

Contact Officer: Nicola Sylvester

# Dewsbury Town Deal Board

**Thursday 28th March 2024**

Present: Keith Ramsay (Chair)  
Councillor Cathy Scott  
Sue Baker  
Peter Mason

In attendance: Charlie Dunn (Virtual)  
Palvinder Singh (Virtual)  
David Shepherd, Kirklees Council  
Joanne Bartholomew, Kirklees Council  
Simon Taylor, Kirklees Council,  
Michelle Illingworth, Kirklees Council  
Helen Jakes, Kirklees Council  
Debbie Swatman, Kirklees Council  
Karen Roche, Kirklees Council  
Jane Jackson, Historic England (Virtual)

Apologies: Mark Eastwood, MP  
Paul Burnett  
Fara Butt  
Martin Walsh  
Nancy Barrett  
Martyn Broadest  
Sophie Johnson  
Anum Rehman

**1 Membership of Dewsbury Town Deal Board**

Apologies were received from Mark Eastwood, Paul Burnett, Fara Butt, Martin Walsh, Nancy Barrett, Martyn Broadest, Sophie Johnson and Anum Rehman.

The Chair advised the Board that Rob Livingstone and Martyn Broadest had resigned as Board Members and thanked them for their contribution to the Board.

**2 Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

The Chair requested that Board members return their updated declaration of interest forms to Governance Officers as soon as possible.

**3 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024 be noted.

**4 Admission of the Public**

The Board noted the exempt information, as set out at Agenda item 13.

**5 Public Question Time**

No public questions were received.

**6 Deputations/Petitions**

No Deputations or Petitions were received.

**7 Dewsbury Market/Market Public Realm**

The Board received a presentation from Simon Taylor, Head of Town Centre Programmes and Karen Roche, Market Manager on Dewsbury Market and Market Public Realm.

Mr Taylor explained that the PAR process with Department of Levelling Up Housing and Community (DLUHC) had been complete with stage 2 design and costing finalised. The Market Business Plan continued to develop with ongoing trader engagement and a trader application process had been set up. Engagement had started with the Planning Team and the Highways Team were now part of the overall project.

The Board received a presentation on the following:

- Park and Outdoor Space
- Events
- Current Trader Types and Numbers
- Spatial Design
- Costs at the end of Stage 2
- Key Milestones
- Key Risks
- Engagement

During discussion, the Board questioned the running costs of the water feature in the park and the closing period to market traders. Mr Taylor advised that conversations were to take place on the cost of running the water feature, and that a decision on its inclusion would most likely be made at the next stage of design. In addition, the project team would need to review how that area of the park could be utilised. The decant market would open early 2025, with minimum disruption to market traders. It was noted that the Market would not close in a trading period, and that any communication regarding the market to be collective communication from the Board, through Kirklees Communications team.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted, and Officers thanked for their contribution.

**8 Dewsbury Better Spaces (Public Realm)**

The Board received a presentation from Debbie Swatman, Group Engineer – Public Realm, who provided a progress update on proposals presented to the Board in September 2023. A budget of £4m had been allocated, with three key areas being prioritised, which were (i) Town Hall Apron and Town Hall Way, (ii) Memorial Park and Long causeway, (iii) Market Place.

Ms Swatman advised the Board on the programme of works which were as follows:

- Planning application for the Bandstand – May 2024
- Traffic Regulation Order Consultation for temporary road closures - April/May 2024
- On site – Town Hall Way – June/July 2023
- Town Hall Apron, Memorial Gardens and Longcauseway –Early 2025
- Market Place – On site following the Market Decant.

During discussion, the Board was advised that from consultations on the Band Stand it was felt that the structure stopped openness with some aspects of antisocial behaviour in its current location. There was a stand base without a band stand within Crow Nest Park which was a potential suitable location.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted, and Officers thanked for their contribution.

**9 Project Update**

The Board received highlighted reports on all projects.

Mr Taylor advised the Board that there had been activity on the Arcade with strip out work currently being undertaken.

Mr Mason advised the Board that marketing developer tenders for Field House had now closed, with a group being chosen next month who would communicate activities and help find tenants.

