

A Town Deal for Birkenhead
Minutes of the Board
Tuesday 15th September 2020 at 2pm
Online meeting via Teams

REFERENCE	ITEM	ACTION
1	<p>Welcome and apologies The Chair welcomed the Board and visitors.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Nigel Hughes, Paula Basnett, Mick Whitley MP, Angela Eagle MP and Mick Allen.</p> <p>Attendance sheet attached.</p>	
2	<p>Declarations of Interest Declarations of interest will be made at the start of each meeting on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>No declarations of interest were received.</p>	
3	<p>Meeting minutes The Board approved the previous minutes of 18th August 2020.</p>	
4	<p>Towns Fund Guidance Update KP delivered an update regarding the Towns Fund guidance.</p> <p>The Board noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Accelerated Grant proposal of £1mil was submitted last month. Positive feedback has been received and a full update will follow after the receipt of formal outcome. This is expected before the end of September. • The outcome of Future High Streets Fund bid is not yet known. Details of Town Deal bid may change depending on result of FHSF, therefore submitting in October 2020 may be too soon to dovetail both projects together. <p>KP proposed that the Town Investment Plan be submitted as part of the 3rd Cohort, in January 2021 to ensure that that outcome of the FHSF could be taken into account. KP asked that the Board continue to keep up momentum of project identification and development.</p> <p>The Board approved this proposal.</p>	
5	<p>Current regeneration programmes in Birkenhead SS delivered an update regarding the current regeneration programmes in Birkenhead:</p>	

	<p>Birkenhead Regeneration Framework update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The framework, which covers the wider area including Seacombe, Wirral Waters, Hamilton Park and Hind Street is nearing completion. • In addition to the overarching framework, more detailed plans for delivery action areas are being brought forward. Medium-term and longer opportunities for connectivity and culture, to drive people from the waterfront to the town centre, will also be included. • Wirral Growth company has submitted an outline planning application for Birkenhead Town Centre, as well as a more detailed application for two office buildings. • Temporary hoardings in the Milton Pavement area will be erected soon as the demolition process commences. As this is the first visible sign of transformation of town centre, hoardings are to reference the future plans. Hoardings with more detailed information and images will be erected once the demolition process has been completed and construction begins. <p>SS confirmed that the business case and plan for the proposed office accommodation had been reviewed to understand risk/impact of COVID-19 and change of working circumstances. Unmet demand for Grade A office space within the Wirral still applies due to a lack of existing good quality office accommodation, and businesses still needing office accommodation.</p> <p>The need for employment opportunities for local young people, such as work experience, apprenticeships, and jobs, as part of the regeneration delivery plans, was noted.</p> <p>Birkenhead Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relocation of the market is part of the first phase of the town centre regeneration. A press statement has been released to update on current activity. • A temporary market is planned on Europa Boulevard, near Conway Park station, whilst the current market is redeveloped. • Market traders have been kept informed, by both officers and Members, to ensure they understand the process and future plans. 	
6	<p>Task and Finish Groups updates</p> <p>The Board received feedback from the Task & Finish Group leads (or nominated representatives) on the emerging long list of proposals</p> <p>Education and skills – Sue Higginson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions have come from a ‘needs analysis’ of skills and education across the Borough. Needs include the east/west gap in terms of health, skills and worklessness and also technology education and accessibility to services across the borough. • The group is looking at how capital funds might enhance, protect and grow existing revenue streams, through a hub and spoke model of skills provision. They may possibly utilise the Treasury building and use libraries/one stop shops to do area specific education/training programs. 	

- The group are looking to help people of the Wirral retrain for different work areas, develop skills, and access funding that is already available. Due to the impact of COVID-19 on access to facilities, there is the possibility of technology and internet skills courses, to assist with access to GP services etc.

