

Dewsbury Town Deal Board

Thursday 30th June 2022

Present: Keith Ramsay (Chair)
Mark Eastwood, MP
Iqbal Bhana (OBE, DL)
Martin Walsh
Sue Baker
Peter Mason
Bruce Bird
Pat Hawkins

In attendance: Martyn Broadest (Virtual)
Nancy Barrett (Virtual)
Fara Butt (Virtual)
Palvinder Singh (Virtual)

Observers: David Shepherd, Kirklees Council
Simon Taylor, Kirklees Council
Michelle Illingworth, Kirklees Council
John Lambe, Kirklees Council

Apologies: James Conn
Heather Waddington

1 Membership of Dewsbury Town Deal Board

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of James Conn. Councillor Cathy Scott substituted for Councillor Pandor and Pat Hawkins substituted for Paul Burnett.

2 Declaration of Interests 4:30pm - 4:35pm

No interests were declared.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 17 March 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

4 Public Question Time 4:35pm - 4:40pm

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No questions were asked.

5 **Kirklees College Youth Engagement 4:40pm - 5:00pm**

The Board received a report and presentation prepared by students from Kirklees College and presented by Anum.

The report outlined the engagement events that had taken place with the young people who attended Kirklees College. The Youth Voice's aim was to have the youth voice heard and to put forward ideas, feedback, and opinions on the regeneration of Dewsbury.

Anum advised the Board that the next steps for Youth Voice Champion Members was to (i) engage with the wider student population within Pioneer House and Springfield Education Centres, (ii) to create a questionnaire that could be used to capture thoughts and comments, (iii) to further engage with Town Board Members and (iv) to explore other avenues of connecting and engaging with the youth sector within Dewsbury and surrounding areas.

The Board noted the importance of the voice and vision of young people, particularly given that 43% of residents in Dewsbury were under the age of 30.

RESOLVED – That the Board: -

- 1) Thank the Youth Voice Champion Members for the work done in gathering the thoughts of young people in Dewsbury.
- 2) Thank Anum for her excellent presentation to the Board Members.
- 3) Invite Youth Voice Champion Members to the October meeting of the Board to hear about the further engagement with the youth sector.
- 4) Hold a future meeting at Kirklees college.
- 5) Agree that Loaded PR should engage with the Youth Voice Champion Members to understand their 'ideal future' for Dewsbury.

6 **Communication Strategy 5:00pm - 5:45pm**

The Board welcomed Gemma Birbeck and Martin Shaw from Loaded PR to the meeting.

It was noted that some Board Members had not received a copy of the questionnaire provided by Loaded PR, however, further copies would be circulated with Board Members to return the completed questionnaire as soon as possible.

Ms Birbeck explained that the questionnaire was just one tool that would be used as a starting point in the discovery phase of the strategy.

RESOLVED – That the questionnaire be recirculated with Board Members completing it and returning to Loaded PR as soon as possible.

7 **Update on the Building Revival Scheme 5:45pm - 6:00pm**

John Lambe attended the Board meeting to present an update on the Building Revival Scheme.

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The Board noted that the Heritage Grant from the National Lottery Fund and Council funds totalled £3.7m. Mr Lambe explained that the revival scheme had focused on priority streets in the Town Centre, to re-use and refurbish historic buildings, reversing the decline of these heritage assets.

The Board was informed that the scheme had a good level of enquiries coming through, including some current applications. It was noted though, that additional staff resources would be required to deliver the projects effectively and within timescale.

Mr Lambe explained that three grants were pending being Northgate House, 23 Foundary Street and the Creative Craft Centre. There were also three applications pending for the former Principals building in Northgate, 6-10 Westgate and Pop's in Northgate. Further enquires had been received for the former Coral Unit on Crackenedge Lane, 22 Westgaga, Kingsway Chambers, the former Registry Office, and the Old Post Office.

The Board acknowledged that challenges remained in the Town Centre, with some elements that could not be controlled or resolved, such as sub-standard housing. The Board noted that some businesses and landlords had chosen not to engage with the projects.

The Board noted that Historic England would be visiting Dewsbury Town Centre in July 2022.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Board thank Mr Lambe for his presentation.
- 2) That the Board note the progress on current and future projects.

8 Risk Log 6:00pm - 6:05pm

Michelle Illingworth informed the Board that the Risk Log template was being developed by Project Management Officers. Officers had considered the suggestions made by members of the Board to date regarding the format and the log was now clearer and more adaptable. The Log will be circulated by Ms Illingworth with any further responses to be sought from Board Members.

RESOLVED – That the Risk Log template be circulated prior to the next meeting of the Board.

9 Review of Car Parking in Dewsbury 6:05pm - 6:25pm

The Board considered a report presented by Sue Baker which included a proposal by the Dewsbury Chamber of Trade in relation to parking.

The proposal observed that the Town Investment Plan strategies centred around increasing footfall and dwell time in Dewsbury. However, the Chamber of Trade's proposal advised that car parking was consistently raised by the community and business owners as being an obstacle to both short and long term visitors.

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The Board noted that the Chamber of Trade's proposal would include some free short and long term parking. However, the Board could foresee some difficulties with the proposals, particularly in relation to commuters using the free long term parking then travelling on the train to Leeds, and thus potentially avoiding any visit to Dewsbury Town Centre.

The Board established that parking was one of the most complex challenges, which many towns struggled to resolve. The Board also noted that whilst parking impacted on the schemes which were being progressed as part of the Town Fund, the overall strategy fell within the responsibility of the Local Authority's administration.

RESOLVED - That the Board agree to work closely with Kirklees Council and the Chamber of Trade to produce a suitable parking strategy for Dewsbury Town Centre which would include a cost/benefit analysis.

10 **Chairs Update 6:25pm - 6:45pm**

The Board considered a report from the Chair which was circulated before the Board meeting.

Board Members were reminded that Declarations of Interests should be updated each year and then continue to be updated throughout the year if interests arise.

The Chair outlined his recent meeting with Kath Wynne-Hague from Kirklees Council, and the Board confirmed receipt of the press release in relation to Dewsbury Market. Board Members commented that it would be good practice for the Board to be informed of any press releases prior to it being published to the wider public.

Board Members noted that Dewsbury Market was the flagship project within Dewsbury, but further consideration would need to be given to the project considering the available funding, and the 30-40% construction cost increase in recent months. Board Members agreed that other town and cities had made good use of containers for markets, and the retention of the containers could form part of any further considerations.

Board Members commented that it was difficult to understand at what stage each project was at and asked for an overview of projects. The Chair confirmed that the August meeting would have an update on all projects.

RESOLVED – That the Chair's update be received and noted.

11 **Any Other Business 6:45pm - close**

Peter Mason informed the Board that £106k had been received from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the arcade.

David Shepherd confirmed to the Board that £1.5bn had been received from the Government for the Transpennine Upgrade which would include some station improvements in Dewsbury.

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The Chair reminded the Board about behaviour and indicated a zero tolerance policy would be introduced to avoid officers feeling intimidated by Board Members. The Chair also reiterated the importance of the Board looking forward to the delivery of projects, rather than looking back and going over old issues and discussions.

12 Dates of Future Meetings

The next meetings of the Board will take place at 4:30pm on: -

11 August 2022

22 September 2022

3 November 2022

15 December 2022