



Bridgwater Town Deal Board

15th June 2022

10:30am till 12:00pm

Teams Meeting

MINUTES

1) Introduction and Apologies

In attendance:

- Councillor Gill Slocombe
- Councillor Mick Lerry
- Doug Bamsey
- Gavin Roberts
- Paul Edwards
- Paul Moore
- David Mears
- Haf E Morris
- David Ralph
- Julie Wooler

Supporting the board:

- Nathaniel Lucas
- Keith Thomas
- Erin Davey
- Geoff Sawyer
- Katherine Schollar

Apologies:

- Ruth Lambert

Welcome and apologies given

- Welcome to Erin Davy, Government Representative.
- Welcome to Geoff Sawyer, Project Manager from the Bridgwater Town Council for the Town Hall Theatre and Arts Centre projects.

Previous minutes agreed as correct.

2) Matters Arising

- The Celebration Mile Business Case was submitted to Government last week.
- Carnival and Docks projects have had a timetable extension to December 2022.
- JG/JE to have the Business Case programme circulated to all Board Members.

3) Bridgwater Step-Up Enterprise Centre Business Case

- A preferred property in Angel Crescent has been located.
 - It is 2800 square feet over 3 floors.
 - It is Grade 2 Listed building.
 - The building is in good condition and is well presented as office accommodation.
 - Freehold Value is £395,000, which is affordable under the £500k Town Deal Funding.
 - There is also £200k match funding from SDC.
 - The ground floor to be offered as hot desk spaces, with serviced offices on the upper floors.
 - The serviced offices will be all inclusive, offered on flexible terms.
 - It is modelled to be viable from Year 4.
 - It will employ 2 members of staff. One full time and one part time.
 - It is planned to be incorporated into the SCC Enterprise Network.
- The main challenge for the business case is the building may be sold before we receive a decision from government.
 - Currently expressing lots of interest to the agent and exploring commissioning condition survey.
- Cllr ML enquired about the delivery risks.
 - ere the Utilities, Office Manager etc based on the rent from the occupants?
 - Feasibility study identified potential demand for small offices/space
 - KT explained that the serviced offices had the potential to be ready from April 2023. Desk space would be sold on a membership scheme basis.
 - Full members would have 5 days access.
 - Lower levels of membership would have 1- or 2-days occupancy.
 - There would also be the Hot Desk space on the Ground Floor.
- The modelling has included real figures from the previous owners.
 - The figures also include an 8% annual inflation.
 - The modelling has been stress tested for energy costs doubling.
 - Energy Prices may be an additional charge.
- The modelling shows Value for Money.
- NL explained that conversations have been had with SCC and that they are happy that Step Up will have wider economic benefits.
- The Step-Up Business Case will go to the SDC Executive meeting on 6th July.
- Should then receive funding approval in Sept 2022.
 - SDC are hoping to have a building survey completed between July – September, subject to management sign off.
 - SDC will be looking for early confirmation to use advance drawdown funds to make the purchase of the building.
- Remodelling Fit out work to begin in Jan 2023.
- Enterprise Centre plan to open in April 2023.
- A risk has been highlighted that the Angel Crescent works for the Celebration Mile are scheduled for May to Aug 2023.
 - Look at holding off the opening, in order to work with Jurassic Fibre to lay fibre cables in Angel Crescent.
- The board were in agreement to the business case and express how it is an exciting opportunity for Bridgwater.
- PE enquired if planning permission is needed?
 - KT added that planning permission isn't needed as it is only internal work to be completed.

- As the building is a grade 2 listed building, the Conservation Officer has visited the site.
- Will consider potential to install Velux windows in the attic which would increase the accommodation of the facility – subject to Listed Building approvals.
- This will be the first Town Centre Enterprise Hub.
- PE enquired about car parking. – Could SDC offer free parking?
 - KT added that there are 5 Car parking spaces at the rear of the building, with the possibility of these being Blue Badge. Possibility of obtaining seasonal ticket.
 - DB also added that the property is next to Angel Place and there is scope there for parking.
- The board will need to consider a name for the facility – this will be brought forward to the board to decide at a later date.

The board have agreed to the business case.

