

Stocksbridge Town Deal Board

DATE AND TIME: Thursday 30th June 2022, 09:30 – 11:00

LOCATION: Miriam Cates' Office, Maria House, Fox Valley Way & via Microsoft Teams

ATTENDEES:

Board members attending:

- • Miriam Cates, MP for Penistone and Stocksbridge – Co Chair (MC)
- • Ian Sanderson, SLR Outlets – Temporary Co-Chair (IS)
- • Julie Grocutt, Deputy Leader, SCC (JG)
- • Gillian Duckworth, Director of Legal & Governance, SCC (GAD)
- • Dave Cates, Redemption Media (DC)
- • Graham Silverwood, STEP & SCLC (GS)
- • John Crawshaw, J W Crawshaw Ltd (JC)
- • Chris Bell, Don Valley Railway Trust (CBell)
- • Yuri Matischen, MD, MLSBG (YM)
- • Neil Curtis, Community Representative (NC)

Also attending:

- Howard Varns, Senior Programme Manager, SCC (HV)
- Amanda Holmes, Communications Officer, SCC (AH)
- Matt Bartle, Lead Officer, MCA
- Sam Townsend, Cities and Local Growth Unit, DLU (STo)
- Natalia Govorukhina, Finance and Commercial Manager, SCC (NG)
- Joy Grant, Project Support Officer, SCC (JCG)

Apologies: None



Minutes

- 1. Item: Welcome and confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting and discuss any issues arising** Miriam Cates

MC welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no issues arising from the previous minutes.

Actions of the Previous Meeting:

HV said there was an action for him to distribute an update on the rivers project which is covered during the meeting.

- 2. Item: Governance - Declaration of interest – to declare any interests in items on the agenda** Miriam Cates

GS declared an interest in the Leisure Centre, and hydrotherapy pool.

JC declared an interest in Manchester Road and land ownerships.

JG declared an interest in transport and planning as the co-chair of Transport Planning and Regeneration.

- 3. Item: Project and Business Case Status** Howard Varns



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per_%2030%20June%

HV's Towns Fund Board Paper embedded above was emailed to everyone prior to the meeting.

HV reported that:

- Everything is in budget, on scope and mechanistically deliverable so the OBC's are now being developed.
- There were four ambers which have flipped to green.
- NG is providing an amazing amount of support to the Project Managers on the financial and commercial assurances aspects required and has been a key member of the team in the path to submitting Business Cases.

Bus Service

- See HV's paper, paragraphs 3.8.1 to 3.8.2.

Hydrotherapy Pool

- See HV's paper, paragraphs 3.6.1 to 3.6.3.
- HV added that GS and team have done a really comprehensive job in terms of the business modelling and everything just needs a final check through.
- GS added that the project that is in this funding is a pool and provision but then after that it will be a case of the management of it.
- HV said it was about achieving certainty and being able to assure the Council and the funder of the shopping list that every item can be bought.

Post 16 Education and Skills -. In addition to paragraphs 3.9.1 to 3.9.3 of his paper, HV reported that:

- The post 16 hub is a revenue funded project and there is no issue with grant funding the service. It is about ensuring that some of the requirements that need to be assured are written down and agreed.

Land acquisition

see paragraphs 3.1.2 to 3.1.4 of HV's paper.

Action: HV

IS asked for the Market Demand report to be circulated to Board members in draft form.

Place making

See HV's paper paragraphs 3.2.1 to 3.2.5 and additional comments below:

- HV raised his concerns in terms of cost movement after doing the final calculations on the placemaking scheme. DC has been involved with the team in terms of what can be done to bring it within budget.
- Removing the realignment and resurfacing of the highways element of the project has brought the budget down significantly to £4.5m.
- HV's analysis on the highway investment is that in consultation with the Board and others the priority was on the aesthetics and the public realm.
- There is a contingency fund and a degree of underspend so there is the opportunity to grow that back into phases and look at that on a separate basis where there is merit.
- Focus is on the precincts and doing this work under the contract that the Council manages. The shop frontage works will be grant funded on an individual basis, shop by shop, directly for them to do but there is still a lot of work in creating and agreed design palette and how that will be delivered.

Sports Hub

See paragraphs 3.3.1 to 3.3.3. The four projects include the cricket pavilion, 3G pitch, Rugby club, and Football club.

- HV needs to work with GS on the principal agreement between the council and the Trustees of the Leisure Centre on the adoption of the 3G pitch and its ongoing operation which has been agreed.

