

Meeting Minutes

PROJECT	Town Deal – Member Reference Group		
DATE	21 November 2023	LOCATION	Virtual meeting using MS Teams

Attendees	
Councillor Tillotson (Chair)	Lead Member for Economic Development, Regeneration and Town Centres
County Councillor Ted Parton	Loughborough South
County Councillor Max Hunt	Loughborough North West
County Councillor Jewel Miah	Loughborough East
Councillor Ian Ashcroft	Loughborough Ashby
Councillor Sarah Monk	Loughborough Dishley, Hathern & Thorpe Acre
Councillor Margaret Smidowicz	Loughborough Nanpantan
Councillor Colin Hamilton	Loughborough East
Councillor Sarah Goode	Loughborough Southfields
Councillor Birgitta Worrall	Loughborough Woodthorpe
Justin Henry	Director of Commercial and Economic Development
Chris Grace	Head of Economic Development and Regeneration
Maria Curran	Town Deal Project Manager
Mike Roberts	Communications Manager
Sally Watson	Minute Taker (Charnwood Borough Council)
Apologies	
County Councillor Jonathan Morgan	Loughborough South West
Councillor Beverley Gray	Loughborough Outwoods and Shelthorpe

Meeting Type (Team, Board or other)
Member Reference Group
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<p>1. Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Chair introduced herself and attendees confirmed that they were able to see and hear the meeting. Apologies were given as outlined above.</p>
<p>2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22nd March 2023 were confirmed as a correct</p>

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record and there were no matters arising.

3. Loughborough Town Deal Projects

The Head of Economic Development and Regeneration provided a presentation on the Loughborough Town Deal projects. The presentation provided the following information.

- i. The overarching aim of the Town Deals initiative was to drive sustainable economic regeneration and productivity across the UK. The initiative was part of the Levelling Up programme, which included various other schemes.
- ii. The key themes of the Town Deal were to support urban regeneration, planning and land use, skills and enterprise infrastructure and connectivity (transport and digital).
- iii. There was up to £25m available per town, which was primarily capital funding. The Loughborough Town Deal was awarded £16.9m to deliver 11 projects. This initially equated to £40m total investment value across the projects, although this figure had risen due to inflation.
- iv. The Town Deals programme was set to finish in March 2026, although some projects were due to complete sooner.
- v. There were specific governance arrangements in place for the Loughborough Town Deal to ensure accountability. These governance arrangements included a Town Deal Board, a Delivery Sub-Group, a Member Reference Group, a Community Engagement and Consultation Group, Regular reporting to DLUHC and diligent programme management.
- vi. The Loughborough Town Deal Board was comprised of local business representatives and stakeholders with influence in the town. The Town Deal Board was responsible for overseeing the implementation of the programme and decision making. Charnwood Borough Council was the accountable body for the Town Deal, but did not have influence over the projects included within the programme.
- vii. The Delivery Sub-Group had some delegated authority from the Town Deal Board. This group was responsible to undertake detailed governance, such as deciding whether Heads of Terms and Grant Agreements should be approved.
- viii. The Member Reference Group was comprised of Borough and County Councillors for Loughborough and the Community Engagement and Consultation Group was comprised of a number of stakeholders across Loughborough. Both of these groups operated in a consultative capacity.
- ix. DLUHC reporting was required on a regular basis and also supported the management of the programme, encouraging close working relationships with project leads and ensuring due diligence in processes associated with project delivery. The Town Deal team was required to report on technical aspects of the programme and performance against time scales.
- x. Charnwood Borough Council was the accountable body for the programme and the

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Section 151 Officer at the Council was required to ensure compliance with the governance arrangements in place and oversee the financial aspects of the programme. The officer team at Charnwood Borough Council also facilitated all of the meeting associated with the Town Deal, programme management and liaison with the project leads.

