and support directly to both the Programme Management Officer and to Project Leads – individually and collectively – for the duration of its contract with DLUHC.

## 2.5 Stakeholder Engagement

2.5.1 Sandwell Towns Fund Local Boards are committed to effective engagement and collaboration with all its partners and stakeholders to effectively undertake its role as an advocate for its area and communicate key information relating to the Town Investment Projects. A Stakeholder Engagement Plan was developed and submitted along with the TIPs to government. A copy of this plan can be found in Annex 11a.

Examples of Sandwell Town Board's engagement activities include:

- Consultation of partners and stakeholders in the region for the Town Investment Projects
- Regular engagement with the local media on the Towns Fund Board's work.
- Regular social media updates, website and video coverage of Town Investment Plan activity.

- 2.5.2 The Chairs of the Towns Fund Local Boards will regularly engage with local leaders, elected members, residents, and key business leaders. Within Sandwell Towns Fund Board this engagement is being used to inform key decisions and future strategy development. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be updated to align with the Communications Plan to ensure this is still fit for purpose during delivery phase.
- 2.5.3 Where there needs to be a change to the projects TIP, this will be presented and agreed at the Local Boards and Accountable Body before being communicated to the public. The decision will have been scrutinised appropriately by the Section 151 officer to ensure the change is fair and robust.
- 2.5.5 The Local Boards through the PMO, will remain in regular communication with DLUHC and the Towns Fund Delivery Partner and other towns who have received investment from the Towns Fund to ensure a collaborative approach to sharing ideas and support on any challenges.

## **2.6 Inclusion and Sustainability**

- 2.6.1 The Local Boards will look to enable inclusivity and sustainability in to all its decision-making processes and strategic development. In order to be able to do this the Local Boards will nominate an inclusion representative and any sub working group must have at least one named inclusion representative at all times.
- 2.6.2 The Local Boards will consider how projects will improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of Sandwell, how equality issues are considered, and how such improvements can be secured in the TIPs Projects.
- 2.6.3 The Local Boards and project leads have committed to securing social value within the project designs.
- 2.6.4 As part of the development of full business cases, project leads have set inclusive ambitions, ensuring compliance with strategies for capital funding where consideration must be taking into account the relevant charter which requires all projects to align their construction and development projects to a set of principles which create sustainable Economic, Environmental and Social impacts.
- 2.6.5 Each project as part of the Green Book Business Case include details of how it meets the governments clean growth principles and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

## Section 3 ACCOUNTABLE DECISION MAKING

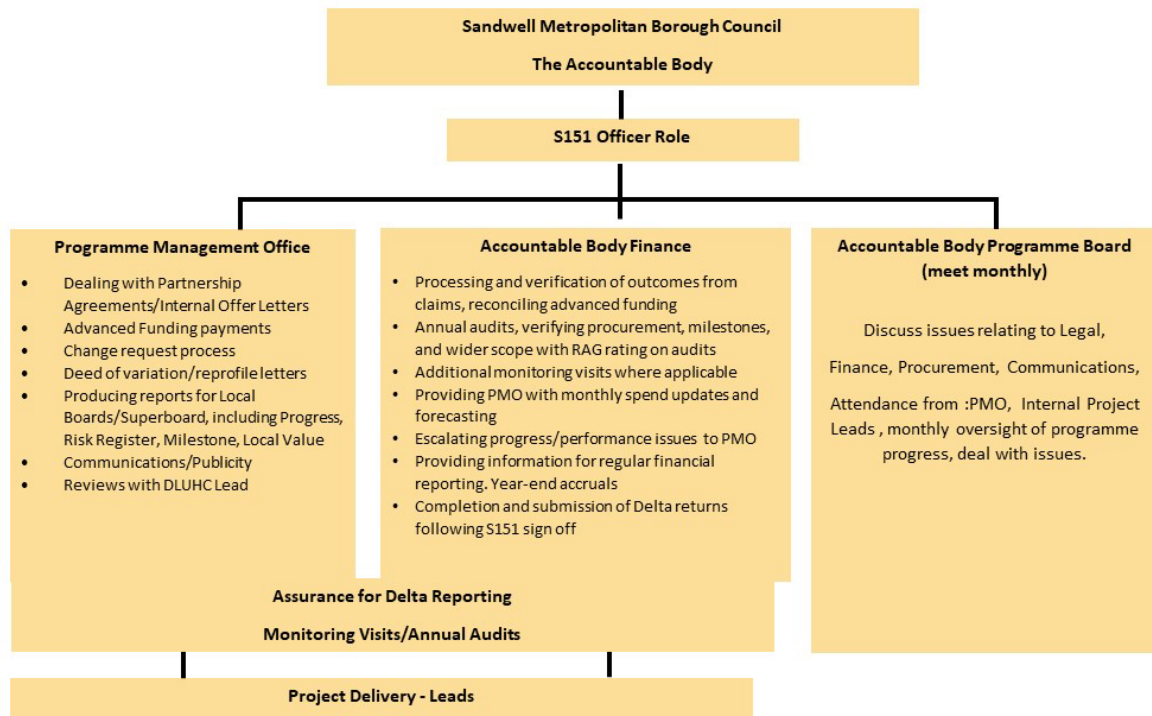
### 3.1 The Accountable Body

3.1.1 The Local Boards are an unincorporated body and therefore require an Accountable Body for the funding programmes it manages. The Accountable Body for the Towns Fund is SMBC and this Assurance Framework will be used to manage and administer the Towns Fund on behalf of the Local Boards.

The primary role of the accountable body will be to:

- Uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles)
- Sign the Heads of Terms with Government
- Ensure Towns Funds are only used in accordance with Board recommendations.
- Establish a Programme Management Office function that will be responsible for ensuring appropriate systems are in place for the management and delivery of Towns Funds, that are compliant with the Towns Fund programme guidance and other relevant Government guidance, for example the HM Treasury Green Book.
- Through the Project Delivery Groups, develop the projects within the Town Investment Plan in accordance with the HM Treasury 5 Case Model.
- Ensure appropriate separation of duties and ethical walls are in place across the functions of the Towns Fund Governance structure to allow independent and transparent decision making.
- Consider and make the final decision on the recommendations of The Board. In making these decisions the Accountable Body will ensure the activities of the Board comply with legal requirements including but not limited to those in respect of equalities, human rights, environmental requirements, procurements and subsidies.
- Ensure that the recommendations made by the Boards are done so in accordance with good governance principles.
- Ensure independent due diligence and assessment processes are in place to review Towns Fund schemes that are compliant with the HM Treasury Green Book, to allow The Board to make an informed recommendation.
- Ensure transparency requirements are met through the publication of the governance arrangements, register or interests and meeting papers for the Board on the SMBC website
- Ensure, where required, Environmental Impact Assessments or Public Sector Equalities Duties are undertaken.
- Submit regular monitoring reports to the Government.
- Enter into Funding Agreements with external Project Applicants
- Hold publicly funded allocations, and make payments to, delivery bodies and account for these funds in such a way that they are separately identifiable from the accountable body's own funds and provide financial statements to The Board as required.
- Ensure that the Towns Fund Assurance Framework is adhered to.
- Act as the Secretariat for the Towns Funds Boards and maintain the official record of the Towns Fund.

The Accountable Body will discharge its responsibilities through the Programme Management Office, Finance and Programme Board as the key structures.



Sandwell MBC

- 3.1.2 A wider support function will be provided by Council officers including expertise provided by Legal Services, Democratic Services, Procurement Services and Financial Services. External consultancy services with specialist expertise will also be procured to support the Towns Fund Project Team, such as to ensure an independent and robust due diligence process.
- 3.1.3 The **Towns Fund Programme Management Office** will be responsible for day to day programme management once delivery commences. It will liaise regularly with each project sponsor and ensure that reporting requirements are clearly set out and understood. It will endeavor to provide and/or enable support for project sponsor organisations where delivery is challenging. The team will provide monthly programme reporting to the Towns Fund Programme Board with both highlight reports and, where commissioned, detailed project reviews. The regular reporting will include information at project and programme level on risk, finance, milestones and outputs/outcomes, social value, procurement with further information where required.

3.1.4 **The Towns Fund Programme Board (Accountable Body Officer Group)** chaired by the Director of Regeneration and Growth, this Board was established to support Phase - Development of Full Business cases. It provided a platform whereby the PMO could provide support to project leads on common issues and collaborative working in ensuring completion of the FBCs. The Programme Board continues to meet whilst awaiting government approvals. This will enable the PMO to update project leads on government guidance and requirements. A copy of the Programme Boards Terms of reference can be found in Annex 4.

## 3.2 Role of the Section 151 Officer

3.2.1 SMBC is the Accountable Body for the Sandwell Towns Fund Local Boards. The Council's Section 151 Officer will ensure compliance with all necessary financial regulations.

3.2.2 The Sandwell Towns Fund Local Boards and Accountable Body will ensure they address the five principles of the CIPFA guidance:

1. Embed a corporate position for the Section 151 officer in Local Board assurance
2. Create a formal/structured mandate for the Section 151 officer
3. Embed good governance onto decision making
4. Ensure effective review of governance
5. Ensure appropriate skills and resourcing

3.2.3 All Local Boards and any sub-group documents which have financial implications will be provided to the Section 151 Officer/delegate. Where decisions are being made, the Section 151 Officer/delegate will have the opportunity to comment.

3.2.4 Assurance will be provided by the requirement for Project Leads to submit signed monitoring returns to the Section 151 Officer as required.

3.2.5 Towns Funding will be separately identified from the Accountable Body's own funds; the Section 151 Officer will ensure that Towns funding is used appropriately and not for any purpose other than for that which it is intended.

3.2.6 The Section 151 Officer (or their delegated representative) will be invited to attend all Local Boards and sub-group meetings but will not be entitled to vote or make decisions.

3.2.7 The Section 151 Office will be responsible for the signing of monitoring and evaluation returns as required by DLUHC.

### 3.3 Audit and Scrutiny

- 3.3.1 The Accountable Body's scrutiny process will apply to the Towns Fund Programme. The Scrutiny Boards act on behalf of the Accountable body and will scrutinise the performance of the Towns Fund programme to ensure appropriate compliance to Council, DLUHC and Towns Fund policies and processes. The Scrutiny Boards are responsible for:
- Carrying out in-depth reviews of services or policies that affect Sandwell.
  - Keeping up to date on new laws and issues that affect the council.
  - Making recommendations to the cabinet on what the Boards think could be done to make things better.
  - Asking cabinet members and other relevant officer questions about how they plan to do things.
- 3.3.2 Where a decision is made by Cabinet, then the Accountable Body will have five working days after the meeting to exercise their right to "request a call in" of a decision.
- 3.3.3 Quarterly Towns Fund reports will be presented to the Economy, Skills, Environment and Transportation Scrutiny Board to provide assurance of programme delivery.
- 3.3.4 Additional scrutiny of the programme will be carried out through programme reviews by internal Audit on an annual basis to provide reassurance that the programme is being managed effectively.

### 3.4 Financial Regulations

- 3.4.1 SMBC is the accountable body for the Towns Fund. SMBC must conduct its business efficiently and ensure it has sound financial management policies in place, including arrangements to monitor compliance. SMBC's statutory Section 151 Officer is also charged with ensuring that proper financial management processes are in place.
- 3.4.2 The financial management of the Towns Fund Programme will be in accordance with SMBC's Contract Standing Orders and Financial regulations. SMBC will account for financial resources granted or to be applied for in the name of the Towns Fund Local Boards.
- 3.4.3 SMBC's financial regulations provide clarity about the financial accountability of individuals. The regulations identify responsibilities of individuals across all levels. Written records are a requirement where decision making has been delegated to members of staff in order to give assurance that tasks or decisions have been performed in accordance with the Financial Regulations.
- 3.4.4 Where applicable, further delegations will be put in place by the Accountable Body with specific reference to the delegation of authority for the Towns Fund programme. This proposal will ensure the most efficient and timely management of the programme, in the context of the delivery timeframes.

## Section 4 PROGRAMME DELIVERY

### 4.1 Contract Management

- 4.1.1 All external project leads organisations will receive a Partnership Agreement, which will be drafted by SMBC and issued by Bevan Brittan on behalf of the Accountable Body to the Lead applicant for its completion.
- 4.1.2 The Partnership Agreement between SMBC and the project sponsor sets out the conditions relating to SMBC's agreement to fund the project and the responsibilities of SMBC and the project sponsor. This will include any conditions for funding that are in place through either the requirements set by government in the Heads of Terms or in subsequent guidance, and/or conditions set by SMBC or the Towns Fund Boards as part of the process for approval of the project business case.
- 4.1.3 The funding agreement will also confirm that the project sponsor organisation:
- a) Bears the risk for all overspend on the project beyond the approved amount
  - b) Will be required to participate in a full and timely manner with any audit activity that is undertaken as part of the overall programme assurance
  - c) Will be required to participate in a full and timely manner with any external reviews undertaken by government (or commissioned by government) as part of its assurance of Towns Fund delivery and/or evaluation of the programme
  - d) Will maintain regular and timely reporting as set out in the monitoring and evaluation requirements outlined in Section 4.4
- 4.1.4 Any contractual issues relating to projects will be considered informally in the first instance through ongoing dialogue between the Towns Fund Programme Management Office and the lead applicant. Where issues are unable to be resolved, they will be considered by the Director of Regeneration and Growth and where applicable Cabinet member and Local Boards prior any formal action being taken. Where necessary, SMBC will seek external legal advice regarding significant contractual issues in the interests of fulfilling its role as the Accountable Body for the Towns Fund.
- 4.1.5 Section 4.2 of this framework details the processes in place to agree changes to approved business case or latest project adjustment request. It is the responsibility of the Towns Fund Programme Management Office to maintain overall change control and ensure any changes are recorded including the requisite level of approval obtained.

4.1.6 Payment milestones and any conditions will be agreed with the Project Lead organisation at the point of contract. The claims and payment process will be managed by the Accountable Body Claims Monitoring Officer and Towns Fund PMO in liaison with each project. Arrangements for processing claims will be made in line with the council's financial procedures and be subject to both internal and external audit. Where the project sponsor is the council itself, additional processes and checks will be put in place to ensure an appropriate separation of roles.

## 4.2 Scheme of Delegation and Project Changes

4.2.1 The Towns Fund funding will need to be managed effectively to ensure the devolved budget delivers both the aims and objectives of the Town Investment Plan as well as value for money.

4.2.2 The Accountable Body will put in place a transparent methodology for the Change Control to actively manage the project grant allocations and respond to changed circumstances including scheme slippage, changes in scheme scope and/or costs. The Change control process is detailed in Annex 9.

4.2.3 Project leads will be required to formally notify the Accountable Body of any changes that impacts the project grant, outcomes, outputs, or Heads of Terms immediately either through the agreed reporting regime or separately if timescales do not align. This will constitute the start of a Change Control process.

**4.2.4 This section will be updated once we have detail from Government on their definitions regarding material changes. It is anticipated that the following principles outlined below will be used.**

4.2.5 The Accountable Body will consider if any notified scheme variation represents a material change to the project. A material change would include, but is not limited to;

- Variation to delivery timescales – where delivery is likely to move into a different financial year;
- Variation to funding package such as a reduction in match funding which could affect the viability of a scheme, or virement of funding between financial years
- Variation to project outputs – forecast reduction in project outputs within the lifetime of the funding agreement; or
- Variation to project scope or scale – where key elements of the project may no longer be deliverable or may be delivered at a reduced scale.

4.2.6 Where a material change is proposed, a formal Change Control will be considered by the Accountable Body who will need to consider if delivery of the proposed changes would mean that;



- The project still fits strategically with the objectives of the Town Investment Plan.
- The project will still deliver acceptable value for money;
- The project is still allowable within Subsidy Control regulations;
- The project can be delivered effectively within the required timescales;
- The proposed changes raise the risk to delivery/achievement of outputs to an unacceptable level.

4.2.7 The PMO will notify the Local Boards where the Change Control process has been invoked and the impact, if any, on the delivery of the Towns Fund Programme. Any changes to the Heads of Terms, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan will be shared with the Board for their views before a decision is taken by the Accountable Body and submitted to DLUHC.

4.2.8 Changes to projects may also be recommended by the Programme Management Office or the Local Boards. They may arise in response to unforeseen external circumstances, changes that affect the capacity or capabilities of the delivery organisation, or as part of risk mitigation.

4.2.9 Where project changes are relatively minor with no bearing on the project grant or the agreed project outputs, these may be agreed directly between the project sponsor organisation and the PMO and reported to the Local Boards and DLUHC where appropriate.

### **4.3 Monitoring and Evaluation PMO and Project Leads**

4.3.1 The Towns Fund PMO will develop local programme monitoring requirements in line with DLUHC's Monitoring and Evaluation guidance (April 2021) to inform the programme management activities and ensure that regular reports can be made to other groups within the governance structure, including the returns to central government. The Monitoring Assurance Protocol in Annex 6, details how the Accountable Body will undertake regular project visits/updates to provide assurance that project activity is on track. Changes to the monitoring approach may be required following government guidance.

4.3.2 In addition to the Monitoring protocol, project leads will also be required to submit returns to indicate their progress towards plans detailed within their Full Business Cases or approved Project Adjustment Requests (PAR). This is including but not limited to Claims returns, Risk Reporting, Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement, progress towards Social Value and Equality Impact Assessments where applicable.

4.3.3 Project sponsor organisations will be responsible for reporting at the agreed frequency against all project data required and in accordance with the agreed data collection methodology to ensure consistency. This monitoring will allow the Accountable Body and the Local Boards to hold each project

sponsor organisations to account for delivery against the activities, outputs, spend etc. set out in the final business case for the project. In turn, the Local Boards and SMBC will be held to account by government for delivery against the outputs included within the Heads of Terms for Sandwell Towns Fund.

#### 4.4 Monitoring and Evaluation Towns Fund Local Boards

4.4.1 The Local Boards will be invited to consider project progress on a quarterly basis following the claims process timeframe. This will enable a review of projects activity against the profiles detailed in the full business case or approved change. A forward plan will be developed to highlight the key issues and reports being presented to the Local Board. As an indication, the timeline for Local Boards is suggested as follows:

Period	Claims in by	Processed by	Local Boards Meeting	DLUHC Returns
Qtr1 Apr-Jun	5 <sup>th</sup> Jul 22	5 <sup>th</sup> Aug 22	24 <sup>th</sup> Aug 22 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug 22 30 <sup>th</sup> Aug 22	December 22
Qtr2 Jul-Sep	10 <sup>th</sup> Oct 22	7 <sup>th</sup> Nov 22	23 <sup>rd</sup> Nov 22 25 <sup>th</sup> Nov 22 29 <sup>th</sup> Nov 22	
Qtr3 Oct-Dec	10 <sup>th</sup> Jan 23	6 <sup>th</sup> Feb 23	22 <sup>nd</sup> Feb 23 24 <sup>th</sup> Feb 23 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb 23	June 23
Qtr4 Jan-Mar	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr 23	5 <sup>th</sup> May 23	25 <sup>th</sup> May 23 29 <sup>th</sup> May 23 31 <sup>st</sup> May 23	

4.4.2 At the meeting, the Local Boards will be presented with information including the following:

- Programme development to ensure projects deliver coherent package of interventions without duplication or gaps.
- Project Business Case development.
- Decision making at project level as details are agreed.
- Proposed project changes.
- Programme risk.
- Monitoring and evaluation across each project.
- Progress towards delivering match funding.

- 4.4.3 The principles of programme management will be for the PMO to manage the key programme risks, through proactive engagement with the project leads and developing a system of regular reporting. A programme overview including high risk projects will be presented at every Local Board meeting.
- 4.4.4 The Accountable Body and Local Boards may decide to withhold funding if the project delivery expectations as per FBC or approved project adjustment are not met, or there are high risks that require further investigation.
- 4.4.4 Projects will be required to submit quarterly monitoring reports (financial, output and narrative) explaining their progress to spend and delivery targets and noting specific changes to the project and challenges in delivery. The Project Lead will check monitoring reports are correct prior to submitting an approved return and that records are retained for the duration of the reporting period. Spot checks for verification purposes will be undertaken by the Accountable Body.
- 4.4.5 A variance of 25% or more on grant profile and delivery targets will trigger a review by the Accountable Body and Local Board, who will request a written response from the project lead detailing why the project has changed from the approved scope.
- 4.4.6 The Local Boards and SMBC, as Accountable Body, reserve the right to recover or withhold all or part of the funding supplied for a project in the following circumstances:
- The project is not delivered within agreed dates
  - The project delivered differs from that specified
  - The outcomes demonstrated through post-delivery evaluation fall short of those on which the value for money assessment and business case were based
  - The outputs identified in the Business Case are not delivered.
- 4.4.7 Monitoring reports will be summarised for consideration at the Local Board meetings, using a RAG rating system. In line with good practice and to support effective and robust decision making, monitoring reports to the Local Boards will typically summarise good progress and areas of good practice. The report will also highlight risks to the delivery of the programme.
- 4.4.8 If the Local Boards consider it appropriate, project leads will be invited to the Board meeting to explain any slippage. The Local Boards and Accountable Body will take circumstances beyond the projects control into account prior to making decisions over whether funding should be withheld or recovered.
- 4.4.9 All projects will be subject to a post-project evaluation completion report; this will ensure the Towns Fund Board follows best practice using recognised project and programme management techniques to ensure sound decisions have been made.

4.4.10 Each project claims monitoring report will be defined by the outputs, outcomes, and interrelationships to the wider programme.

4.4.11 Furthermore, projects will be subject to an annual monitoring/audit by the Accountable Body with summary of any findings and recommendations being presented to the Local Boards.

#### **4.5 Monitoring and Evaluation Reporting to DLUHC**

4.5.1 A condition of receiving Towns Fund funding will be providing regular feedback to DLUHC on progress of the Town Investment projects, to allow for monitoring and evaluation.

4.5.2 At least every six months (or more regularly, if required) the Accountable Body will be required to provide DLUHC with a comprehensive set of data relating to each Town Investment Project, including both total and forecast spend, and output metrics. These returns will be scrutinised and signed off by the Accountable Body's Section 151 Officer.

4.5.3 The specific data requirements are set out in the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework issued by DLUHC in April 2021.

4.5.4 DLUHC will lead on data collection relating to the outcomes and impact of Towns Fund interventions. Where data can be provided directly to government by SMBC it will undertake this; where data requires information from project sponsor organisations, this will be built into the local programme monitoring requirements where possible, to avoid duplication or unnecessary burdens for project leads.

4.5.5 Project sponsor organisations will also be responsible for collaborating with government and SMBC to assist its work on evaluation of the Towns Fund. Whilst this activity will be led by DLUHC, it will require local input and therefore local partners will need to contribute accordingly. This may include participating in any deep dive reviews that government chooses to conduct for the Towns Fund.

4.5.6 In addition to informing the evaluation activity to be conducted by government, the Sandwell Towns Fund Board may carry out its own review of Towns Fund delivery during the lifetime of the programme. The Towns Fund PMO will be responsible for presenting options for this review to the Sandwell Towns Fund Board.

## 4.6 Claims Process

- 4.6.1 The claims process is detailed in Annex 8 of this framework.
- 4.6.2 A Partnership Agreement or Internal Offer letter will be developed by the Accountable Body to align with its requirements in respect of the management and monitoring of Towns Fund projects. The Schedule sections of the agreement will then include the full business case which contains information relating to each project and take into account contractual obligations emerging from the due diligence appraisal process and expectations in terms of monitoring and evaluation of expenditure, outputs and outcomes.
- 4.6.3 A projects approval visit will be conducted by the PMO with Project Leads once Summary documentation has been submitted. The purpose of this visit is to explain further the delivery stages, monitoring and reporting during the project lifetime. The visit will be captured using the Project Approval Visit Template and provide the project leads with a suite of documents to support the monitoring and delivery of their project.
- 4.6.4 The Accountable Body will monitor performance of all projects every quarter and organise site visits/monitoring visits to each project once a year as a minimum. If a project is not performing as expected more frequent visits and progress meetings will be held with the funding recipients.
- 4.6.5 The Accountable Body is responsible for developing and maintaining a claims process enabling passporting of funds to grant recipients. Segregation of duties will ensure approval processes are in place where approval for payment is signed in accordance with scheme of delegation contained within Sandwell Financial Procedures.
- 4.6.6 The Accountable Body will ensure from the outset that robust and suitable systems and processes are in place locally in order to maintain adequate audit trails and manage information effectively and efficiently.
- 4.6.7 Funding recipients will provide quarterly claims to the Accountable Body, completing progress report information and spend/output updates on each claim. However, where a project is unable to financially cover its costs in the first quarter, an advance payment may be authorised, subject to approval by the Accountable Body.
- 4.6.8 The Claims process may be updated following further government guidance and requirements. The Accountable Body will review progress against outputs and outcomes quarterly until all outputs have been achieved.
- 4.6.9 Subject to government monitoring requirements, a quarterly reporting dashboard will provide the Local Boards with regular, detailed RAG rated information on how the project and overall programme is performing.

- 4.6.10 Where a project is Red RAG rated, it will be subject to monthly monitoring by the Accountable Body. If improvement is not demonstrated, this could result in withholding or claw-back of funds (see Section 4.8 Recover of Funds).
- 4.6.11 Projects will be subject to Annual audits from the Accountable Body in order to ensure compliance with funding regulations.
- 4.6.12 There may be occasions where projects incur essential eligible costs in advance of the contractual agreement being in place, for example, project design fees, planning fees, procurement costs, etc. These costs could be included within and considered as part of the due diligence appraisal, and if approved for funding support, would be specifically identified within schedules of the contractual agreement for the project.