Community Hub & Library – project status remains at amber

See paragraphs 2.1.1. to 2.1.7 of HV's paper

Football hub - RAG rating Amber

See paragraph 3.3.2 of HV's paper.

Cricket Pavilion

See paragraph 3.3.1 of HV's paper.

Oxley Park

See paragraphs 3.4.1 to 3.4.2 of HV's paper.

Active Travel – Trails

See paragraphs 3.5.1 to 3.5.2 of HV's paper.

Rivers

- See HV's paper paragraphs 3.7.1 to 3.7.2 and Appendix 2 – Report – Little Don Floodplain Reconnection and Fish Passage Feasibility Study

4. Item: Programme Issues

Howard Varns

- See HV's paper paragraphs 4.1 to 4.2 and Appendix 2 which were emailed to everyone prior to the meeting.

HV reported that:

- There was a timing issue in terms of the ask to MCA and deployment of funding with potentially a window of two months until the funding comes through.

5. Item: Approval Process

Howard Varns

See paragraphs 3.1.1 to 3.1.5 of HV's paper.

6. Item: Communications and Consultation Update

Amanda Holmes

- As outlined in HV's paper paragraphs 6.1 to 6.3.
- AH circulated a copy of the latest comms strategy to everyone prior to the meeting.

Parking Survey

- AH has put some comms out about the parking survey which is to look at how people are using facilities in the town. There will be further comms going out in the next two days.

Local Area Committee meeting

- AH is attending the LAC meeting next Thursday and will provide an update on the timescales.

Library Space

- Two meetings have been held at the library along with Coda and the library team to talk about how that space was going to work following their visit to the Lightbox in Barnsley. The Library Manager and AH have also been to look at a potential relocation space for the library that looks promising at the Icon Church which is just across the road.

Car Parking

- HV reiterated that there is some tension regarding car parking, particularly as the funicular project is not going ahead because what we wanted to do in terms of increasing car parking is not currently funded. There will be a discussion about the mechanism and approach to bring that back online. JG and officers who have been involved in discussions are getting quite a lot of comments and concerns regarding the High Street car parking.

Disruption

- HV outlined that it is going to be a difficult time for businesses although the longer-term benefits of the improvements are significant. Managing any disruption and communicating this will be important in the delivery phase.
- HV added that there is the ability to be discretionary on this but it is incredibly challenging and complex for the Council to grant fund potentially fifty plus businesses actually deliver that grant and it have an end date and it has to be managed correctly.

Disruption (continued)

- AH will either hold a meeting or get round and see all the shop owners as soon as there is a proper dateline of what is going to be delivered when or there is something we can show people and we can help them with promoting themselves through that disruption period.
- HV still has quite a bit of work to do with colleagues to understand the legal and proper mechanism of a compensatory package. The Council cannot give a business rates rebate but they could look at a disruption grant. IS added that it by not doing the carriageway works we are not disrupting a lot of things so the less we disrupt the less the need for compensation.

Comms

- AH added that there are two key comms dates when the business cases are signed off and then when they are submitted to government so she is working on a video showing the different projects and how they all link together and so people can see what we are delivering.

Phasing and Sequencing

- RLB are to do the phasing of the works and DC flagged that there is a significant chunk in that budget for the sequencing and managing of that. HV added that level of work needs to happen so we can do the impact analysis and come up with what is reasonable in terms of a package.

CPO

- GAD outlined that the general strategy is to see what can be done and whether there is the potential to CPO the site but that has been a problem because of what is happening with Liberty Steel. Following confirmation of ownership of Liberty Steel, an approach has been made and if they want to sell and this can be done by agreement then we can resume that conversation.

Gifting

- Liberty Steel did talk originally about gifting it to us but even at that point there was a relocation of their stockyard so there would still be a significant cost. If CPO is necessary in the future, we need to have tried to buy by agreement so the fact that an approach has been made is favourable.

