

# Bridgwater Town Deal Board

18<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Via Teams

2pm till 3:35pm

MINUTES

## 1) Welcome and Introductions

### In Attendance

- Fiona McMillian
- Doug Bamsey
- Andy Berry
- Cllr Mick Lerry
- David Ralph
- Justin Sargent
- Paul Edwards
- Ruth Lambert
- David Northey
- Nathaniel Lucas
- Katherine Schollar
- Jaycee Ellis
- Keith Thomas

### Apologies

- Cllr Gill Slocombe
- Heidi Coombe
- Paul Hickson
- Cllr David Hall
- Paul Moore

The minutes of the last meeting (28<sup>th</sup> February) were approved.

## 2) Covid19 impact on town deal process

- Due to COVID 19, the town deal processes were postponed.
- In June, guidance to the recovery of the town deal was released and everyone was given the go ahead to continue with their TIP's.
- The TIP should reference the direct impact of COVID 19 on the town.

## 3) Summary of progress to date

- Our Town Investment Plan submission date is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort which is in October.
- Document Library of strategic documents has been set up
- Research into potential match funding
- Officer Working Group has been established
- Northgate project was selected for accelerated funding and submitted.

- Procurement process completed with PER Consulting selected.

#### 4) PER Consulting – Early View/setting the scene

- Welcome to Keith Thomas from PER Consulting.
  - Keith will be working with Patrick Gulliver.
- Bridgwater Reenergised is a potential strapline. The following points are themes that we could include within the potential strapline.
- Green, Sustainable Growth
- Green Spaces
- Culture and Heritage
- Health and Wellbeing
- Inclusive Regeneration
- Education
- Impacting the majority, not the few.

#### 5) PER Consulting – Outline of Town Investment Plan project plan/timeframe for delivery

- A rough outline of the TIP Project
  - Week 1-3: Baseline Evidence
  - Week 4-6: Project Prioritisation
  - Week 7-9: Technical Review
  - Week 10: Approve Submission
- Are there any projects in place that could coheres with in town deal to make our TIP stronger?
  - New projects can emerge, but they would need to be fast tracked.
- Are we in the position to go beyond the £25 million?
  - Beyond £25 million is ambitious.
- Invest in clean growth within the town.

#### 6) Board member opportunity to discuss and feedback

- How will the town be managed in the future?
  - Town Board?
  - Town Council?
- Could the shop front improvements programme be 50% fundable by the town board and 50% funding elsewhere – is this possible?
- We could connect to young people through the college.
- Health and Wellbeing is important
  - Support them to become healthier and more active within young people/community.
- Boris Johnson has mentioned he is giving £1million into education.
  - Spot the gaps within the sector and invest in them?
- We need inclusive growth
  - Need the wider community to feel proud to come from Bridgwater and the connectivity from within the town centre. Hope to get the majority of the community involved.
- Seeing boarded up vacant units has a huge impact within the centre.
- There is no enthusiastic feeling within the town.
- Potentially move away from town centres being retail focused.

- Bring other ways to bring people within the town centre.
- SEED in Bridgwater has £1.5 million for cultural projects.
- Bridgwater could act as a gateway to the rest of the south west.
- We need to get people to come to Bridgwater instead of going to Weston/Bristol.
- Bridgwater has good heritage within the town, however it will need investment.

## 7) Town Deal accelerated funding update

- Bridgwater was eligible for £750,000, based on population size. It was decided that the Northgate project was the most suitable project to be selected for this funding, as the project covers; urban regeneration, planning & land-use, arts, culture & heritage.
- The project consists of the Northgate Leisure Complex and Brewery Field regeneration. With a spilt of £600K for the leisure complex, which will consist of a 7-screen cinema, bowling alley and an additional 4 food/drink units, and £150k to the Brewery field park regeneration, which will create a town park with play facilities.
  - Justin Sargent mentioned how the open space would be managed: will it be a community ownership?
  - Ruth Lambert mentioned: *Good project to help make Bridgwater a destination. It would be good to see the restaurants include some independent operators not just the larger chains.*
- There is no set date, but MHCLG has suggested that we should hear back by the end of September.

## 8) Next steps/actions

- Workshop for Vision and Project Prioritisation, the 11th September is suggested for this.
- Request for meeting space for the next board meeting – 11th September.

## 9) Date of next meeting

- Date of next meeting will be implemented via a Doodle Poll to see availability from the board.

## 10) AOB

- No AOB was discussed in this meeting.

Meeting was closed at 3:35pm