## 4.7 Procurement

- 4.7.1 As a public sector body, SMBC employs rigorous procurement processes which fully comply with the European and HM Treasury regulation on tendering and procurement and is a 'contracting authority' under the Public Contracts Regulations. Any procurement carried out as part of the Towns Fund programme will follow the Council's procurement procedures where an organisation does not have such a policy. Compliance with procurement regulations are detailed in each project Partnership Agreement or Internal Offer Letter. The Councils Contract and Procedure rules can be found via the following link: [Sandwell Council's Contract and Procedure](#)
- 4.7.2 Procurement information will be required as part of the quarterly claims process. Compliance of procurement regulations will be verified during claims process or as part of the annual audits undertaken by the Accountable Body.

## 4.8 Recovery of Funding

**This section will be updated once we have detail from Government on grant conditions.**

- 4.8.1 It is anticipated that the Accountable Body through regular project monitoring will be in a position to identify where projects are likely to:
- Underspend
  - Underperform
  - Demonstrate non-compliance with the conditions of funding
- 4.8.2 Such concerns will be reported at the earliest possible stage to Accountable Body and where appropriate escalated to the Programme Risk Register.

4.8.3 Where mitigation measures fail and a project is likely to underspend, underperform or demonstrates non-compliance, an individual report will be considered by the Towns Fund Local Board which will include as a minimum:

- Project summary.
- Detail on the overall performance of the project to date.
- Description of the nature of the underperformance (financial, output or non-compliance);
- The level of funding at risk.
- A legal opinion setting out the legal basis for recovery of funding and the likelihood of success.
- A recommendation from the Accountable Body on the proposed course of action.

4.8.4 In exceptional circumstances, the Accountable Body may need to consider as to whether it is able to recover some or all funding from a project. In each circumstance the Accountable Body will provide a report to the Towns Fund Board to seek their endorsement for a proposed course of action.

## **4.9 Publications of Reports and Information**

4.9.1 Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard papers for Phase 1 and 2 and the Local Boards for delivery phase will be published on Modern.gov website.

4.9.2 These are published in line with the Best Guidance Practice Guidance in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, meeting agendas and papers are published 5 clear working days before the meeting takes place and draft minutes of the meeting are published within 10 clear working days of the meeting taking place.

4.9.3 Any declaration of interest made at the meeting will be included in the minutes.

4.9.4 The three Towns Fund Local Boards will follow the Accountable Body – SMBCs document classification policy in terms of how documents are classified as public, controlled, or restricted.

4.9.5 Information which is not to be placed in the public domain is treated under The Local Authorities-Executive Arrangements Meetings and Access to Information Regulations 2012 using one of following 7 exemptions:

- a) Information relating to any individual.
- b) Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
- c) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Authority holding that information).
- d) Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultation or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations

matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.

- e) Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
- f) Information which reveals that the authority proposes:
  - i. To give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
  - ii. To make an order or direction under any enactment.
- g) Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation, or prosecution of crime.

4.9.6 The Towns Fund Programme Board is a meeting of project leads, SMBC representatives and specialist advice from consultants therefore will not be a public meeting. Papers will be kept restricted to those attending the meetings, though (as noted below) any request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 would be considered and responded to, subject to any relevant exemptions (for example due to commercial considerations).

4.9.7 SMBC have in place appropriate data protection arrangements in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. The Council is the Data Controller for the Board in its capacity as Accountable Body

#### **4.10 Government Branding**

4.10.1 The Local Boards will meet any branding requirements set by DLUHC including the HM Government Identity Guidelines. Any additional branding changes or requests by HM Government will automatically be adopted by the Local Boards and Accountable Body and will apply to all communication produced afterwards

4.10.2 Each project is given the Towns Fund branding guidance document which includes details for press and publicity and marketing and branding materials. This guidance adheres to the standards issued by the DLUHC.

4.10.3 Each project is contractually obliged to conform to the branding guidance. This is followed up as part of the monitoring returns from each project, with projects required to provide details of forthcoming milestones linked to publicity opportunities to enable the PMO and Accountable Body to co-ordinate an appropriate marketing approach including engagement with DLUHC. A detailed Communications Plan (Annex 11) has been developed which will comply with any Government guidance.



## 4.11 RISK AND ASSURANCE

- 4.11.1 A detailed Risk Management Policy is included in Annex 12. Projects will maintain a detailed risk register and update on a regular basis to report to Boards as appropriate. The risks of each project are rated using a scoring matrix based on likelihood and impact that each risk presents. A set of mitigations is also included.
- 4.11.2 Based on the risk register and as part of the programme overview report, red and amber within projects are highlighted to the Local Boards on a quarterly basis.
- 4.11.3 Where a project as a whole is seen as high risk the Boards will seek a full risk report including how the risks will be mitigated. If the Boards are not satisfied with the response, they will seek further information from the project leads.
- 4.11.4 In the event that a project has, in the opinion of the Local Board, significantly changed (by 25% or more) from what was originally proposed (i.e.: spend profile, outputs and outcomes, or delivery) the Towns Fund Board will write to the project lead requesting a written response detailing why the project has changed.
- 4.11.5 Following receipt of the response, the Local Boards may decide to proceed with the amended project, may request that the project revert back to what was originally approved, release only part of the funding or delete the project from the programme.
- 4.11.6 The Local Boards will be provided with quarterly performance reports by the PMO. If it is reported that a project is delayed (commencement / completion / outputs / outcomes) by 3 months or more then the project will be reported as a High-Risk project. In this instance the Local Boards will write to the project lead requesting a written response detailing why the project was delayed.
- 4.11.7 If the Local Boards are not satisfied with the response, they can invite the project lead to present additional information to the next Board meeting.
- 4.11.8 The Towns Fund Programme will use a model of four 'lines of defense' in order to provide assurance across the programme to government and to the communities of Sandwell. The details of this are included in Annex 13. In summary, the four lines will be:

First line	Towns Fund (PMO) working with project leads
Second line	Towns Fund Programme Board
Third line	Sandwell Towns Fund Local Board and SMBC Cabinet
Fourth line	Internal Audit and Scrutiny (SMBC) and external scrutiny including DLUHC

## 4.12 Communications and Engagement

4.12.1 For the Towns Fund to be successful and of greatest benefit to the communities of Sandwell, it will be important to communicate effectively, accurately and regularly with stakeholders and the public. A Communications Protocol has been developed and adopted by the project leads.

This has been further developed into a detailed Communications and Engagement Plan (Annex 11) has been developed to ensure the Towns Fund Programme is communicated effectively.

4.12.2 Community stakeholder communication and engagement is essential to support the effective delivery of the Towns Fund by understanding how people are experiencing change in the local community and what their priorities are. Core principles to delivering communication and engagement activity were identified as:

- Clear, timely and accurate.
- Targeted and appropriate.
- Accountable to The Board.
- Planned, consistent and professional.
- Two way – with feedback considered in every interaction.

4.12.3 The Communications and Engagement Plan will also:

- Build a consistent and clear story of the Towns Fund and aligned initiatives.
- Take a coordinated Sandwell-wide approach.
- Be put into context and linked to the bigger picture.
- Use all available channels and techniques that are appropriate to the audience.
- Be meaningful and provide a feedback mechanism at all times.
- Be mindful of partners when sharing information.

4.12.4 Project leads will be asked to agree and follow the Communications Plan that will ensure communication regarding Towns Fund projects is coordinated and fulfils government expectations for branding and any other Towns Fund requirements. The Sandwell Towns Fund Board will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the protocol and working with project sponsor organisations to ensure adherence to this.

4.12.5 The Towns Fund PMO will be responsible for maintaining the Sandwell Towns Fund website pages and ensuring information is kept up to date. It will also be responsible for ensuring any other digital channels are utilised effectively and contain accurate and timely information about the programme.

#### **4.13 Data management and Freedom of Information.**

- 4.13.1 Towns Fund programme activity will comply with the council's Information Governance Framework which is aligned to requirements of the General Protection Data Regulation (GDPR) 2015 and Data Protection Act 2018.

Through the Towns Fund PMO, the council will support the Board in Funding with any data protection questions and ensure that project sponsor activity is also conducted in line with information assurance requirements. The relevant council policies can be found [here](#).

- 4.13.2 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 will also apply and there should be prompt liaison with SMBC over any request for information received to enable an appropriate response within statutory timescales and under the council's procedures.

#### **4.14 Consultations during Delivery Phase**

- 4.14.1 All projects have been required to complete a detailed Consultation and Engagement plan as part of their Full Business case. Project leads will be responsible for regularly updating this document and reporting back to the PMO on progress towards this plan as part of the monitoring process.
- 4.14.2 Where objections have been received following consultation on the proposed designed of Towns Fund projects, a process has been developed to assist projects navigate through this and provide the necessary approvals required to proceed with projects where applicable. The process can be found in Annex 14.

Signatories:

Towns Fund Chairs

S151 Officer

Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Growth

DRAFT

## Towns Fund Governance Document Phase 2 and Phase 3

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### 1. Purpose of Document

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to outline the governance arrangements for Sandwell's Towns Fund Programme for Phase 2 and Phase 3 and supersedes the Towns Fund Governance Arrangements agreed in July 2020.
- 1.2 It has been updated to reflect the next phases of the programme now that the Town Deals have been signed and to reflect the latest Towns Fund Guidance (released by MHCLG December 2020 and April 2021).
- 1.3 The document includes Roles and Responsibilities, Code of Conduct for Board Members, Decision Making arrangements, Scrutiny arrangements, Transparency and Accountability and a List of Members of the Towns Fund Superboard, and three Local Boards

### 2. Context

- 2.1 Governance is provided to this programme through the Towns Fund Superboard, three Local Boards, and the Council as the Accountable Body.
- 2.2 In accordance with the Towns Fund Guidance published June 2020 and December 2021 the Sandwell Superboard will be classed as the *Town Deal Board*.
- 2.3 The three Local Boards (Rowley Regis, Smethwick and West Bromwich) are constituted as working groups of the Superboard and have a remit to influence the Towns Fund Programme and to form part of the assurance mechanisms to ensure that project delivery remains in keeping with the Vision and objectives outlined in the Town Investment Plan.
- 2.4 Over the forthcoming months, the work of the Local Boards will involve considering options around the projects and the development of consultation and engagement plans, ahead of these being recommended to the Superboard.
- 2.5 MHCLG guidance outlines the following responsibilities for the Town Deal Board: -

2.5.1 Over Phase 2 of the Programme (development of full business cases) - the Town Deal Boards should have an ongoing role and sight of decisions, the nature and degree of which should be agreed locally and that the accountable body should make decisions in partnership and collaboration with the Town Deal Board.

2.5.2 Phase 3 of the Programme (project delivery) - that the Town Deal Board should ensure an element of independent 'on-the-ground' monitoring of the deal delivery and act as a 'critical friend' throughout the programme lifecycle.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **3.1 Superboard**

3.1.1 The Superboard is responsible for: -

- Leadership/ Direction - Provide strategic direction across all of the Town Deal Areas
- Coherent Governance - Ensure a coherent approach across all of the Town Deal Areas, maximising cross town initiatives where possible
- Consistency - Ensure interventions are not competitive across the Town Deal Areas and act to build the local economy
- Alignment to Strategic Priorities - Ensure alignment of projects to Local, Regional and National strategies
- Approve the Stakeholder Engagement Approach – ensuring that communities' voices are involved in shaping design and decision making at each phase of development, and ensuring diversity in its engagement with local communities and businesses
- Support and provide a steer (as required) to the Local Town Boards
- Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)
- Ensure compliance with Heads of Terms Agreements
- Have sight of and be consulted over project change requests
- Agree Full Business Cases and recommend them for appraisal and approval
- Act as a critical friend throughout the programme
- Fulfil any other duties and responsibilities required of the Town Deal Board by Central Government

3.1.2 The Chair of the Superboard is responsible for:

- Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)
- Leading the Superboard to achieve its objectives, maintaining an overview of activity, and championing the supporting partnership working

- Ensuring that decisions are made by the Board in accordance with good governance principles
- Signing the submissions to Government on behalf of the Superboard

### **3.2 Local Boards**

#### 3.2.1 The Local Boards are responsible for: -

- Helping develop project business cases as required by the Superboard
- Provide views, opinions and ideas on options and proposals
- To input into and advise on proposed engagement and consultation plans to encourage and help ensure relevant, proportionate and timely engagement with stakeholders
- To champion the Towns Fund projects
- To act as a critical friend offering on the ground local knowledge and perspective
- To make recommendations / create reports detailing the views of the Local Board to Superboard and Project Leads (as required)

#### 3.2.2 The Chairs of the Local Boards are responsible for: -

- Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)
- Leading the Local Boards to achieve their objectives, maintaining an overview of activity, and championing the supporting partnership working
- Reporting progress to the Superboard
- Acting as a Champion for the Towns Fund projects and the Town vision

#### 3.3 Superboard Members and Sandwell Council Cabinet Members will have an open invite to attend Local Board Meetings and engage and contribute to the development of projects.

### **3.4 Sandwell Council**

#### 3.4.1 Sandwell Council is the Accountable Body for the Town Deal

#### 3.4.2 Sandwell Council is responsible for: -

- Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)
- Developing a delivery team, delivery arrangements and agreements
- Ensuring that decisions made by the Superboard are in accordance with good governance principles.
- Ensuring transparency through the publication of agendas and minutes of the Superboard on CMIS
- Developing agreed projects in detail and undertaking any necessary feasibility studies
- Undertaking any required Environmental Impact Assessments or Public Sector Equality Duties

- Monitoring and evaluating the delivery of Towns Fund projects and impact
- Submitting monitoring reports, as required
- Receiving and Accounting for the Town's Funding allocation and capacity funds
- Undertake business case assurance and sign off in line with local processes (approval from SMBC Cabinet)
- Engage with the Towns Fund Superboard regarding project changes
- Proactively consult the Towns Fund Lead (MHCLG representative) on any potential changes to approved plans
- Ensure that all templates submitted to MHCLG are accurate and complete representations of current circumstances

#### **4. Board Vacancies**

- 4.1 **Superboard** - Vacancies occurring within the Superboard are for the identified organisations to make an appointment to in line with their own governance procedures.
- 4.2 **Young People's Representatives** - Vacancies occurring in young people's representation at Superboard and Local Boards will be identified and appointed to via the Sandwell Council Youth Service in consultation with the Chair of the Superboard and the relevant Local Board Chair, as appropriate.
- 4.3 **Local Board Representatives** - As working groups of the Superboard, Local Board appointments to vacancies will be agreed by Superboard. Any changes to the overall composition of the Local Boards should be made in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economic Growth.

#### **5. Code of Conduct**

- 5.1 All Members of the Superboard and Local Boards will sign the Councillor Code of Conduct which is based on the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles) and contained within Article 13 of the Council's constitution.
- 5.2 Members of the Superboard and the Superboard as a whole will be required to declare and register any gifts and/or hospitality which will be maintained by the Council.



## 6. Decision Making – Superboard

6.1 The Council's Principles of Decision Making will apply to the Superboard, as laid out in article 13 of the Council's Constitution. 'elected member' is taken to refer to Superboard member: -

6.1.1 Article 13.02 Principles:

- Proportionality (i.e. the action taken is proportionate to the desired outcome);
- Decisions are taken on the basis of due consultation and professional advice from officers (Decisions taken by elected members will be based on information provided in a written report prepared by the responsible officer/s);
- Respect for human rights and giving due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- A presumption in favour of openness (Reports will only be considered in private where they contain exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)(see Part 4 Access to Information Rules – Rule 10);
- Clarity of aims and desired outcomes (The written reports submitted to elected members will contain a clear recommendation of the professional officer for every decision they are asked to take)

6.2 **Quorum** – the Superboard will be considered quorate with one quarter of voting members present.

6.3 **Voting** – any matter will be decided upon by a simple majority of those members present in the room and eligible to vote.

6.4 **Confirmation of minutes** - The Chair presiding shall put the question that the minutes submitted to the meeting be approved as a correct record.

### 6.5 Declarations of Interest

6.5.1 Members shall be required to declare interests in accordance with any relevant statutory provisions and the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Part 5 of the Constitution.

- 6.5.2 Where a Superboard member has a disclosable pecuniary interest or pecuniary interest in the business of the authority he/she must withdraw from the room or chamber where the meeting considering the business is being held unless the member has obtained a dispensation from the Council's Monitoring Officer.

## **7. Recommendations from Local Boards**

- 7.1 As working groups of the Superboard, Local Boards will not have decision-making responsibilities. Through their recommendations and reports, Local Boards will influence the programme and project direction and will therefore adopt good governance principles for the management of declarations of interest as follows: -

### **7.2 Declarations of Interest**

- 7.2.1 Where a Local Board Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest or pecuniary interest in the business of the authority he/she must withdraw from the room or chamber where the meeting considering the business is being held unless the member has obtained a dispensation from the Council's Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee.
- 7.2.2 Where a Local Board Member is nominated as the Lead Officer for a project and/or is involved in project delivery, they may attend the Local Board discussion relating to the project in the capacity of providing and presenting information but they may not participate in any deliberations or decision by the Local Board concerning that project.
- 7.3 In the event that Local Board wishes to move to a vote, any matter will be decided upon by a simple majority of those members present in the room and eligible to vote.
- 7.4 The Chair shall have a casting vote.

## **8. Scrutiny**

- 8.1 Scrutiny of Sandwell's Towns Fund Programme will be provided by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements and through the critical friend challenge that will be provided by Superboard and Local Boards.

## **9. Transparency and Accountability**

### **9.1 Superboard Agendas and Minutes**

- 9.1.1 The Council will publish Superboard meeting agendas on CMIS 5 clear days before the meeting.
- 9.1.2 Draft minutes of the Superboard will be published within 10 clear working days; and
- 9.1.3 Approved minutes of the Superboard will be published within 10 clear working days

### **9.2 Member profiles**

- 9.2.1 Profiles of Superboard Members will be published on CMIS.

### **9.3 Conflicts of Interest**

- 9.3.1 Members of the Superboard will be required to declare any conflicts of interest (commercial, actual and potential). This will be maintained by the council in a declaration of interest register which will be managed by Sandwell Council.
- 9.3.2 Superboard Members should take personal responsibility for declaring their interests before any decision is considered by the Superboard. These will be formally noted within the published minutes of meetings of the Superboard including action taken in response to any declared interest.
- 9.3.3 Local Board Members should take personal responsibility for declaring their interests prior to an item being discussed. These will be noted within the minutes including action taking in response to any declared interest. If any Member has any queries about their interests and the disclosure thereof, they should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer.

## 10. Membership

### 10.1 Towns Fund Superboard

Representative	Organisation	Individual
Chair	Jude Thompson - President of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce	
Board Members	Federation of Small Businesses (FSP)	Karen Woolley
	Homes England Rep	Jo Nugent
	Black Country LEP	Geoff Layer
	Liberty Group – CEO Jahama Group	Dilip Awtani
	Local Board Chair – West Bromwich	Chris Hinson
	Local Board Chair – Smethwick	Alan Taylor
	Local Board Chair – Rowley Regis	Adrian Eggington
	MP (Halesowen and Rowley Regis)	James Morris
	MP (Warley)	John Spellar
	MP (West Bromwich East)	Nicola Richards
	MP (West Bromwich West)	Shaun Bailey
	Sandwell College CEO	Graham Pennington
	SCVO CEO	Mark Davis
SVCO Board Member	Geoff Foster	
SMBC Leader	Cllr Rajbir Singh	
SMBC Cabinet Member Strong and Inclusive Economy	Cllr Iqbal Padda	
Transport for West Midlands	Sandeep Shingadia	
WMCA	Gareth Bradford	
Sandwell Youth Parliament	Vacancy	
Police Representative	Keeley Bevington	
SMBC Officers (attending in advisory capacity)	SMBC CEO	David Stevens
	SMBC Executive Director, Children Services	Lesley Hagger
	SMBC Interim Director - Regeneration and Growth	Tammy Stokes
	SMBC Monitoring Officer	Surjit Tour

## 10.2 Local Boards

<b>West Bromwich</b>		
<b>Representative</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Individuals</b>
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Hinson – Sandwell Business Ambassador	
<b>Business Community</b>	West Bromwich BID	Lisa Hill
<b>Voluntary and Community Sector</b>	Multistory SCVO Kaleidoscope Albion Foundation YMCA Greets Green Community Enterprise The GAP Centre West Bromwich African Caribbean Centre	Emma Chetcuti Leona Bird Monica Shafaq Rob Lake Steve Clay Wendy Brookfield Andrew Bent Shane Ward
<b>BME, Equality and Faith Group Representatives</b>	Vacancy	Vacancy
<b>Young People’s Representative</b>	West Bromwich Resident/ Sandwell Council Apprentice	Dannielle Hawthorne
<b>Public Sector Organisations</b>	Sandwell College West Midlands Police WMCA Officer Level Sandwell & West Birmingham CCG	Simon Griffiths Vacancy Vacancy Andrew Lawley
<b>Elected Members</b>	Town Lead Member Deputy Town Lead Member	CLlr Melia CLlr E Giles / CLlr K Akpoteni
<b>Superboard Members &amp; Cabinet Members in attendance, as desired</b>		

<b>Smethwick</b>		
<b>Representative</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Individuals</b>
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Taylor (MI Glass) – Sandwell Business Ambassador	
<b>Business Community</b>	Business Representative Liberty Engineering	Omar Rashid John Wood
<b>Voluntary and Community Sector</b>	Brasshouse Community Centre SCVO Albion Foundation Smethwick Church Action	Jennifer Harrison Leona Bird Rob Lake Gareth Brown
<b>BME, Equality and Faith Group Representative</b>	Guru Nanak Gurdwara	Jatinder Singh

<b>Smethwick</b>		
<b>Representative</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Individuals</b>
Young People's Representative	Vacancy	Vacancy
Public Sector Organisations	Sandwell College West Midlands Police WMCA Officer Level Sandwell & West Birmingham CCG	David Holden Sgt Joanne Parke Vacancy Andrew Lawley
Elected Members	Town Lead Member Deputy Town Lead Member	Cllr Shaeen Cllr S Gill
<b>Superboard Members &amp; Cabinet Members in attendance, as desired</b>		

<b>Rowley Regis</b>		
<b>Representative</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Individuals</b>
Chair	Adrian Eggington – Black Country Housing Group	
Business Community	Business Representative/ Local Resident	Wayne Edwards
Voluntary and Community Sector	Cradley Heath Community Link Agewell Grace Mary to Lion Farm Big Local SCVO Murray Hall Community Trust Black Country Touring	Alecia Baker Deborah Harrold Helen Trueman Leona Bird Manjula Patel Matt Andrews
BME, Equality and Faith Group Representative	Cradley Heath Mosque	Mohammed Asif
Young People's Representative	Rowley Regis Resident/ SHAPE Youth Forum Member	Harvey Katarina
Public Sector Organisations	Sandwell College West Midlands Police West Midlands Police WMCA Officer Level Sandwell & West Birmingham CCG	Ann Sheridan Sgt Cheryl Reed Insp. Bel Sixsmith Vacancy Andrew Lawley
Elected Members	Town Lead Member Deputy Town Lead Member	Cllr Ashman Cllr Mabena
<b>Superboard Members &amp; Cabinet Members in attendance, as desired</b>		

### 1. Purpose of Document

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to outline the governance arrangements for Sandwell's Towns Fund Programme for Phase 3 and supersedes the Towns Fund Governance Arrangements agreed in July 2021 which was relevant to Phases 1 and 2.
- 1.2 It has been updated to reflect the next phases of the programme now that the Town Deals have been signed and to reflect the latest Towns Fund Guidance (released by MHCLG December 2020, April 2021 and December 2021).
- 1.3 The document includes Roles and Responsibilities, Code of Conduct for Board Members, Decision Making arrangements, Scrutiny arrangements, Transparency and Accountability and a List of Members of the three Local Boards

### 2. Context

- 2.1 Governance was provided to this programme through the Towns Fund Superboard and three Local Boards, and the Council as the Accountable Body for Phases 1 and 2.
- 2.2 For Phase 3 -Delivery, the work of the Local Boards will involve reviewing progress of the Towns Fund Programme and projects, assessing change requests and ensuring compliance with Heads of Terms. In accordance with the Towns Fund Guidance published June 2020 and updated guidance in, the Local Boards will each act as the Town Deal Board for their respective Towns.
- 2.3 MHCLG guidance outlines the following responsibilities for the Town Deal Board: -
  - 2.3.1 Phase 3 of the Programme (project delivery) - that the Town Deal Board should ensure an element of independent 'on-the-ground' monitoring of the deal delivery and act as a 'critical friend' throughout the programme lifecycle.
  - 2.3.2 Through project delivery, ensure regular catch ups with the Town Deal Board to enable the board to see through the town vision, take ownership of their proposed projects and provide a level of accountability.
  - 2.3.3 The Town Deal Board should have an ongoing role and sight of decisions, the nature and degree of which should be agreed locally.



### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

#### 3.1 Local Boards

3.1.1 The Local Board will be responsible for: -

- Leadership/ Direction - Provide strategic direction across all of the Town Deal Areas
- Coherent Governance - Ensure a coherent approach across all of the Town Deal Areas, maximising cross town initiatives where possible
- Consistency - Ensure interventions are not competitive across the Town Deal Areas and act to build the local economy
- Alignment to Strategic Priorities - Ensure alignment of projects to Local, Regional and National strategies
- Approve the Stakeholder Engagement Approach – ensuring that communities' voices are involved in shaping design and decision making at each phase of development, and ensuring diversity in its engagement with local communities and businesses
- Support and provide a steer (as required) to the Local Town Boards
- Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)
- Ensure compliance with Heads of Terms Agreements
- Have sight of and be consulted over project change requests
- Agree Full Business Cases and recommend them for appraisal and approval
- Act as a critical friend throughout the programme
- Fulfil any other duties and responsibilities required of the Town Deal Board by Central Government

3.1.2 The Chair of the Local Boards will be responsible for:

- Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)
- Leading the Local Boards to achieve its objectives, maintaining an overview of activity, and championing the supporting partnership working
- Ensuring that decision are made by the Board in accordance with good governance principles
- Signing the submissions to Government on behalf of the Local Boards

#### 3.2 Sandwell Council

3.2.1 Sandwell Council is the Accountable Body for Sandwell's Town Deal Programme.





### 3.2.2 Sandwell Council is responsible for: -

- Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)
- Developing a delivery team, delivery arrangements and agreements
- Ensuring that decisions are made by the Local Boards are in accordance with good governance principles.
- Ensuring transparency through the publication of agendas and minutes of the Local Boards on CMIS
- Developing agreed projects in detail and undertaking any necessary feasibility studies
- Undertaking any required Environmental Impact Assessments or Public Sector Equality Duties
- Monitoring and evaluating the delivery of Towns Fund projects and impact
- Submitting monitoring reports, as required
- Receiving and Accounting for the Town's Funding allocation and capacity funds
- Undertake business case assurance and sign off in line with local processes (approval from SMBC Cabinet)
- Engage with the Towns Fund Local Boards regarding project changes
- Proactively consult the Towns Fund Lead (MHCLG representative) on any potential changes to approved plans
- Ensure that all templates submitted to MHCLG are accurate and complete representations of current circumstances

## 4. Board Vacancies

4.1 **Local Board** - Vacancies occurring within the Local Boards are for the identified organisations to make an appointment to in line with their own governance procedures.

4.2 **Young People's Representatives** - Vacancies occurring in young people's representation at Local Boards will be identified and appointed to via the Sandwell Council Youth Service in consultation with the Chair of the Local Boards, as appropriate.

## 5. Code of Conduct

5.1 All Members of the Local Boards will sign the Councillor Code of Conduct which is based on the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles) and contained within Article 13 of the Council's constitution.



5.2 Members of the Local Boards as a whole will be required to declare and register any gifts and/or hospitality which will be maintained by the Council.

## 6. Decision Making – Local Boards

6.1 The Council's Principles of Decision Making will apply to the Local Boards, as laid out in article 13 of the Council's Constitution. 'elected member' is taken to refer to Local Board member: -

6.1.1 Article 13.02 Principles:

- Proportionality (i.e. the action taken is proportionate to the desired outcome);
- Decisions are taken on the basis of due consultation and professional advice from officers (Decisions taken by elected members will be based on information provided in a written report prepared by the responsible officer/s);
- Respect for human rights and giving due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- A presumption in favour of openness (Reports will only be considered in private where they contain exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) (see Part 4 Access to Information Rules – Rule 10);
- Clarity of aims and desired outcomes (The written reports submitted to elected members will contain a clear recommendation of the professional officer for every decision they are asked to take)

6.2 **Quorum** – the Local Boards will be considered quorate with one quarter of voting members present.

6.3 **Voting** – any matter will be decided upon by a simple majority of those members present in the room and eligible to vote.

6.4 **Confirmation of minutes** - The Chair presiding shall put the question that the minutes submitted to the meeting be approved as a correct record.

## 6.5 Declarations of Interest

6.5.1 Members shall be required to declare interests in accordance with any relevant statutory provisions and the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Part 5 of the Constitution.



- 6.5.2 Where a Local Board member has a disclosable pecuniary interest or pecuniary interest in the business of the authority he/she must withdraw from the room or chamber where the meeting considering the business is being held unless the member has obtained a dispensation from the Council's Monitoring Officer.
- 6.5.3 Where a Local Board Member is nominated as the Lead Officer for a project and/or is involved in project delivery, they may attend the Local Board discussion relating to the project in the capacity of providing and presenting information but they may not participate in any deliberations or decision by the Local Board concerning that project.
- 6.6 In the event that Local Board wishes to move to a vote, any matter will be decided upon by a simple majority of those members present in the room and eligible to vote.
- 6.7 The Chair shall have a casting vote.

## **7. Scrutiny**

- 7.1 Scrutiny of Sandwell's Towns Fund Programme will be provided by the Council's Economic, Skills, Environment and Transport Scrutiny Board on a quarterly basis and through the critical friend challenge that will be provided by the Local Boards.

## **8. Transparency and Accountability**

### **8.1 Local Board Agendas and Minutes**

- 8.1.1 The Council will publish Local Board meeting agendas on Modern.gov 5 clear days before the meeting.
- 8.1.2 Draft minutes of the Local Boards will be published within 10 clear working days; and
- 8.1.3 Approved minutes of the Local Boards will be published within 10 clear working days

### **8.2 Member profiles**

- 8.2.1 Profiles of Local Board Members will be published on Modern.gov.uk



### 8.3 Conflicts of Interest

- 8.3.1 Members of the Local Boards will be required to declare any conflicts of interest (commercial, actual and potential). This will be maintained by the council in a declaration of interest register which will be managed by Sandwell Council.
- 8.3.2 Local Boards Members should take personal responsibility for declaring their interests before any decision is considered by the Local Boards. These will be formally noted within the published minutes of meetings of the Local Boards including action taken in response to any declared interest.
- 8.3.3 Local Board Members should take personal responsibility for declaring their interests prior to an item being discussed. These will be noted within the minutes including action taking in response to any declared interest. If any Member has any queries about their interests and the disclosure thereof, they should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer.

**(The following sections are proposed new additions to the Terms of Reference)**

### 9. The Boards relationship with Sandwell Council

- 9.1 In accordance to the government guidance, the Town Deal Board will have sight and endorse Accountable Body decisions in the delivery of the Towns Fund Programme. Sandwell Council will remain the Accountable body for any Town Deal funding that is received, and any other funding received in future in relation to Town Deal projects.
- 9.2 These Terms of Reference do not change, replace, substitute for or amend in any way the statutory powers or duties or other responsibilities of any of the people or organisations represented on the Sandwell Town Deal Boards.
- 9.3 The procurement policies of Sandwell Council will apply. Where external professional advice is required, consultants will be identified using the procurement policies of Sandwell Council and contracts will be entered into between Sandwell Council and the relevant organisation in accordance with Sandwell Councils policies and procedures including its contract procedure rules.
- 9.4 Where applicable, Sandwell Councils Cabinet will receive regular reports on progress of activities through regular performance monitoring.
- 9.5 Board Members shall make themselves available from time to time to meet Cabinet and / or Portfolio Holder and to attend meetings of the Council's Scrutiny Committee if invited.



9.6 The council's Data Protection Officer and the PMO will support the Board in dealing with any data protection questions. The councils framework can be found at [:Information Governance and Data Protection](#)

## 10. Membership

10.1 The Lead Council has responsibility for establishing the Town Deal Boards for the development and implementation of the Town Investment Plans

10.2 The Local Boards will now assume responsibility for future governance under these Terms of References in consultation with the Accountable Body.

10.3 Membership will be reviewed annually and seek to continue to be representative of a diverse range of sectors, skills and interests in Sandwell in order for the Sandwell Towns Boards to be a valuable resource to draw on at all stages of the Town Investment Plan implementation.

10.4 Advisors – Advisors are invited by Board Members and participate in the meetings but will have no voting rights or ability to make decisions on behalf of the Board.

10.5 S151 Officer – Sandwell Council is the Accountable Body for the Town Board. The Council's S151 Officer or substitute will have a standing invite on the Local Boards to ensure compliance with all necessary financial regulations.

10.6 These terms of reference may be reviewed and modified at any time in consultation with the , Director of Law and Governance .

## 11. Scheme of Delegation

11.1 The Scheme of delegation in relating decision making are included as an annex to these Terms of Reference.

11.2 A decision which is made in contravention of the process will be invalid based on non- compliance unless the Local Board has given prior approval for variation in the decision-making process.

11.3 Any financial decision must be signed off by Sandwell's S151 Officer as the Accountable Body. The Council's S151 Officer will ensure compliance with all necessary financial regulations, in order to protect the Accountable Body and ensure proper administration of all financial affairs.

11.4 The Chair of the Local Board can decide to convene a meeting where decisions need to be considered by the Local Boards which does not fit within the timeframe of the scheduled meetings. Where possible, the standard notice period will apply for any such meeting.



- 11.5 Where a meeting cannot be convened, urgent decisions can be endorsed by the Local Board through a written procedure.
- 11.6 Only in the most exceptional circumstances might it be considered necessary and appropriate for a matter of strategic importance usually reserved to the Main Board to be decided through this procedure. This will apply where a project cannot continue without a decision being approved, therefore posing a significant risk to project deliverability. This includes, but is not limited to:
- a) Time limited reallocation of funding
  - b) Changes to Heads of Terms
  - c) Changes to Mandatory Indicators and financial profiles
- 11.7 Written/Urgent Procedure:
- 11.7.1 Following consideration by Director of Regeneration and Growth/S151, a report in the usual meeting format and including reasons for urgency, will be circulated to the Chair/Vice chair to consider whether, due to the urgent nature of the decision to be made, it is necessary and appropriate for the decision to be made before the next meeting.
- 11.7.2 The Chair/Vice Chair may consult with Director of Regeneration and Growth /S151 or other officers to provide further information where required.
- 11.7.3 Within 5 working days of the report being presented, the Chair/Vice Chair will inform whether the decision is endorsed on behalf of the Board.
- 11.7.4 For transparency the report, reasons for urgency, and decision will be presented to the next Local Board meeting.

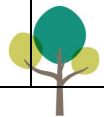
## 12. Objections following Consultations

- 12.1 Project Leads will present any objections that have been received following consultation on Towns Fund projects to the Local Boards. The Local Board will consider the objections and alternative options prior to making a decision in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet member.
- 12.2 In the event that a decision cannot be agreed between Local Board and Cabinet member, a separate meeting will be held with the Leader, Cabinet Member, Chair of Local Board and Director of Regeneration and Growth to discuss/resolve difference of view.
- 12.3 The project will not proceed in the delivery phase until a decision has been made.



## Annex 1

Type of Variation	Scale of Variation	Action Required	Requires Local Board endorsement?	Delegated Authority to approve	Approval required from DLUHC	Action following DLUHC approval
<b>Heads of Terms</b>	Any Changes to the Heads of Terms	Submit Project Adjustment Request	Yes	Director of Regeneration & Growth in consultation with Cabinet Member and S151 Officer  *(subject to May 22 Cabinet approval)	Yes  S151 sign off required	Issue Deed of Variation
Financial	A decrease/increase of <b>grant funds</b> to be drawn down by the project which is less than £250,000					
	A decrease/increase of <b>grant funds</b> to be drawn down by the project which is greater than £250,000					
	Any decrease of match funding					
	An increase in the match funding cost of the project without impact to the agreed funding for the project, the outputs/ outcomes or project completion	Update PMO	n/a	Towns Fund Programme Manager	No	Issue Re-profile letter  Report to Local Board
Time/ Schedule	Slippage of milestones with no effect on total grant, completion date, outputs/outcomes	Update PMO	No	Towns Fund Programme Manager	Tbc	Issue Re-profile letter  Report to Local Board
	Slippage of outcomes and/ or grant claim profile, requiring re-profiling across future financial years with no overall change to project	Submit Project Adjustment Request	Yes	Director of Regeneration & Growth in consultation with S151 Officer*	Yes  S151 sign off required	Issue Re-profile letter  Report to Local Board
Outcomes/Outputs	An increase in the outputs and outcomes of the project.	Quarterly reporting by project lead	No	Towns Fund Programme Manager	No	Report to Local Board
	Any decrease to Mandator indicators outputs and outcomes of the project.	Submit Project Adjustment Request	Yes	Director of Regeneration & Growth, in consultation with S151 Officer and Cabinet Member	Yes  S151 sign off required	Issue Deed of Variation
	Any decrease to Local Measures	Submit Project Adjustment Request	Yes	Director of Regeneration & Growth	Tbc	Issue Re-profile letter
Other	Changes to project contact information, administrative errors and others which have no impact to approved outcomes, outputs or grant.	Inform Project Lead/PMO	No	Towns Fund Programme manager	Tbc	Update documentation and Local Board where applicable



## WEST BROMWICH PROPOSED LOCAL BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Organisation	Individual
Sandwell Business Ambassador	Chris Hinson - Chair
Albion Foundation	Rob Lake
Greets Green Community Enterprise	Wendy Brookfield
Kaleidoscope	Monica Shafaq
Multistory	Emma Chetcuti
SCVO	Leona Bird
Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG	Andrew Lawley
Sandwell College	Simon Griffiths
<b>Ward Member representative</b>	<b>Tbc</b>
West Bromwich Town Lead Member	Councillor Steve Melia
The GAP Centre	Andrew Bent
West Bromwich African Caribbean Centre	Shane Ward
West Bromwich BID	Lisa Hill
West Midlands Police	Identified in line with rest days
WMCA Officer Level	Vacancy
YMCA	Luke Tyler
Young Peoples Representative	Danielle Hawthorne
SMBC Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member – Councillor Hartwell
<b>Transferred from Superboard</b>	
SMBC Leader	Cllr Kerrie Carmichael
Cabinet Member for Strong and Resilient Communities	Portfolio holder structure has changed - to be updated following election
SMBC Cabinet Member for Governance and Democracy	Portfolio holder structure has changed - to be updated following election
SMBC Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth	TBC/ Cllr Kerrie Carmichael
MP	Nicola Richards - MP West Bromwich East Constituency
Business Representative/Vice Chair	Jude Thompson
LEP representative	Geoff Layer
Homes England Representative	Jo Nugent
Transport for West Midlands	Sandeep Shingadia
<b>SMBC Representative</b>	
Towns Fund Programme Manager	Rina Rahim
Towns Fund Programme Support Officer	Emma Parkes
Regeneration Manager	Jenna Langford
Director – Regeneration and Growth	Tony McGovern
Managing Director Commissioner	Kim Bromley-Derry
SMBC Monitoring Officer	Surjit Tour
Employment and Skills	Kelly Thomas
Regeneration Lead	Joshua Singh/ Alex Oxley
Service Manager for Culture and Tourism	Jane Lillystone
Interim Service Manager for Assets and Land	Chris Hilton





## SMETHWICK PROPOSED LOCAL BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Organisation	Individual
MI Glass	Alan Taylor - CHAIR
Albion Foundation	Rob Lake
Brasshouse Community Centre	Jennifer Harrison
Business Representative	Omar Rashid
Guru Nanak Gurdwara	Jatinder Singh
Liberty Engineering	John Wood
Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG	Andrew Lawley
Sandwell College	David Holden
SCVO	Leona Bird
<b>Ward Member representative</b>	<b>Tbc</b>
Smethwick Town Lead Member	Councillor Farut Shaeen
West Midlands Police	Sgt Joanne Parke
WMCA Officer Level	Vacancy
Young People's representative	Muhammed Shabir
Young People's representative	Muskaan Iqbal
Smethwick Church Action Network	Gareth Brown
SMBC Cabinet Member	Councillor-Piper
SMBC Cabinet Member	Councillor Ahmed
<b>Transferred from Superboard</b>	
SMBC Leader	Cllr Kerrie Carmichael
MP	John Spellar - MP Warley Constituency
Business Representative/Vice Chair	Jude Thompson
SMBC Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Growth	Tbc/Cllr Kerrie Carmichael
Cabinet Member for Strong and Resilient Communities	Portfolio holder structure has changed - to be updated following election
SMBC Cabinet Member for Governance and Democracy	Portfolio holder structure has changed - to be updated following election
LEP representative	Geoff Layer
Homes England Representative	Jo Nugent
Transport for West Midlands	Sandeep Shingadia
<b>SMBC representatives</b>	
Regeneration Manager	Jenna Langford
Towns Fund Programme Manager	Rina Rahim
Towns Fund Programme Office/ Note Taker	Emma Parkes
Director – Regeneration and Growth	Tony McGovern
Managing Director Commissioner	Kim Bromley-Derry
SMBC Monitoring Officer	Surjit Tour
Director Town Lead	Vacant
Employment and Skills	Kelly Thomas
Regeneration Lead	Hayley Insley / Clinton Felicio
Service Manager for Culture and Tourism	Jane Lillystone
Interim Service Manager for Assets and Land	Chris Hilton



## ROWLEY REGIS PROPOSED LOCAL BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Organisation	Individual
Black Country Housing Group	Adrian Eggington - CHAIR
Agewell	Deborah Harrold
Cradley Heath Central Mosque	Mohammed Asif
Cradley Heath Community Link	Vacancy
Business Rep and Local Resident	Wayne Edwards
Grace Mary to Lion Farm Big Local	Helen Trueman
Murray Hall Community Trust	Manjula Patel
SCVO	Leona Bird
Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG	Andrew Lawley
Sandwell College	Ann Sheridan
<b>Ward Member representative</b>	<b>Tbc</b>
Rowley Regis Town Lead Member	Councillor Lorraine Ashman
SMBC Local Cabinet Member	Councillor Maria Crompton
SMBC Local Cabinet Member	Councillor Danny Millard
West Midlands Police	Attendance in line with rest days
WMCA Officer Level	Vacancy
Young People's Representative	Harvey Katarina
<b>Transferred from Superboard</b>	
SMBC Leader	Cllr Kerrie Carmichael
MP	James Morris - MP Halesowen and Rowley Constituency
Business Representative/Vice-Chair	Jude Thompson
SMBC Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Growth	Tbc/Cllr K Carmichael
LEP representative	Geoff Layer
Homes England Representative	Jo Nugent
Transport for West Midlands	Sandeep Shingadia
<b>SMBC Representatives</b>	
Towns Fund Programme Manager	Rina Rahim
Towns Fund Programme Support Officer	Emma Parkes
Director, Regeneration and Growth	Tony McGovern
Regeneration Manager	Jenna Langford
Managing Director Commissioner	Kim Bromley-Derry
SMBC Monitoring Officer	Surjit Tour
Employment and Skills	Kelly Thomas
Regeneration Lead	Alan Reynolds
Service Manager for Culture and Tourism	Jane Lillystone
Interim Service Manager for Assets and Land	Chris Hilton
Programme Support/ Note Taker	Jenny Bakewell





# **CODE OF CONDUCT**

West Bromwich Local Board/ Smethwick Local Board/  
Rowley Regis Local Board.

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Sandwell MBC, as the Accountable Body for the Towns Fund, has a statutory duty under the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct. This code of conduct sets out the expectations placed on all members of the West Bromwich, Smethwick and Rowley Regis Local Boards.

The Code is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all the obligations that are placed on members. It is the responsibility of individual members to comply with the provisions of the Code as well as such other legal obligations as may apply to them from time to time.

## **Definitions**

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In this Code “meeting” means any formal meeting of the Local Boards. It also means any informal meeting, which is not a formal meeting, but which has been arranged in advance where business is being discussed between board members or between members and officers.

In this Code a ‘member of your family’ includes the following relationships of the member, the member’s spouse or the member’s civil partner or any person with whom you are living as husband and wife or as if you were civil partners: a son/daughter (including a biological son/daughter, stepson/daughter, adopted son/daughter or male/female child for which the person has custodial responsibilities), mother, father, brother or sister, a niece, nephew, aunt, uncle, grandchild, grandparent

In this Code ‘a person with whom you have a close association’ means someone that you are in either regular contact with over a period of time or a significant contact who is more than an acquaintance or can be considered to be a friend, a colleague, a business associate or someone whom you know through general social contacts.

## **Rules of Conduct**

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Sandwell Towns Fund Local Board’s success as a partnership depends on the professionalism of all of its Board Members and officers who support Board activity. This relates to both internal and external funding and how its Board Members and officers conduct themselves in relation to others, both within work environment and any work-related social event.

Sandwell Towns Fund Local Board’s expect all its Board Members/Committee Members and employees to be courteous and respectful to clients, suppliers and colleagues and not behave in a discriminatory manner. This code of conduct should be signed by all Local Board Members upon appointment and on annual basis after joining the Board/Committee and upheld at all times.

1. You are a Board Member of the Sandwell Towns Fund Local Board and hence you always shall have regard to the Seven Principles in Public Life (the Nolan principles) which are: –

<i>Selflessness</i>	Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
<i>Integrity</i>	Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
<i>Objectivity</i>	Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
<i>Accountability</i>	Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
<i>Openness</i>	Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
<i>Honesty</i>	Holders of public office should be truthful.
<i>Leadership</i>	Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

2. Accordingly, when acting in your capacity as a Board Member of Sandwell Towns Fund Local Board: -

- You must act solely in the public interest and should never improperly seek to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person or act to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, a close associate, an employer or a business carried on by you.
- You must not place yourself under a financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that may influence you in the performance of your duties
- You must not disclose any information given to you as a member in breach of any confidence.
- You must not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.
- You must not bring the Towns Fund Local Board into disrepute
- You must treat others with respect and must promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their sex, race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability

- You must not bully any person
- You must not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or is likely to be -
  - a complainant,
  - a witness, or
  - involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings, in relation to an allegation that a member (including yourself) of the Board has failed to comply with the code of conduct;
- You must respect the impartiality and integrity of the council's statutory officers and its other employees.
- When carrying out your public duties such as awarding contracts or making appointments, you must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- You must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of the Sandwell Towns Fund Local Board, ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political or personal purposes (including party political purposes).
- You must promote and support high standards of conduct when serving as a board member
- You must at all times facilitate and engage with the council and its committees on probity and ethical matters and submit yourself to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this without any undue delay.

### **Registering and declaring pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests**

3. You must, within 28 days of appointment as a Board Member notify the Council's (as the Accountable Body) Monitoring Officer of any disclosable pecuniary interest, where the pecuniary interest is yours, your spouse's or civil partner's, or is the pecuniary interest of somebody with whom you are living with as a spouse, or as if you were civil partners. Where you may have a "sensitive interest" as defined by the Localism Act 2011, you should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer on whether this can be exempt from public disclosure.
4. In addition, you must, within 28 days appointment as a Board Member, notify the Councils Monitoring Officer of any non-pecuniary interest which the Sandwell Towns Fund Local Board has decided should be included in the register or which you consider should be included if you are to fulfil your duty to act in conformity with the Seven Principles of Public Life. These non-pecuniary interests will necessarily include your membership of any Trade Union. Register of Interests forms will be provided for you to do this.
5. You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of it, register with the Monitoring Officer any change to interests or new interests.
6. Board Members should review their individual register of interest before each board meeting or any other meeting where a decision is proposed to be made. If an interest has not been entered onto the Board's register, then the member must disclose the interest at any meeting of the Sandwell Towns Fund Local Board at

which they are present, where they have a disclosable interest in any matter being considered and where the matter is not a 'sensitive interest'.

7. Following any disclosure of an interest not on the register or the subject of pending notification, you must notify the Council's Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days beginning with the date of disclosure.
8. Unless a dispensation has been granted, you may not participate in any discussion of, vote on, or discharge any function related to any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest. Additionally, you must observe the restrictions the Sandwell Towns Fund Local Board places on your involvement in matters where you have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Sandwell Towns Fund Local Board.
9. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to or affects an other registerable interests you must declare the existence and nature of the interest unless it is a sensitive interest. When acting alone declare the interest and do not take any steps, or any further steps in relation to the matter.

## **Gifts and Hospitality**

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### **General Caution**

Treat with extreme caution any offer or gift, favour or hospitality that is made to you personally.

Your personal reputation and that of the Board can be seriously jeopardised by the inappropriate acceptance by you of a gift or hospitality.

The acceptance of gifts and hospitality is not always unlawful or inappropriate. The decision for you in every case is whether or not it is appropriate to accept any gift or hospitality that might be offered to you, having regard to how it might be perceived.

No hard and fast rules can be laid down to cover every circumstance as to what is appropriate or inappropriate. This guidance is intended to enable you to make your own decision.

### **Criminal Law**

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It is a criminal offence corruptly to solicit or receive any gift, reward or advantage as an inducement to do or forbear to do anything in respect of any transaction involving the Board or Council as the accountable body.

The onus would be on you to disprove corruption in relation to a gift from a person holding or seeking to obtain a contract from the Board or Council.

## **Limits of Guidance**

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This guidance does not apply to: -

- Gifts and hospitality you may receive from family and friends (as birthday or other festival presents) that are not related to your position as a member. You should however question any such gift or hospitality offered from an unusual source.
- The acceptance of facilities or hospitality provided to you by the Board or Council.
- Gifts given to the Board that you accept formally on the Board's behalf and are retained by the Board and not by you personally.

## **Meaning of Gifts and Hospitality**

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The expressions 'gifts' and 'hospitality' have wide meanings and no conclusive definition is possible.

Gifts and hospitality include:

- The free gift of any goods or services.
- The opportunity to acquire any goods or services at a discount or at terms not available to the general public.
- The opportunity to obtain goods or services not available to the general public.
- The offer of food, drink, accommodation or entertainment or the opportunity to attend any cultural or sporting event.

Common gifts include pens, diaries, calendars and other business stationery, articles of clothing, books, flowers and bouquets. Members should however be cautious when purchasing anything, when additional services, privileges or advantages are offered, which might be related to their position as a member.

## **Appropriate Gifts and Hospitality**

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There are some circumstances where you may accept gifts and hospitality as being in the normal course of your duties as a board member.

- Hospitality provided by another board or public authority.
- Normal and modest refreshment in connection with any meeting in the course of your work as a member (e.g. tea, coffee and other normal beverages and refreshments)
- Tickets for sporting, cultural and entertainment events which are sponsored or promoted by the Board or bodies to which you have been appointed by the Board, and the tickets are offered in relation to that sponsorship or promotion.