Viable Scheme

- There has got to be a viable scheme with CPO or the Council would not enter into such a scheme until it was sure that there was some funding to support it. If it is to support some sort of development usually there is an agreement with the developer and some indemnities around the cost of doing it.
- If there is money in the towns fund then potentially, that could be used to give that indemnity and secure the Council's financial position. When the planning application that goes in for the High Street is amended along with the masterplan, that was previously put in the public domain which includes this piece of land that shows it as parking which potentially helps deal with any planning issues if that is secured as an outline permission and that is included to support a CPO going forward.
- In terms of viability it is a case of showing that there is a way of securing the land, it is whether we can CPO part of Liberty Steel's interest and it has to demonstrate that they do not need it to function. Some evidence would need to be put together to show that they could give up that bit of the car park and it would not impact their ability to operate effectively.
- A start has been made on it by making that approach to see if it could be bought by agreement and when the application is put in for planning it will be determined if it is wide enough to increase the site.
- GAD and HV acknowledged after persistence and correspondence from IS on the matter that the Council can CPO the Liberty Steel Land.
- AH added that we had a letter of support from Liberty Steel which went in with the original bid agreeing to pursue discussions around making that land available should the bid be successful.

Accessibility

- HV added that the funicular could be reintroduced and we need to see how far we get with the discussions and if the funding is there then we would need to consider the access link e.g. an escalator or lift. IS said we could start with steps even though they are not DDA compliant and accessible there is an alternative route until a better route is found. HV suggested that we could do something with other car parking at the top of the High Street that is solely for disabled badge holders only. There are ways we can mitigate some of the topographical issues that Stocksbridge faces.
- AH added that there is a conversation to be had to use some of Liberty Steel's car parking and the Co-op as they are both great locations for workers to park

- IS said it is a major part of the comms that people will be keen to know what the strategy is to tackle more parking. HV outlined that the highways accessibility project is about wayfinding, signage and improvements to car parking particularly as we have lost the additional car park that would have been at the valley bottom.
- Discussions have taken place with shopkeepers about creating underground car parks under the precinct. In light of the engagement with shopkeepers there is concern about the lack of increase in car parking and making a link there. For now it is not in scope but as we start to understand budgets a bit better then we will start to approach Liberty Steel to see if we can buy their site and then work on what would be the best way of linking it back up to the High Street e.g. a bridge link.

Action: IS asked for the latest plan from CODA to be circulated for information.

7. Item: Finance Update

Howard Varns

See Appendix 3 – Financial position overview – spend to date which was an update from NG and colleagues.

8. Item: AOB

All

HV outlined that our analysis for the Stocksbridge projects for consideration for the LUF 2 round was for three specific projects to be put in to form a bid:

YW

- HV reported that he did some engagement work with YW but the measures YW were wanting to put in place were so high level and conceptual that there was a huge amount of work to get to a point that they could be interrogated robustly and be able to provide any delivery assurance.
- One of the key tests of this round of funding is spend this year and delivery by 2024 and with those timescales and where YW were at meant that we could not have had a compliant bid. YW were not in a position to provide any level of commitment so we could not consider it going forward.
- HV added that in terms of the YW work we are out of time because the timescale to draft it was too tight. In a practical sense they were doable or there were ways of solving the delivery issues, but the authoring of the bids is extensive and extra resource would have been required to support the bid. Amion are working on our ten projects right now so it would be the opportunity costs of pulling them off these projects to do a speculative bid.

Town Centre Park

- HV outlined that they had looked at two sites for the park, behind Lidl on the High Street but that was a really challenging site in terms of levels so would be an expensive site in would need huge amounts of underpinning. There is an ancient woodland there and rights of access and the ownership of it is convoluted.
Dransfield Properties / Fox Valley owns a site that has got planning permission for apartments which is next to the Card Factory in the shopping centre . The company is not interested in selling at this time.

Land ownership

- HV outlined that there are issues with Liberty Steel's land ownership which need to be resolved in order to be able to convince the funder that having spent a number of months going through a change process it is not deliverable unless we can resolve the land ownership. However, the strategy to unlock that is that we can do it out of our own gift and powers from this round of money rather than going for another bid.

LUF2 bid

- HV concluded that there was therefore no merit in putting a bid in for the three projects because they would not be deliverable and the problems are too fundamental for us to credibly be able to say we have a strategy to deliver them and there is not the time.
- IS added that there are lessons to be learned because we geared up too late which did not leave enough time or resource for it to happen. If there is another round, we need to be ready, willing and able if there is the resource to do it.
- STo flagged that there is the potential for further rounds or further iterations of the fund.
- HV highlighted that we would have put a bid in if we felt there was any chance it would have made been successful but we could not make the case that we could deliver it. HV added that the LUF2 had to be viewed city wide and all local authorities had to look at this nationally. GAD highlighted that unfortunately it was not just Sheffield but a lot of city councils have reduced that resource because they have had to cut costs and to have those pipeline projects ready to go would mean having the resource to keep it at that level.

