

# Bridgwater Town Deal Board

28<sup>th</sup> February 2022

1:30pm-3pm

Teams Meeting

Minutes

## 1) Introduction and Apologies

In Attendance:

- Julie Wooler,
- Cllr Gill Slocombe,
- Doug Bamsey,
- Ruth Lambert,
- Cllr Mick Lerry,
- Rob Semple,
- Paul Moore,
- David Mears,
- Cllr C Lawrence,
- Justin Sargent,
- Stephanie Parsons

Supporting the board:

- Keith Thomas,
- Sophie Davenport,
- Jaycee Ellis.

Apologies:

- David Ralph,
- David Northey,
- Haf e' Morris,
- Jonica Walkinshaw,
- Katherine Schollar,
- Nathaniel Lucas,
- Paul Hickson,

The board was welcomed, and apologies were given.

Previous meeting minutes were agreed as correct.

The board was confirmed as being quorate for decisions to be taken.

## 2) SDC Assurance & Exec Approval – Tidal Barrier and Dunball Junction Projects confirmed and submitted to Government.

- The Tidal Barrier and Dunball Junction business case have both been through the governance process, ratified by the SDC Assurance Group and approved by SDC Executive.
- Tidal barrier and Dunball Junction business case have both been submitted to government for final decision.
- Now waiting for 2-3 months for a final decisions/till the money is released.

## 3) Town Wardens & Ambassadors Business Case

- Town Wardens is the first substantive business case prepared specifically for the Town Deal.
  - Tidal Barrier & Dunball Junction were externally prepared by Environment Agency & Somerset County Council.
- The business case is structured in accordance with the Treasury 5-Case Model.
  - Strategic Case – is there a compelling rationale and need?
  - Economic Case – Does the recommended option show value for money?
  - Commercial Case – Is the confidence in end user demand?
  - Financial Case – Is all funding available and are the revenue implications affordable?
  - Management Case – Is the project achievable, how will it be delivered successfully?

### Key Matters for the Board to consider in a Business Case

- Need to ensure the project is coherent with the TIP objectives and evidence of need.
- Confidence that the delivery risks are manageable and either mitigated/resolved.
- Certainty that the Town Deal funding will be spent by 2025/2026.
- Confirmation the project is financially viable upon completion.
- The outputs and outcomes of the project provide value for money.

### Project Context

- The Town Wardens & Ambassadors is a revenue-based project, with an allocation of £1m.
- The project will be managed and delivered by SDC
- SDC will provide funding-in-kind to support the project delivery through staff time and absorbing some of the overhead/management costs.
- There will be 5 Full Time Employment (FTE) posts that will lie within the Community & Safety team within SDC.
- The 5 FTE will make up of 1 senior officer (full time), 3 full time officers, and 2 part time officers.
- The senior officer will manage the full time/part time officers, which the senior officer will then directly report back to Rob Semple.
- These officers will look to engage with the community/partners to help provide support for those who may need it and provide enforcement as and when it is necessary – which will hopefully look to improve the perception of the town.
- The Socio-Economic benefits for the Town Wardens is high – sitting at a 3.3:1 BCR.

## Questions/Points Raised by the Board

- It is important that the wardens make connections with statutory/voluntary organisations in order to create links for support. – If the board know of any connections that would be beneficial for the wardens to be aware of, please send these ideas through. – DM had a multi-agency panel pre-covid which he can send through details of if necessary.
- Would the Town Wardens operate at demanding times within the town – evening/weekend work?
  - The Town Wardens will be contracted to also work out of hours/weekends where the demand fits.
  - They are contracted to 37 hours a week, with flexibility in the hours.
- How would the wardens be managed in terms of times they work and what they would do within the post?
  - Finer details have not yet been refined but will ensure wardens time is used efficiently.
- When management transfer to the new council (from April 2023), will the in-kind support continue?
  - It is anticipated that the new authority will have similar community responsibilities and the Wardens will transfer to the appropriate department.
  - As an established, ringfenced project management support should continue.
- Would the wardens be based in Bridgwater House?
  - This is yet to be refined in the new authority but there is a lot of opportunity of options on where they can link with the community.
  - Majority of the role will be out and about in the town centre but can use local hubs/spaces if needed.
  - Open to ideas of hubs/spaces of where the wardens can be based.
  - The NHS has bought the property of Fore Street and have plans for a mental health hub/safe space. The wardens can use this link to help people get further support if it is needed.
- Board raised concerns that there was a lot of enforcement duties identified in the role profiles – need to also address and highlight the Ambassador/Welcoming remit as well..
- Town Wardens will undertake training, so they know what is expected of them.
  - Will also gain knowledge of all the town deal projects to gain local knowledge of what is happening in the area.
  - This will involve bringing them to board meetings and giving them an introduction to the projects once they are in post.
  - This could also involve a vision/mission statement from the board to the wardens of these expectations.
- Concerns were raised regarding the annual salary for the wardens, it appears to be very high.
  - The salary figures quoted includes National Insurance, Pension & Super Annuation contributions – board have requested for this to be more clear in the business case/job descriptions as well as a figure that is more accurate once going through the job evaluation panel.
- Has funding for the posts been thought about beyond 2026?
  - Not something that can be advised on just yet due to the merging of the new authority, although it can be anticipated that other funding opportunities could occur – something that can be monitored going forward.
- Could the police provide support with access to uniforms/equipment?
  - Rob Semple to enquire opportunities for shared purchasing with the Police.