- Small gifts of token value i.e. estimated to be below £50: -
  - (a) given by way of trade advertisement to a wide range of people, e.g. pens, calendars, diaries and key-rings; or
  - (b) given on the occasion of a courtesy visit, e.g. to a factory or other business premises; or
  - (c) received from a recipient of a service, where it would give offence to reject it.
- Drinks or other modest refreshment in the normal course of socialising arising consequentially from Authority business (e.g. inclusion in a round of drinks after a meeting).
- Modest meals provided as a matter of courtesy in the office or meeting place of a person with whom the Board has a business connection.
- Souvenirs and gifts from other public bodies intended as personal gifts (e.g. arising from twin-town and other civic events).
- Invitations to attend functions where you represent the Board (e.g. dinners where you are invited to speak, opening ceremonies and trade shows) or to functions when you attend by virtue of your position on the Board.
- Hospitality provided at public events, where a formal invitation has been received at Council offices and the attendance is in a civic capacity.

### **Inappropriate Gifts and Hospitality**

- Free or subsidised holidays or travel.
- Personal invitations to the theatre, cabaret, light entertainment or sporting events.
- Personal invitations to socialise with representatives from a company or organisation that has business or other Fundings with the Council.
- Offers of any free or subsidised accommodation (i.e. hotel, flat, villa or holiday home).
- Any offer whatsoever of free services.
- Any other hospitality offered by a company or organisation that has business or other Fundings with the Council, which is not linked to its normal course of business with the Council (i.e. not part of business meetings or offered to officers representing the Council at events).

In exceptional circumstances, it may be permissible to accept travel, accommodation and hospitality from a company or organisation, which has or may have business with the Council, when the assessment and evaluation of bids or tenders necessitates visiting reference sites, provided that this facility is also offered/applied to other

tenderers. In such a situation, you must be accompanied by an officer of the Council, whose attendance has been approved by his Director/Service Manager or in appropriate cases the Chief Executive.

## **Principles to Apply in Relation to Gifts and Hospitality**

In deciding whether it is appropriate to accept any gift or hospitality you must apply the following principles: -

- Do not accept a gift or hospitality as an inducement or reward for anything you do as a member. If you have any suspicion that the motive behind the gift or hospitality is an inducement or reward you must decline it. "Reward" includes remuneration, reimbursement and fee.
- Do not accept a gift or hospitality whose value is excessive in the circumstances.
- Do not accept a gift or hospitality if acceptance might be open to misinterpretation. Such circumstances will include gifts and hospitality: -
  - a) From parties involved with the Authority in a competitive tendering or other procurement process except in the limited circumstances referred to in paragraph 7 above.
  - b) From applicants for planning permission and other applications for licences, consents and approvals.
  - c) From applicants for grants, including voluntary bodies and other organisations applying for public funding.
  - d) From applicants for benefits, claims and dispensations.
  - e) From parties in legal proceedings with the Authority.
- Do not accept a gift or hospitality if you believe it will put you under any obligation to the provider as a consequence.
- Do not solicit any gift or hospitality and avoid giving any perception of so doing.

## **Registration of Gifts and Hospitality**

For the purposes of the Code of Conduct for Board Members, you have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £100.00.

This interest (gifts or hospitality worth £100.00 or over that you receive in connection with your official duties as a member and its source) must be registered in the register of members' interests within 28 days of receiving it.

You should register the interest as soon as possible after acceptance of the gift or hospitality. The registration should include the source and nature of the gift or hospitality.

You should also register any such gift or hospitality, which you decide to refuse or decline.

You do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a Board member, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family, or gifts which you do not accept. However, you should always register a gift or hospitality if it could be perceived as something given to you because of your position or if your authority requires you to.

You should ask yourself, would I have been given this if I was not on the Board? If you are in doubt as to the motive behind a gift or hospitality it is recommended that you register it or at least seek advice from the Monitoring Officer. If you have not registered your gift or hospitality in accordance with the requirements set out in your Code of Conduct then you must declare or disclose the existence and nature of the interest arising from a gift or hospitality at a meeting of the authority at which business is considered to which the interest relates. (i.e. business relating to the interests of the person or body giving the gift or hospitality).

Whilst the registration requirement in the Code is limited to gifts or hospitality over the value of £100.00, members are encouraged to register any significant gift or hospitality they receive below this value.

There is no obligation to make a declaration or disclosure in relation to gifts and hospitality on the register which are below £100.00 in value. The general rule is, if in doubt as to the value of a gift or hospitality, you should register it, as a matter of good practice and in accordance with the principles of openness and accountability in public life.

You may have to estimate how much a gift or hospitality is worth. Also, an accumulation of small gifts you receive from the same source over a short period that add up to £100.00 or over should be registered.

### **Reporting of Inappropriate Gifts and Hospitality offered**

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It is a criminal offence for a person corruptly to give or offer any gift, reward or advantage as an inducement or reward to you for doing or forbearing to do anything as a member of the Board.

You must immediately report to the Monitoring Officer any circumstances where an inappropriate gift or hospitality has been offered to you. You may thereafter be required to assist the Police in providing evidence.

### **Enforcement**

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Allegations of any failure to meet the parameters of the Code of Conduct must be made in writing to the Monitoring Officer.

## Policy Owner

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This code of conduct is owned and maintained by the Council's Monitoring Officer and Chair of Sandwell Towns Fund Local Boards and reviewed annually.

## Confirmation

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**In accepting my appointment to the Sandwell Towns Fund Local Board, I confirm that I have read, understood and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct.**

<b>Full Name</b>	
<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Dated</b>	

## Guidance and Further Information

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1. For the purposes of this guidance, we are using the definition of a pecuniary interest as set out in the Localism Act 2011 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.
2. A Non-Pecuniary interest is any interest which is not listed in the Schedule to The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (No.1464).
3. A 'sensitive interest' is described in the Localism Act 2011 as a member or co-opted member of an authority having an interest, and the nature of the interest being such that the member or co-opted member, and the authority's monitoring officer, consider that disclosure of the details of the interest could lead to the member or co-opted member, or a person connected with the member or co-opted member, being subject to violence or intimidation.

# REGISTER OF BOARD MEMBER INTERESTS

West Bromwich Local Board/ Smethwick Local Board/  
Rowley Regis Local Board.

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(Pursuant to the agreed Code of Conduct for Board Members and Part 1, Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011).

**Please refer to the Code of Conduct and the accompanying Notes of Guidance before completing this form.**

I, **[Insert Name]**

An appointed Board member of **West Bromwich, Smethwick, Rowley Regis Local Board (Delete as appropriate)** give notice that I have set out below my interests and in so far as I am aware of the existence of the interests of my spouse or civil partner or any person with whom I am living as husband and wife or as if we were civil partners (relevant persons).

I have also set out in so far as I am aware of the existence of the names of any members of my family or close associates who either work on behalf of the Board or the Council or have a contractual relationship with the Board or the Council and the nature of that interest.

I have put 'None' where I/ we have no such interest under any heading.

## **PART A - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

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1. Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain (Including employment outside of the Borough of Sandwell). Please give details of (i) every employment, job, trade, business or vocation you and/or your partner have, for which you and/or your partner receive any benefit or gain (i.e. profit, salary or benefit in kind) including a short description of the activity e.g. accountant or plumber and (ii) the name of any employer or body, firm or company which you and/or your partner own or in whose securities you and/or your partner have any beneficial interest. This must include remuneration as a director.

2. Sponsorships - any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred in carrying out duties as a Board member. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

3. Contracts - any contract which is made between you and/or your partner (or a body in which you and/or your partner have a beneficial interest) and the Council or Town Deal Local Board (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.

4. Land - any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the Borough of Sandwell. Please give the address or other description (sufficient to identify the location) of any land or property in the area of the Borough of Sandwell in which you and/or your partner have a beneficial interest, indicating whether you and/or your partner are the owner or lessee or a tenant. Include any house you rent from Sandwell Borough Council.

5. Licences - any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the Borough of Sandwell for a month or longer. Please give the address or other description (sufficient to identify the location) of any land or property in the area of the Borough of Sandwell in which you and/or your partner licence.

6. Corporate tenancies -any tenancy where (to your knowledge) (a) the landlord is the Council; and (b) the tenant is a body in which you and/or your partner have a beneficial interest. Please give the address or other description (sufficient to identify the location) of any land leased or licensed from the Council by you and/or your partner or any body, firm or company by which you are employed or which you own or in which you have a beneficial interest.

7. Securities - any beneficial interest in securities of a body where (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Borough of Sandwell ; and (b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class. Note it is not necessary to declare the nature or size of the holding, simply the name of the company or other body.

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## **PART B - OTHER REGISTERABLE INTERESTS**

8. Any body of which you and/ or your partner are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you and/ or your partner are appointed or nominated by the Council or Town Deal Local Board.

9. Any body of which you and/ or your partner are a member or in a position of general control or management and which: -

- (a) exercises functions of a public nature;
- (b) is directed to charitable purposes; or
- (c) is a body which includes as one of its principal purposes influencing public opinion or policy (this includes any political parties or trade union).

10. Any person from whom you and/or your partner have received a gift, or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £100 (you must register any gifts and hospitality worth over £100 that you receive personally in connection with official duties).

### **PART C - MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY AND CLOSE ASSOCIATES**

11. The names of any members of your family or close associates who either work for the Council or on behalf of the Town Deal Local Board or have a contractual relationship with the Council or Town Deal Local Board and the nature of that interest.

### **PART D – VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION OF OTHER INTERESTS**

12. Please list below any other interests that you wish to declare in accordance with the General Principles of Conduct as set out in the Code of Conduct or which you think may lead to a conflict of interests between your personal interests and the public interest.

### **PART E - CONFIRMATION**

I understand that: -

- (a) I may be committing a criminal offence if I: -
- (i) fail to register or declare disclosable pecuniary interests as required, without reasonable excuse;
  - (ii) participate or vote or take steps in Council business at meetings or when acting alone when prevented from doing so;
  - (iii) knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading;

I understand that I must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new or change in the above interests, provide written notification to the Monitoring Officer.

- (b) I will be in breach of Sandwell Town Deal Local Board Council's Code of Conduct for Members if I: -
- (i) fail to meet the requirements in relation to disclosable pecuniary interests;
  - (ii) fail to register or declare other interests as required;
  - (iii) take part in Council business at meetings or when acting alone when prevented from doing so;
  - (iv) provide information that is materially false or misleading;

I understand that I must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new or change in the above interests provide written notification to the Monitoring Officer.

<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Dated</b>	

Please sign and return this Notice to the Democratic Services Unit, Sandwell Council House, P.O. Box 2374, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3DE.

Alternatively, please return the signed notice to [town\\_deal@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:town_deal@sandwell.gov.uk)

Date received by the Monitoring Officer	
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You should complete the register with sufficient detail to identify clearly what the interest is. Do not use abbreviations, initials or acronyms. You are personally responsible for the accuracy of the contents of the register.

## **PART A - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

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Disclosable Pecuniary interests are prescribed by Regulation. Please refer to Part A of the Code of Conduct when completing questions 1 - 7.

## **PART B - OTHER REGISTERABLE INTERESTS**

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1. List all the bodies that are not committees or sub committees of the Council to which you have been appointed by the Council. Give the full name of the body (not acronyms or initials). If in doubt, ask the Monitoring Officer or the Service Manager - Democracy for the list of Outside Bodies. Appointments or nominations may include local committees and charities, partnerships and companies in which the Council is involved, and other related organisations. Include nominations to regional and national bodies such as local authority associations.
2. Include any public bodies of which you are a member (e.g. school governor, health authority, government agency, other non-profit organisation in the public sector, local committee). Include any charity of which you are a trustee or member and any non-profit making body such as a cultural, sporting, environmental or social association, club or organisation. Include the name of any political party of which you are a member, any national or local body operating as a pressure group and any trade union or trade association.
3. This requirement is not intended to cover gifts and hospitality received by you in your private capacity (i.e. when you are not acting as a Board Member). The requirement covers gifts and hospitality received by you as a Board Member. With some hospitality, for example, weddings and special events, you will need to consider in what capacity you are involved. You are advised to register all gifts that you accept, and all hospitality (other than incidental refreshment of a modest nature). You must register the nature and approximate value of the gift and hospitality, and the person or body giving it. You should register it as soon as possible after receiving it. Make sure that you indicate the date when you register as this is important to determine how long you will need to disclose the receipt of the gift or hospitality in the event of any business of the authority relating to it (three years from the date of registration). Please see Guidance on Gifts and Hospitality.

## **PART C - MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY AND CLOSE ASSOCIATES**

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4. List the names of any members of your family or close associates who either work for the Council or in supporting the Town Deal Local Board or have a contractual relationship with the Council. Named individuals will need to provide written approval for their personal data to be used or the member will need to sign a statement that they have obtained permission. Any such names will be redacted from the public register.

## **PLEASE NOTE**

In the context of BOTH Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Registerable Interests you are required to set out your own interests AND in so far as you are aware of their existence the interests of your spouse or civil partner or any person with whom you are living as husband and wife or as if you were civil partners.

In circumstances where the interest is not your own, you are not required to identify the interest as being your spouse or civil partner or any person with whom you are living as husband and wife or as if you were civil partners. However, you may wish to do so should you wish to provide further clarity where appropriate.

In this Code a 'member of your family' includes the following relationships of the member, the member's spouse or the member's civil partner or any person with whom you are living as husband and wife or as if you were civil partners: a son/daughter (including a biological son/daughter, stepson/daughter, adopted son/daughter or male/female child for which the person has custodial responsibilities), mother, father, brother or sister, a niece, nephew, aunt, uncle, grandchild, grandparent.

In this Code 'a person with whom you have a close association' means someone that you are in either regular contact with over a period of time or a significant contact who is more than an acquaintance or can be considered to be a friend, a colleague, a business associate or someone whom you know through general social contacts.

# DRAFT Towns Fund Programme Board Terms of Reference

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## 1. Purpose of Document

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to outline the Terms of Reference for the Towns Fund Programme Board including membership. **This document will remain in draft release until the approval of the Towns Fund Governance Document Addendum by Cabinet (scheduled May 2022).**

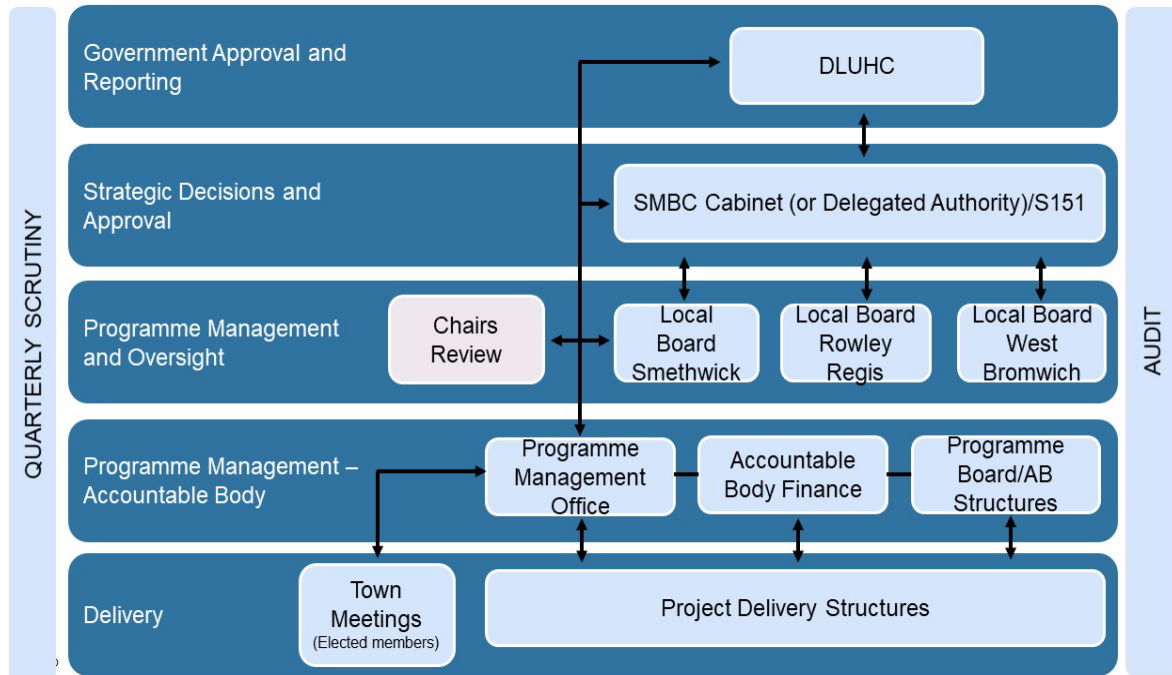
## 2. Version Control

Version Number and Date	Changes since previous release
Draft v1 29/02/21	N/a
Draft v2 25/4/2022	3.1 Updated governance for phase 3 3.2 Guidance updated April 21 4. Updated structure 5. Updated purpose 8. Frequency of meetings 9. Chair and attendees

## 3. Towns Fund Programme Governance Context

- 3.1 Governance for the Sandwell Towns Fund Programme is documented in the *Towns Fund Governance Document*, approved by SMBC Cabinet in July 2021 and the forthcoming Draft '*Towns Fund Programme Governance relating to Phase 3 of the Towns Fund Programme*', which is scheduled for Cabinet approval in May 2022.
- 3.2 The Local Boards Terms of Reference (currently draft) reflects the governance required for the next phases of the Towns Fund Programme and the latest Towns Fund Guidance released by MHCLG in April 2021. This details the roles and responsibilities of the Accountable Body and Local Boards in ensuring the successful delivery of the Towns Fund Programme. The creation of a Towns Fund Programme Board during Phases 1 and 2, enabled the submission of all summary documentation to DLUHC by 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

#### 4. Draft Governance diagram



#### 5. Towns Fund Programme Board Purpose

5.1 The main function of the Towns Fund Programme Board is to create a platform whereby Project Leads can meet collectively to discuss progress/ issues relating to project delivery and monitoring requirements. This ensures the delivery of the Towns Fund Programme is in line with DLUHC requirements and Heads of Terms, SMBC requirements as Accountable Body, and the recommendations of the Towns Fund Local Boards.

#### 6. Accountability

6.1 The Programme Board is accountable to SMBC as the Accountable Body for the Towns Fund Programme.

#### 7. Responsibilities

7.1 Officers will use the Programme Board as a platform to discuss Towns Fund project/programme related matters with any new guidance from DLUCH presented by the PMO. This will also provide opportunity for collaborative working, sharing of information and experience where applicable. Officers are expected to refer to the Assurance Framework which sets out approaches to:

- Governance
- Stakeholder Engagement and External Communication
- Design approach
- Funding
- Delivery
- Resourcing
- Information Management
- Knowledge and Learning
- Assurance
- Decision Making
- Issue Resolution
- Risk Response

The Programme Board will support the development and implementation of the Assurance Framework throughout the Towns Fund Programme lifetime.

## 8. Frequency of Meetings

8.1 The Programme Board will meet 6-weekly in the initial phases of delivery whilst monitoring arrangements are being established. It is anticipated that the board will then move to meeting quarterly / on an exception basis.

## 9. Board Attendees and Chair

9.1 The Board will be chaired by Tony McGovern, Director of Regeneration and Growth and will comprise representatives from SMBC Corporate Functions. Project Delivery Leads will have a standing invite.

9.2 Attendees:

Name	Organisation	Representing
<b>Core Representatives</b>		
Tony McGovern	Sandwell Council	Senior Responsible Officer/Director of Regeneration & Growth
Rina Rahim	Sandwell Council	Towns Fund Programme Manager
Emma Parkes	Sandwell Council	Towns Fund Programme Support Officer
Rebecca Maher	Sandwell Council	SMBC Finance Representative
TBC	Sandwell Council	SMBC Legal Representative
Andy Jukes	Sandwell Council	SMBC Procurement Representative
Jenna Langford	Sandwell Council	SMBC Regeneration Manager
Santokh Singh	Sandwell Council	SMBC Neighbourhoods
Tariq Karim	Sandwell Council	SMBC Young People's Engagement
Harpreet Dhillon	Sandwell Council	SMBC Press Office Representative

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Joshua Singh	Sandwell Council	SMBC Regeneration Town Lead for West Bromwich
Hayley Insley	Sandwell Council	SMBC Regeneration Town Lead for Smethwick
Alan Reynolds	Sandwell Council	SMBC Regeneration Town Lead for Rowley Regis
Clinton Felicio	Sandwell Council	SMBC Regeneration Town Support Officer
<b>Project Leads</b>		
Wendy Brookfield	GGCE	Digital Den
Joshua Singh	Sandwell Council	Urban Greening
Alex Oxley	Sandwell Council	Retail Diversification Programme
Jane Lillystone/ Mark Evans	Sandwell Council	Town Hall Quarter
Wayne Moore	Sandwell Council	West Bromwich Connected
Roland Barret-Price	Sandwell College	Sandwell Civil and Mechanical Engineering Centre Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub
James Dennison	Canal and River Trust	Canal Network Connectivity
Andy Miller	Sandwell Council	Blackheath Bus Interchange and Public Realm
Chad Smallman	Sandwell Council	Rowley Regis Connected
John R Satchwell	Sandwell Council	Britannia Park Greenspace and Community Hub
Austin Bell	NHS Trust	Midland Met Learning Campus
Talvinder Sandhu	Sandwell Council	Smethwick Connected
Erroll Blackwood	Sandwell Council	Smethwick Ron Davis Centre Expansion
Hayley Insley	Sandwell Council	Grove Lane Regeneration Rolfe Street Canalside Regeneration

# Sandwell Towns Fund – Assurance Panel Terms of Reference

## 1. Purpose of the Assurance Panel

- 1.1. The role and purpose of the Assurance Panel is where the Financial, Economic and Commercial Cases of Towns Fund Projects have been prepared with the support of an independent third party, the Assurance Panel will provide assurance that the projects are a strategic fit; support a compelling case for change; maximise public value; are commercially viable; are affordable and funding and can be achieved successfully by the organisation and its partners.
- 1.2. If the Assurance Panel agree, they will authorise, by the signatures of the Section 151 Officer and the Town Deal Board Chair for a Project Summary Document to be prepared and submitted to DLUHC by the Programme Management Office.

## 2. Assurance Panel Members & Voting Rights & Decision Making

Organisation	Position	Voting rights
Sandwell MBC	Director Regeneration & Growth	Yes
	Director of Finance/S151 Officer	Yes
	Cabinet Member Regeneration & Growth	Yes
	Towns Fund Programme Manager	No
	Towns Fund Programme Support Officer	No
	Strategic Investment Unit Officer	No
Town Deal Board	Town Deal Board Chair	Yes

- 2.1 The Board shall be quorate if the signatories are in attendance.
- 2.2 Those who are present and eligible to vote may vote. Non-voting members of the Board shall attend in an advisory capacity.
- 2.3 The Chair does not have a casting vote.
- 2.4 The Assurance Panel is a decision-making body, with delegated authority from Cabinet (24 November 2021; 218/21) and the Town Deal Board to undertake the assurance process and submit project summary documents to DLUHC.
- 2.5 The Panel will be supported by the Programme Management Office and the Strategic Investment Unit.

- 2.6 Town Deal Local Board Chairs are authorised to deputise for the Town Deal Board Chair at Assurance Panels and can authorise for the Town Deal Board Chair's signature to be added to Project Summary Documents for submission.
- 2.7 The Service Manager for Finance, as Deputy S151 Officer, is authorised to deputise for the Finance Director as S151 Officer at Assurance Panels and can authorise Project Summary Documents for submission.

### **3. Frequency of Meetings**

- 3.1 The Assurance Panel will meet fortnightly to cover the Tranche 3 submission programme which will conclude by the 24 March 2022.
- 3.2 The Chair of the Board may call additional Assurance Panel meetings as necessary to meet the Tranche 3 submission programme.
- 3.3 Meetings of the Assurance Panel are not to be held in public due to the commercial sensitivity contained within the documentation. However, minutes of the Assurance Panel will be published via Mod.Gov.
- 3.4 Agenda and papers for each Assurance Panel shall be circulated least three days in advance of the meeting, unless otherwise agreed by the Chair of the Board.
- 3.5 The Board meetings may be held remotely or physically in suitable offices as determined by the Chair (or a hybrid format of the two).

**<END>**



## **ANNEX 6                      Monitoring and Assurance Framework - Projects**

### **Introduction**

The Accountable Body (AB) will monitor and assure programme compliance and performance on the delivery of the Towns Fund Programme. The Accountable Body team will regularly review visit requirements to ensure alignment with best practice and funders requirements.

The Monitoring Framework comprises of four types of visit:

- **Project Approval Visit (PAV)**
- **Annual Audit Visit (AAV)**  
Full audit (grant and match funding, procurement, milestones and outcomes)
- **Progress Audit (Full audit completed, ongoing progress against match, milestones and outputs)**
- **Progress Visit (PV) – undertaken in addition to AV where delivery of achieving the project outcome and match is assessed as being at risk.**
- **Project Closure Visit (PCV)**

The content of these individual visits is detailed in the **Project Audit Visit Framework** (Figure 1.below). The frequency of the visit will be determined on a risk based criteria excluding the Audit Visit (AV) which will be carried out annually to review the previous year's claim submissions. An Audit Visit may be combined with a Project Closure Visit (PCV). Where deemed appropriate. If a project is of high risk requires further support, additional informal visits will be undertaken.

### **Visit Overview**

The purpose of these visit checks is to advise, support and ensure grantees are fulfilling their Partnership Agreement obligations. Audit visits will involve sample-based testing of financial and performance documentation in support of claim(s) and future profiles. The objective of the testing is to confirm that the project control systems provide adequate expenditure and output audit trails.

