

Meeting minutes

PROJECT	Town Deal		
DATE	13th June 2023	LOCATION	MS Teams

Attendees	
Board Members	
Dr Nik Kotecha (Chair)	Randalsun Capital Ltd
Jane Hunt	Loughborough MP
Martin Traynor	Economy and Skills Group
Lez Cope-Newman	Loughborough BID
Cllr Jewel Miah	Leader of the Council
Cllr Jenni Tillotson	Lead Member for Economic Development, Regeneration and Town Centres
Prof. Chris Rielly	Loughborough University
Deborah Taylor (CC)	Leicestershire County Council
David Pagett-Wright	Chair of the CCEG
Officer Attendees	
Rob Mitchell	Charnwood Borough Council
Justin Henry	Charnwood Borough Council
Simon Jackson	Charnwood Borough Council
Chris Grace	Charnwood Borough Council
Mike Roberts	Charnwood Borough Council
Maria Curran	Charnwood Borough Council
Jo Dexter	DBT (BEIS)
Tom Purnell	Leicestershire County Council
Sally Watson	Minute Taker (Charnwood Borough Council)

Meeting Type (Team, Board or other)
Board Meeting
1. Apologies
Jo Maher (Loughborough College), Andy Reed (LLEP), Sue Tilley (LLEP). Lez Cope-Newman joined the meeting after 25 minutes. Jo Dexter left the meeting after approximately 30 minutes.
2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising
The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as a correct record.
Maria Curran advised that with regards to the first action of the minutes of the previous meeting, (provide a response from DLUHC regarding the College's PAR submission and provide an update on timelines), this had been approved.

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With regards to the second action (the Terms of Reference for the Member Reference Group and Community Consultation and Engagement Group be reviewed to align with the updated Framework), this would be addressed under item 5 of the agenda.

With regards to the third action (communications - any content that Board Members could share individually would be appreciated), this was ongoing and a communications update would be provided under item 8 of the agenda.

3. Declarations of Interest

- i. Jane Hunt MP declared an interest as the Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) for DLUHC.
- ii. Prof Chris Rielly declared an interest as the Project Lead for the Healthy and Innovative Loughborough project.
- iii. David Pagett-Wright declared an interest as a Director of the Generator Loughborough CIC and Loughborough BID.

4. Board Administration of Membership

The Chair welcomed two Charnwood Borough Councillors to the Board meeting, Councillors Jewel Miah (Leader of the Council) and Jenni Tillotson (Lead Member for Economic Development, Regeneration and Town Centres).

The Chair highlighted that Jonathan Morgan and Councillor Jenny Bokor would no longer be participating in meetings of the Board and recognised their significant contributions to the Board and the programme so far. He asked that his personal thanks, and the thanks of the Board be recorded.

Councillor Jewel Miah gave thanks to Jonathan Morgan and Councillor Jenny Bokor for their work on the programme so far.

Chris Grace introduced the report and outlined the officer guidance in relation to the membership of the Board. He stated that the political make-up of Charnwood Borough Council had changed following the recent local elections, and had resulted in a Labour minority administration. The Council had made appointments to outside bodies and had appointed Councillors Jewel Miah and Jenni Tillotson to the Loughborough Town Deal Board. The Terms of Reference stated that two members of the Borough Council could sit on the Board. Jonathan Morgan and Councillor Jenny Bokor had tendered their resignations to allow for the appointments of Councillors Jewel Miah and Jenni Tillotson.

The Board had been operating Co-Chair arrangements since the start of the programme, with Dr Nik Kotecha and Jonathan Morgan sharing the Chair role. Following the resignation of Jonathan Morgan, it was possible for the Board to proceed with a single Chair model, provided that that Chair represented the private sector.

A further change in governance arrangements was that Councillor Jenni Tillotson would be appointed as Chair of the Member Reference Group.

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Councillor Jewel Miah suggested that Dr Nik Kotecha proceed as the sole Chair of the Board. The Chair stated that he would be happy to proceed as the single Chair of the Board.

Councillor Jenni Tillotson suggested that providing the Board proceeded with a single Chair model, it would be advantageous to elect a Vice-Chair.

Agreed: That the Loughborough Town Deal Board proceeds with a single Chair model, with Dr Nik Kotecha as Chair.

Agreed: That Councillor Jenni Tillotson be appointed as the Chair of the Loughborough Town Deal Member Reference Group.

Post meeting note: It was acknowledged that the Terms of Reference for the Board would require updating to reflect the new membership and the changes to chairing arrangements. The updated Terms of Reference would need to be ratified at the next Board meeting.

5. Terms of Reference

Maria Curran introduced the report and stated the Terms of Reference documentation for the Member Reference Group and the Community Consultation and Engagement Group required an update, following the updating of the Project Assurance Framework to reflect guidance from DLUHC.

The updated Terms of Reference documents were shared with the Chairs of the groups, and both Chairs had stated that they were content with the changes made.

Recommendations Agreed: That the Board ratifies the updated Terms of Reference documents for the Loughborough Town Deal Member Reference Group and the Community Consultation and Engagement Group.