- All clarification points that board have made today will be put forward to the Assurance Group this afternoon.
- It was highlighted to board to keep discussions regarding any town deal projects broad, as information can be confidential.
  - It was agreed that the business case doc/any information within that, is to be kept confidential.
  - As soon as papers go to SDC Executive Panel, the project is public. It is important that we don't raise expectations to the public and to retain as much information as possible until we have had final government decision.
- Given the amount of input the members of the board made and seemed to want to have about the direction of the Town Wardens team, it was suggested that the board draw up a mission statement or a vision statement that the team use to guide their execution of this role.

**The Board agreed to the above proposal on the basis that the salary in the job description is clarified and greater emphasis given the Ambassador role in the job description**

#### 4) Local Engagement & Communications

- The board have 3 options regarding how they would like the PR/Comms to be managed for the town board.
  - The board could create a subcommittee of board members to manage the PR/Comms for the board.
  - A member of the board who has expertise in PR/Comms could manage the PR/Comms for the board.
  - The board could procure an external PR/Comms organisation to manage the PR/Comms for the board.
- It was mentioned that an external PR/Comms organisation manage the PR/Comms for the Northgate development which has been very successful.
  - The external PR/Comms company would help reinforce the positives and manage the negative comments that arise.
  - If the board decide that this is the route they wish to take, there is a small pot of Capacity Funding in the Economic Development team which could potentially fund it.
- It is important that the big milestones are managed efficiently
- It will need to be refined as to when the right time would be to introduce the PR/Comms company, if procured, at what stage would they be introduced to the Town Deal?
- PR/Comms need to make it clear about what the Towns Fund actually is, what it is offering for Bridgwater Town Centre and what links it creates with other town centre developments.
- It is highlighted that it is not just PR/Comms work, the organisation would also need to support community and stakeholder engagement presence too.

#### Board Decision

- The Board agreed, in principle, to explore external PR/Comms appointment subject to confirmation of available capacity funding and expected cost of work.
  - Officers to provide further update to March Board meeting for decision.

#### Potential Town Deal logos

- SDC Digital team have prepared some potential logos for the Bridgwater Town Deal Board.

- It has been highlighted that going forward, it is important for Bridgwater Town Deal Board to have a separate identity following the merger of the authorities.
- A suggestion was made that it the logos could include the word "Deal" or possibly the removal of the word "Board".
- Two of the option were gaining more favour among Board members -
- The colourful logo was considered positively and may appeal to a younger demographic.
- It has been suggested that there could be more colour added to the circular logos.
- Possibly add blue to the wave in one of the logos.
- Officers will review the suggestions and prepare revisions with SDC Portfolio Holder and Board Chair delegated to confirm a final preferred logo for use by the board.

## 5) Project Presentations

- Celebration Mile Progress
- Event Activity & Programme
- Presentations for the above will be brought forward for the next meeting.

## 6) Forward Plan – Progress Review

- The Business Case Programme has been updated.
  - Bridgwater "Step-Up" could possibly be brought to the next board meeting.
  - Celebration Mile would be presented to April Board.

## 7) AOB

- The following consultation and engagement events have taken place so far:
  - The Sedgemoor "Conversation" Briefing
  - Spark Somerset – Forum – 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021
  - Bridgwater Town Council – 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021
  - Bridgwater Town Development Forum – 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021
  - Bridgwater Youth Forum – 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021
  - Bridgwater Chamber of Commerce/FSB Business Engagement – 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022
  - Celebration Mile Business Engagement Event – Business – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022
- A presentation will be given at the next board meeting reporting on the feedback from the Celebration Mile Engagement Event.