

Contact Officer: Nicola Sylvester

Dewsbury Town Board

Thursday 18th June 2026

Present: Sophie Johnson (Chair)

Paul Burnett (Virtual)
Fara Butt
Andi Eccles
Christine Fox
Chief Superintendent Jim Griffiths
Sajid Hussain (substitute for Iqbal Mohamed MP)
Peter Mason
Jackie Ramsay
Helen Rose
Palvinder Singh
Martin Walsh
David Wildman

In attendance: James Blamires, Project Officer
Thomas Fish, Acting Head of Town Centres
Regeneration
Michelle Illingworth, Project Officer
Andy Raleigh, Project Manager, Town Centres

Observers: Lisa Kinch, Historic England: Yorkshire Partnerships
Team (substitute for Richard Butterworth)

Apologies: Iqbal Mohamed MP
Anum Rehman
Richard Butterworth

**1 Membership of Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board
RESOLVED -**

David Wildman, Service Director for Skills and Regeneration at Kirklees Council, was appointed to the Board as an interim measure for this meeting.

Apologies were received from Anum Rehman, Iqbal Mohamed MP and Richard Butterworth.

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Sajid Hussain substituted on behalf of Iqbal Mohammed MP and Lisa Kinch substituted on behalf of Richard Butterworth.

2 **Declaration of Interests**

Sophie Johnson, Peter Mason, Fara Butt, Andi Eccles, Jackie Ramsay and Martin Walsh, declared an interest as shareholders in the Arcade for the agenda item relating to the Town Deal Project Update. The report was submitted to the Board for information.

Andi Eccles and Peter Mason declared an interest as a Member of the Arcade Group in the agenda item relating to the Town Deal Project Update. The report was submitted to the Board for information.

Jackie Ramsay declared an interest as Member and Chair of the Arcade Group in the agenda item relating to the Town Deal Project Update. The report was submitted to the Board for information.

David Wildman declared an interest as Service Director of Regeneration and Skills, Kirklees Council and refrained from voting on all agenda items.

3 **Minutes of Previous Meeting and Action Tracker**

RESOLVED -

- 1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2026 be approved as a correct record.
- 2) That the action tracker be noted.

4 **Admission of the Public**

All items were considered in public session.

5 **Deputations/Petitions**

No deputations or petitions were received.

6 **Public Question Time**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, Bruce Bird attended the meeting and asked the following question which they had submitted in writing:

“The Daisy Hill project of the Town Investment Plan was intended to deliver 200 quality, affordable residential homes of which the Field House conversion was a part. The intention was to improve the environment in the Daisy Hill area which, at the launch of the Town Investment plan, had already acquired a negative reputation.

In May 2023 the report to the Board was that some property had been acquired but the recruitment of developers was stalled due to the proposal being unattractive to them. There has been no further information about anything other than the flagship projects and the Daisy Hill project was noticeably absent from the community engagement container.

In the meantime, the state of the remaining properties, particularly the waste management problems that exist continue with no prospect of improvement.

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As we are now out of the Town Deal Board funding window can the Chair provide a summary of the activity completed, the funds expended and any funds remaining to improve the Daisy Hill area.”

A response was provided by the Chair.

Bruce Bird asked an additional question which had not been submitted in writing, regarding Item 8, at the discretion of the Chair:

“There is a contradiction within the draft terms of reference. Article 3.1 gives members notice and the opportunity to defend themselves, thereby providing the openness and accountability required to meet the requirements of the Nolan Principles. In Appendix B the council reserves the right to remove a member without such transparency and is in breach of the Nolan Principles. Will the Chair resolve this contradiction before presenting the draft for approval by the Board?”

A response was provided by the Chair, and his comments were noted by the Board.

7 **Chair's Update**

The Chair advised the Board that:

- Dewsbury's Pride in Place Regeneration Plan had now been approved by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- A Board Strategy Day had taken place to agree interventions and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the programme.
- A Board skills audit had achieved a 99% response rate and would be used to identify gaps in membership and inform future recruitment.
- Recruitment efforts would focus on expertise in health, faith communities, business, regeneration and community representation.
- Working Groups had commenced activity and plans were being developed to strengthen business engagement arrangements.

RESOLVED –

That the Chair's Update be noted.

8 **Terms of Reference**

The Board considered a report presenting revised Terms of Reference for the Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board.

The Board were advised that amendments had been made to:

- Align the Terms of Reference with MHCLG guidance.
- Reflect the Board's decision-making powers.
- Update provisions relating to membership and quorum requirements.
- Incorporate arrangements for working groups and sub-groups.

