

Contact Officer: Nicola Sylvester

Dewsbury Town Deal Board

Thursday 16th November 2023

Present: Keith Ramsay (Chair)
Councillor Cathy Scott
Mark Eastwood, MP
Fara Butt
Charlie Dunn
Sue Baker
Peter Mason
Palvinder Singh
Martyn Broadest
Sophie Johnson
Anum Rehman

In attendance: Paul Burnett (Virtual)
Jane Jackson (Virtual)
Michelle Illingworth, Kirklees Council
Simon Taylor, Kirklees Council
Peter Thompson, Kirklees Council
David Shepherd, Kirklees Council
Karen Roach, Kirklees Council
Helen Jakes, Kirklees Council

Apologies: Robert Livingston
Martin Walsh
Nancy Barrett

1 Membership of Dewsbury Town Deal Board

Apologies were received from Rob Livingston, Martin Walsh and Nancy Barrett.

2 Declaration of Interests

Keith Ramsay, Martyn Broadest, Mark Eastwood, Cllr Cathy Scott, Sophie Johnson and Peter Mason declared an interest in the Arcade project.

Sue Baker declared an interest in the Creative Hub project.

Martyn Broadest declared a Pecuniary interest in the Creative Hub project.

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3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 28th September 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

4 Admission of the Public

The Board noted the exempt information, as set out at Agenda item 11.

5 Public Question Time 4:05 - 4:20

Question from Gill Young

“Will the Town Board confirm that it is considering and planning actions to manage the successful outcomes of its projects for the town centre given the current considerations to permanently close Dewsbury Leisure Centre and the impact that such a major loss of local facilities will have on the town?”

The Chair of the Board responded to the question and advised that the Board seeks to represent many interests in Dewsbury, in terms of funding and influencing capital projects, it had limited remit insofar as it was set up in response to the Government's Town Deal initiative dating back to 2019/20. The Board's remit was to concentrate on delivering projects set out in the Town Investment Plan. This remit was captured in the agreed Heads of Terms between the Board, the Council and Government which was signed in Summer 2021. On this basis, the ability to deviate from the agreement was constrained, and Dewsbury Leisure Centre was a matter for Kirklees Council and not Dewsbury Town Board.

The Chair also advised that a deputation had been submitted to the Board for consideration regarding Dewsbury Leisure Centre, as the deputation had been considered at Council on 15th November 2023 it would not be considered by Dewsbury Town Board.

6 Deputations/Petitions 4:20 - 4:25

No Deputations or Petitions were received.

7 Long Term Plans for Towns - HM Government Announcement 4:25 - 4:40

The Board received an update from Simon Taylor, Head of Town Centre Programmes that explained that the Prime Minister had announced a £1.1 billion levelling up investment as part of a long-term plan for towns. Dewsbury had been identified as one of 55 towns that would benefit from a £20m endowment-style fund over the next 10 years which would be made up of 25% Resource and 75% Capital funding. Further details were to be released by Government with a view to submitting plans to them in the Summer of 2024. There were 3 key themes which Government expected plans to be submitted to identify measures that mattered most to people. These were, Safety and Security, High Streets, Heritage and Regeneration and Transport and Connectivity. Mr Taylor explained that current Town Boards could be repurposed. and capacity funding would be released to support the development of plans, including additional community engagement activities. Ongoing engagement advice would be available from the Towns Taskforce.

During discussion the Board noted that it was key to consult with local people, and setting up a task force to form the consultation would be beneficial along with a skills

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audit to strengthen the Board. The Board noted that Anti-Social behaviour in the Town Centre were areas that needed to be focused on for the people of Dewsbury. Dewsbury Leisure Centre concerns were raised by some Board Members. David Shepherd, Strategic Director explained that rules as set out by Government would have to be followed, and as an accountable body for the funding, Kirklees Council would need to ensure that all projects could be met, and that the £20m was £2m per year over 10 years dependent upon future government.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

8 **Project Update 4:40 - 5:15**

The Board received highlighted reports on all projects.

Palvinder Singh, Principal and Chief Executive of Kirklees College updated the Board on conversations that had taken place with Council officers regarding the Constructions Skills Hub. Regular updates had been provided to Mr Singh on the progress of partnership arrangements and applications received.

The Board noted that a cultural event, Song for Seasons was to take place on 12th December 2023 at Dewsbury Town Hall and Board Members had been invited. If any Board members would like to attend the event to contact Michelle Illingworth.

An invitation had gone out to all Board Members to invite three Board members to attend a workshop on sustainable transport on 28th November 2023. If any Board member would like to attend the workshop to contact Simon Taylor.

The Chair invited Helen Jakes to provide an update on communication. Helen Jakes, Senior Communications officer for Growth and Regen advised the Board that visuals around the market plans had been put up around Dewsbury Town to provide the public with a look and feel of the market and provide details of the ethos, this was to also reassure the public that market plans were taking place in the background and plans were also in place regarding trader engagement. It was noted that Kirklees Council were supporting the Arcade with communications across council platforms.

RESOLVED: That the project updates be noted.

9 **Date of Next Meeting**

24th January 2024.

10 **Exclusion of the Public**

RESOLVED - That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

11 **Project Update 5:15 – close**

The Board considered exempt information in relation to agenda item 8.