Where not previously examined, a sample of the selected expenditure and procurement will be checked during the visit for completeness.

### **Partner Obligations – record retention**

Document retention timelines are required to be observed by the grantee in line with funding requirements. All related project information to be held in an accessible format during this period.

### **Expenditure and Outputs Verification**

A quarterly claim has been developed ensuring that data is captured in line with Sandwell Council's claim process. The claim will include, but is not limited to:

- Expenditure claimed in period
- Budget forecast
- Outputs achieved
- Outputs forecast

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	1

- Milestone reporting
- Major and Fixed Assets Register information
- Updated Risk Register
- Procurement
- Social Value

The different visit types check that Partners are appropriately maintaining source documentation and backing evidence in support of claims. Templates will be used to ensure that Partner project systems and procedures are comprehensively and consistently checked. The Accountable Body will test project systems and comment upon and make recommendations as necessary.

### **Evidence Documentation**

All source documents (originals or certified copies) will be maintained by Project applicants with copies of relevant evidence submitted requests to support claims.

Key evidence to be held by Projects will include:

1. Staff timesheets
2. Payroll information for relevant staff
3. Hourly rates calculations
4. Purchase orders, invoices, QS certificates, transaction processing documentation
5. Procurement/value for money documentation
6. Asset register (as applicable)
7. Evidence of defrayed expenditure where internally generated documents support transactions or where transaction processing documentation is not available.
8. Evidence to support outputs claimed
9. Any other 3<sup>rd</sup> party evidential requirements needed to support expenditure

### **Highlighting Issues and Reporting**

The PMO team will notify any issues identified during relevant visits with the Project Manager/ Senior Responsible Officer. An audit dashboard will be produced annually and reported to the S151 Officer, Town Deal boards and Cabinet where appropriate.

All material issues during each year will be reported to the Cabinet and Town deal boards and where applicable, an agreed method of escalation to relevant parties/boards.

Where supporting evidence for financial or outputs claims is insufficient or not available at the time of the visit, a period of time will be given to allow the Project applicant to collate and/or review evidence/documentation. If evidence is not satisfactorily provided within this timeframe it will be treated as an ineligible for inclusion within the programme and an adjustment made to remove this from the claim. Where the project is able to provide satisfactory evidence post removal from claim, the items can then be included in a later claim which will be verified during future visits.

Where a project outputs and match funding is materially behind original profiles, and where deemed necessary, additional output and match funding visits will be undertaken to assist the project re-profiling and agree project action plans.

A programme performance dashboard will be produced annually to be reported to the S151 officer and the Town Deal Local Boards

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	2

## Figure 1: Project Visit Audit Framework

### Project Approval Visit (PAV)

All projects are offered a Project Approval Visit within 4 weeks of receipt of signed Partnership Agreement, and include:

1. Our role as Accountable Body
2. Project Contacts and Project Update
3. Project File and Document Retention
4. Future Data Sharing
5. Publicity and Branding
6. Completion of Claim
7. Financial evidence
  - a. Grant
  - b. Match
  - c. Asset Register
8. Outcomes evidence and reporting requirements
9. Progress and milestones evidence/reporting
10. Future visits
  - a. Annual Audit
  - b. Progress visit
  - c. Project closure visit
11. Issues/Risks/Queries

### Annual Audit Visit (AAV)

1. Review of Project files including asset register where applicable.
2. Verification of claimed expenditure (minimum 20% sample)
  - a. Grant
    - i. Source documentation (invoices, payroll, etc.)
    - ii. Procurement/ best value
  - b. Match
    - i. Source documentation
3. Verification of milestones claimed, with evidence as agreed at PAV
4. Verification of claimed outputs (minimum 20% sample), with evidence as agreed at PAV
5. Contract variations
6. Issues/Risks/Queries
7. Re-profiling

### Progress Visit

Carried out in addition to Annual Audit Visit where the non-delivery of the outcomes, spend or match if considered a risk.

1. Verification of claimed outputs (minimum 20% sample)
2. Agreed Action plan to resolve project non-delivery.

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	1

## Project Closure Visit (PCV)

All projects where relevant

1. Project evidence
  - a. Grant Agreement
  - b. Subsidy aid compliance (if applicable)
  - c. Project variations/changes
  - d. Claims and supporting evidence
  - e. Outputs and supporting evidence
  - f. Asset Register
  - g. Document retention/storage
  
2. Issues/Risks/Queries

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	2

# Project Approval Visit

## Project: XXXXXXXXXXXXX

Project Ref:

Date:

Attendees:

### Notes of Meeting

#### 1. SMBC's role as the 'Accountable Body'

Explain the division of future roles – PMO and AB Finance, post setup, between SMBC and Project applicant in relation to the fund. SMBC, as the grant making body ("Accountable Body"), is responsible for grant approvals, contracts, processing grant claims; and ensuring compliance. SMBC's role is to also ensure the correct spending of public monies in line with statutory requirements

#### 2. Project Contacts and Project Update

*Check the detail of who will need to be recorded as a contact for project delivery and monitoring (Project Manager, finance, performance, data etc.) and who to address for various communications in practice*

*Emphasis need for continuity if project contacts change – to inform us and provide internal handover*

#### **ACTIONS:**

1.

#### 3. Project File & Document Retention

Requirement to retain relevant documents for a period of 12 years after project closure, as per Partnership Agreement - documents include both *financial* documents and those relating to *outputs*.

*Explain that project need to keep evidence in project file either hard copy or electronically for access for internal/external audits and for accountable body monitoring visits – expectation that milestone and outputs evidence will be available to view at visit*

#### **ACTIONS:**

To retain relevant documentation up to 31 March (XXXXX).

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	1

#### 4. Future Data Sharing

*Agree to password protection of documents containing sensitive information with project.  
Agree a password e.g. project reference WBXXX.*

**ACTIONS:**

#### 5 Publicity and Branding

*As per your Partnership Agreement, during all stages, projects are required to comply with:*

- 1) Identity Guidelines;*
- 2) Town's Fund requirements for the use of appropriate signage and logos at the Site; and*
- 3) SMBCs requirements to provide high-resolution images of the Project and the Site.*

*Reference to Towns Fund Purity Guidance (Appendix 1)*

*The **absence of or non-compliance with the Towns Fund identity requirements** will be reported back to the Towns Fund Boards and will be treated as a breach of contract (your grant agreement) with Accountable Body, **potentially triggering the clawback clause.***

*There are no technical specifications as the guidelines are to have a "common sense" approach to how they are used and may differ depending on what the funding is being used for, so a prescriptive one size fits all is not the intention.*

#### **NEW BUILD**

*If the building is a **new** building as a result of funding from us, then it is expected that a sign would acknowledge this upon completion. How, what and where this is displayed is entirely up to the venue. Some prefer to display plaques outside, some in reception, on walls or desks etc. The basic rule of thumb for determining this is, if a Minister turned up at the building, would there be something they could stand next to for a photo!*

**ACTIONS:**

#### 6. Completion of claim

**ACTIONS:**

**7. Financial Evidence**

*Note any HoT that are project specific or eligible expenditure etc*

*Any budget breakdown to be discussed, informing applicant that they need to ensure contractors/applicant allocates costs as per budget in Partnership Agreement*

*If there is a variance of +/- 10% on any budget line, rationale and explanation will be required and if there is a variance of +/- on the overall budget there will be a requirement to go back to Towns Boards if this is the case. A summary of budget v actual costs will need to be submitted with each claim, also showing a rolling cumulative total.*

*Review Grant, Match, Asset Register*

*Partial recoverable VAT – Ensure project confirms rate by letter or email. For projects crossing multiple years, this needs to be reviewed annually. Confirmation required for any irrecoverable VAT claimed*

**ACTIONS:**

**8. Procurement**

Do they have their own policy? If not, follow the Council's policy.  
3 quotes etc.

**ACTIONS:**

**9. Mandatory Output Evidence & Reporting**

See table on outputs in **Appendix 1 & 3 and evidence required.**

**ACTIONS:**

### 10. Additional Output Evidence & Reporting

See table on outputs in **Appendix 2.**

*Discuss claim form completion for outputs*

**ACTIONS:**

### 11. Monitoring Evaluations/Benefits

See project targets **Appendix 1.**

**ACTIONS:**

### 12. Future Visits

Future visits would take on different formats and these would consist of:

- An annual audit visit – this visit is carried out to undertake detailed checks on expenditure, progress and outcomes claimed.
- Progress visit – this is less formal visit undertaken and is often carried out with the check the project progress against forecast expenditure and outputs- discuss any issues.
- Project Closure visit – this would be undertaken at the end of the project to ensure all project information is kept on file and readily available should this be required.



**13. Issues/Risks/Queries/AOB**

Check any other outstanding information required from Grantee

**ACTIONS:**

**VISIT ACTION POINTS**

No	Action point	Owner	Status

## Milestones/Outputs/Outcomes

*Insert table from Full Business Case and add additional column headed - Agreed file evidence – suggestions for discussion*

*This will require populating prior to visit*

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	6

# Appendix 1: Grant Agreement Overview

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	7



## **ANNEX 8 - CLAIMS PROTOCOL:**

1. The PMO will inform the Claims Monitoring Officer of Summary Document approval by DLUHC.
2. Accountable Body Claims Monitoring Officer will issue Grant claim form (Appendix A) to project applicant with email guidance on completion.
3. Project Leads to submit electronic claims returns with supporting evidence to Accountable Body Claims Monitoring Officer by the following date:

### Proposed Claim Dates

Claim Period	Project Claims deadline	DLUHC Returns
Up to March 2022	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2022	1 <sup>st</sup> June 2022
Qtr 1 Apr- Jun 2022	10 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	1 <sup>st</sup> December 2022
Qtr 2 Jul – Sep 2022	10 <sup>th</sup> October 2022	
Qtr 3 Oct- Dec 2022	10 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	1 <sup>st</sup> June 2023
Qtr 4 Jan-Mar2022	10 <sup>th</sup> April 2022	

## **4. Checking the claim:**

*Initial Checks will be undertaken to ensure:*

- That the whole of the claim is completed, signed and outputs/milestones are updated. Where it is an electronic signature, an email from the authorised representative supporting the claim must be received from the applicant.
- General ledger sheet/transaction listing has been submitted.

### ***Where applicable:***

- Bank statements/evidence of defrayment required to support expenditure
- Time sheets submitted for staff not spending 100% time on the project
- Supporting evidence required for outputs, outcomes, milestones claimed.
- Completion of procurement information.
- Claims will be returned to Project Lead where there is missing information. This will stop the payment clock of 21 days, until project leads respond to queries.

### *Full Claim Checks*

- All invoices to reference Towns Fund Project and to reconcile to transaction list submitted
- Timesheets, apportionments, hourly rates to be submitted for staff time, where applicable. This is to be supported by salary information e.g. payslips, payroll transaction reports.
- Where invoices do not refer to project, obtain confirmation from project that they relate to the project

- Items included in claim must be capitalised with revenue costs checked for eligibility.
- Part claimed invoices must have apportionment rationale
- Update of VAT status may be required where non-recoverable costs are claimed. E.g. if VAT status fluctuates year on year.

#### *Outcomes monitoring*

- Evidence to support claimed outputs/outcomes/milestones will be required with each claim. Refer to Indicator Guidance see Appendix C
- Where applicable, a sample of match funding claimed will be requested following claim

If adjustments required, these are to be made on current claim being processed with a revised claim form submitted where applicable.

#### **Forecasting**

Projects are required to provide update forecasting for financial profiles and output/outcome targets

#### **Procurement**

Update procurement spreadsheet required where applicable

#### **Publicity**

Project PR articles to be forward to PMO

Any queries to be raised with the Project Manager/applicant. Ongoing issues to be raised with PMO. If queries are taking longer to resolve, removing the item of expenditure from the current claim may be proposed to allow payments to be made. Once queries are resolved, the expenditure can be claimed in the following claim submitted.

Once claim form has been checked and all information has been verified, the claim will be passed to the Approver (Senior Accountant) to sample check and approve the claim for payment.

#### **5. Reconciling the Claims**

At the end the quarter, reconciliation of project claims will be made against the Councils Finance system to provide further assurance.

#### **6. Programme Management Office**

The Accountable Body Finance reps and PMO team will meet at least monthly to reconcile payments, review forecasts, issues, risks, and balance of advanced funding. PMO will submit reports to Local Board on the progress of spend, achievement of outcomes and any changes to risk.

Both the PMO and Finance will collate information from claims to support the monitoring returns requiring sign off by S151 Officer.

## [Insert Project Title Here]

Highlight Report and Claim Form

Project Lead: [Insert Name here]

Organisation: [Insert organisation here]

Date: [Insert date here]

Sandwell Council  
Council House  
Oldbury  
West Midlands  
B69 3DE

**Project Details**

[Insert Project Title Here]

## PROJECT STATUS

**Overall Project Status Rating**

Please provide details of the projects overall status using the RAG key.

**Overall Project Status**

RAG KEY	Description	'X'
RED		
AMBER		
GREEN		

**Project Component Status**

Provide details of the project components status using the RAG key.

Component	RAG Status	Owner	Commentary		
Schedule					
Resourcing					
Risks					
Issues					
Outputs					
Outcomes					
Budget			Total Budget	Budget Spent to date	Budget Remaining

**Reasoning behind Project Overall Status**

Please provide reasoning behind project overall status, including progress highlights.

**Items for escalation to the Towns Fund Programme Management Office**

Please detail items that require escalation to the Towns Fund Programme Management Office.





## RISK AND ISSUES

---

### Red Risks Log

Please provide details of the red risks affecting your project.

Reference	Risk Description	Risk Mitigation	Status	Owner	Resolve By Date

### Issues Log

Please provide details of the issues affecting your project.

Reference	Risk Description	Risk Mitigation	Status	Owner	Resolve By Date

**Grant Claim Form - Sandwell Towns Fund Programme**

[Insert Project Title Here]

Period of Claim

[Month, Year] - [Month, Year]

**Instructions**Please complete the **un-highlighted** cells only.

Budget as per Agreement:	Claimed to Date (1)	Claim for this period (2)	TOTAL (1&2)
<b>CAPITAL</b>			
<i>Refurbishment</i>	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	<b>£2,000.00</b>
<i>Construction Costs</i>	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	<b>£2,000.00</b>
<i>Professional Fees</i>	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	<b>£2,000.00</b>
<b>Capital Total (a)</b>	<b>£3,000.00</b>	<b>£3,000.00</b>	<b>£6,000.00</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>			
<i>Staffing Costs</i>	£0.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
<i>Marketing</i>	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Revenue Total (b)</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>
<b>Total Grant Claim (a +b)*</b>	<b>£3,000.00</b>	<b>£4,000.00</b>	<b>£7,000.00</b>
<b>Match Funding (c)</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>
<b>Total Grant Claim and Match Funding (a+b+c)</b>	<b>£3,000.00</b>	<b>£5,000.00</b>	<b>£8,000.00</b>

**Instructions**

Please submit a transaction list of defrayed expenditure, supported with invoices for the value of the claim.

**GRANT CLAIM CERTIFICATE**

On behalf of **(Project Applicant)**, this claim form details the Grant claim for the **(Project Name)** project. I have recorded all details of eligible expenditure incurred (net of recoverable VAT), all funding received and details of outcomes achieved. I have completed all sections of the claim form and I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that:

1. The information given is correct.
2. No other grants, payments or contributions have been or will be made to **(Project Applicant)** for activity against which this claim is made.
3. The expenditure has been incurred on implementing the Project in line with the grant approval by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council and DLUHC
4. The grant claimed is within the Project's limit for the Town Funds grant in this financial year and in all other ways complies with the conditions of Project approval.
5. All information given in this claim is supported by appropriate evidence on which the claim can be checked and verified.
6. The Grantee confirms that all expenditure is Eligible Expenditure.
7. The Grantee confirms that there are no Material Changes to the Project and/or the Eligible Expenditure and/or the estimated Project costs

***This is an auditable document. Where original forms are not submitted, claims with electronic signatures must be supported with email from the delegated signatory.***

<b>Authorised Signatory Name</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Position</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

### Instructions

Please complete the **un-highlighted** cells only.  
 Please include the **total Towns Fund Claimed for this period**  
 Please **report the cumulative totals** from 1 April 2021.

TOWNS FUND GRANT CLAIM	(1) Agreed Towns Fund Budget 21/22	(2) Claimed to date	(3) Forecast Claim this period	(4) Claim this Period	(5) Variance this period (-under/+over)	(6) Total Claimed to date Including this period	(7) Balance of Grant to claim 21/22	(8) Revised Annual Forecast 21/22	(9) Variance to Annual Budget (-under/+over)
Towns Fund Capital Grant (A)	100,000.00	75,000.00	20,000.00	15,000.00	-5,000.00	90,000.00	-10,000.00	100,000.00	0.00
Towns Fund Revenue Grant (B)	25,000.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-20,000.00	25,000.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL GRANT CLAIM (A+B)</b>	<b>125,000.00</b>	<b>75,000.00</b>	<b>20,000.00</b>	<b>20,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>95,000.00</b>	<b>-30,000.00</b>	<b>125,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Capital Match (C)	50,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00
Revenue Match (D)	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL MATCH (C+D)</b>	<b>51,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>-51,000.00</b>	<b>51,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL GRANT AND MATCH</b>	<b>176,000.00</b>	<b>75,000.00</b>	<b>20,000.00</b>	<b>20,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>95,000.00</b>	<b>-81,000.00</b>	<b>176,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

#### In-kind Resources

Land	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Buildings	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other Assets	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Please provide explanation of any slippage that has occurred/ forecasted with mitigations/ action plan to return to profile. A forecast for the lifetime of the project is required below.

## FINANCIAL YEAR FORECAST

### Instructions

Please complete the **un-highlighted** cells only.  
 Please update with actuals where applicable

Financial Year	Budget approved	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4	Total	Variance	Forecast V Budget
21/22	£ 125,000.0000	£ 50,000.0000	£ 20,000.0000	£ 12,000.0000	£ 10,000.0000	£ 92,000.0000	£ 33,000.0000	74%
22/23	£ 200,000.0000							0%
23/24	£ 200,000.0000							0%
24/25	£ 200,000.0000							0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 725,000.0000</b>	<b>£ 50,000.0000</b>	<b>£ 20,000.0000</b>	<b>£ 12,000.0000</b>	<b>£ 10,000.0000</b>	<b>£ 92,000.0000</b>	<b>£ 33,000.0000</b>	<b>13%</b>

## OUTPUTS

### Instructions

Please complete the **un-highlighted** cells only.

	Agreed Indicators		Claimed Indicators		(5)	Forecasted Indicators			(9)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		(6)	(7)	(8)	
	Lifetime Target	2021/22	B/fwd Achieved to Date	Amount Claimed this period	TOTAL to C/fwd (3+4)	Next Period	2021/22	Lifetime	Lifetime Variance (-under/+over) (8-1)
<b>Mandatory Indicators</b>									
Commercial Floorspace constructed (sqm)	10,498	0	0		0				-10498
FTE Jobs Created	25	0	0	1	1				-25
FTE Jobs safeguarded	2	0	0		0				-2
<b>Local Measures</b>									
Area of land remediated (ha)	2.67	2.67			0				-2.67
Learners enrolled onto course	1,200.00	200.00			0				-1200

Please provide explanation of any slippage that has occurred/ forecasted with mitigations/ action plan to return to profile.

## OUTCOMES

### Instructions

Please complete the **un-highlighted** cells only.

	Agreed Indicators		Claimed Indicators		(5)	Forecasted Indicators			(9)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		(6)	(7)	(8)	
	Lifetime Target	2021/22	B/fwd Achieved to Date	Amount Claimed this period	TOTAL to C/fwd (3+4)	Next Period	2021/22	Lifetime	Lifetime Variance (-under/+over) (8-1)
<b>Mandatory Indicators</b>					0				0
					0				0
					0				0
<b>Local Measures</b>					0				0
					0				0

Please provide explanation of any slippage that has occurred/ forecasted with mitigations/ action plan to return to profile.



The following evidence is required to support your claim where relevant:

#### ALL CLAIMS

##### FINANCIAL SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

- Signed claim form
- Transaction list - evidence of spend from your financial/accounting system to support your claim
- Copy of defrayed invoices /subcontractor certificates (with grant funded elements, apportion rate clearly highlighted where applicable)  
**Where applicable:**
  - Match funding evidence
  - Details of contributions in Kind
  - Completed Asset Register

##### OUTPUT SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

- Beneficiary output list
- Supporting evidence for outputs claimed

##### STAFF TIME ONLY

- Payroll evidence
- Timesheets
- Apportionment calculations and methodology, hourly rates etc

##### GRANT CLAIM REPORTS

The following information is required within the grant claim report template to support your claim:

- Update of overall achievement
- Progress against targets
- Reasons for slippage
- Forward plan of how targets will be achieved if slippage has occurred



Grant Claims Checklist	
Project Name:	
Project Applicant	
Claim Period	

Task	Compiler
1. Grant Claim form signed, all tabs completed	
2. Transaction List Submitted	
3. Evidence of defrayal	
4. Copy of invoices, with apportionment where applicable, all invoices are eligible and comply with approved FBC spend	
5. Output evidence	
6. Match funding evidence (where applicable)	
7. Forecast completed	
8. Update Programmes Monitoring Spreadsheet	
9. Invoice received and matches claim amount	
10. Date forwarded to Finance verifier (2 <sup>nd</sup> check)	
(For Finance Second check)	
11. Minimum 10% check of invoices Amount checked:	
12. Where errors found, return to Claim compiler	
13. Date of approval	

## **ADVANCE ON GRANT FUNDING**

The Accountable Body received 5% of the Capital element from the Towns Fund Programme to support advance works required in full business case development and preliminary works. This funding was allocated following requests from Project Leads and approved by Finance. Project Leads are to contact the PMO if further funds are required providing sufficient justification.

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to release fund to a project prior to receipt of an official award notice from the funding source. Utilisation of the Advanced funding process must be approved by email confirmation from Director of Regeneration and Growth.

Establishing an advanced fund is appropriate only when certain conditions exist. Examples of such cases include, but are not limited to, recurring contracts from same state and local agencies, mid-cycle of a multi--year project period, and grants or contracts where pre-award costs are allowable.

An advanced fund can be established if the following conditions are met:

- The Accountable Body has received confirmation of approved grant award or funds have already been received.
- The Project Lead informs the Accountable Body at the outset of Full Business Case or Partnership Agreement, that advanced funding is required to begin preliminary works prior to approval.
- There is an essential need to incur expenses in advance of the grant rather than arrears.
- The Accountable Body concurs that the risks of releasing advanced funds are minimal
- All due diligence has been completed with no outstanding actions
- Partnership Agreement is signed by the Accountable Body and Project Applicant.

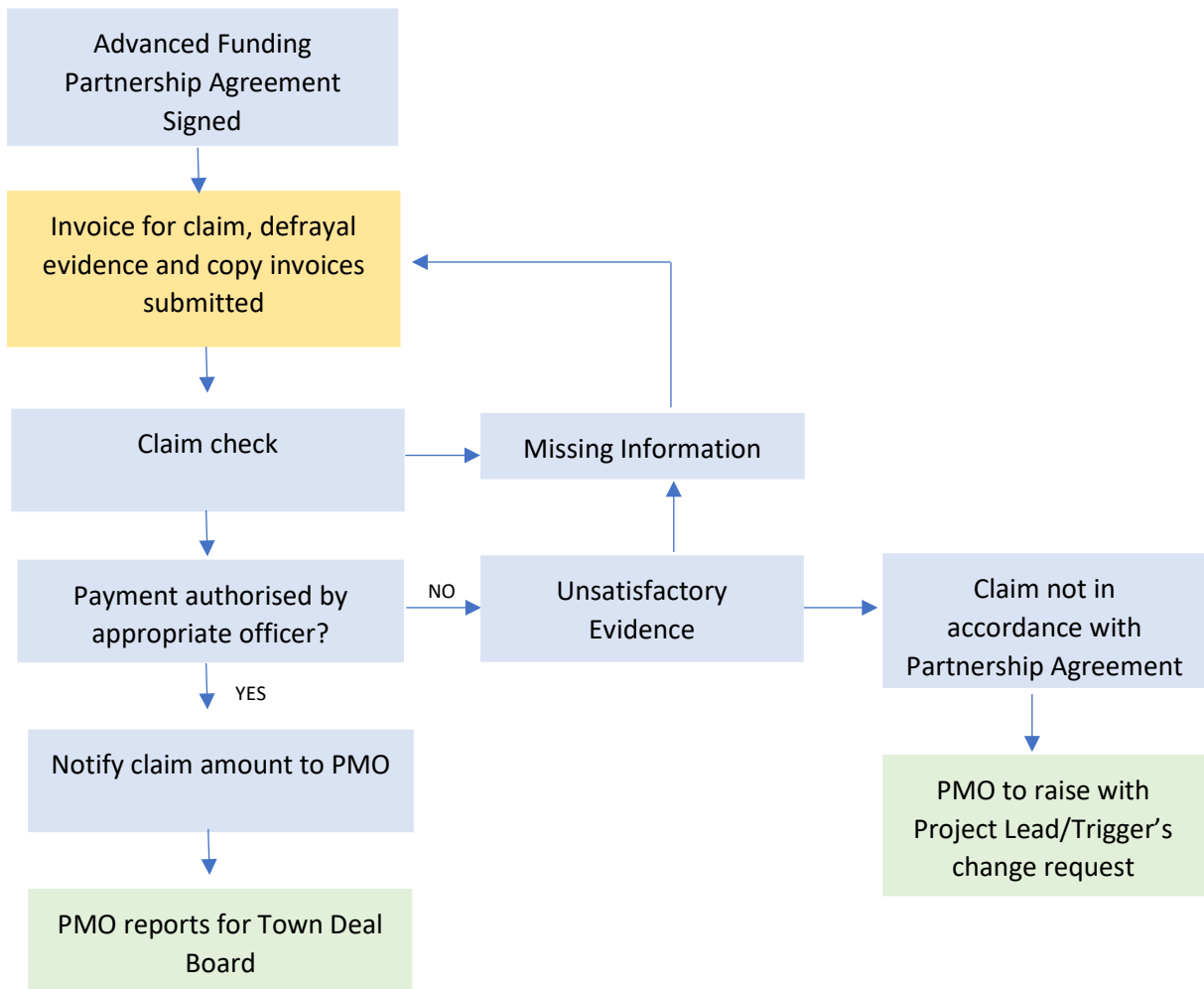
The following restrictions apply to an advanced fund:

- The Advanced Funding must only be used for the purposes of the costs as detailed in the Full Business Case.
- The Advanced Funding Request Form must be completed, signed and dated along with a supporting invoice
- At the end of the Quarter, the project applicant will submit a Grant Claim form, supported by defrayed invoices, a transaction list from the organisation's ledger, asset register and any evidence of any outputs claimed.
- Any advanced funds not utilised, must be returned to the Accountable Body where the project is not approved by DLUHC.
- Project claims will be reconciled against any advanced funding already received by the project

## **Payments**

The Accountable Body will process the request and request any further information if appropriate.

