



Bridgwater Town Deal Board

20th July 2022

12:30pm-2pm

Teams Meeting

MINUTES

1) Introduction and Apologies

In attendance:

- David Mears,
- Doug Bamsey,
- Erin Davey,
- Gavin Roberts,
- Paul Edwards,
- Paul Moore,
- David Ralph

Supporting the board:

- Nathaniel Lucas,
- Keith Thomas,
- Erin Davey,
- Katherine Schollar,
- Sophie Davenport,
- Jaycee Ellis

Apologies:

- Cllr Gill Slocombe,
- Cllr Mick Lerry,
- Ruth Lambert,
- Paul Hickson,
- Julie Wooler,
- Jonica Walkinshaw,
- Haf E Morris

Welcome and apologies given

Previous minutes agreed as correct.

2) Matters Arising

- Project Funding Received
 - Step-Up Enterprise Centre – Business Case Approved
 - Update on Celebration Mile Business Case Submitted
 - LUF submission delayed to August 2nd by Government.
- The first tranche of money has been received for Dunball Junction and the first year of the Town Wardens.
 - Has enabled the Town Wardens programme to kick off – senior town warden JD has gone out.
 - Will be liaising with SCC to get a grant agreement in place to transfer monies for Dunball Junction.
 - KT, NL & JE to have a discussion regarding the structure and next steps for the delivery of projects – this process was picked up on an audit from SWAP. The audit raised no issues with town deal work to date – SDC have actions to carry out going forward.
 - Celebration Mile business case was approved through SDC Executive and was submitted to Government after the 5-day cool-in period.
 - Bridgwater Step-Up business case was approved by SDC Executive and SDC are planning to submit this to Government over the next week or so.
 - Further due diligence from SCC is yet to be carried out, although it is not seen as an issue.
 - SDC is proceeding with a building condition survey.
 - No formal offer has been put forward for purchase of the building just yet.
 - The agent has implied that there is building interest for the building.
 - ED advised that the decision of the Step-Up business case has a possibility to not be decided/released funding until September.
 - PE suggested for SDC to make an offer on the building.
 - ED also advised that the risk of the project not being approved is minimal – unless there is something significant that is being flagged up.
 - Board suggested to put a bid in after the building conditions survey has been completed. SDC officers to have the conversation on how they can drive this forward.
 - The Levelling Up Fund (LUF) has progressed.
 - There has been a delay from Government on submission portal, that has now rectified and is now open for submissions.
 - Bid needs to be submitted by the 2nd August.

3) Cycling link in Docks & Station to College Link update

- A funding application has been submitted to GWR to their community grant fund.
 - With SDC Match Funding, this should be able to deliver the scheme.
 - Stantec are undergoing the design and feasibility.
 - Looking to deliver this in the early spring 2023.
- Have sought further feasibility work on the cycling link on the North of the Docks.
 - Will look to have a cycling/pedestrian only bridge.
 - Currently awaiting further guidance of feasibility of costings.
 - Will report back to board next month.

4) Cultural Venues (Arts Centre/Town Hall Theatre/Engine Room) update

- Arts Centre, Town Hall Theatre and Engine Room are the next business case to be brought to board as a combined cultural venues business case.
- Combined business case will be presented at the August board meeting.
- The Engine Room is ready in terms of plans and costings.
- The Town Hall Theatre is just finalising costings.
- The Arts Centre is receiving finalised work on plans before getting costings.
- All plans and costings to be completed by end of July.
DM added that the QS costings is planned for Town Hall Theatre and Arts Centre for this week.
- The full business case will be drafted on a tight timescale – finalised version of the business case will be communicated with the board.
- This business case will then go to SDC Executive in September.

5) Carnival Sheds Progress & Update on Planning & Design

- One of the larger/complex schemes.
- The Community Renewal Fund (CRF) was secured to help make progress on design and technical feasibility.
- Initially, the concerns were about access to the site.
 - This has proved as a reduced constraint.
 - Have had comfort with SCC regarding the access due to the improvements on the A38 as part of the SCC LUF submission.
 - Most Carnival activity is also during an off-peak period.
- The main challenge that has been faced is that the Carnival site does not naturally drain.
 - An attenuation will need to be implemented to and hold and drain the site.
 - Due to the drainage, may not be able to accommodate for all 16 clubs to be on site.
 - Have had delays with progression on design due to constraints.
 - There is a meeting next week to finalise plans.
 - These constraints will need to be effectively managed in order for the implications and economic benefits to be outlined.
 - Constraints would have been unknown until the design & feasibility was undertaken.
 - Restrictions on the site outline that nothing can be built within 20 metres of the Network Rail line – also need to manage the ecology and biodiversity requirements on the site.
 - Further land options around the site are not available.
- There will be a change in the expected output but no major change in the outcome.
 - The activity of the Carnival remains the same, but not all clubs will be based on the same site.
- Planning application to be submitted in September/October – in line with completion of CRF funding.

6) Docks Regeneration update

- An update meeting with SDC, SCC and Bridgwater Town Council on the progress with the Docks. A further briefing was also held with county, district and town councillors on the progress with the analysis.
- Further progress on finalising costings and technical works.

- There are 3 locks that were initially being looked at to be replaced in order to have full navigation into the river.
 - Current costings are higher than envisaged as further work required than expected.
 - Market analysis confirms demand for residential moorings and further water-based leisure activity.
 - The research suggested more limited demand for river access given the challenge of navigating a fast-flowing, tidal river.
 - The Inland Waterway Association volunteers are keen for the docks to be navigable through the river long-term and this was acknowledged by Town Council from the outset.
 - There are, however, also concerns about future risks and liabilities on who gives permission for those to go out in the river.
 - Additional investment will also be required for mooring facilities in the river to allow boats to queue before accessing the lock gates.
 - Costings are far more than initially anticipated.
- There are several implications for the cost and use of the Docks – currently looking at managing them.
- May be cost constraint as the final costings come in at £5.5m whereas the Town Deal allocation is only for £4.2m.
- A possible Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) application for further funding for the bridge operations as it highlights more heritage of the Docks – will allow for more capacity at the site.
 - HLF application needs to be submitted in August for a possible decision in December – which also works for the business case timescale.
- The land side facilities for use of the water have identified additional costs which would generate income and adds further value and activity to the Docks.
- The cycling link feature will be added to this once further feasibility has been done.
- There will be a transfer of ownership from SCC to Bridgwater Town Council – the Town Council are meeting in September to review the operational plan.
- Will update further in September/October.

7) AOB

- Is there an update on the marketing proposal for the Town Board?
 - Under the Celebration Mile revenue funding, an Events and Outreach Manager was included in order to help support the Town Board with publicity. A draft Job Spec is being prepared in consultation with Town Council and Bridgwater Cultural Partnership in readiness for funding approval
 - A comms plan on Town Board milestones is also being produced to trigger communications against key milestones.
 - NL is in progress on a procurement spec for the marketing plan.
- DB suggested that a Northgate yard presentation is brought to a board meeting in the future as it was one of the first projects to receive funding under the Bridgwater Town Deal and it also has links with multiple Town Deal projects.
 - It will be on the agenda for the September board meeting.
- JE to arrange new board meeting dates for September/October.