

Minutes of Telford Town Deal Board
Friday 24 September, 12.00 - 13.30
Held via Microsoft Teams

Attended:

Board Members

Graham Wynn OBE (GW)	Chair
Mark Pritchard MP (MP)	MP for the Wrekin
Cllr David Wright (DW)	T&WC
Mandy Thorn MBE (MT)	Marches LEP
Holly Davies (HD)	Telford College
Teresa Hughes (TH)	Telford College
Will Westley (WW)	Telford Business Board
Guy Beaumont (GB)	Sovereign Centros
Julie Mellor (JM)	Chief Officer Group (T&W Community & Voluntary Sector)
Claire Skidmore (CS)	T&W CCG
Felicity Wingrove (FW)	Zen Communications
Ray Flynn (RF)	University of Wolverhampton

Observer

Annabel Townley BEIS

Officers

David Sidaway (DS)	T&WC
Angie Astley (AA)	T&WC
Katherine Kynaston (KK)	T&WC
Deb Byle (DB)	T&WC
Kate Callis (KC)	T&WC
Julie Wedge	Minute taker

1. Welcome

Actions

GW welcomed everyone to today's meeting.

2. Apologies

Lucy Allan MP (post meeting briefing offered)
Cllr Shaun Davies
Graham Guest
Maria Machancoses
Karl Tupling
Tim Steele (represented by Ray Flynn)

3. Declarations of Interest

GW acknowledged MT declaration of interest in item 5 as Chair of the Marches LEP as the LEP has allocated funds to the Station Quarter project. GW noted the declaration and thanked the LEP for their support and contribution.

No further declarations received.

4.

Notes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes were confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

No matters arising.

5.

Programme Update

KK confirmed that following endorsement by the board the project confirmation was submitted to the MHCLG at the end of August. The Destination Growth Fund & SQ Residential Sub Project had been removed. We now have up to 12 months to prepare the individual business cases with each to be signed off by MHCLG

KK advised that we have been looking at ways to top up the funding and confirmed that TWC would 'top up' Wellington and Oakengates funding so both projects will now receive the full £3m.

KK also advised that in principle a bid to the LEP had been approved for £685k which will be matched by TWC, and enable us to obtain the land adjacent to Boyd House as part of the Station Quarter project. This will help us to strengthen the frontage on the route from the Train Station to the Town Centre and enable delivery of residential outputs lost due to the reduced Towns Funding.

The Accelerated Delivery Funds are fully committed and delivering outcomes. This includes viability gap funding to support the redevelopment of properties in Wellington with units already taken by businesses supported by the Council's Pride in Our High Street programme.

6.

Business Case Development

Teams are working with consultants to prepare cases and independent business case assurance consultants have been procured in line with Government requirements.

Sign off of business cases will be required by the Council's S151 officer along with Chair of the Board, who will seek the support of the Board. The summary documents need to be submitted to Government by June 2022.

MHCLG can request additional business case appraisal and Deb Byle (Towns Fund Programme Manager) is continuing to work closely with BEIS colleagues to ensure work and documents align with requirements.

We currently anticipate SQ business case will be presented to the board in early 2022. Funding will be received on the basis of business case approval.

With regards to engagement, KK confirmed that briefings have taken place with both town councils and they will be engaged in business case development.

KK advised that we will also be looking to refresh the Towns Fund web pages via a new microsite. Project information will be held here along with minutes of the meetings.

GW asked if there were any questions -

FW asked if following the cabinet re shuffle and appointment of Michael Gove MP as Minister for LUHC if we were anticipating any changes. KK advised that there were no indications of any changes and asked AT if she wished to comment. AT confirmed business as usual and currently cannot see anything changing.

GW agreed we carry on as normal. We need to consider the levelling up agenda and how we can play into that. He confirmed SD is taking up a national post with LGA and we should invite Michael Gove to Telford.

7. Focus on Station Quarter

KC - Programme Manager for Station Quarter, provided an update on Station Quarter.

There has been a lot of work around the budgets to align with aspirations for the schemes. Figures will flex through the next stage of design but we will continue to focus on delivering the outputs agreed.

KC shared a draft illustration of the master plan, confirming work is continuing to refine this.

We will be looking to maximise the opportunities for development along Ironmasters Way linking from the railway to the shopping centre. This will create a strong, active frontage and create a campus feel to the town centre.

We will be looking to consolidate residential areas with a mix of apartment and town houses. All modelling is done in 3d to get an idea of the sense of mass.

The design seeks to reflect the Towns industrial heritage and to maximise and feature green spaces. Station Quarter will be a transition area as people move from the Station to the Town Centre but it will also be a new community and academic campus and we want it therefore also to be a place where people want to spend time. A key aspect is to avoid domination by the car and focus on strengthening pedestrian and cycle routes and provision.