Once the request is accepted and approved, payments will be processed and within the Project applicants bank account within 5 working days.



## **Annex 9 - Change Management Policy**

### **Purpose**

1. This document details the process that the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) follows to manage change on the Towns Fund Programme and forms part of the Towns Fund Assurance Framework.
2. It is not unusual for circumstances to alter in such a way that a project can no longer be delivered as originally agreed, impacting project cost, schedule and/ or outputs/outcomes. The change control process is the process through which all requests to change the approved baseline of a project, are captured, evaluated and then approved, rejected or deferred. In the event of a variation to a project's cost, schedule and/or outputs/outcomes the variation must be reported to the Programme Management Office who will support projects through this process.
3. Understanding variations on individual projects within the programme is integral to successful programme management and ultimately the delivery of the benefits expected from the programme.
4. These variations include when grant funding will be utilised by projects, to ensure programme expenditure targets are not impacted through individual project changes.
5. Additionally, changes to individual projects may create a reputational risk to SMBC, which would need to be managed and may impact on delivery of other projects within other capital programmes.

### **The Change Process**

6. Throughout the development of a project, Project Leads having been working in partnership with the Programme Management Team (PMO). Any changes to the proposed project – from Strategic to Full Business Case – will be managed in a proportionate way. This may be through meetings or discussions to understand what changes are proposed and what their impact on delivering the proposed project will be.
7. On approval of the Summary documentation and Monitoring & Evaluation Plans submitted to (DLUHC), funding allocations are committed to a project and the formal Change Management Policy comes into effect.
8. Upon the conclusion of the contracting stage and as part of the Project Approval Visit, the Project Lead will be informed of the Change Management Policy.
9. In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation (Appendix A) should a variation occur on a project; the Project Lead must notify the PMO at the earliest opportunity.
10. At this point, the PMO will advise on how the change process will work and what action the Project Sponsor needs to take. Details of the format for reporting variations are provided within the 'Recording Change' section below.

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	1

11. Effective handling of change requests is critical to the management of the Towns Fund programme. The thresholds make clear where responsibility lies for these decisions, providing a balance between the need for scrutiny and swift action.
12. Where a major change is requested, which has a significant negative impact as detailed below, approval is required from SMBC Cabinet or appropriate person/group having delegated authority to make such decision:
  - Any changes to Mandatory Outputs/Outcomes or Heads of Terms
  - Time/schedule (more than £250,000 *slippage over financial years*);
13. All change requests will be reported in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation included in Appendix A.
14. In exceptional circumstances, contracted projects may, have their funding withdrawn and reallocated elsewhere within the programme, with approvals as per the Scheme of Delegation.
15. This is likely to be an exceptional event where, following detailed discussion between SMBC as the Accountable Body and the Project Lead, a project can no longer deliver the planned benefits within an agreed timeframe, or can no longer be expected to deliver the agreed outcomes because of a change in external circumstances, often beyond their control.

### **Recording Change**

16. There are a number of ways of reporting and recording changes to projects depending on the nature of the change. The PMO will advise on the most appropriate method to take. Reporting and recording change can take one or more of these forms:
  - i. **Project Adjustment Request** – where changes will affect the outputs/outcomes, time and/or cost of the project as detailed in the Partnership Agreement or approved change request, the Project Lead will need to notify the PMO and submit a formal change request at the earliest opportunity. This document will detail the change and enable the PMO, and Accountable Body to consider the effect of the change to the project, its impact on the programme and request any further information, prior to approval being sought. The Project Adjustment Request form is shown in Appendix B
  - i. **File Notes** – on occasion, minor variations to the agreed project parameters may not warrant a formal change request. There should still be clearly recorded as a change to what was agreed in the Business Case and Partnership Agreement. In these instances, following notification by the Project Sponsor of the change, the PMO will record the change reported and confirm this via email to the Project Sponsor.

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	2

- ii. **Project Claim Reports** – this is how Project Managers report, on a quarterly basis, on the progress and status of their project. Projects will be required provide forecasts on financial profiles, outcomes/outputs throughout the lifetime of the project. This may include changes that may not require the formal change process i.e. slippage across quarters but not financial year. Projects should not wait until the next quarter returns to report significant changes. Regular dialog the PMO is required to ensure that the correct process is followed.
- iii. **Exceptions Report** – where a project has experienced more significant change, an Exception Report will be presented to the Town Board/Cabinet for consideration.
- iv. **Deed of Variation** – Once the project is in contract, i.e. a signed Partnership Agreement or Service Level Agreement is in place. All project adjustment requests that are approved by Towns Fund Board and Accountable Body will also need to be supported by a variation to contract. This will be done via a Deed of Variation to the Partnership Agreement or reprofile offer letter for Internal projects.
- v. **Reprofile Letter** –The Accountable Body will issue reprofile letters signed by the Director of Regeneration and/or S151 following the closure of claims for the financial year. This is to reflect an updated position on spend, outcomes and milestones to future years.

17. The Programme Management Office will support projects to manage and control change in order that they are able to meet the delivery of their projects in the most timely and cost-effective way, to deliver the agreed outputs and outcomes.

18. A written/urgent procedure is included as part of the Boards Terms of Reference to allow urgent decisions to be made where change requests cannot wait until the next Local Board to be approved.

Appendix A Scheme of Delegation  
 Appendix B Project Adjustment Request Form

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	3

APPENDIX A

Type of Variation	Scale of Variation	Action Required	Requires Local Board endorsement?	Delegated Authority to approve	Approval required from DLUHC	Action following DLUHC approval
<b>Heads of Terms</b>	Any Changes to the Heads of Terms	Submit Project Adjustment Request	Yes	Director of Regeneration & Growth in consultation with Cabinet Member and S151 Officer*	Yes S151 sign off required	Issue Deed of Variation
Financial	A decrease/increase of <b>grant funds</b> to be drawn down by the project which is less than £250,000					
	A decrease/increase of <b>grant funds</b> to be drawn down by the project which is greater than £250,000					
	Any decrease of match funding					
	An increase in the match funding cost of the project without impact to the agreed funding for the project, the outputs/ outcomes or project completion	Project lead to update PMO	n/a	Towns Fund Programme Manager	No	Issue Re-profile letter Report to Local Board
Time/ Schedule	Slippage of milestones with no effect on total grant, completion date, outputs/outcomes	Update PMO	No	Towns Fund Programme Manager	Tbc	Issue Re-profile letter Report to Local Board
	Slippage of outcomes and/ or grant claim profile, requiring re-profiling across future financial years (under £250k) with no overall change to project.  Over £250k	Submit Project Adjustment Request	Yes	Towns Fund Programme Manager -  Director of Regeneration & Growth in consultation with Cabinet Member and S151 Officer*	Yes S151 sign off required	Issue Re-profile letter Report to Local Board
Outcomes/Outputs	An increase in the outputs and outcomes of the project.	Quarterly reporting by project lead	No	Towns Fund Programme Manager	No	Report to Local Board
	Any decrease to Mandator indicators outputs and outcomes of the project.	Submit Project Adjustment Request	Yes	Director of Regeneration & Growth, in consultation with S151 Officer and Cabinet Member*	Yes S151 sign off required	Issue Deed of Variation
	Decrease to Local Measures – below 10%	Submit Project Adjustment Request	Yes	Towns Fund Programme Manager	Tbc	Issue Re-profile letter
	Above 10%			Director of Regeneration & Growth		
Other	Changes to project contact information, administrative errors and others which have no impact to approved outcomes, outputs or grant.	Inform Project Lead/PMO	No	Towns Fund Programme manager	Tbc	Update documentation and Local Board where applicable

\*(subject to May 22 Cabinet approval)

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	4



APPENDIX B



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

A project adjustment form is required where changes may be need to be made after agreeing the final projects.  
Please liaise with your CLGU Area Lead and when ready submit the form to them for consideration.  
Please duplicate this tab for every project that is being adjusted.

Project details	Original proposal	Reason for change (where applicable)	Details of change (where applicable)	Details of how the Town Deal Board and relevant stakeholders have been consulted on changes
<b>Project name</b>				
<b>Project description including:</b> - rationale and strategic fit with original Town Investment Plan; - how the project addresses need/opportunity; - alignment with other plans and strategies				
<b>Outputs (where these vary or have reduced from your original proposal, please provide rationale for the change in column c)</b>				
<b>Outcomes (where these vary or have reduced from your original proposal, please provide rationale for the change in column c)</b>				
<b>Project completion date</b>				
<b>Towns Fund (£m)</b> Please also complete Finance Annex				
<b>Total project cost (£m)</b> Please also complete Finance Annex				
<b>Capital/revenue split</b> Please also complete Finance Annex				
<b>Financial profile</b> Please also complete Finance Annex				

I confirm that this request has been discussed with the Town Deal Board and the relevant Accountable Body, and they agree with this request. We will provide a value for money assessment and BCR at summary document stage.

<b>SIGNATURE OF S151 OFFICER</b>	
<b>NAME</b>	
<b>DATE</b>	

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	5

# Joint Publicity Protocol

## Background

The effective and consistent management of communications within the Sandwell Council/Town Funds Programme (TFP) partnership is vital in supporting a successful roll-out of the projects and funds allocated to each town, as the messages and reporting of activities will impact upon the general public's perception of the success of the service and the partnership.

As we seek to raise the profile of the (TFP) partnership as well as protecting the brand and reputation, we will be identifying and taking up a growing number of opportunities to engage with stakeholders through third party events, the media, social networking as well as through campaigns and activities.

While these interactions create new opportunities to enhance our profile they also bring responsibilities for us all, particularly when engaging with the media.

Although the majority of these interactions will enhance the partnerships profile and represent little or no reputational risk for either the Council or (TFP) partnership, we have a responsibility to ensure that we support our staff and provide carefully managed communications throughout every aspect of the Town Funds Programme.

The guidance in this document covers our engagement with the media, and protocol between Sandwell Council and (TFP) partnership.

## 1. Definition

This document refers to all media engagement whether proactive or reactive, broadcast or prints. This includes any reference to Sandwell Council or (TFP) partnership, where either partner is dual branded or mentioned where applicable, including: press releases, announcements, interviews, statements/comments and background briefings etc.

## 2. Purpose

- To manage the (TFP) partnerships brand and reputation nationally and locally within the Sandwell community.
- To promote the innovation and benefits brought to the people of Sandwell by the partnership
- To manage any potential crisis, through managed joint communications

# Joint Publicity Protocol

## 3. Principles

### Lead responsibilities

1. In all cases, the other party is to be kept informed of enquiries, actions and feedback, and be invited where appropriate, to provide input and comment
2. In all cases, press statements and releases will represent the project delivery as the **'Partnership'** rather than apportioning responsibility and comments from either party. All enquiries will be allocated through the central point of the councils press office.

## 4. Publicity Protocol Partnership Representation

- The contact within the Council for work with the (TFP) partnership should ensure that this protocol is discussed at the partnership, taken back for approval by each partner, as appropriate, and adopted as a working method. If appropriate, other areas of work can be added. Variations to the protocol must be discussed with the communications team before it is adopted by the partnership.
- The partners agree that:  
Publicity for each partnership project will be overseen by the organisation leading or co-ordinating that initiative.
- The leading or co-ordinating partner to draw up a timetable for publicity for the initiative to be communicated to the partners at partnership meetings, or by e-mail if deadlines cannot wait for the next meeting.
- The leading or co-ordinating partner to provide the main spokesperson to be quoted in press releases and interviewed by print and broadcast media interviews. Other major partners to be invited to contribute quote for press releases (wherever possible this should be kept to a maximum of two quotes).
- All partners to be issued with a draft of the publicity or promotional material with comments invited by a deadline. If comments are not received by the deadline the co-ordinating body to assume that it is OK to go ahead. Partners need to be aware that, due to media deadlines, notice may be short – but wherever possible at least 24 hours notice should be given for comments. Bearing this in mind, information should be e-mailed or faxed wherever possible.
- All press and media statements will make it clear that decisions are being taken by the (TFP) partnership.

Statements issued by Sandwell Council featuring quotes should read:  
Sandwell Council along with our Town Funds Programme partner XXX said XXX

All press releases to include, or similar: "The Sandwell Town Funds Partnership exists to ..... Its main activities are ..... The Partners are (list of partners). For further information on the Town Funds Programme Partnership's work visit [www.....](http://www.....) ....."

- Media coverage of initiatives to be collated and record kept by leading or co-ordinating partner for use in evaluation.

## Joint Publicity Protocol

- If the partner leading the initiative does not have the resources to carry out the above activities, another partner should be nominated to provide support.
- Where possible quotes from either the Chair of the Superboard or the Chair of the Local Board should be obtained for all press releases.

### 5. Proactive Positive Communications

From time to time, either the Council or (TFP) partnership will develop communications around positive activities and work being implemented. Typical examples of these would be the original roll out of the timescale and updates of the projects in each of the towns. This can include awareness raising.

On such occasions, the ideal approach would be to work up the various communications pieces, e.g. press releases in partnership, with the instigating partner, taking the lead in preparing content that can be shared by Sandwell Council and vice-versa.

However, in all cases, no material is to be published or distributed without the 'sign-off' of both partners, in terms of text and imagery approvals.

### 6. Media Enquiries/Crisis Management

If an event of potential concern occurs prior to a media enquiry formally, each partner will inform the other, to prepare them for a potential approach.

The appropriate partner will prepare statements and responses according to the nature of the enquiry. Additional Q&A's to be included if these are deemed to be helpful and address other predicted enquiries. A designated media contact or his/her substitute, for each partner will gain all internal approvals and be the single point of contact/approval between Sandwell and (TFP) partnership

Each (TFP) partner will keep the other posted on their response. All final responses are to go to the Sandwell Council press office who will then conclude by sending to the journalist that made the original enquiry the response. All final responses will be issued by the press office to reflect ownership as a partnership.

The councils press office will be responsible for briefing the relevant cabinet member regarding the enquiry.

The designated media contacts for each partner from the commencement of the Town Funds Programme will be:

#### **Sandwell MBC:**

Sandwell Council press office team

Tel: 07920 027723 (out of hours)

E: [harpreet\\_dhillon@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:harpreet_dhillon@sandwell.gov.uk) or [press\\_office@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:press_office@sandwell.gov.uk)

Add Town Fund Programme Partner details here (when funding has been confirmed and allocated)

# Joint Publicity Protocol

## 7. Press Coverage

In all cases, be it proactive positive press articles or responsive negative all (TFP) partners will share coverage captured through various channels. This coverage will be distributed to selected stakeholders within both organisations, and assessed as part of the ongoing **Communications Group meetings??**.

The objective will be to ensure more positive coverage is achieved throughout the duration of the programme.

## 8. Spokespeople

Each (TFP) partner will select its own spokespeople for quoting in statements/releases or for broadcast interviews.

In Sandwell's case, this will usually be the council's Cabinet Member although on occasions other officers will be chosen.

The designated media contact or his/her substitute for each partner will confirm the spokesperson for each occasion, prior to any statements or broadcast.

## 9. Useful contacts

Sandwell Council's Authorised Representative - Tammy Stokes	<a href="mailto:Tammy_Stokes@sandwell.gov.uk">Tammy_Stokes@sandwell.gov.uk</a>
Portfolio holder/Cabinet member – XXX	XXX
Sandwell Council Chief Executive - David Stevens	David_Stevens@sandwell.gov.uk
Town Fund Programme Manager	Rebecca Jenkins <a href="mailto:Rebecca_jenkins@sandwell.gov.uk">Rebecca_jenkins@sandwell.gov.uk</a>
Sandwell Council Communications and PR Officer	Harpreet Dhillon <a href="mailto:Harpreet_dhillon@sandwell.gov.uk">Harpreet_dhillon@sandwell.gov.uk</a>
Towns Fund Programme Management Office	Emma Parkes <a href="mailto:Emma_parkes@sandwell.gov.uk">Emma_parkes@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

# Joint Publicity Protocol

DRAFT

# Annex 11 - Communications and Engagement Plan

## 1. Background

This Communication and Engagement Plan helps set out how Sandwell Towns Boards will engage effectively with stakeholders, demonstrate the success of its work, ensure people understand what it does and change behaviour / perceptions where necessary. This will be done building on the Town Fund Guidance principles of:

- **Involve:** Identify and involve the people/organisations who have an interest in the projects and developments.
- **Support:** Identify and show how any barriers to involvement will be overcome.
- **Evidence:** Gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken.
- **Design:** Agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose, and demonstrate engagement throughout the project lifetime / Town Deal Fund.
- **Work together:** Agree and use clear procedures that enable the participants to work with one another effectively and efficiently.
- **Share information:** Ensure necessary information is communicated between the participants to make informed decisions.
- **Work with others:** Work effectively with others who are already or could help with engagement for example the voluntary and community sector, social enterprises or relevant public sector bodies.
- **Improve:** Consider further developing the skills, knowledge and confidence of all Participants.
- **Feedback:** Implement process to feed back the results of engagement to the wider community and agencies affected, and show the impact this engagement has had.
- **Evaluate engagement:** Monitor and evaluate whether the engagement achieves its purposes and adjust as necessary.

To oversee this Plan, the Local Boards may establish a Communications and Engagement Sub-Group is made up of relevant Board Members and supporting officers from Sandwell Council.

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	1

## 2. Communications and engagement vision and objectives

Overarching vision statement for communications and engagement:

- **The vision** is for all members of Sandwell Town Board and Project Leads to:
  - Talk in one unified voice that aligns to the board’s vision, aspirations and goals and wider Sandwell narrative as set out in the Sandwell Town Investment Plan.
  - Increase awareness, understanding and engagement on the Town Deal with our audiences.
  - Create a compelling, narrative for the projects to encourage everyone to tell the same powerful story about Sandwell and its positive future.
  - Engage with the press, broadcast and digital media to enhance perceptions, Town Deal Board, its responsibilities and the projects it is overseeing.

**Strategic objectives:** is for all members of Sandwell Town Boards and Project Leads to:

- Help build a positive reputation - all communications seek to address any negativity around the projects through an authentic voice and regular publication of positive content, which showcases Sandwell’s present and future transformation and highlights upcoming actions taking place around Sandwell’s regeneration.
- Have one unified voice - through communications, all partners will showcase the vision and positive direction the programme is moving in, developing trust and belief in the messaging
  - Deliver evidence of the communication and engagement taking place to satisfy any government requirements and showcase the journey being undertaken by local communities.
- Ensure a consistent approach to all external communications activity relating to the work of the Board and the Sandwell Town Deal projects.
- Effectively engage with all appropriate stakeholder groups.
- Raise the profile of the Board and promote the Investment Plan ambition’s vision and plans for Sandwell.

## 3. Communications approach

SMBC is the accountable body for Sandwell Towns Fund. The Board is made up of cross-sectoral community representatives from the public, private and voluntary sectors and, as such, is reflective of the ‘partnership working’ that is helping underpin the regeneration of Sandwell.

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	2



The PMO will support the Local Boards, Project Leads and any sub groups by identifying and agreeing:

- A clear set of procedures and protocols for issuing communications – as well as the channels via which they will be issued.
- An agreed set of key messages with an authentic voice will underpin all communications and engagement activity and will be reviewed as the projects evolve
- The key milestones in each project and a programme of regular communications on agreed subjects. Once established (and developed as each project progresses, to maximise opportunities) this will enable all board members to see what activity is planned and the positive messaging that is being used.
- How best to support the Boards to maintain relationships with key stakeholders and identify opportunities to maximise these relationships.
- The communications messaging, to showcase how the Boards have involved the communities of Sandwell in the projects, with the aim of highlighting a ‘people-centred approach’
- All communications activity – whether delivered as a group or individually – considers the wider ‘Sandwell story’ and any potential reputational risks

To keep the Board up-to-date on all actions undertaken, a quarterly Communication Plan update will be reported to the Town Deal Boards as per the template in Appendix A, to enable ongoing review and coordination during the programme.

#### 4. Communications and Engagement Action Plan

The PMO will support the Local Boards in implementing the communications strategy by developing the Town Board brand, create the individual project communications plans and support project leads in delivering them.

##### Initial priorities

What	How/Who	By When
Identify membership of communications and engagement subgroup	Local Board	June 22
Agree / suggest amends of the draft Communications strategy	Local Board/Programme Board	June 22
Identify and map out the communication and engagement channels already held– including active social media accounts, websites/webpages, stakeholder relationships and media contacts of Sandwell communication	tbc	tbc

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	3

Begin work to create a brand for the Board and its work	tbc	tbc
Draft and agree a boiler plate to be used where necessary in communications A boiler plate is a statement set in stone that should be agreed by the Board as a solid, unchangeable statement to be used by all Comms sub-group for Town Board endorsement	<b>Update of Towns Fund Publicity Protocol</b>	tbc
Agree all key messages for each Project	Project Leads/PMO	tbc
Identify the key project milestones and establish a clear timeline of communication activity that supports the work of Sandwell Town Board	Project Leads/PMO	<b>May 22</b>

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

**Local Board Chair** – final sign off for all communications and engagement activity

**PMO/Communications and engagement sub-group** – Agree and implement the communications and engagement approach and work together to draft and issue the subsequent activity/communications products

**Project Comms leads** – To work with PMO and project leads to identify project milestones, appropriate audiences, messaging and channels in advance

**SMBC Comms Team** – Can advise on the strategic communications and engagement approach and draft core communications material on behalf of the board, with input from sub-group members

**Branding** SMBC can be consulted for queries about using the brand (once developed) and its assets

**Website** – PMO to be responsible for updating Towns Fund Website. Microsite to be updated by internal project leads and PMO on behalf of external projects.

## 6. Procedures and protocols

The general approval process for media releases will need to be in compliance with the following:

- Press releases should include the descriptions detailed in government guidance - Notes to Editors. MHCLG press office will be provided with advance notice of announcements and press releases, via [NewsDesk@communities.gov.uk](mailto:NewsDesk@communities.gov.uk) whilst also copying in our Area Lead / FHSF Delivery Support Manager. For expedience, fully drafted press releases should be provided.

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	4

- Board members retain the right to make comment and carry out media interviews in their personal capacity. However, in doing so, members should be mindful of their position on the Board and how their comments could impact on the Board’s work and the strategic objectives set out in this strategy
- All requests for interview/comment by the media, specifically regarding the Board as a whole, should be directed to the PMO in the first instance. No interview should be carried out before doing this. A decision will then be made by SMBC on who will lead and respond to that enquiry. The response should receive final sign off by the Chair and then be issued by the appropriate organisation.
- A full briefing can be provided by SMBC Communications for those giving interviews/comment

All communications activity regarding the Board approved by the Local Board Chairs Communications should not be issued without the Chair’s prior approval.

At the first opportunity, Board members should raise any potential reputation issues that could impact on the work of the Board or wider regeneration of Sandwell so that positive action can be taken.

Key opportunities for positive communications and engagement activity will be identified by the Local Board and PMO as the projects progress and incorporated into the timeline of planned activity.

As a general rule, quotes in press releases will be attributed to the Board’s Chair/Vice Chair. If related to specific projects or thematic groups, a decision will be taken by the sub-group and Board Chair as to who the quote should come from and also be as follows:

1. Press release drafted by SMBC communications team or lead project communications officer, following discussions with the sub-group
2. First draft sent to comms sub-group member for comments and their subsequent approval following any amends
3. Send to SMBC, as the accountable body, for comments and sign-off
4. Send to Board chair for comments and final sign-off
5. Final draft shared with all Board members and the sub-group before being issued to the media – this will be done at least two hours before issuing to the media (unless there is an exceptional circumstance which requires the comms to be issued without delay).
6. It is the Chair’s decision whether or not to incorporate any suggested amends/feedback given by board members into the release. If they do wish to comment, board members are asked to do this within two hours of receiving the draft to avoid delaying the process of issuing comms.

**In the short term:**

- All media releases issued by the Board will be focused on the work planned to deliver the

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	5

projects and will be agreed by the sub-group

- Press releases solely regarding the Board will be issued by Sandwell Council communications team, with a note that it is issued on behalf of the board
- Press releases that discuss the wider Sandwell narrative but reference the board should instead incorporate the agreed boiler plate and be issued by the lead organisation (these are still subject to the comms sub-group's input and sign-off by the chair)
- Any quotes included in press releases are subject to the related organisation's own approval processes and the time to achieve this should be factored into the planning process for communications activity

#### **Longer term**

- Media relations including press releases and enquiries will be divided up based on project leads. The comms sub-group will also allocate resources based on the projects.

