Contact Officer: Nicola Sylvester

# Dewsbury Town Board

**Wednesday 26th March 2025**

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| Present: | Keith Ramsay (Chair)<br>Councillor Graham Turner<br>Anis Dadu<br>Martin Walsh<br>Anum Rehman<br>Peter Mason<br>Helen Rose<br>Palvinder Singh<br>Christine Fox<br>Paul Burnett (Virtual)<br>Jackie Ransden (Substitute for Natalie Liddle) |
| In attendance: | Joanne Bartholomew, Service Director, Development<br>David Wildman, Acting Head of Town Centres<br>Michelle Illingworth, Project Officer<br>Andy Raleigh, Economic Resilience Project Manager<br>Helen Jakes, Communications Business Partner |
| Apologies: | Chief Supt Jim Griffiths<br>Fara Butt<br>Charlie Dunn<br>Sam Heaton<br>Sophie Johnson<br>Iqbal Mohamed<br>Natalie Liddle |

**1 Membership of Dewsbury Town Board**

Apologies were received on behalf of James Griffiths, Fara Butt, Charlie Dunn, Sam Heaton, Sophie Johnson, Iqbal Mohamed and Natalie Liddle.

Jackie Ramsden substituted on behalf of Natalie Liddle.

**2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting dated 6th February 2025 were not approved at this meeting.

**3 Declaration of Interests**

**RESOLVED-**Keith Ramsay, Martin Walsh, Peter Mason, Jackie Ramsay and Anis Dadu declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 7.

**4 Admission of the Public**

It was noted that Agenda item 12 would be considered in private session.

**5 Public Question Time**

No Public Questions were considered at this meeting.

**6 Deputations/Petitions**

No Deputations or Petitions were received.

**7 Acquisition of strategic property**

The Board received a report regarding the purchase of a strategic property in Dewsbury using Building Grant Revival Scheme funding. It was noted that this was the best option to help safeguard investment in the town.

As discussed at a previous Board Meeting, a request was made to enter discussions regarding the acquisition and repair of the building with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, who confirmed this was within scope of the Building Grant Revival Scheme as funds were intended to support the reinstatement of shop fronts to support wider regeneration and improve the image and appearance of the town centre.

Negotiations with the owner had taken place and a purchase price had been agreed.

**RESOLVED-**

1) That the report be noted
2) That, utilising the Building Grant Revival Scheme funds as part of the Town Deal allocation, approval be given to the acquisition and subsequent repairs to the strategi property as outlined in the private appendix
3) That, subject to the Plan for Neighbourhoods being approved by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, a recommendation be made to Kirklees Council as the accountable body, to:-
   (i) Utilise the revenue funds from the Plan for Neighbourhoods for the annual holding costs of the property
   (ii) Agree to further investment in the strategic property as part of the Regeneration Plan, in order to facilitate the renovation and sale or lease of the property in the future.

**8 Plan for Neighbourhoods**

The Board received a report on Plan for Neighbourhoods. On 4th March 2025, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government confirmed further investment of up to £20m in Dewsbury as part of their Plan for Neighbourhoods. The Board, working with the Local Authority, would be responsible for producing a 10-year regeneration plan, setting out the activity that would be pursued to achieve the three strategic objectives of the programme which were:

- Thriving places
- Stronger Communities
- Taking back control

The Board noted that Kirklees Council had to confirm the Neighbourhood Board Membership and place boundaries by 22nd April 2025.

The Board was informed that priorities for capacity funding were identified using feedback from a survey completed by Board Members and Council Officers which included establishing a multi-disciplinary safety and security team, developing and delivering a programme of events, engaging with businesses and developing housing and economic plans.

During discussion, the Board suggested that green space in relation to Caulms Wood be included in the boundary. It was noted that this would need to be agreed with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Authority.

**RESOLVED-**

1) That a report be referred to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government with a recommendation that:-
   (i) current Board Members be retained for the Neighbourhood Board
   (ii) the default geographical Boundary as defined by the Office for National Statistics be used for the Plan for Neighbourhood.

**9 AOB**

The Board was updated on the resignation of Sue Baker, The Chair thanked Sue for her input in improving Dewsbury Town Centre over the time she had been a Board Member**.**

The Chair advised the Board that Iqbal Mohamed (MP) had requested an extraordinary meeting of the Board to discuss Dewsbury Sports Centre. The Chair confirmed that he had requested a report be submitted to the next Board Meeting on the reasons to why the sports centre could not be refurbished**,** along with details on the piece of work that had been commissioned on Health and Wellbeing of people in Dewsbury.

**10 Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 1st May
Location: Dewsbury Town Hall

**11 Exclusion of the Public**

**RESOLVED –** That acting under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the pubic be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Park 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as specifically stated in the undermentioned minutes.

**12 Acquisition of Strategic property**

**RESOLVED-** That the Committee noted the exempt information, which was an appendix to agenda item 7.