

Contact Officer: Nicola Sylvester

Dewsbury Town Deal Board

Thursday 17th March 2022

Present: Keith Ramsay (Chair)
Mark Eastwood, MP
Fara Butt
Sue Baker
Peter Mason
Martyn Broadest
Councillor Cathy Scott
Julia Arechiga
Martin Walsh

In attendance: Joanne Bartholomew – Kirklees Council
Simon Taylor – Kirklees Council
Michelle Illingworth – Kirklees Council
Leigh Webb – Governance Manager
Richard Thorpe – Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Chris Duffill – Head of Service, Business and Skills
Gillian Wallace – Head of Employment and Skills
Thomas Fish – Project Officer
Kath Wynne-Hague – Head of Culture & Tourism
Frances Northrop – Frances Northrop Consulting

Apologies: Iqbal Bhana (OBE, DL)
Paul Burnett
James Conn
Nancy Barrett
Bruce Bird
Heather Waddington

- 1 Membership of Dewsbury Town Deal Board**
Apologies were received on behalf of Iqbal Bhana, Paul Burnett, James Conn, Nancy Barrett, Bruce Bird and Heather Waddington. Councillor Cathy Scott substituted for Councillor Shabir Pandor and Julia Arechiga substituted for Palvinder Singh.

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2 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 3rd February 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

4 Public Question Time

No questions were received.

5 Chairs Update

The Chair updated the Board on the meeting with peer Chairs and the LEP Chair, Sir Roger Marsh, the meeting had been re-arranged for 24th March 2022.

The Chair asked Board Members to submit their declarations of Interest to the Governance Team to ensure the Board register was up to date.

The Chair confirmed that Terms of Reference for the Youth Engagement and Skills working groups would be developed over the next few weeks.

The Chair informed the Board that he had attended a very good initial round table, facilitated by Chris Duffill, Board colleagues and representative from Kirklees Council and Kirklees College. The meeting was very informative and the Chair asked all Board Members to be involved with the groups to ensure interaction between the Board and local community.

The Chair updated the Board on wider business and community engagement. In 2019 Kirklees Council wrote to a range of organisations and businesses in Dewsbury regarding the proposals around the Town Deal, it was felt that an update should be provided on progress made. A discussion had taken place with Officers with regards to holding a “drop-in session” in Dewsbury Town Hall. The drop-in session would take place during the afternoon/early evening of June 1st 2022. The session would be open to the public and invitations would be sent to original consultees and others to highlight the 9 Town Deal projects and progress.

The Chair requested that Board meetings commenced at an earlier time of 4:30pm.

The Chair advised the Board that Michelle Illingworth would be submitting business cases to the Board for comment. Michelle Illingworth advised that there were 5 business cases over the next 3 months. The timescale for the Board to provide comment was 5 working days, (7 Calendar days). It was agreed that feedback on the comments made would be provided to the Board, by the Quality Assurance Team at the Informal meeting in May 2022

RESOLVED:

- i. That Board meetings commence at 4:30pm
- ii. That the Chairs update be received and noted.

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- iii. That feedback on the Business Cases submitted is provided to the Board from the Quality Assurance Team at the Informal meeting in May 2022.

6 **Board Matters**

The Chair confirmed that the Board had not provided any feedback from the email sent 16th February 2022 regarding Governance processes, other than a recommendation for a report template. Timings would also be added to future agendas.

The Chair advised that work would take place on draft Terms of Reference Spring 2022, with a final version ready in June/July 2022.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the Board received and noted the email sent on 16th February 2022 regarding Governance processes,
- ii. That timings would be added to future agendas.
- iii. That draft Terms of Reference would be worked on Spring 2022, with a final version June/July 2022.

7 **Construction Skills Village**

The Board received a presentation on Bed making manufacturing in Dewsbury that provided the following information:

The Bed/Furniture sectors in Kirklees

There was a total of 401 businesses in Kirklees, with the vast majority manufacturing mattresses or other furniture. One third of the 401 had a Dewsbury postcode.