### **7. Key messages**

- Sandwell is one of 101 towns who put forward a bid for funding from the government's Towns Fund, which will be available to spend up to 2026
- The bid was successful, and Sandwell is now able to deliver a variety of capital projects to help boost the 's long-term economic growth and development
- The bid was the chance for the people of Sandwell to help shape their 's future. Through discussions with the community, Sandwell Town Board has developed a vision and strategy that will shape the transformation of Sandwell over the coming years
- Sandwell has grown significantly in recent years and so much has already been achieved. But we now have an opportunity to carve out a new chapter and help to ensure the Sandwell reaches its full potential.
- This is a great opportunity to help raise the standards of living for people working and living in Sandwell
- Securing this funding for Sandwell enables us to deliver against the current strategy and vision for Sandwell to support future prosperity based on the needs and wants of Sandwell people.

### **8. Communication channels**

Traditional media outlets have shifted content to digital platforms via mainstream media and community websites and media owned social media accounts. The pace of publishing new stories continues to increase. This requires much quicker responses and additional content (images, video, statements) to support engaging positive content.

There is the expectation that the Town Board projects will provide better content for reporters as they experience expectations on pace of publishing content. Increasingly our audiences are also gathering news online from sites and social media aimed

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	6

at specific demographics and communities around interest, lifestyle or geography/place.

We need to be where our audience is, so it is proposed that a focus is given to digital media, therefore devising planned communications which embrace digital methods of communication.

This will include appropriate hashtags to be used, such as #SandwellTownDeal, #TownsFund, #SmethwickTownsFund when describing or promoting the projects, and at key milestones, to enable people to identify posts specifically related to those specifically being undertaken in Sandwell.

Tagging DLUHC in our content will also be undertaken using the handle, across all platforms, of @DLUHC on: Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Posted content will be re-tweetable by the Communities Secretary, Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government and DLUHC, allowing others to follow project development.

**Sandwell Website** – A Town Deal page has been set up and is available via this link [Sandwells Towns Fund](#)

Information that can be accessed from this page includes:

- Downloadable copy of Town Investment Plan
- Description of the Town Board’s role
- Minutes of the Town Board meetings
- Description of the council’s role as accountable body
- Progress summaries and updates of all Town Deal Projects

## 9. Our audiences

- Partner organisations
- All of the partners’ workforces
- Residents of Sandwell
- Visitors to Sandwell
- Community groups
- Voluntary sector organisations/third sector
- Businesses / Business groups
- Regional government
- National government – see item. 10
- Funding bodies
- Local, regional and national media
- Online media
- Specialist/trade media
- Representative bodies including LGA and Key Cities
- Regeneration partners
- Investors
- Developers

## 10. Communication with national government (DLUHC)

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	7

To comply with the government’s guidelines, Sandwell Council, as the accountable body, along with the Local Boards and any communications and engagement sub-group, will ensure that:

- DLUHC is given as much advance notice as possible (at least two weeks) of announcements and milestone events to allow quotes to be arranged for any media releases
- Relevant descriptions provided by DLUHC in its guidance are used in media releases
- Ministers and DLUHC Area Leads / Delivery Support Managers (and other relevant policy departments such as DfT) are invited to any landmark events
- The appropriate logos provided by DLUHC are on display as set out in government guidance
- The dedicated DLUHC Area Lead / Delivery Support Manager is informed of any upcoming project milestones and planned communications activity, to feed into DLUHC’s monthly milestone reporting
- Ministerial quotes are provided for media releases where appropriate, following the agreed process for seeking a quote, sending draft media releases to the Area Lead/
- DLUHC is notified of programmed communication events, allowing the opportunity for any Ministerial attendance if required. Ministerial departments will endeavour to tweet support or retweet our tweets when Ministerial attendance is not possible.

## 11. Branding

Communications should be mindful of the place brand – and therefore narrative - for Sandwell to ensure consistent messaging, in addition to the ‘wider story’ for the borough. A strong brand family is critical communicating a cohesive narrative and core messages in a consistent and compelling way to all our audiences. The brand is more than a logo, look and feel, colour, font and style guidelines. But at the same time this use of a consistent approach is all part of creating recognition and trust.

The branding of the work being undertaken by the Town Deal Board can support other objectives for partners, most of which are firmly linked to economic development and the support you provided to local businesses. It can help promote Sandwell as a visitor destination, attract new business and inward investment and promote pride among the Sandwell residents.

Government has produced a document which is clearly aimed at helping the Board (or sub-group) create its brand. This document can be found on the government website as follows: [insert link](#)

## 12. Evaluation / measures

Social media metrics:

- How many people are we reaching with our messages?
- User engagement – clicks on calls to action
- Organic reach and impressions
- Increase in followers
- Shares

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	8

Websites:

- Visitor numbers and dwell time on specific priority web pages
- Email click-through acting on a call to action

Media releases and statements – coverage in and on local media

- Positive media coverage in articles – online and print
- Improved ‘sentiment’ – qualitative analysis where we are working on developing positive opinion on each particular project
- Resident awareness of the Board, the Deal and the projects – from council resident satisfaction survey

Engagement:

Consultation surveys and customer feedback

### **13. Monitoring**

The PMO on behalf of the Accountable body, will report annually on the implementation of the communication plan as part of the ongoing assurance process.

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	9

## Appendix A Communication Plan Template

### Quarterly Town Board Communications Plan Update

Project	Key Milestone	Comms Lead
<b>Digital Den</b>	Renovation complete Launch Event	Wendy Brookfield
<b>Sandwell MEC</b>	Construction works commence Construction works complete Launch/opening of building	Roland Barrett-Price
<b>Urban Greening</b>	Phase 1 works commence Phase 1 works complete Phase 2 works commence Phase 2 works complete	Joshua Singh
<b>Town Hall Quarter</b>	Town Hall Bell Tower works complete Construction Works Commence Construction Works Complete	Mark Evans Jane Lillystone
<b>Retail Diversification</b>	Acquisition of Kings Square Acquisition of Queens Square Relocation of Indoor Market Demolition works commence Demolition Works complete	Alexander Oxley
<b>West Brom Connected</b>	Phase 2 works commence Phase 2 works complete Phase 3 works commence Phase 3 works complete Phase 4 works commence Phase 4 works complete Phase 5 works commence Phase 5 works complete	Andy Miller Wayne Moore
<b>Ron Davis Centre Expansion</b>	On site works commence Building works complete Classrooms operational	Erroll Blackwood
<b>Midland Met</b>	Construction commence Construction complete Launch Event Training delivery commences	Austin Bell
<b>Grove Lane Regeneration</b>	Site works commence Site works commence Post Demolition works commence Post Demolition Works complete	Hayley Insley
<b>Rolfe St Regeneration</b>	Site works commence Site works complete Post Demolition works commence Post Demolition Works complete	Hayley Insley
<b>Smethwick Connected</b>	Phase 2 works commence Phase 2 works complete Phase 3 works commence Phase 3 works complete	Andy Miller Talvinder Sandhu

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	10



	Phase 4 works commence Phase 4 works complete Phase 5 works commence Phase 5 works complete	
<b>Brittania Park</b>	On site works commence On site works complete	Johnr Satchwell
<b>Canal Network</b>	Site works commence Site works complete	James Dennison
<b>Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub</b>	Construction commences Construction completed Launch Event/Building opening	Roland Barrett-Price
<b>Blackheath Bus Interchange</b>	Construction commences Construction completed	Andy Miller
<b>Rowley Regis Connected</b>	Phase 1 works commence Phase 1 works complete Phase 2 works commence Phase 2 works complete Phase 3 works commence Phase 3 works complete	Andy Miller Chad Smallman

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	11

	2022											
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2023	2024	2025
Digital Den		Renovation complete	Launch Event									
Sandwell MEC			Purchase of Shaftesbury Site		Construction works commence				Construction works Complete	Operational set up		
Urban Greening	Phase 1 works commence				Phase 1 works complete					Phase 2 works complete	Phase 2 works complete	
Town Hall Quarter				Town Hall Bell Tower complete works			Construction works commence				Construction works complete	
Retail Diversification			Acquisition Kings square						Acquisition Queens square	Relocation of indoor market complete	Demolition works complete	
West Brom Connected				Phase 2 commence		Phase 3 complete				Phase 3 commence & complete	Phase 4	Phase 5
Ron Davis				On site works commence		Building works complete				Classrooms open and operating		
Midland Met											Construction works commence & complete	
Grove Lane Regeneration				Acquisition complete		Site works commence				Site works complete		
Rolfe St Regeneration										Site works commence & complete		
Smethwick Connected	Phase 3 commence	Phase 3 complete								Phase 2 commence Phase 3 complete	Phase 5 commence Phase 4 commence & complete	Phase 5 complete
Brittania Park					Site works commence					Site works complete		
Canal Network										Site works commence & complete		
Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub								Construction works commence			Building complete and opening	
Blackheath Bus Interchange								Detailed design complete		Works commence	Works complete	
Rowley Regis Connected										Phase 1 commence & complete	Phase 2 commence & complete	Phase 3 commence & complete

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	12

## **SANDWELL TOWNS FUND**

### **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY**

Version 03

#### **Consultation and Engagement Statement**

The following statement was agreed by the Towns Fund Superboard:

*This stakeholder engagement plan will clearly outline an inclusive stakeholder list and communication strategy as to ensure a transformational, locally driven and community owned submission to the Town Fund for Sandwell's three towns.*

#### **Purpose of Consultation and Engagement Strategy**

The purpose of the Consultation and Engagement Strategy is to consider how stakeholders will be involved in the development of Sandwell Town Funds Programme. The stakeholders will be involved in the design and development of a sustainable future for the towns of Rowley Regis, West Bromwich and Smethwick.

Stakeholders are being engaged to seek their involvement and views to shape and deliver the best solutions to meet the needs of local communities.

The Consultation and Engagement Strategy is aimed at a wide range of businesses and stakeholders; the engagement and consultation techniques used will vary depending on which method would be the most effective for each group involved in the process and the stage of the programme.

#### **Towns Fund Background**

As Sandwell Council embarks on an exciting period of transformation, inward investment and expansion. A significant opportunity has arisen to secure funding from Towns Fund in three of the six towns in Sandwell.

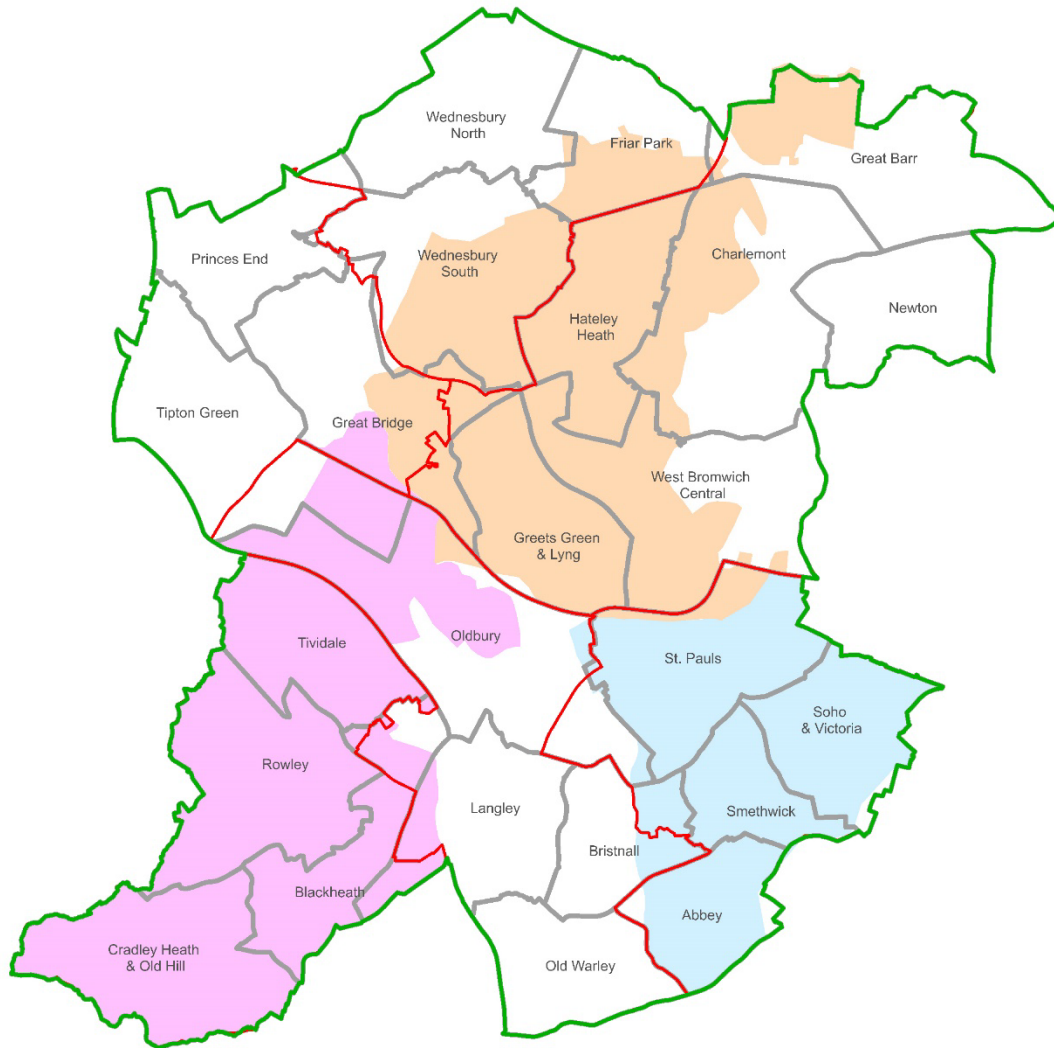
In 2019, The Government announced that West Bromwich, Smethwick and Rowley Regis were invited to bid for up to £25m each of funding to deliver interventions in planning and regeneration, skills and enterprise infrastructure, and connectivity (transport and digital).

The benefits of gaining funding from the Programme will contribute to the Sandwell 2030 Vision and economic growth in the towns through linking to existing integrated regeneration strategies. There are also wider benefits to be realised by the towns achieving stronger heritage, a sense of place and by cultural and civic assets benefiting. Leading to increasing tourism and making places more attractive to live, work, visit and invest in.





## Sandwell Towns Fund Boundaries – West Bromwich, Smethwick and Rowley Regis

**Sandwell Towns - West Bromwich, Smethwick and Rowley Regis**




**Key**


 Borough Boundary


 Ward Boundaries

 Six Towns Boundaries

**Towns Fund Boundaries**

 West Bromwich

 Smethwick

 Rowley Regis



**NORTH**

June 2020

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## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT PRINCIPLES

Co-deliver	• We will work together to deliver services and make the decisions together.
Co-design	• We will work together to define issues and design the best responses.
Engagement Structures	• We will work together through effective and meaningful structures.
Consultation	• We will consult by completing informal and formal consultations to influence decisions.
Information	• We will engage by sharing information and utilising social media.
Compliance	• We will engage in relation to statutory or regulatory requirements
Social distancing	• All consultations and engagements were completed within government guidance and guidelines.

## TOWN FUND PRIORITIES AND OUTCOMES

Towns Fund is focused around 3 themes:

- **Urban Regeneration, Planning and Land use:** ensuring towns are thriving places for people to live and work, by: increasing density in town centres; strengthening local economic and cultural assets; site acquisition, remediation, preparation, regeneration and use of planning tools to bring strategic direction and change.
- **Skills and Enterprise Infrastructure:** driving private sector investment and ensuring towns have the space to support skills and small business development.
- **Connectivity:** local transport schemes complementing regional and national networks, improved digital connectivity (5G and Fibre).



## **STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION**

The programme will follow the Government's Towns Fund Guidance and ensure that planned interventions are consulted with local people and where possible communities are part of producing originating ideas, setting objectives and the longer-term vision.

One of the key elements of the Town Funds guidance are that there should be ongoing engagement and genuine partnership arrangements. The town boards (Superboard and Local Boards) have a cross-section of people that reflect a broad range of groups and communities across Sandwell.

Evidence from previous Neighbourhood and Regeneration Programmes in Sandwell has demonstrated that consulting with local communities from the outset is likely to lead to a sense of pride and connectivity to projects following their completion. This then positively impacts upon local communities benefiting more widely from the overall outcomes of the programme.

The stakeholder engagement strategy plan has been revised in light of Covid-19 to reflect that there will be a much greater emphasis on completion of engagement through virtual methods and via social media, but where possible we will try to facilitate face to face engagement.

As there has been increased levels of community action and volunteering since the start of the pandemic across Sandwell, it is anticipated that there will be an opportunity to reflect new and emerging priorities in local Neighbourhoods and in the final Town Investment plans. We will ensure that the community consultation and engagement is completed sensitively and appropriately to facilitate physical and social connectivity and diversity across the three towns.

**A stakeholder mapping exercise has been completed to identify stakeholders and select appropriate methods for engagement and consultation.**

Key major stakeholders are brought together within the programme governance as participants of the Towns Fund Superboard, or three Local Boards all of which will be chaired by people independent of the Council.

The first phase of the Towns Fund Programme ran from March 2020 – October 2020. This Phase lead to the creation of a Town Investment Plan (one for each Town). This Phase of the programme was split into two key stages.

### **Stage 1**

Ideas Generation (Evidence base compiled, local priorities for Towns Fund identified and Ideas generated for interventions)

### **Stage 2**

Investment Development (Development of outline business case for Interventions and compilation of Town Investment Plan (TIP))

The nature of consultation and engagement differed during each of these stages.

### **Stage 1**

During Stage 1, the project team undertake a broad ranging stakeholder consultation in each of the 3 towns with key identified stakeholders and listened to local residents and community groups by gaining their views on local priorities and ideas for improvements.

The project team drew heavily on existing data and consultation (e.g. gathered through Vision 2030 consultation, through the formation of the Inclusive Economy Deal and regular survey work such as the SHAPE survey for young people).

The Government's MyTown website was established at the start of the Towns Fund Programme and many local residents have already engaged with this forum to offer ideas. We will continue to review content on the MyTown website.

### **Stage 2**

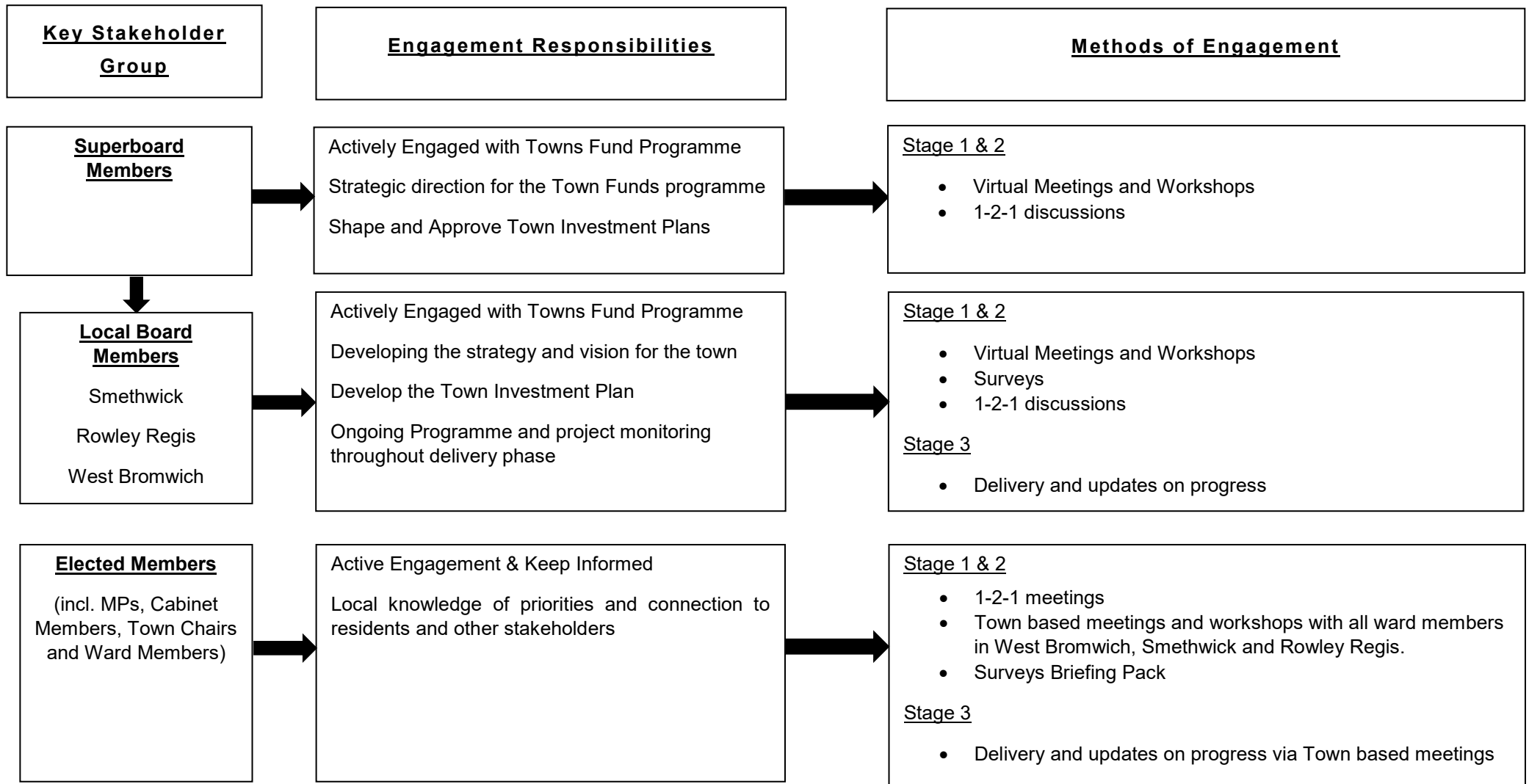
During Stage 2, proposed projects became more defined and explored project feasibility and viability. At this stage engagement and consultation was used in a more targeted way to shape the interventions and test their feasibility and acceptability.

A young people's virtual reference group was to be established to conduct engagement with young people and to support the Superboard and Local Boards. In addition, a young person's representative was supported to participate in the Superboard and Local Board meetings.