Mr Singh updated the Board on Skills village. Progress reports received were very positive, and it was likely that the College would be on site at the Spring Field campus for a temporary facility.

Mr Singh advised the Board that Kirklees College had received 30 applications for construction and skills courses in September 2024, if it wasn't for the Town Deal the opportunity would not be available for the Dewsbury Community. Kirklees College were to bring a presentation to the Board on communication work the college wanted to carry out, who were to spend substantial revenue in promoting Dewsbury. Mr Taylor advised the Board that a paper on Daisy Hill had been circulated with details of properties that Kirklees Council owned.

Mr Taylor advised the Board that Peter Thompson had retired and thanked him for the work that he had undertaken. Andrew Raleigh was to replace Peter as programme manager and to take the position from April 2025.

Heritage advisor Nigel Hunston had also retired and had been replaced by another member of staff. Nigel was also thanked for the work he had undertaken.

**RESOLVED:** That the Project Update be noted.

**10 Long Term Plan**

Mr Taylor explained that a meeting had taken place with DLUHC on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024, with an update circulated to the Board. This included an introduction providing an update on progress made on the development of the Long-term plan, since the discussion at the last Board meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

The note was split into three sections, including:

- Governance requirements and arrangements for 1<sup>st</sup> April
- Long-term Plan development activities since the last board meeting
- Next steps to develop Long-term Plan for 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

As Dewsbury had an existing Town Deal Board, it was agreed that this Board would become the Town Board, in line with the December 2023 DLHUC guidance around the formation of a board.

To ensure the membership of the Board reflected the community, the Chair had engaged with Town Deal Members to confirm if they wanted to be part of the new Town Board. The Chair also sought nominations for new members and initiated contact.

Guidance from DLUHC advised that town boards should have a membership of around 15 members, the addition of new board members meant that there would be at least 20 members. The Chair had confirmed that the larger number would only be in place for a short-term whilst the plan was developed. As part of the board effectiveness review in October 2024, the size and structure of the Board would be reviewed.

The Chair of the Board confirmed that Sophie Johnson had been appointed as Deputy Chair of the Town Board.

A draft Terms of Reference had been circulated to Board Members ahead of a Long-term Plan meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> March. Comments and suggestions raised by Board Members were noted. Using the feedback and following engagement with DLUHC, the Terms of Reference had been amended and endorsed by the Chair on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024. During discussion, the Board raised concerns around the lack of clarity and status of the board, what powers the Board had and what decisions were retained by the Council. It was noted that the amended Terms of Reference addressed those concerns and would be brought for consideration/ratification by the new Town Board in the meeting in May 2024.

Since the Board Meeting in January 2024, a number of workshops had taken place to raise awareness, share ideas and start to develop a list of potential interventions. The sessions had helped to identify ideas and potential interventions which would

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need to be refined and assessed to identify areas that met priorities and were deliverable within the funding.

The Long-term Plan needed to be underpinned by an understanding of the priorities for the wider community. In the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024, Board Members noted their support to progressing community engagement and an update on progress was provided at the meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Kirklees Council had contacted seven companies. Five companies had expressed an interest with deadlines for responses being Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

Work was underway to establish an evidence base, by combining this evidence base with local perspectives through the engagement, local priorities and locally relevant outcomes would be able to be identified.

A detailed programme of tasks and activities to ensure the Long-term Plan was developed and submitted for 1<sup>st</sup> August was under development with the Board receiving a summary of the key next steps.

Mr Taylor also advised on the area of the board and that this would not deviate from the suggested area put forward by DLHUC. Officers also advised that it was their strong recommendation that as part of the long-term plan process investment was concentrated into the town centre to maximise impact.

Referring to the note circulated earlier to the board, Mr Taylor confirmed that all details of the new board would be passed to DLHUC to ensure compliance with the deadline set by the guidelines.

The Chair advised that other than the statutory Board Members, Members who sat on the new Town Board represented sectors and not organisations.

**RESOLVED:** That the update be noted.

**11 Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Location: Dewsbury Town Hall

**12 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.

**13 Project Updates**

The Board considered exempt information in relation to agenda item 9.