6. Delivery Sub-Group Update

Maria Curran introduced this report and stated that at their last meeting, the Delivery Sub-Group approved the formal performance report, which was subsequently submitted to DLUHC, as part of the ongoing monitoring of the programme.

The Delivery Sub-Group had also considered changes to the Careers and Enterprise Hub project, which were necessary for the project to proceed. In addition, the group had approved a Change Control Note, which was required to update a grant agreement, with the various project changes including delivery milestones and funding.

It was emphasised that the Loughborough Town Deal remained on track to be delivered in full by March 2026 and that the Delivery Sub-Group closely monitors the progress of each project. There were regular meetings held with project leads, quarterly reports from project leads and one-to-one meetings where required. This process meant that potential issues were identified and addressed as early as possible.

Recommendation Agreed: that the Board notes the contents of the report.

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7. Performance Report and Programme Update

Maria Curran introduced the report and shared a summary of the progress of each project, including the use of Town Deal funding, match funding, delivery updates and any project delays.

Maria Curran highlighted that the value of projects had increased by over £5million, in part due to supply chain issues, inflationary costs and in some cases, changes to design. The additional costing has been met with match funding and the total value of projects was closer to £47million.

In terms of delivery, Project Adjustment Requests may be required for some projects.

The majority of grant agreements had been completed and the process of finalising the remaining agreements was underway.

The first fully complete project of the programme was the Careers and Enterprise Hub, which completed in May 2023. There were four other projects that were due to end within the current financial year, those being the Bedford Square Gateway Project, the Canal and River Trust's Towpath project, Great Central Railway project and the Bellfoundry project. It was anticipated that there would be a further four projects completing within the following financial year, including the Digital Skills Hub, the Generator Loughborough project, Lanes and Links and Living Loughborough. The final projects for completion were the Healthy and Innovative Loughborough project and the Woodbrook Flood Mitigation project.

There had been some delays related to the tendering processes in terms of increasing prices and additional time required for undertaking value engineering. In addition, in some cases, design changes had incurred delays.

It was noted that the delays incurred were not significant in that the result would be some delayed outputs, not loss of outputs.

It was highlighted that some Board members had raised concerns over the time taken for Project Adjustment Requests processing. Maria Curran stated that these issues had been identified by DLUHC and that they were trying to make the process quicker in future.

Rob Mitchell stated that the information in the Performance Report and the summary provided indicated that the progression of projects was being closely monitored, and that there was a substantial amount of work involved in managing the programme. He stated that there was a need to maintain the discipline demonstrated to avoid potential issues in the future. Rob made a suggestion that the Loughborough Town Deal progress be bench marked against that of other Town Deal towns in order to understand if towns were experiencing similar challenges. The Chair stated that he had taken an action from the Delivery Sub-Group to meet with a number of other Town Deal Chairs across the country in order to share ideas and discuss project delivery across the programmes.

Members of the Board praised Maria Curran for her diligent work and valuable support to the Project Leads.

Recommendation Agreed: that the Board notes the contents of the report.

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8. Communications Update

Mike Roberts introduced the report and highlighted some of the key points. He stated that the casting of the Hope Bell had been a successful event, involving members of the community, key workers and civic guests. The event had been picked up by regional media and the Council had promoted the event across social media, reaching approximately 45,000 people.

Mike stated that the Canal and River Trust project had been popular, with the Council sharing a number of updates on the project, the most popular reaching around 10,000 people.

The Digital Skills Hub had been publicised using a video which was shared across social media.

Updates had been communicated on the WiFi expansion of the Living Loughborough project, although this was very recent and metrics were not currently available to demonstrate the reach of these communications at present.

There were a number of updates scheduled in the coming weeks, including the official opening of the Sports Park, the completion of the canal project, the completion of the Careers and Enterprise Hub, the launch of the augmented reality trail, which was part of the Living Loughborough project and work on the Digital Skills Hub. It was highlighted that the team would continue with routine updates across all projects.

It was suggested that a time-lapse be created for the work being done to the HSBC building in the town, to demonstrate the development of the building after the fire. The Council's Communications team could liaise with HSBC to suggest promoting the development of the building.

Communications on the Town Deal projects were shared across the Council's social media channels, and where possible, relevant partner organisations were tagged in posts to expand the reach of the posts. The Council also encouraged partners and Town Deal organisations to share the content more widely across their platforms.

Mike Roberts agreed to ensure Town Deal Board members were included on the distribution list for project update communications.

Recommendation Agreed: that the Board notes the contents of the report.

Agreed: Mike Roberts to ensure Town Deal Board members were included on the distribution list for project update communications.

9. Any Other Business

Rob Mitchell highlighted that a new Chief Executive for the LLEP had been appointed, and that when confirmed they would be appointed to the Town Deal Board as a representative of the LLEP and an officer advisor to the Board.

Jane Hunt MP thanked officers and the Board for their work on the programme so far and stated that she appreciated the work undertaken to get to this stage.

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Date of next Meeting

26th September 2023 – to be held as an in-person meeting at GCR. Virtual attendance was possible if required but it was encouraged that members attend in person.

Follow up actions

8

Mike Roberts to ensure Town Deal Board members were included on the distribution list for project update communications.