- 400 businesses in manufacturing & Wholesale,
- Up to 7,900 jobs,
- Larger employers included High Seat Holdings, High Grove Beds, J.T. Ellis & Co and Durabeds,
- Vast majority SMEs – average workforce size 20 employees,
- More than 60% had 10 or less staff.

Skills and recruitment issues

Kirklees Council were working with businesses to help identify access to financial support available and what the businesses were looking for with regards to recruitment, upskilling and apprenticeships, the following challenges were noted:

- Recruiting & retaining lower skilled/paid roles,
- Ageing workforce across the manufacturing sector,
- Limited opportunities for progression/career development,
- A risk of losing specialist/traditional skills,
- Difficulties in attracting young people to the industry.

Supporting ethical business practices

It was noted that a small number of organisations did not follow correct processes and legal requirements, examples are:

- Some high-profile examples of businesses operating illegally
- No single regulator – HSE, Trading Standards, KC Environmental Health, all involved
- Employment law compliance was especially complex
- Role of trade associations – National Bed Federation – to promote/support ethical practice and raise standards

How could the sector be supported?

- Assemble package of business/skills support – tied to business commitment to raise standards, pay National Minimum Wage and trade ethically, support to include,
 - Dedicated Growth Manger (business advisor),
 - Whole system business diagnostic,
 - Support to recruit and retain staff through Works Better, SWAP,
 - Access to grant to support investment in production processes and productivity improvements,
 - Training needs analysis/long-term skills planning,
- Commit to NBF membership/code of practice-covers key compliance areas including health and safety, modern slavery, flammability, chemicals and timber legislation, trade descriptions etc,
- NBF awarded Assured Advice status by West Yorkshire Trading Standards

Next steps

- Seek views of Towns Fund Board and other key stakeholders,
- Consult with National Bed Federation and West Yorkshire Trading Standards,
- Engage with key local employers to test appetite for and shape package of support,
- Develop pilot initiative – packaging existing support/activity,
- Evaluate and consider options for future roll out.

The Board raised concerns around legitimate companies and how they could ensure that employees were not taken advantage of, along with ensuring specialist skills were retained and upskilling took place. It was noted that Kirklees Council and Kirklees College were working with companies to build up skills and roll out to companies, along with working with Trading Standards, Environmental Health and HSE. It was recommended that “FIESTA” The Furniture and Interiors Education Skills and Training Alliance was contacted to provide support. FIESTA had joined forces with eight other organisations to launch a new sector voice that would work with government to grow the number of high-quality apprenticeships in the manufacturing sector.

RESOLVED:

- i. That officers were thanked for the good work that had taken place,
- ii. That the update be noted,
- iii. That an update be provide at a Board meeting early autumn.

8 Youth Engagement

The Board received an update on Youth Engagement and next steps. A brief paper with questions and comments from Board members around questions they wanted to present to the youth sector had been presented to Kirklees College. The themes around the questions were “Active, Attractive and Accessibility”. An open session for the youth sector had been arranged at Kirklees College on Thursday 24th June 2022 to put forward the questions. Feedback from the sessions would be presented to the Board at the Board Meeting in May 2022. The Board was advised to contact Michelle Illingworth if interested in attending the sessions with the youth sector.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the update be noted,
- ii. That Feedback from the sessions be presented at the May 2022 Board Meeting,
- iii. Board Members to advise Michelle Illingworth if interested in attending the sessions with the youth sector.

9 Risk Register Programme

The Board received an updated risk register.

The Board raised questions around the risk register and how confident Kirklees Council were that all projects would be completed, or if there were any projects that were high risk. It was noted that there were a small number of projects that were higher risk than others, the aspirations of the Council were to ensure that they were all deliverable. There was one project that could be challenging due to external funding.