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The Board were advised that feedback from Members, the Governance and Legal Teams at Kirklees Council had been incorporated into the final version of the Terms of Reference.

During discussion, Board Members:

- Requested that future Board recruitment be managed to maintain an effective Board size.
- Sought clarification regarding Board member terms of office and arrangements for future deputy chair appointments.

RESOLVED –

That the updated Terms of Reference for Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board be approved.

9 Pride in Place Update

The Board received an update on implementation of the Pride in Place Programme.

The Board were advised that:

- The Regeneration Plan had been approved and the first tranche of funding received.
- Working Groups had met during March and April 2026.
- Initial interventions had commenced, including three fly-tipping clean-up operations in Daisy Hill, improvements to waste storage arrangements and targeted policing activity within the town centre.
- The pre-approved intervention to fund a dedicated Police Sergeant was in place, his team had acted to tackle drug-related crime in Dewsbury Town Centre.

The Board discussed performance monitoring arrangements and agreed the importance of regular KPI reporting.

The Board suggested that the dedicated Police Sergeant attend a future meeting to provide an update on the work that was undergoing.

Safety and Security Working Group

The Board considered recommendations relating to:

- Continued delivery of Police Sergeant and Enforcement Officer roles.
- A one-year trial of a town centre radio system.
- Future development of capital safety and security projects.

Engagement, Events and Communications Working Group

The Board considered recommendations relating to:

- Continued delivery of the Creative Programme Manager role.
- Development of a community small grants programme.
- Use of funding to attract additional external investment and match funding opportunities.

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The Board was provided with an updated figure on the total investment for 27 Market Place, the report advised the total investment cost was £361,000, the Board was advised that the current position was £406,000.

Place Working Group

The Board considered recommendations relating to:

- Procurement of specialist consultancy support to undertake a vacant units and buildings study.
- Progression of strategic master-planning work to support future regeneration and inward investment.
- Additional investment to bring 27 Market Place to a wind and water-tight condition and prepare it for future use.

The Board discussed the need to build upon existing regeneration frameworks whilst ensuring a clear long-term vision for Dewsbury.

Business Support Working Group

The Board noted that a Chair of the Business Support Working Group had not yet been appointed.

The Board were advised that a Business Support Officer role had been recruited on a 12-month basis to provide business engagement capacity within the town whilst detailed working group arrangements were developed.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Pride in Place Programme be noted.
- 2) That the recommendations and KPIs within the Pride in Place report and appendix attached be endorsed.

10 Town Deal Project Update

The Board received an update on delivery of Town Deal projects and were advised that:

- The Arcade Project was progressing well and remained on track for practical completion during Summer 2026, with a formal reopening anticipated in September 2026.
- Procurement activity for the Market and Town Park Project was progressing, with a temporary market expected to be operational during Autumn 2026 ahead of construction works.
- Public realm works around the Town Hall and Market Place were nearing completion and were expected to be available for public use during Summer 2026.
- The Construction Skills Village project continued to progress, with refurbishment works and design development underway.
- Work continued in respect of Neil Jordan House and wider Daisy Hill regeneration activity.

The Board welcomed the visible progress being made across Dewsbury town centre and discussed future event programming, inward investment opportunities and business engagement.

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An update was also provided on work being undertaken with the NHS and partners to explore opportunities to establish health services within vacant town centre premises, including potential future use of 27 Market Place.

During discussion, the Board requested clarification on how the Riverside Active Travel Route would cross the river and canal. It was noted that the Riverside project remained on the forward plans and discussions were taking place, however the scheme was still at a very early stage and there was currently no detailed design information available, including for crossing arrangements. Officers undertook to present information on the Riverside Active Travel Route at a future Board meeting.

Board Members were invited to visit other town markets to see how they had transformed, and were asked to advise officers if this was something they would be interested in.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Town Deal Project update be noted.
- 2) That a report on the Riverside active travel route be presented to the Board at a future meeting.
- 3) That a report on attracting retailers, food outlets and businesses to the Market be brought back to Board at a future meeting.

11 AOB

Board Members highlighted forthcoming events including:

- Caribbean Food Festival – June 2026.
- Dewsbury on Sea – July 2026.
- Official Arcade reopening celebrations – September 2026.

The Board received an offer from Council officers for future presentations on strategic transport, regeneration, business support and other service areas relevant to delivery of Board priorities.

12 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 4pm on Thursday 10th September 2026 at Dewsbury Town Hall.