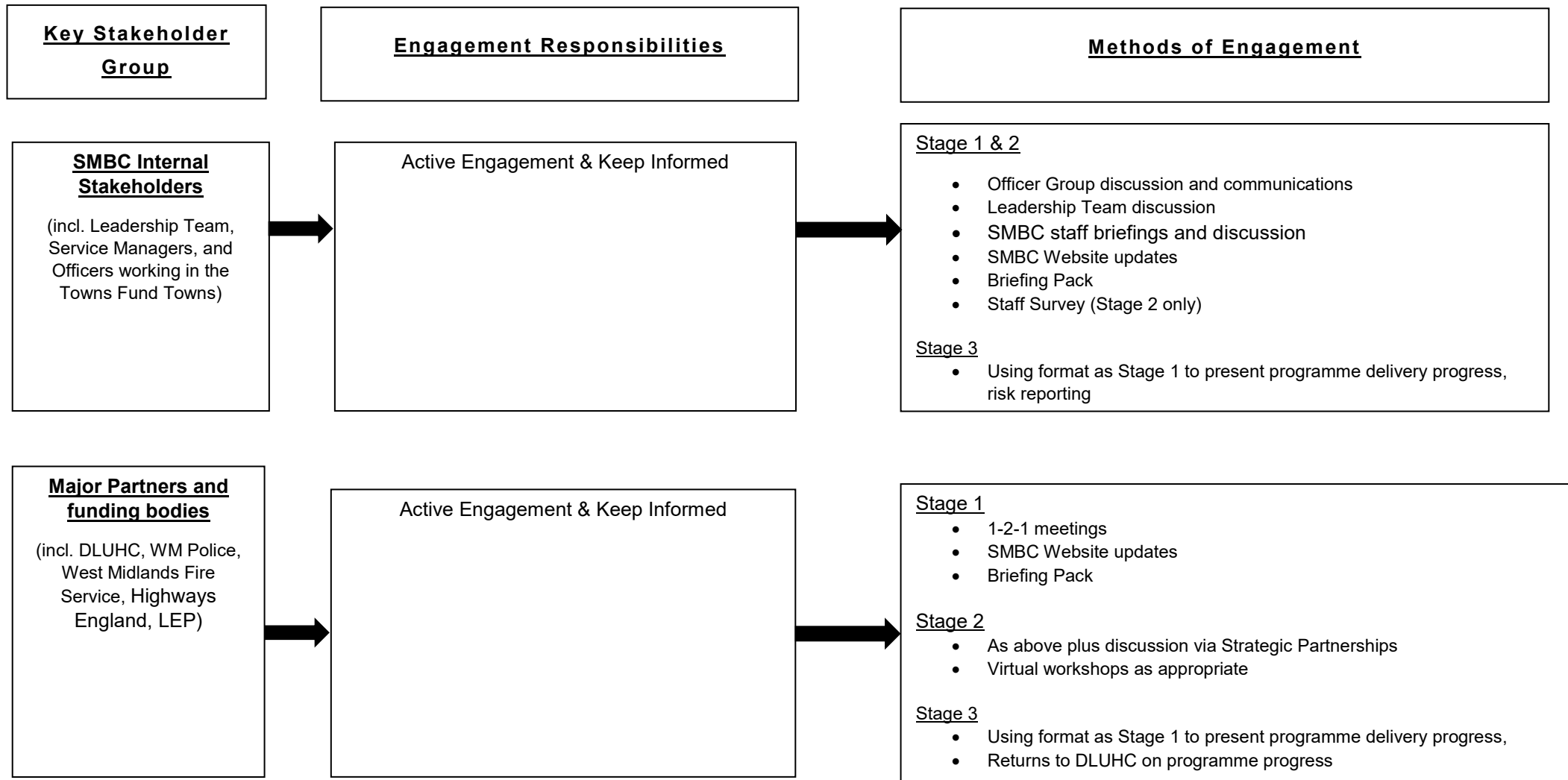
### **Stage 3**

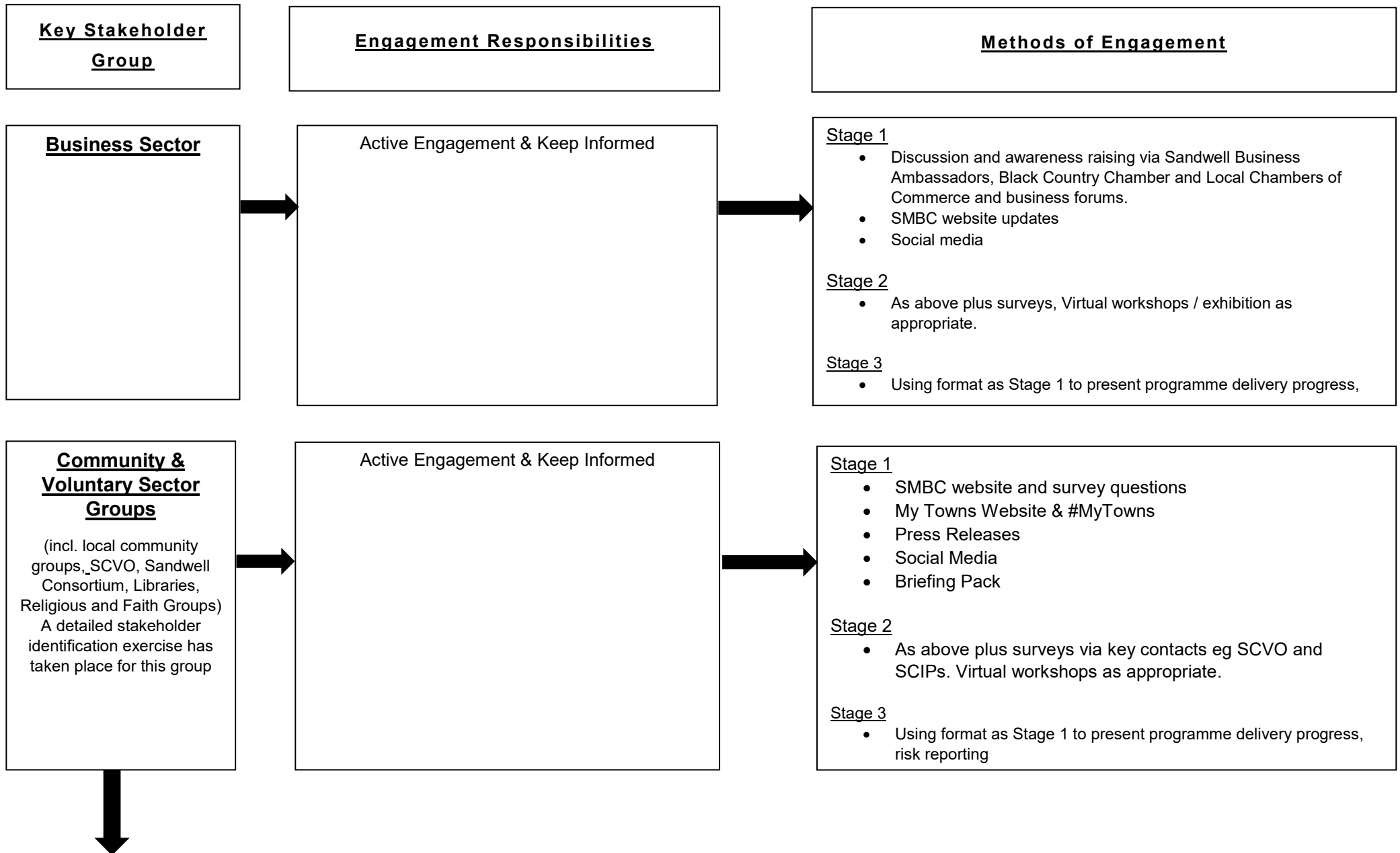
During the delivery phase of the programme, ongoing stakeholder engagement and consultation will be undertaken in accordance with agreed Engagement Plans that projects submitted as part of their Full Business Case. This will allow continued involvement of local communities and resident in understanding and getting involved with projects as they are delivered throughout the lifetime of the project.

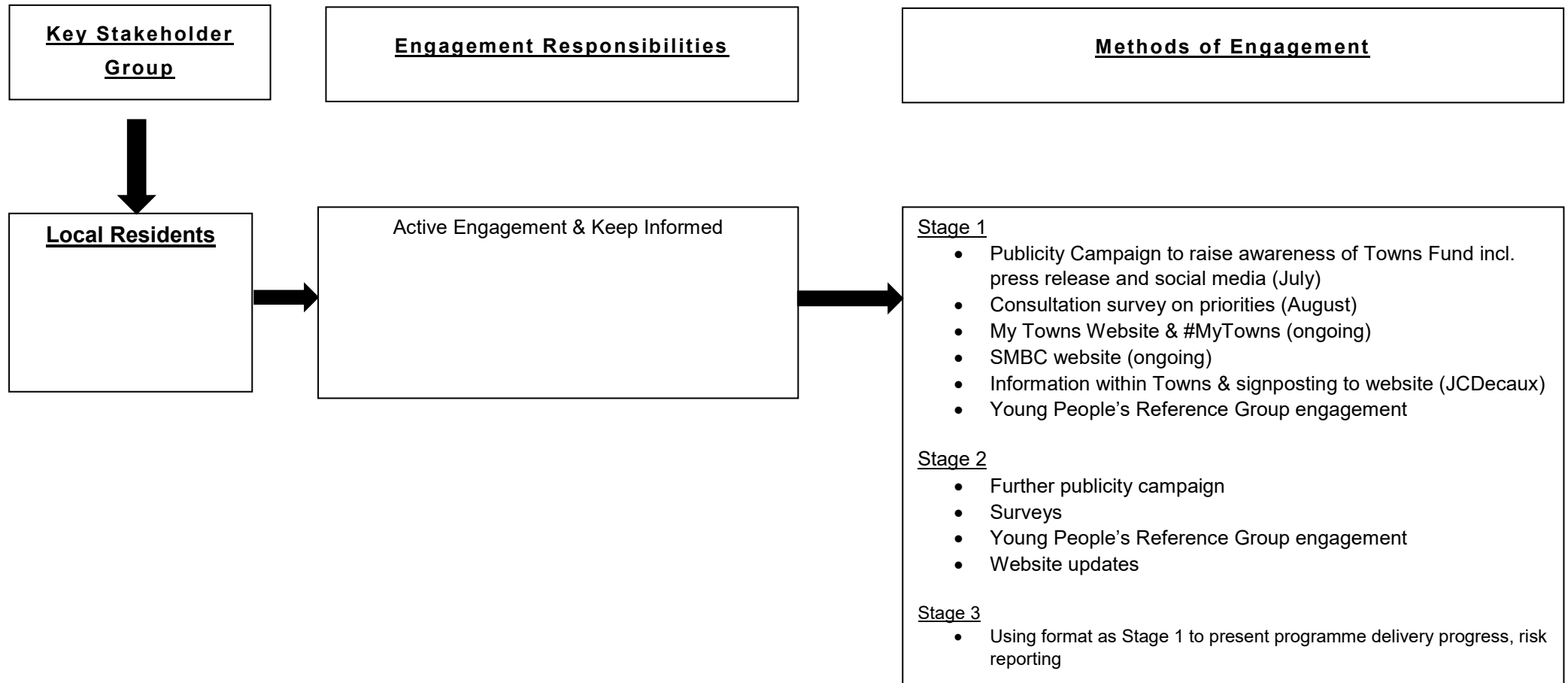
## Engagement Plan













## **Annex12 Towns Fund Risk Management**

### **1. The Purpose of this risk management policy is to identify the Towns Fund objectives, approach, responsibilities and the context for procedures.**

SMBC is committed to the effective management of risk throughout the organisation and to:

- Provide the effective delivery of the outcomes for Towns Fund
- Provide the appropriate management of finances and funding to secure those same outcomes
- Protect the reputation of SMBC and its partners
- Ensure compliance with regulations and guidance from government which oversee Towns Fund.

The Towns Fund Programme will adhere to the Accountable Body's Risk Management Strategy. The strategy sets out the specific steps to take in all processes and includes:

- business planning;
- financial planning (and setting our medium-term financial strategy in particular); and
- managing budgets, performance and projects.

### **2 Objectives of Risk Management**

- Improve project performance
- Ensure effective governance of risks
- Promote a risk aware culture
- Avoid unnecessary Programme liabilities and costs
- Encourage the taking of calculated risks in pursuit of opportunities that would benefit the projects, programmes and borough

### **3 Risk Management Approach**

- Effective risk management of the funding programme needs to be aligned with SMBC objectives and priorities
- Risk management culture that spreads best practice, identifies and communicates lessons learnt from both internal and external experiences as part of management practice
- Using appropriate expertise and has a clear ownership structure
- Applying up-to-date and reliable information about risks
- Promoting decision-making supported by a consistent risk analysis framework
- Regular processes in place to monitor risks
- Cost-effective controls in place to manage the risk
- Recognition that many of the risks handled by SMBC will be interdependent on partners and the risks need to be handled jointly where appropriate

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	1

#### **4 Risk management has to be proactive to ensure that programme risks are:**

- Identified
- Evaluated by considering the impacts and probability of their occurrence;
- Effectively managed by identifying suitable controls and countermeasures and assessing the cost effectiveness of the mitigating actions proposed.

Effective risk management anticipates and avoid risks rather than dealing with the consequences of events happening. However, not all risks can be managed, particularly those that are caused by external factors over which the organisation has no control (e.g., severe weather). SMBC will therefore separately develop a business continuity plan in order to reduce the impact should a major event occur.

#### **5 Risk Responsibilities**

##### **Project Leads are responsible for:**

- Maintaining and updating project risk registers throughout the delivery phase of the project. A copy of the risk register can be found in Appendix 1
- Submitting quarterly risk registers as part of the claim process
- Respond to any request for further information where RED risks are identified
- Communicate major risks to project to the PMO where this has not been identified previously through risk registers and would severely impact the delivery of the project.

##### **The PMO is responsible for:**

- Producing quarterly programme dashboard reports to the Local Board on the progress of all projects for review and to provide information on any risks that have been identified as well as the proposed solutions thereof.
- Completion of SMBCs Strategic Risk Register which is presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)
- Responding to strategic risks 'called in for further review
- Producing a yearly report on risk and appropriate RAG status of all projects, once the annual project audits are completed.

##### **The Accountable Body is responsible for:**

- Ensuring that the Accountable Body effectively manages risk relating to the Towns Fund Programme complying with the [SMBC Corporate Risk Management Strategy](#)
- Ensuring the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) review Strategic Risk Register and 'call in' any risks for review to provide assurance that actions are being implemented to mitigate/reduce.

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	2

**The Town Deal Board is responsible for:**

- Receiving monthly programme dashboard reports on the progress of all projects and to review risks that have been identified

**6 Project Risk Profile and RAG rating system**

<b>Impact</b>	<b>4. Very High:</b> The project objectives and benefits will not be achieved.
	<b>3. High:</b> Risk that has the potential to significantly impact project cost, schedule or performance by 11-20%
	<b>2. Medium:</b> Risk that has the potential to moderately impact project cost, project schedule or performance by >5% - <10%
	<b>1. Low:</b> Risk that has relatively little impact on cost, schedule or performance by <5%
<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>4. Expected:</b> Greater than 80% probability of occurrence (likely to occur, to be expected).
	<b>3. Probable:</b> Between 50% and 80% probability of occurrence (not surprised, will occur in given time).
	<b>2. Possible:</b> Between 20% and 50% probability of occurrence (could occur occasionally).
	<b>1. Remote:</b> Below 20% probability of occurrence (unlikely, though possible).
<b>Risk Score</b>	This is calculated field based on the values selected for both Risk Impact and Probability of Occurrence.
	<b>Red: 4-4 (Very High, Expected), 4-3 (Very High, Probable), 3-4 (High, Expected), 3-3 (High, Probable)</b>  Red risks are those that require immediate action to reduce their likelihood and/or impact. These risks should be monitored on at least a monthly basis to ensure that the further actions necessary to reduce the level of risk are completed within appropriate timescales. These risks should be escalated / reported as appropriate to ensure that they are brought to the attention of the Management Board and members.
	<b>Amber: 4-2 (Very High, Possible), 3-2 (High, Possible), 2-4 (Medium, Expected), 2-3 (Medium, Probable), 2-2 (Medium, Possible)</b>  Amber risks are those that require action to ensure that the effectiveness of existing control measures are monitored and improvements made if required to reduce the likelihood and/or impact to green. These risks should be reviewed on at least a quarterly basis.

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	3

	<p><b>Green: 4-1 (Very High, Remote), 3-1 (High, Remote), 2-1 (Medium, Remote), 1-4 (Low, Expected), 1-3 (Low Probable), 1-2 (Low, Possible), 1-1 (Low, Remote)</b></p> <p>Green risks are those that should be monitored on a less frequent basis, either six monthly or annually, to ensure that existing control measures continue to be effective.</p>
<b>Risk Owner</b>	Identify who is responsible for the management, monitoring and control of the identified risk. Note that the actual task of monitoring may be delegated
<b>Mitigation</b>	Define the actions required to reduce the probability, improve the controls and/or reduce the financial impact using the following Risk Responses as guidance
	<b>Terminate</b> the Risk - by doing things differently and this removing the Risk, where it is feasible to do so. Countermeasures are put in place that either stop the threat or problem from occurring or prevent it having any Impact on the Project or business.
	<b>Treat</b> the Risk - take action to control it in some way where the actions either reduce the likelihood of the Risk developing or limit the impact on the Project to acceptable levels.
	<b>Transfer</b> the Risk - this is a specialist form of Risk Reduction where the management of the Risk is passed to a third party via, for instance, an insurance policy or penalty clause, such that the impact of the Risk is no longer an issue for the health of the Project. Not all Risks can be transferred in this way. Consideration must also be given as to whether all facets of a Risk can be transferred. E.G. while the financial impact of a Risk might be transferred, the brand impact may not be.
	<b>Tolerate</b> the Risk - conscious decision to maintain threat where nothing can be done at a reasonable cost to mitigate it or the likelihood and impact of the Risk occurring at an acceptable level.

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	4



Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	5

APPENDIX 1  
RISK REGISTER



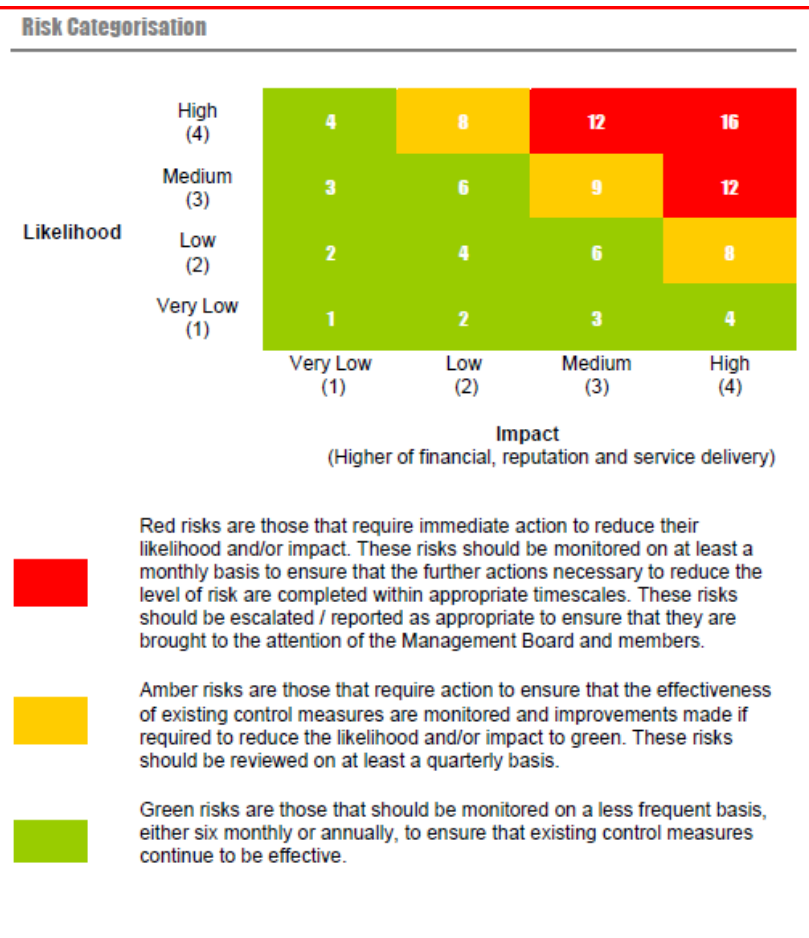
Directorate/ Project Risks:

Ref	Risk Title and Description	Risk Owner	Service/ Workstream Area	Current Measures in Place to Manage Risk	Current Risk Score			What else do we need to do / Further actions required to manage the Risk	Responsibility for Action	Date for completion of Action(s)	Target Risk Score			Business plan/ project priority
					Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total	

Directorate/ Project Priority	
1	
2	
3	

Version	Date	Created by	Approval & Date	Protectively Marked	Page No
1	20/4/22	R Rahim	Tbc	Not protectively marked	6

Score	Impact - Higher of			Likelihood (the proximity of the risk at the time of assessment)
	Financial	Reputation	Service Delivery	
4 (High)	>20% of budget	National media coverage – permanent impact on reputation	>80% Serious service or programme failure directly affecting vulnerable groups, requiring intervention by Members.	<b>Almost certain</b> It is reasonable to expect that the event will undoubtedly happen or recur, possibly frequently or at least within the next six months A more than 50% chance of the risk occurring
3 (Medium)	11% to 20% of budget	Local media and TV coverage- long term local reputation affected	50%-80% Significant service or project disruption requiring intervention by Corporate Directors / Management Board	<b>Probably / likely</b> The event is more than likely to occur. It will probably happen in the next year but is not a persisting issue. The chance of the event occurring is between a 25% to 50% likelihood
2 (Low)	5% to 10% budget	Local newspaper coverage – reputation affected temporarily	25%-49% Noticeable disruption to outputs requiring intervention by a relevant Director / Service Manager	<b>Possible</b> Little likelihood of the event occurring. It might happen in the next 18 months or recur occasionally. The chance of the event occurring is between a 10% to 24% likelihood.
1 (Very Low)	<5% of budget	Local gossip/ reputation affected internally	<25% Short term service disruption requiring intervention by a unit or project manager or equivalent	<b>Unlikely</b> The event is not expected, There is no expectation that the event will occur, but it is possible that it might do so. The chance of the event occurring is less than 10%.



## Annex 13 Assurance Framework lines of defense

The following table describes the four lines of defense model used to provide assurance for the Sandwell Towns Fund. This approach will be kept under review as part of the annual review of the Assurance Framework.

<b>First line – Programme Management Office and Finance</b>
<b><i>Lead responsibility</i></b>
Towns Fund Programme Manager responsible for ensuring the Programme Management Office undertakes first line checks against policies and procedures in the Assurance Framework and that control mechanisms are in place and are utilised.
<b><i>Further roles</i></b>
Expectations of project sponsor organisations to be clearly set out and documented with regard to business case requirements, funding agreements, monitoring, financial claims and risk management.
<b><i>Sources of assurance</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project business cases (draft, full)</li><li>• Project business cases external assurance</li><li>• Legal advice</li><li>• Partnership Agreements/Internal Offer Letter</li><li>• Project monitoring returns</li><li>• Project risk registers</li><li>• Programme plan and monthly programme report to Programme Board</li><li>• Notes from bilateral meetings with project sponsors</li><li>• Notes from Project sponsor group meetings</li><li>• Risks and issues log</li><li>• Quality assurance processes for documentation produced</li><li>• Cabinet papers and minutes</li><li>• Disseminate government guidance</li><li>• Finance team to monitor and manage claims process to passport fund, highlighting any areas of concern to PMO</li></ul>
<b>Second line – Programme Board</b>
<b><i>Lead responsibility</i></b>
Towns Fund Programme Board Chair responsible for ensuring the Programme Board provides a sound second line with mechanisms in place to assess, control and mitigate risk and monitor programme delivery on a monthly basis.
<b><i>Further roles</i></b>
Programme Board members to play an active role in ensuring that the agenda and papers facilitate this second line role and allow opportunity to highlight project delivery issues. Relevant SMBC officers will be invited to support delivery ie procurement, governance, legal, communications
<b><i>Sources of assurance</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monthly programme board papers, minutes</li></ul>

- Programme risk register
- Programme Equalities Impact Assessment and regular review of this
- Stakeholder Engagement and Consultations
- Controls in place for claims submission and payment process,
- Collaborative working towards delivering project, shared experience

### **Third line – Towns Fund Board and Accountable Body**

#### *Lead responsibility*

Sandwell Towns Fund Board Chair responsible for ensuring the Towns Fund Board provides appropriate oversight and further assurance with mechanisms in place to assess, control and mitigate risk and monitor programme delivery.

Council Leader responsible for ensuring that Cabinet has put in place sufficient resources and controls for the council to fulfil the Accountable Body role.

#### *Further roles*

Sandwell Towns Fund Board and SMBC Cabinet members to embody good governance through providing appropriate challenge and oversight in line with the respective roles set out in the Assurance Framework. Towns Fund PMO to ensure quality assurance of all documentation prior to circulation to the Towns Fund Board/Cabinet.

#### *Sources of assurance*

- Sandwell Towns Fund Board papers and minutes
- Board and Chair sign-off
- Section 151 officer sign off
- Board representations made to government and/or the Accountable Body
- Review of the programme/project risk register, the Assurance Framework and the Equalities Impact Assessment
- Sign off of returns to government and programme reports for Sandwell Towns Fund Board and SMBC Cabinet
- Management of potential conflicts of interest
- Leader sign off
- Approval of Assurance Framework and other programme delivery requirements

### **Fourth line – Audit and external scrutiny**

#### *Lead responsibility*

Internal audit (and external audit where required) to assess the effectiveness of the first three lines of assurance, providing an independent and objective opinion on the framework of governance and making recommendations for improvement. External scrutiny from DLUHC as the lead government department in line with funding requirements, guidance and the Heads of Terms for the Sandwell Towns Fund.

#### *Further roles*

All partners to engage fully and in a timely way with audit and external scrutiny/requests from government. Recommendations for improvement to be considered at the earliest opportunity by the Sandwell Towns Fund Board and the Accountable Body.

#### *Sources of assurance*

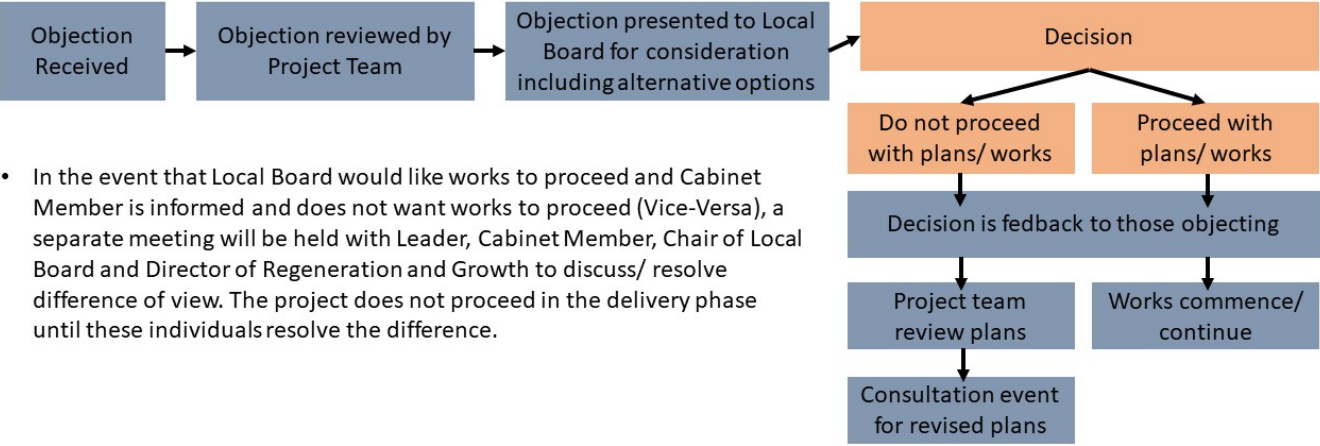
- Internal audits

- Consideration of audit reports and recommendations by the Sandwell Towns Fund Board and Accountable Body
- Compliance with audit recommendations
- DLUHC reviews of governance
- DLUHC monitoring and evaluation of programme delivery
- DLUHC sign-off

# Towns Fund Process

Local Board has decision making authority on objections raised, minutes will be recorded and published on Modern.gov

*Cabinet Delegated authority to the Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard to approve the Town Investment Plans*



- In the event that Local Board would like works to proceed and Cabinet Member is informed and does not want works to proceed (Vice-Versa), a separate meeting will be held with Leader, Cabinet Member, Chair of Local Board and Director of Regeneration and Growth to discuss/ resolve difference of view. The project does not proceed in the delivery phase until these individuals resolve the difference.