The Digital Skills and Enterprise Hub is key – it will be an iconic landmark building really underpinning the design work. The proposal is for a ground floor, staffed reception, with exhibition space, touch down areas and café. Above will be 2 floors of learning space for the University of Wolverhampton and Telford College with flexible floor plates.

Nuplace - Residential is also taking shape, creating a real community. LIV have been appointed to provide specialist support, demand is there for build to rent properties. Will need to secure some additional funding and have had initial conversations with WMCA for potential funding bid. Above this will be Enterprise space.

Legal & General have been confirmed as a residential partner. They are a relatively new entrant to the housing market with strong low carbon agenda.

Sustainability workshops have been held to explore aspirations and objectives. Over the coming weeks we will be detailing out the low carbon benefits so these can shape the masterplan.

The planning application for SQ is anticipated Spring 2022. Pre application meetings have been held with key stakeholders and an overarching branding and marketing strategy for SQ is being developed.

GW thanked KC for the impressive work that has clearly been going on. It gives the board a good feel of how this will be looking. GW asked for comments from the board.

DW commented that the work level has been fantastic and most of the elements fall under his cabinet remit. Thanks to LEP for coming into partnership to help us to develop the site. Key will be how the buildings look and they need to be strong architecturally. DW as cabinet member is committed to this and we also need to work with Town Centre partners, around other key sites e.g. old petrol station site. Visibility from Rampart Way is important. There will be a number of key frontages and these really have to look the highest quality. This has potential to be an exemplar scheme and we need to deliver on behalf of the board and the community.

GW thanked DW for his comments and appreciated that we are now getting into the detail, and we only have one chance to get this right.

GW handed over to HD/TH from Telford College to update the Board on the curriculum vision.

The curriculum is looking at both national and local priorities and supporting wider Levelling Up agenda.

The curriculum vision is based on ensuring it engages the wider community and to ensure the building is well utilised and supports business growth. Currently there are local skills gaps around Maths and Digital. Proposals will see maths taught in a different way and making learning more exciting. Telford College are already trialling this through teaching of A Level Maths at Addenbrooke House, mixing students and business. Also preparing for the future offer by using digital equipment. This is proving to be really successful. The plan would be that students stay for their whole journey i.e. A Level, Degree Level, and Masters. University would then offer specialist routes that students could go on to.

The College is working with a number of employers and is engaged with the Chair of the Federation of Small Businesses.

In relation to the Digital Curriculum students of all levels would benefit from Level 1 moving to Level 2 GCSE level and Level 3 A Level. Cyber Security would also be run. Student Projects and collaborative learning are all part of the College and University offer. The central location will ensure students from across Telford can access the campus.

Adult Courses around Maths and Digital Studies will enable students of all ages to come in at different levels and work up to University and post graduate.

Combined Team are meeting every 2 weeks regarding the curriculum.

GW welcomed the presentation and good to see how the curriculum is being shaped to business needs. GW looked forward to businesses being involved and suggested linking in with MT and WW to develop this.

MT commented it was great to see the engagement that has been done so far. Shropshire Chamber of Commerce have links with over 800 companies and MT is really happy to help.

GG/MT

RF reiterated that business engagement is key to this. University are very impressed with the vision of SQ. Endorsed all the points made around curriculum alignment, aspiration of the building, and range of learning. With regards to the time line, the devil is in the detail, and RF mindful of governance outside of the TDB, which we will need to build into the process. Great to be part of it.

WW confirmed that the TBB is already engaged with the college, and meetings taking place with GG around Digital and engaging with significant employees in area. Doing all can to create pathways to meeting with employers'.

JM advised that volunteers also engage with Businesses e.g. Cap Gemini and HMRC. Sectors are always looking for volunteers, so please do bear us in mind.

DS commented that the curriculum that is emerging is really exciting, along with the aspiration and ambition - thank you to GG. DS had a query for RF around Maths / Digital focus and importance of ensuring consistency in what is delivered.

JM stated that there are a lot of older people who are being digitally excluded. Need to make sure we are catering for all ages and abilities.

HD confirmed that they absolutely want to ensure that everyone has an opportunity. There are new courses, for those who have no skills for English or as a second language. Also a level 3 adult provision for adults who may have been working or lost their job.

RF reassured DS that the University are absolutely committed to digital and maths, but were looking at accommodating elements other than maths. He would pick this detail up separately.

GW thanked all for the input into the presentations.

AOB

GW advised that Nick Ralls, CEO of IGMT had written expressing his disappointment at the loss of the Destination Growth Fund from the bid. GW/KK will continue to keep in touch and keep the museum updated.

GW proposed that the Board meetings align with business case development with the next meeting in early 2022 – dates to be confirmed. However if anything important comes up in the meantime a meeting or briefing note would be provided.

8. GW assured the board that he was having regular meetings with the Team and would keep board updated in written form and around any comms. He is also meeting with other TDB chairs.

GW was keen to keep all informed and engaged. These are exciting times and it was good to see the positive direction of travel.

Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed.

DB

FINNVA