

Meeting minutes

PROJECT	Town Deal		
DATE	2nd October 2020	LOCATION	Virtual meeting using Zoom

Attendees	
Board Members	
Dr Nik Kotecha (Co-Chair)	Morningside Pharmaceuticals
Cllr Jonathan Morgan (Co-Chair)	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr Jenny Bokor	Chair of MRG
Prof. Tracy Bhamra	Loughborough University
Lez Cope Newman	Loughborough BID
Jane Hunt MP	MP for Loughborough
Jo Maher	Loughborough College
David Pagett-Wright	Chair of CECG
Cllr TJ Pendleton, CC	Leicestershire County Council
Andy Reed	LLEP
Martin Traynor	Economy & Skills Group
Officer Attendees	
Rob Mitchell	Charnwood Borough Council
Eileen Mallon	Charnwood Borough Council
Richard Bennett	Charnwood Borough Council
Sylvia Wright	Charnwood Borough Council
Chris Grace	Charnwood Borough Council
Tom Purnell	Leicestershire County Council
Mandip Rai	LLEP
Peter Sutton	BEIS/Communities
David Marlow	Third Life Economics (Consultant)
Nicky Conway	Minute Taker (Charnwood Borough Council)

Apologies	
Mike Roberts	Charnwood Borough Council

Meeting Type (Team, Board or other)
Board Meeting

Meeting minutes

Meeting Minutes

2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as a correct record.

Matters Arising:

- Item 3 – Declarations of Interest - Cllr Pendleton confirmed that his Register of Members' Interests form had been completed.
- Item 6 – Town Investment Plan - a meeting had been held between the Borough Council and County Council and it was explained that finance and resources for highways, cycling and green corridor projects was not available in both councils. Any projects put forward would require full funding from the Town Deal and that the County Council were fully supportive of this.
- Item 6 – Town Investment Plan - reviewing the Council's Licensing strategy in respect to encouraging the town centre's night-time economy had suffered a temporary set back with current COVID-19 rules (closing at 10pm) but it would continue to be monitored and reviewed as appropriate.
- Item 7 – Upfront Projects Funding - Jane Hunt MP confirmed she had encouraged organisations and community groups to submit project ideas.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Project Overview Update

Richard Bennett presented this update. He highlighted the following to the Board:

- following the approval of the draft Town Investment Plan (TIP), officers met with ARUP in the first of two 'check and challenge' sessions, to refine the plan and understand lessons from TIP submissions in Cohort 1.
- an extended deadline for proforma submissions had enabled partners to develop their bids further with consultant support.
- a Governance Audit which took place on 23rd September recommended improvements to the Governance structure and website – there was further detail covered in item 5.
- the project milestones had been revised to take into account the extension of the submission deadline for the Town Investment Plan (TIP), and a new date agreed for finalising the plan of 12th October.
- the Member Reference Group and Community Consultation and Engagement Group had met since the Board's last meeting and received an update regarding the ARUP session and the final version of Part 1 of the TIP.
- the Consultant David Marlow had continued to meet with individuals submitting proformas beyond the submission deadline to accommodate all proposals.
- with regard to communications and future engagement, amendments to the Town Deal website were in progress and a visually engaging TIP which was more easily understood would be drafted by the end of October. A proposed forward communications strategy was shared.
- the Council has received confirmation of £750K upfront funding for Town Deal related

Meeting minutes

projects, to be completed before end on March 2021.

Board Members were satisfied with the content of the report and had no further questions.

Recommendation Agreed: That the Town Deal Board noted the content of the report and the revised milestone activities and dates.

5. Revisions to Board Terms of Reference

Richard Bennett presented this report. He drew the Board's attention to the following:

- the Terms of Reference (ToR) and governance structure, agreed by the Board at its meeting on 29th January 2020, had been audited by the Cities and Local Growth Team of Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to check if the mandatory requirements for the Towns Fund process had been met.
- examples of good practice had been identified but there were weaker areas that required improvement prior to submission of the TIP. These were identified in the audit summary in Appendix 1 and in the ToR amended by tracked changes in Appendix 2.
- the inclusion of a Code of Conduct incorporating the Nolan Principles required signing by members of the Board and would be published on the Town Deal website.

