

Meeting Minutes

PROJECT	Town Deal – Member Reference Group		
DATE	2 November 2021	LOCATION	Virtual meeting using Zoom

Attendees	
Councillor Bokor (Chair)	Lead Member Loughborough
County Councillor Max Hunt	Loughborough North West
County Councillor Ted Parton	Loughborough South
Councillor Roy Campsall	Loughborough Garendon
Councillor Sandra Forrest	Loughborough Storer
Councillor Kat Goddard	Loughborough Ashby
Councillor Colin Hamilton	Loughborough Hastings
Councillor Geoff Parsons	Loughborough Nanpantan
Councillor Emma Ward	Dishley and Hathern
Chris Grace	Town Deal Project Manager
Richard Bennett	Head of Planning and Regeneration
Sally Watson	Minute Taker (Charnwood Borough Council)

Apologies	
County Councillor Jonathan Morgan	Loughborough South West
County Richard Bailey	Loughborough Outwoods
Councillor Paul Mercer	Loughborough Southfields
County Councillor Betty Newton	Loughborough North
County Councillor Jewel Miah	Loughborough East
Councillor Christine Harris	Loughborough Lemyngton
Eileen Mallon	Strategic Director of Housing, Planning, Regeneration and Regulatory Services

Meeting Type (Team, Board or other)

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1. Welcome and Apologies

Members confirmed that they were able to see and hear the proceedings and apologies were given as outlined above.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 10th February 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and there were no matters arising.

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3. Project Update and Next Steps (Presentation)

The Head of Planning and Regeneration and the Project Manager delivered a presentation providing information on the progress of the project since February 2021. This included updates as follows;

- TIP finalised after feedback from MHCLG and its retained consultants ARUP and Grant Thornton
- Town Investment Plan submitted to MHCLG
- Requested funding from the Towns Fund of £25m
- Government requested some points of clarification in relation to some projects and did not commit to giving towns a timeline as to when funding announcements would be made.
- Work on the Careers and Enterprise Hub was completed by the deadline of 31/03 set by government for Accelerator projects. £750K had been received from the government for the project.
- Careers and Enterprise Hub opened to the public.
- Government confirmed Town Deal offers - Loughborough allocated £16.9m
- Heads of Terms received from MHCLG and subsequently signed.
- A Delivery Sub Group (DSG) of the Town Deal Board was created as task and finish group in order to oversee the prioritisation
- Government confirmed Town Deal offers - Loughborough allocated £16.9m
- DSG recommended which projects should be prioritised for being taken forward within the parameters of the £16.9m town deal offer
- Town Deal Board agreed that the DSG should be formalised with new terms of reference to enable it to:
 - have responsibility for checking of project business cases;
 - send business cases for sign off by the S151 officer; and
 - regular monitoring of projects once they begin to be delivered.
- Town Deal Board approved a final list of projects to be taken forward
- The list of projects was confirmed and submitted to the government on 27 August

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- 11 projects taken forward following the prioritisation process.
- 3 held 'in reserve' (Developer Accelerator / Parish Green / Connected Loughborough) should projects not be successful in producing full businesses or should significant underspend accrue as projects are delivered.
- Up to 5% of the £16.9m (£845k) was allocated to provide capacity to deliver town deal projects.
- Local Assurance Framework drafted
- Revised ToR for the Board and DSG agreed by the Board
- Regular Project Leads meetings set up
- Government announced changes to the deadlines for project business case submission in Oct 21 and Jan 22
- MACE consultancy appointed to carry out assurance assistance and checks of business cases
- 2 project business cases were signed off and submitted to DLUHC on 15th Oct (Bedford Square Gateway and Taylors Bell Foundry)
- New Communications and Engagement Plan considered by the Board
- DLUHC issued an update on delays to requirements for project baseline reporting and monitoring

Information on next steps for the project was provided, including;

- Delivery capacity funding expected from DLUHC early November
- MACE and 31ten consultants to work with Project Leads; regular liaison with project leads by Accountable Body
- PIDs to be submitted to Accountable Body; local monitoring of projects established
- Board meets Dec; DSG meets Nov and Jan
- Funding for Bedford Square and Bell Foundry expected before Christmas
- **Potentially** 6 project business cases to be submitted in Jan 2022 (Digital Skills Hub / Careers and Enterprise Hub / Healthy and Innovative Loughborough / Generator / Great Central Railway / Riverside Regeneration)

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- 3 projects to be submitted by no later than August 2022 (Flood mitigation / Lanes and Links / Living Loughborough).

The following summarises the discussion;

- i. Unforeseen increased costs associated with specific projects would be mitigated by contingency plans such as value engineering, identifying savings, effective monitoring, reallocation of funds and matched funding. Project Leads were aware of risks and were working proactively to ensure any cost increases were addressed.
- ii. The group considered that presentations from Project Leads at a future meeting of the Member Reference Group would be beneficial as it would allow members to better understand project delivery and the impacts made on local communities. This would allow members to provide information to residents on the progression of projects.
- iii. The Council was the ultimate legal entity responsible for the funds.
- iv. There were clauses in the grant funding agreement which would allow for the recovery of funds to the Council from any project which had not progressed appropriately. The S151 Officer has a responsibility to ensure the Assurance Framework was adhered to and therefore would be involved in this process.
- v. The utilisation of the £845k programme support funds would be considered by the Delivery Sub-group (DSG) and a recommendation would be provided to the Town Deal Board following this. Some of the funding would potentially be used through the Council's Revenue accounts in order to undertake necessary requirements such as procurement. A reserve account would likely be created for the programme support funds.
- vi. The programme support fund would be up to 5% of the total government offer (£845k). These funds were expected to be made available by the end of November. A five-year plan for the delivery of the project and the utilisation of these funds would be considered at the next meeting of the DSG.
- vii. The £845K referred to did not mean any projects in the Town Deal would be allocated less than they had originally asked for; Three projects had not been successful in the projects prioritisation process and that had enabled finance to be allocated for delivery capacity on the projects that remained part of the Town Deal.
- viii. The Town Deal Board and the DSG were responsible for the delivery of projects against objectives and this process was ongoing until the end of the five-year programme, at which time the Council would no longer be responsible for the projects.
- ix. The Town Deal Board was able to make decisions regarding the prioritisation of funding and the DSG was able to make decisions regarding adjustments up to the value of £500k.

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Actions agreed:

That Project Leads be invited to a future meeting of the Member Reference Group in order to discuss project delivery and the impacts made on local communities.

4. Date of Next Meeting

There were currently no meetings scheduled for the Member Reference Group. It was stated that the meetings would be scheduled in due course.