

# Dewsbury Town Deal Board

**Thursday 11th August 2022**

Present: Keith Ramsay (Chair)  
Mark Eastwood, MP  
Martin Walsh  
Sue Baker  
Peter Mason  
Bruce Bird  
Julia Arechiga

In attendance: Joanne Bartholomew, Kirklees Council  
Michelle Illingworth, Kirklees Council  
Peter Thompson, Kirklees Council  
Gemma Birbeck, Loaded PR  
Martin Walsh, Loaded PR

Apologies: Iqbal Bhana (OBE, DL)  
Nancy Barrett  
Martyn Broadest  
Charles Smith  
James Conn  
Heather Waddington  
Paul Burnett

- 1 Membership of Dewsbury Town Deal Board**  
Apologies for absence were received on behalf of James Conn, Charles Smith, Nancy Barrett, Martin Broadest, Iqbal Bhana, Heather Waddington and Paul Burnett. Councillor Cathy Scott substituted for Councillor Shabir Pandor and Julia Arechiga substituted for Palvinder Singh.
- 2 Declaration of Interests**  
No interests were declared.
- 3 Minutes of Previous Meeting**  
**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 30 June 2022 were agreed as a correct record.
- 4 Public Question Time**

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No questions were asked.

### 5 **Business Case Update 4:30pm - 4:50pm**

The Board received an update on the Business Cases. Michelle Illingworth, ER Project Officer, informed the Board that the business cases had gone through the assurance process and had now been signed off and the summary documents had been submitted for approval by government.

The Board was advised that the Arcade, Market, Cultural Events including the overall Cultural Programme, Fibre Capability, Building Revival and Daisy Hill had all now been approved. The Sustainable Transport Mode, Construction Skills Village, Town Park, and Cultural Hub were still awaited, although it was noted that approval for the Cultural Hub may take a little longer to return. Ms Illingworth informed the Board that good progress was being made, with payments now being received.

The Board were made aware that the Urban Realm (Town Park) and Sustainable Transport Mode had a project adjustment request due to the outputs changing.

The Board discussed the difficulties relating to the location of the Construction Skills Village. Although Dewsbury Riverside and Chidswell were two locations being considered, other sites were actively being sought. The Board noted that Dewsbury Riverside was just outside the boundary of Dewsbury, however the government had not expressed any concerns relating to the location as long as the Board was made aware.

Bartholomew, Service Director for Development explained that suggestions for site location would be welcomed from the Board but that the longevity of the site was important with two to three years being required. The drop-down centre would also need to be placed on site ahead of construction at a time when apprentices could have meaningful opportunity.

The Board was advised that there was some urgency to the project, as the money for the Construction Skills Village had to be spend within a certain timeframe, and therefore the site would need to be ready to begin.

It was noted that Mark Eastwood (MP) objected to the Construction Skills Village being located in Batley.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1) That the Business Case Update be noted.
- 2) That suggestions for sites for the Construction Skills Village be communicated to Joanne Bartholomew.
- 3) That consideration be given to discussing the timeframe with the government.

### 6 **Dewsbury Town Investment Plan Project Overview Updates - Risk and Issues Log 4:50pm - 5:50pm**

The Board received the Dewsbury Town Investment Plan Project overview updates.

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The Board was advised that the risk registers that appeared in the updates would be the approach taken for further updates being brought future meetings. Included within the updates were key milestone trackers and the aim was to work towards keeping them throughout all the projects.

In relation to Dewsbury Market, the RAG ratings showed some challenges, and it was noted that some substantial changes would need to be made to the original plans. Ms Bartholomew informed the Board that there was both a cost and programme risk. The Board was advised that construction inflation was between 10 and 30 percent with fewer construction companies now tendering for work.

Ms Bartholomew explained that it was important to keep the integrity of the scheme, but that further work needed to be undertaken to see what was deliverable within the budget package. Initially, officers would be looking at the costs, but it was noted that all necessary permissions were being sought now, so that once a deliverable Market was agreed, work could commence without delay.

The Board was advised that the market traders understood the need to compromise on some aspects of the vision, but they were keen that the decant did not take place until such time that the work could commence immediately.

The Board voiced some concerns in relation to the imminent change of leadership in the government, and whether any changes would be made to the funding already allocated. However, Mr Eastwood (MP) informed the Board that he would continue to work with The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), to emphasise the need for the investment to remain in place.

Regarding The Arcade, the Board noted that a recruitment exercise was well attended. Although the update indicated that The Arcade management was a risk it was agreed that the risk was actually around ensuring the continued successful management of The Arcade.

Ms Bartholomew explained that in relation to the Town Park, consultation responses were important from both the public, and Board Members to ensure voices are heard in relation to how the play areas could be used.

The Board discussed the update in relation to the Creative Hub, in which match funding from Brigantia was awaited. £1.68m had been committed by the Town Investment Programme, but it was noted that limited progress had been made to date on the matched funding arrangements. This was a high-risk project as it was the only one not entirely funded by the Town Fund.

The Board noted that once Brigantia had secured funding, grant agreements would be signed that required milestones and checks at regular agreed intervals.

The Board was advised that there was also a risk regarding the affordability of the Phase 1 element, The Library. A full condition survey would need to be carried out to gain an understanding of costs required for the project. It was noted that an adjoining plot of land to The Library may be available, with a suggestion that match funding might also be an option depending on the proposal.

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### RESOLVED –

- 1) That the project overview updates be noted.
- 2) That further updates be brought to future meetings of the Board

### 7 **Update on the Communication Strategy 5:50pm - 6:40pm**

Gemma Birbeck and Martin Shaw attended the Board meeting to give a presentation relating to the Communication Strategy. The presentation gave an overview of the evidence gathered by Loaded PR and outlined recommendations for the Boards consideration.

Ms Birbeck outlined the importance of brand identity and ensuring continuity and clarity of communication. Ms Birbeck outlined several ways in which Loaded PR could promote the work of the Dewsbury Town Board and ensure engagement with all sections of the population.

The Board noted that no costs for the communication strategy were contained within the presentation, as there needed to be an understanding about what would be achievable with the financial package available. The Board would need to make decisions regarding next steps and discussions took place around several possible options which could be more quickly introduced.

### RESOLVED –

- 1) That Gemma Birbeck and Martin Shaw be thanked for their presentation.
- 2) That the Communication Strategy and options be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

### 8 **Chairs Update 6:40pm - 6:50pm**

The Chair advised the Board that a change to the Terms of Reference would be considered at the next meeting of the Board. The proposed changes would be discussed with Board Members individually over the next couple of weeks.

### 9 **Any Other Business 6:50pm to close**

The Board raised the issue of the UK Prosperity Fund. Ms Bartholomew explained that officers were aware of the fund, and that some scopes of the projects may benefit from the fund. Ms Bartholomew advised that more information would be brought to the September meeting to give some clarity around the fund.

### 10 **Date of Next Meeting**

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

22 September 2022

3 November 2022

15 December 2022