Further to the published report, additional guidance from the Government suggested that the following further amendments be included in the ToR as follows:

- inclusion of specific time periods for agenda publication, for draft minutes and for approved minutes by the Board to be uploaded to the website.
- enhancements to the role of co-chairs - to uphold the Nolan Principles, lead the Board in achieving its objectives, maintaining an overview and championing partnership working whilst ensuring decisions were made in accordance with good governance principles.
- specific reference to delegated authority for Co-Chairs to agree to amendments to the TIP as required prior to submission.

It was noted that the membership for Loughborough College required updating.

Board Members were supportive of the changes to the Terms of Reference.

Recommendations Agreed:

- a) The revisions to the Town Deal Board Terms of Reference be approved as indicated in appendix 2 to this report and including further amendments as detailed in this meeting, and to then be published on the Loughborough Town Deal Website;
- b) Town Deal Board Members sign the Code of Conduct contained in the revised Terms of Reference without delay.

6. ARUP 'Check and Challenge' Report

Richard Bennett introduced this report and drew the Board's attention to the summary in the covering report (p25-26) and the full review in the Appendix. He noted that the review by ARUP of Part 1 of the Town Investment Plan (TIP) had proved to be very useful and points raised during the session would help to strengthen the credibility of the final TIP. The second session with ARUP to review Part 2 of the TIP was scheduled to be held on 5th October 2020.

Meeting minutes

Board Members considered that the points raised by ARUP were fair and generally constructive and it was beneficial to receive a peer review. David Marlow stated that he agreed with this view and that in drafting the final narrative for the TIP he hoped he had tackled all 24 observations made by ARUP. Since the session there had been further discussions with the ARUP team and some of the points Loughborough had raised had been fed back to MHCLG.

Recommendation Agreed: That Board noted the content of this report.

7. Project Appraisal Process

Richard Bennett introduced this report and stated that further to the advice given at the meeting of the Board on 24th July the Project Team had met to evaluate the project proposals against the Government's criteria prior to submission of the final TIP to the Board. An Appraisal and Prioritisation Sub-group of the Town Deal Board had been invited to review the outcomes of the evaluation and to sense check the proposals.

David Marlow was invited to explain the process taken, what the sub-group were asked to consider, and the outcome of the meeting. During his slide presentation he highlighted the following:

- at the time of the officer evaluation there were 25 proformas submitted totalling a funding request of £57.2 million with a further two 'aggregator projects' suggested by officers (Developer Accelerator and Microprojects).
- it was acknowledged that some small businesses and community groups may have had difficulties developing a proforma during the current COVID circumstances, but it had become apparent during the consultation process that these projects would contribute towards making the town a better place.
- there was a reasonable spread of schemes and project applicants had taken on board the vision and narrative of the TIP.
- projects had been appraised against the Government guidance issued in June but the appraisal process had also included a specific focus on Loughborough requirements and how proposals contributed to a post COVID-19 recovery.
- it was agreed upfront that the evaluation wouldn't solely be a numerical exercise; the goal of the appraisal was to create a balanced TIP which met Government intervention framework categories, was coherent, logical and could be progressed over five years.
- the projects clustered and aggregated together were discussed with the project applicants.

Board Members raised the following points:

- that the TIP projects were a good catalyst for the long-term transformation of Loughborough, and it was essential not to be afraid of exceeding the £25m limit.
- it had been a very thorough evaluation process, working through the rationale and scoring system and a good group of projects with project clusters that told a theme had been included.
- the projects reflected themes from the consultation exercises and indicated people's views were respected.
- the projects were generally well balanced across the themes and the diversity of proposals was welcome.

Meeting minutes

- it was important to ensure there was a list of robust 'shovel ready' projects in reserve to take advantage of any capital underspend or to bid for government capital project funding in the future.
- it was necessary to assess clustered projects cautiously, if the full funding requested was not granted, projects in these clusters would require a second review to ensure that individual projects in the cluster that may have received lower scores previously did not lose out.