Economy and enterprise – Warren Ward and Ben Lavell on behalf of Paula Basnett

- Discussions have focused on the development of the community improvement district with scope to have a joint business and community improvement district.
- Priorities agreed are the development of proposals for increase number of start-ups and scale-ups, especially within the creative industries as well as unlocking underused sites for business and commercial uses. Creating inclusive growth is a key focus.
- Other priorities are to look at initiatives that enable businesses to source goods from alternative means in order to embed some resilience.
- Ideas include allotment spaces for growing food, visitor economy ‘edutainment’ economy, and to explore where projects have synergy with other groups, with the potential to write shared bids.

Connectivity, place and public realm – Beverly Staniford on behalf of Keith Keeley

- Group intended to visit Birkenhead waterfront area, but due to COVID risk escalation, members shall visit independently.
- Discussions have included linking town centre to the waterfront, importance of bicycle and pedestrian access along Argyle St, potential for pedestrianisation in some parts of the areas, safe access to student accommodation and connectivity between key attractions.
- Discussions have also included the creation of a cultural arc between Seacombe and Woodside, improving the pedestrian exit from Birkenhead Central station and the creation of an iconic structure on the waterfront, of fitting height, design and scale.
- The group also aims to consult with students about walking and cycling within the area and have engaged with the LCR cycling & walking champion, noting that changing how people move through the Wirral can take time.

Health, wellbeing and community – Lucy Gardner

The group have reviewed the main challenges facing the borough and have developed 2 key ideas.

- The first is a Health and Wellbeing hub in Birkenhead, to provide services where there is unmet demand such as community health services, mental ill health prevention, as well as debt advice, housing advice and domestic abuse services. Due to COVID, providing services away from hospitals will increase the safety and accessibility of our provision.
- The group are open to sharing the Hub with other services, and other Hub ideas generated by other groups.
- The second idea is to link in with other T&F groups to see where they can have a positive impact in terms of health and wellbeing. For example, the

	<p>group could possibly help the Education and Skills T&F group, in terms of jobs and skills within Health.</p> <p>Culture and heritage – Liam Kelly The group have met with multiple stakeholders to develop ideas. They discussed multiple projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The expansion of cultural/creative amenities around Argyle Street area. 2. The development of a support system for cultural institutions within the Wirral, akin to Culture Liverpool. This is not a capital bid however, but a means of generating and protecting revenue streams. 3. The transformation of the outdoor realm, including transformative landscaping and creation of place and destination, such as a bike area, adequate lighting and an eye-catching outdoor design. <p>Digital and clean energy – Gary Evans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group wish to align all activities to support clean growth principles. They have discussed multiple projects, including a deep energy retrofit, starting with a consultation of older housing within Birkenhead with low energy performances, and to use the fund to future-proof them with innovative thermal and heating upgrades. • Other projects include a Low Voltage Network real-time Monitoring System, a solar energy generation scheme either on or off shore as floating panels, a sustainable heat project within a low carbon heat network as well as an electric heat pump retrofit. • The group have also discussed a consolidated WAN/ future full fibre network, to consolidate its telecoms network infrastructure from three separate networks delivering CCTV, UTC (traffic management) and WAN (services to council buildings) into one consolidated network. <p><i>ACTION - T&F group leads to send list of projects to KP.</i></p> <p>KP presented the key criteria for the shortlisting of Town Deal Fund projects to the Board.</p> <p>The Board noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All projects will need to be shortlisted against Town Deal criteria and critical success factors embedded within Town Deal Guidance. • Other criteria includes alignment with Council strategies such as the Wirral Growth Plan and Birkenhead Regeneration Framework, and the aims within them such as increasing inward investment, support business growth or providing good quality housing. • Other criteria include financial sustainability beyond Town Deal, and further project specific details. • Council officers shall shortlist the list of projects against these criteria, then feedback to the Board. <p>A long list of potential projects is being prepared and will include proposals put forward from the Task & Finish groups. This will be circulated to the Board for comment ahead the evaluation exercise taking place.</p>	<p>Group leads</p>
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	<p><i>ACTION – KP to share presentation of detailed criteria to the Board.</i></p> <p><i>ACTION – KP to prepare long list of projects.</i></p>	KP
7	<p>AOB</p> <p>None</p>	
8	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board 23rd October (please note new rescheduled date) • Task & finish groups – frequency and date to be set by each group 	