The Board raised a concern that the risk register did not always match the risks on plan on page documents. It was noted that the risk register would be updated to match the risks on the plan on page.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the updated risk register be noted,
- ii. That the risk register be updated with the information on the plan on page.

10 Daisy Hill Project

The Board received a presentation on the Daisy Hill Project and a verbal update on Field House.

The project was to undertake the critical first steps to create a new neighbourhood of approximately 200 homes at the heart of Dewsbury, which would support Town Centre vibrancy and make the most of the heritage assets of the Town.

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The project was comprised of two parts:

- The first phase which was the conversion of vacant grade 2 listed Field House building into 23 high quality apartments and a restaurant/bar,
- The acquisition of land and buildings to create a single development opportunity of a scale necessary to deliver the desired outcomes. The project would set a new standard for quality of residential accommodation in Dewsbury Town Centre and would attract occupiers with disposable incomes that would help support the town centre economy.

The Board raised concerns with regards to residential use of flats in the Town Centre, it was felt that a park was required along with dentists and doctors. It was noted that the transformation would include communal spaces and green spaces. The land that was owned by Kirklees Council was sufficient to plan appropriately which could include demolishing some buildings. It was important to note that some buildings and infrastructure could change and the aspiration was to have a thriving neighbourhood.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received and noted.

11 Format of New Report

The Board received a report template to be completed by Board Members and Officers who presented updates and information at Board Meetings. The template provided full details of information required to make decisions, implications to the Town Deal, along with recommendations. The template would be implemented for the Board meeting May 2022.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the report template be received and noted,
- ii. That Implications to the Council was amended to Implication for the Town Deal.

12 AOB

The Board was informed of a meeting that had taken place with PCSO's regarding CCTV in Dewsbury. Currently the CCTV that was in place across the town did not provide facial recognition and there was a need for high-definition visionary to identify perpetrators. It was noted that a piece of work with the police was required, to understand what benefits of having the high-definition visionary would be and where they would be best placed.

A discussion took place around training on Teams for Board Members, this could be a group training session or individual training. It was noted that a recorded training session may be available from Kirklees IT department which could be forwarded to Board members to view at their convenience. Officers were to enquire with Kirklees IT and circulate to members

RESOLVED:

- i. That work be carried out on high-definition visionary to identify benefits.
- ii. That Video training session on Teams be forwarded to Board Members.

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13 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next public meeting will take place on 30th June 2022, 4:30pm
Location to be confirmed.

14 **Communication Strategy**

The Board received a report on the Communication Strategy with proposals on how to develop and deliver a communications strategy, provide ongoing support for the Board's activities regarding regular communication with residents, partners and Stakeholders.

In February 2022 the Chair was encouraged to bring forward proposals as to how the Board may rapidly put in place a communications strategy coupled with ongoing and regular communication with the local population of Dewsbury focusing on:

- Activities associated with the Dewsbury Town Deal
- Delivery of the Town Investment Plan
- How the Town Deal Board could encourage engagement with local residents, partners and stakeholders.

The Board decided not to pursue the establishment of a brand for the Town Deal, but it was something that required revisiting as activities matured. Equally, Board had not taken up a draft strategy on marketing and communications that were presented to the Board on two occasions in June 2021 and October 2021.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and noted

15 **Exclusion of the Public**

RESOLVED – That acting under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item 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, as specifically stated in the undermentioned Minute.

16 **Communication Strategy**

(Exempt information within Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) Order 2006, namely that the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining the exemption, which would protect the interests of the Council and the company concerned, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information and providing greater openness in the Council's decision making.)

The Board received a report on the Communication Strategy with proposals on how to develop and deliver a communications strategy, provide ongoing support for the

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Board's activities regarding regular communication with residents, partners and Stakeholders.

A tender process was carried out, two companies had submitted proposals to be considered by the Board.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the Board received and noted the Communication Strategy and tender documents,
- ii. That proposal one be appointed to advise and work with the Board on the Communication Strategy.