In response to questions from Board Members, David Marlow explained that the emphasis had changed around the 'active healthy living' theme. Loughborough had many assets and capabilities in the future to become a model for active healthy living in a post COVID world, but it was recognised that these roles were generally delivered by regional and national organisations. The focus of the Town Deal was to provide a solid robust working town centre as a springboard for future health related projects regionally and nationally.

It was noted that work was continuing with applicants to refine and update their project proposals.

Recommendation agreed: that Board noted the evaluation process followed to assemble the basket of projects to include in the Town Deal Investment Plan.

8. Final Draft Town Deal Investment Plan

Eileen Mallon introduced this report and stated that a significant level of work had been completed to support applicants in their bids. It was pleasing to have a significant number of proformas to review and projects had been clustered to match Government themes. It was important to emphasise that the Town Deal projects would only be a part of Loughborough's story and that partner organisations were also progressing plans. The Council had taken on an enabling role and would work with partners to ensure a consistent narrative was adhered to.

David Marlow shared presentation slides and explained that the primary audience for the TIP would be Government officials, but that once the TIP had been submitted an 'easy to read' summary document would be prepared. He noted that there might be minor changes after the second ARUP 'check and challenge' session. He asked the Board if they considered that asking the Government for £31.7 million was a reasonable starting point for negotiation and whether they considered the TIP captured the direction and future vision for Loughborough.

Board Members agreed that the TIP was robust and confident, considered that it was a good starting point for negotiation and that projects would be chosen that would have the biggest impact to the town. The TIP strengthened key elements such as the university being an anchor institution and integrated with its own strategy. It was an exciting opportunity to invite expertise into the town and growing the businesses and economy.

In response to questions by the Board, David Marlow stated that:

- MHCLG spreadsheet documentation requirements presented difficulties in communicating match-funding data and 'in kind / time based' contributions.
- it had been vital to emphasise the distinctive aspects of the town. He considered that the Loughborough Town Deal was submitting a unique proposition, in particular the integrating of the university and the college into the town centre, and the observatory

Meeting minutes

which would be relevant to town deals nationally.

- the detail and quality of the proformas had varied and applicants had been supported to submit the best proformas possible. It was important for the final submitted proforma to reflect what the applicant wished to represent. It was not expected for all schemes to have detailed proformas, 'shovel ready' schemes were well developed and had very detailed proformas but others like the smart sustainable transport corridor project were more of a concept proposal to be developed over a longer duration.

It was noted that it would be beneficial to include an appendix to the TIP detailing potential match-funding data.

David Marlow stated that it had been a real privilege to work with the Board and the Town and considered that Charnwood Borough Council had managed the project excellently whilst maintaining its other services during a global pandemic. Members of the Board thanked David for his hard work and appreciated his considerable expertise in producing the Loughborough TIP.

Members wished it to be noted that the Member Reference Group and Community Engagement and Consultation Group had fully engaged with the process and wished to recognise the hard work of all who had been involved.

Recommendations agreed:

- a) That the Board approved the projects endorsed by the Town Deal Board Subgroup and include these in the final draft of the Town Deal Investment Plan;
- b) That the Board endorsed the final draft Town Deal Investment Plan for submission to Government before 31st October 2020.
- c) That the Board agreed that any amendments required as a result of the ARUP check and challenge process or changes to bid proposals which may be necessary are agreed with the co-chairs of the Board, in order that the deadline for submission can be met.

9. AOB

It was noted that the final TIP would be published on the Town Deal website.

It was requested that an update regarding the upfront grant funding of £750K was provided to the Board at its next meeting on 27th November 2020.

10. Date of Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for 27th November 2020.

Meeting minutes

Follow up actions	
1	<p><u>ITEM 5 – Revisions to the Board Terms of Reference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Members to sign the Code of Conduct form. • Clerk to arrange for publication of the revised Terms of Reference and signed Code of Conduct forms on the Town Deal website.
2	<p><u>ITEM 8 – final Draft Town Deal Investment Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that an appendix detailing potential match funding be included in the TIP document.
3	<p><u>ITEM 9 – AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that an update report is submitted to the Board at its next meeting on 27th November regarding the Government's upfront grant funding awarded to Charnwood Borough Council. • that once the Town Investment Plan has been submitted to the Government that this be confirmed to the Board.