- xi. The Loughborough Town Investment Plan outlined the projects to be included in the programme and was approved by the Government before the funds were received. The Plan was used to communicate the intentions of the programme to the local community. The Investment Plan had a number of themes, including addressing the 'hollowing out' of Loughborough town centre, securing regeneration, improving connectivity, protecting heritage and improving opportunities.
- xii. There were three stages that the Town Deal had progressed through. Stage one involved submitting the Investment Plan, receiving approval and a funding award and the signing of Heads of Terms. Stage two involved submitting and approval of the business cases for each project and grant agreements put in place. Stage three was the delivery stage of each of the projects.
- xiii. The Bellfoundry project included a comprehensive restoration and repair of Grade II Listed John Taylor Bellfoundry and was awarded £835k in Town Deal funding. The project was due to complete in April 2024.
- xiv. The Great Central Railway project included refurbishment of a locomotive shed and improved visitor and educational facilities. The project was awarded £280k in Town Deal funding and was due to complete in July 2024.
- xv. The Generator project included refurbishment of the Generator Hall to create a cultural, community and events venue and was awarded £1.6m in Town Deal funding. The project was due to complete in March 2025.
- xvi. The Canal project (Riverside Regeneration) included improvements to 2km of towpath such as resurfacing and new moorings. The project was awarded £885k in Town Deal funding and was complete. Information on the access to the work undertaken as part of the Canal project would be circulated following the meeting.
- xvii. The Bedford Square Gateway project included public realm improvements and was awarded £1.7m in Town Deal funding. Construction was completed in August 2022 and the project was in a snagging and defects phase.
- xviii. The Lanes and Links and Living Loughborough projects were being lead and delivered by the Council. The Living Loughborough Project was being delivered in collaboration with the Loughborough BID and contained 17 work packages within it. These projects include public realm and infrastructure improvements and included work on the Hope Bell and the market area in Loughborough. The Lanes and Links project had been awarded £669k of Town Deal funding, and Living Loughborough had been awarded £2.87m. Completion for both projects was expected to be in 2025. It was agreed that following the meeting, information on the 17 work packages included within the Living Loughborough project be circulated.

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- xix. The Careers and Enterprise Hub Phase 2 included improvements to external fabric of the building and was awarded £120k for this part of the project (£900k in total). This phase was completed in May 2023.
- xx. The Healthy and Innovative Loughborough project included several components such as business and innovation facilities, health interventions and research to support wider regeneration. The project was awarded £2.466m in Town Deal funding. SPP4 construction was completed, and research activities were underway. The project was expected to complete in 2025/26.
- xxi. The Digital Skills Hub included a new build facility teaching digital skills and was awarded £2.6m in Town Deal Funding. The project expected to complete in 2024.
- xxii. The Wood Brook Flood Management project included enhancements to flood protection by engineering and natural floor storage solutions and was awarded £2m in Town Deal funding. Implementation was expected in 2025.
- xxiii. There was a [Loughborough Town Deal website](#) which contained all public documentation, agendas and minutes associated with the Town Deal.

The following summarises the discussion.

- i. There was no Town Deal funding available for research. The research as part of the Healthy and Innovative Loughborough project was associated with the impact of the Town Deal projects.
- ii. Town Deal funding was only available for projects within Loughborough. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund was also part of the Levelling Up initiative and was similar to the Town Deal. The projects being delivered as part of the Investment Plan for this funding were across the Borough including villages. It was agreed that information on the projects involved in the UK Shared Prosperity Fund would be circulated to members of the group.
- iii. Members felt the presentation was very useful and informative.

AGREED

1. That the group noted the information.
2. That information on the 17 work packages within the Living Loughborough project be circulated to members of the group. This information should include an indication which work packages were being delivered by the Loughborough BID and which were being delivered by the Council.
3. That information about access to the work undertaken as part of the Canal project would be circulated to members of the group.
4. That information on the projects involved in the UK Shared Prosperity Fund would be circulated to members of the group.

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4. Date of Next Meeting

It was confirmed that a further meeting of the group would be scheduled in due course.