4) Town Deal Board Briefing – Bridgwater Old Hospital LUF proposals

- A £20m Levelling Up Funded Bid for the Bridgwater and West Somerset Constituency is in progress.
- The Project Board consists of:
 - Sedgemoor District Council
 - Somerset West and Taunton Council,
 - Somerset County Council,
 - NHS Foundation Trust,
 - NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board,
 - Bridgwater & Taunton College,
 - University of West of England,
 - Somerset Association of Care Providers,
 - Young Somerset.
- There are 5 main local challenges:
 - Skills and Labour Market,
 - Health Inequalities,
 - Linking Service Delivery to skills and Innovation,
 - Listed Building,
 - Regeneration.
- Project Outcomes are as follows:
 - Retention of employees,
 - Attracting Overseas Labour,
 - Save a listed building,
 - Generate footfall into the Town Centre.
- Concept Design Proposals have been prepared to inform the bid providing:
 - Training Facility, including flexible space for Café, events,
 - Accommodation/ Key Worker Housing,
 - Lodge converted into a Nursery/Creche,
 - Create Garden Space,
 - Office Space on Ground Floor,
 - Learning Resource Centre.
- This will be the first project like this in the UK and needs Town Deal Board Endorsement.
- PE expressed that it is an exciting proposal and a good use of the building.
- Cllr GS fully supports the proposal – enquired if there was any scope to have accommodation at the front of the building?

- KT added that free standing residential makes more sense as it can cause problems with creating a separate access.
- Cllr ML asked what is the connection with the other Hospital training provision? And is £20m enough?
 - KT confirmed potential for some existing training provision to relocate to the new centre but added that the designing of the curriculum is a long way off.
 - Currently looking at growing the training into a National Accreditation.
 - Current NHS training is taking place at Express Park which is not ideal as it has restrictive parking – They would like to relocate and expand.
 - Have also been looking at facilities in West Somerset with the capacity for onsite training with links to Yeovil to grow the wider delivery network.
 - QS costs have been provided for the building work, additional allowances made for inflation and contingency risks and for fit-out and equipment to deliver a turn-key solution.
- NL added that there is a significant amount of engagement with a high range of partners.
 - If the submission is successful there is the opportunity to speak to a wider range of Partners.

The board are supportive to the LUF proposals as it enhances Town Deal projects.

5) Town Deal Cycling Potential Change to Schemes

- The original cycle links are likely to be addressed through the wider A38 improvements being carried out by SCC although some elements proving more complicated than expected due to utilities and land ownerships.

The link from the Station to the College is also exploring alternative funding via GWR Community fund and SDC support.

Meanwhile the LCWIP includes proposals for enhancing the Riverview Terrace connecting into the Docks as a central hub linking to Northgate and town center.

Suggestion, therefore, is to transfer the Town Deal Fund allocation £1m to improve the cycling connectivity through the docks and joining up the other sections.

A feasibility exercise and design options will be required specially to explore scope for a new bridge crossing over the Newtown Lock.

- Cllr ML welcomed the idea of the Riverside links
 - It will encourage the regeneration of the area.
- DM added that the Docks have huge historical importance to the town.
 - It was Bridgwater Town Council's ambition to acquire the Docks through the Town Deal Funding.
 - The proposal will help the wider economics of the Town.
 - PM added that it is encouraging for the proposal to be supported by the Town Council.
- Cllr GS welcomed the idea – the change seems appropriate.
 - Supports and encourages the proposals for redevelopment of the Bowerings Mill building as well.
- KT confirmed we will work with SCC on the feasibility study and bring further information back to future board meeting.
- Business Case Programme from previous meeting was discussed and is appended to the notes below.

6) AOB

Business Case Programme – June 22 update

Project Title	Design Stages	Town Board	SDC Assurance	SDC Exec Approval	Submit to Gov	Funding Released
River Barrier						2023
Dunball Junction						July 22
Town Wardens						July 22
Celebration Mile						Sep 22
Step-UP		June 22	June 22	6 th July	July 22	Oct 22
Cycling Links ¹	June 22	July 22	July 22	27 th July	Aug 22	Dec 22
Arts Centre	24 th July					
Town Hall	June 22	24 Aug	25 th Aug	14 th Sep	Sep 22	Dec 22
Theatre		28 th Sep	29 th Sep	12 th Oct	Oct 22	Jan 23
Engine Room 2.0	May 22					
Docks ²	July 22	Oct 22	Oct 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Mar 23
Carnival ²	Sep 22	Oct 22	Oct 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Mar 23

The next board meeting is the 20th July starting at 12:30pm.

- RL added further comments after the board meeting:
 - This is a brilliant project and will add extra interest to the town centre encouraging footfall and the use of the local facilities.
 - Full fibre provision is essential for the project's success
 - It is relevant to include the facility in the network of Enterprise Centres, economies of scale will be a big benefit.
 - A suggestion to see that the business support offered on site can be offered more widely and to offer drop-in support for local businesses not based in the enterprise centre.