Local Plan

- HV highlighted that a few months ago we talked about a medium-term plan for the town and the neighbourhood. If it is reasonable for the Board to look at a proper exercise with measures and an extended ambitious shopping list it could be part of the local plan- JG added that there had been conversations about how to develop the town as an outdoor destination place. They were looking at what they could do with YW because of the great outdoor provision and it is about building the town and the local economy around that by having the pipeline projects and as a Board thinking about how we get that done as well.

STDB Representation

- MC flagged that in terms of being ready for future rounds once the bid is in it would be good to get Kate Josephs to sit on the Board for a meeting to talk through all of that as she will be responsible for delivering a lot of these things and engaging KJ quickly for that discussion will mean it is on her radar.

Consultation

- IS suggested another consultation after the bid is in. HV added that the function of the Board has served up to next month radically changes because it has been a commissioning, stress testing, challenging ideas factory which has helped to get a great programme of projects together but we are going to flip into delivery mode and that is really crucial in terms of how they each feed into the actual delivery.

Status Dashboards

- HV will be giving status dashboards once we get into delivery which will provide a look and feel and everything should be going smoothly. If they are not then HV will assist.

Community Hub

- IS highlighted that if the Community Hub building starts to make a surplus, the board could morph into an organisation that represents the community and the Council are the Procurer or the doer so we can get a community fund pot that is topped up. When cash opportunities come along, we will have cash flowing from the building or we can borrow against it or if there is a grant opportunity that is ready to go and fits in with the local plan and the 2030 vision of Stocksbridge.
- IS highlighted that if the Community Hub is successfully run and let it will be a good source of income. HV added that in terms of other bid opportunities we already have a credible governance structure that other places have not had.

STDB Constitution

- GAD flagged that in terms of the constitution the STDB has a runway legitimately until 2026 so in that time we will have to think about representation and how we evolve. Once we get the bid in, we can have a closer working relationship with the Town Council and the ambition of a CIC can be fulfilled. HV added that a CIC has the assets and it can do all kinds of different things that the Board cannot. IS added that the Board could be expanded again as it goes into operational mode.

Next Steps

- HV outlined that over the next couple of months SCC will start to compile the contracts, let the contracts and the contracts will freeze the activities and then it is about making sure they are on track, checking and challenging based on a different set of information which will be around comms and some key decision points.

- In the next phase the contracts will be up and running and doing what is specified. The Board could meet in a different pattern e.g. one month they check and challenge and the next month they look at strategy and next steps. The thematic could change in terms of what the Board's business is and not require that level of detail.
- HV outlined that the plan is to produce a slide deck and prep summary documents for the ten projects that gives an overview of risks and issues and scope switch is more in keeping.
- After the principle sign off by one of the Chairs on the 22nd of July, there is still time to pull together statutory things that we need to sign off to government and to STo and then it will go as early in August as possible.
- IS suggested that any grey areas that HV thought were of concern should be flagged. HV outlined that he would circulate papers as far ahead of the July Board as possible to give people time to digest it and produce action points. AH to pull a slide deck showing the details of each project and refresh everybody to show where we have got to over the last two years.
- NG reported that she attended a meeting with the Director of Finance and Commercial Services who will sign off the business cases on 15th August. Summary documents need to be signed off by a Chair and the business cases need to be ready for the internal Board on the 21st which means Project Manager's deadline is the 15th July.
- It was agreed that the next Board meeting will take place on Friday 22nd July, 13:00 – 14:30 hrs.
- STDB meetings to resume again in September. HV added that by the end of September/beginning of October STo and team should be able to let us know if we have been successful in terms of funding.
- GAD is leaving SCC in September and will identify those to whom she will handover.
- IS suggested a Friday in August to get together for drinks and pizza. AH to co-ordinate.

Towns Fund Progress

- STo reported that in relation to the progress that some towns have submitted their investment plans and there are a number of towns that have their money and are spending having received it back in April. Other towns have had an extension period from March to the summer. All 101 towns will have submitted by the end of August with a few exceptions for certain projects that are a bit more complicated. In terms of South Yorkshire towns, no-one else has got into spending yet.

PR

- IS suggested a major PR campaign for the ones that have started and got the next green light. AH added that branding is important so that it is known that these are towns fund projects and suggested getting comms out to businesses to get their application for the grants before the disruption on the High Street.

9. **Item:** Date of Next Meeting: Friday 22nd July 2022, 13:00-14:30hrs