

Stocksbridge Town Deal Board (STDB)

DATE AND TIME: Thursday 25th January 2024, 10:30am

LOCATION: Towns Fund Office, Stocksbridge Library, Manchester Road, Stocksbridge

CO-CHAIRS: Miriam Cates MP
Yuri Matischen

ATTENDEES:

Board members attending:

- Miriam Cates, MP for Penistone and Stocksbridge (MC)
- Yuri Matischen, MD MLSBG (YM)
- Neil Curtis, Community representative (NC)
- Gail Larking, Manchester Road Rep (shared role) (GL)
- John Crawshaw, JW Crawshaw Ltd
- Graham Silverwood, Stocksbridge Training and Enterprise Partnership & Stocksbridge Community Leisure Centre (GS)
- Dave Cates, Redemption Media (DC)
- Kathryn Giles Bowman, Manchester Road Rep (shared role) (KGB)

Also attending:

- Howard Varns, Programme Manager, SCC (HV)
- Sam Townsend, Sheffield City Region (Cities and Local Growth Unit)
- Natalia Govorukhina – Finance and Commercial Business Partner (NG)
- Dermot Reader – Project Manager (DR)
- Amanda Holmes, Communications Officer, SCC (AH)

Apologies:

- Sean McClean Director of Regen SCC (SM)
- Gail Larking, Manchester Road Rep (shared role) (GL)
- Cllr Julie Grocutt, Sheffield City Council Stocksbridge Town Council
- Ian Sanderson, SLR Outlets (IS)



Minutes

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

Previous minutes agreed. JC noted that his attendance was not listed though he had attended the November meeting. AH said this would be corrected to reflect JC's attendance and the document be updated on the website.

Matters arising HV noted that he is continuing to liaise with Yorkshire Water around costs on the Tracks and Activities Project but this project is sequenced for later in the programme so officers are focussed on the town centre, Oxley Park, the education provision and the bus project.

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

None declared.

3. **Communications and engagement update:** **Amanda Holmes**

DC asked to move the communications update to earlier in the meeting, so this was moved up the agenda. AH updated the group around recent press coverage about the planning submission for the Community Hub building and further media releases were discussed including the link with Northern College around a new skills and learning hub as part of Stocksbridge 519.

DC outlined some ideas for updating the website www.welcometostocksbridge.co.uk to make information easier to access. There is a lot of useful information on the Town Deal website, but it could be organised better to be more easily accessible and better signposted. DC talked through some ideas he circulated around changes to the layout and content. All agreed this was a good idea and AH will implement.

JC asked for the website statistics and AH said she would circulate these.

A letter which had appeared this week in Look Local about funding for the Upper Don Trail was discussed – YM said that all these points had been answered previously and the Board does not have the time or the resource to continually repeat this. This group are upset they aren't received funding and that is understandable, but this tactic is just an attempt to misinform our community. YM said the UDTT have been engaged with about the decision repeatedly, along with the reason behind this. By letter and in a face-to-face meeting with Board champions. All points have been answered. He added that Board is

fully focussed on the economic regeneration of the town centre and that has to come first for Stocksbridge.

Actions: Update Comms plan with upcoming media releases / website updates / webstats information (AH)

4. Programme Update – Phase 1 Projects

Howard V

HV updated the following position on the Phase 1 Projects.

- Community Hub – Cost plan is funded and can progress to tender.
- Place-making project (including new town square) – Possible requirement for additional budget to deliver cost plan resulting for highways requirement. Project to progress.
- Parking and Wayfinding improvements – Budget savings achieved, and project can progress.
- Precinct Shop frontage works – Cost plan funded and can progress.
- Hopper Bus project – Funding issue with MCA looks to be resolved but further work on concession scheme required.
- Post 16 hub – Draft MoU provided by Northern College – project to progress when Hub building completed (funding ring-fenced)
- Oxley Park Improvements – Work underway.
- Grants to Sports Clubs – Funding provided.

Placemaking: DR outlined that on the placemaking project the most recent cost plan included the most recent designs for the Town Square and since then it was apparent that some works must be done on the highways. There is also the possibility of increasing the car parking to the rear of the Town Square but this is not in the cost plan. The cost plans are being reworked to reflect these additional costs. He added there were also discussions about what lighting might be needed in the area of the new Town Square. HV added that placemaking does not include the re-surfacing of the car parks – they have a separate cost plan as does the shop fronts scheme. DR confirmed that the priority for the team in recent weeks has been the submission of the planning application for the Community Hub and resources could now shift to these other parts of the programme with the shopfronts a key project which needs to be progressed.

JC asked if it would be possible to look at some artwork or a feature as part of the Town Square DR said there may be a public art requirement as part of the planning process. HV added that there was such limited budget headroom that the long term revenue implications which come with some installations ie a water feature, are not affordable. All agreed this needed further thought and that there should be some discussion and engagement with the Town Council around the proposed market area and the activation / activities at the Town Square.

Hopper Bus: HV gave the background to recent issues around the funding of concessionary fares for the Stocksbridge Hopper Bus project. A commitment had been made in July 2023 by SYMCA to find the funding to cover the concessionary fares for this service. However, changes in priorities had put this under threat and funding was being pulled back. HV updated that Cllr Ben Miskell had assisted with discussions around this issue and SYMCA are putting the funding back for the Stocksbridge Hopper Bus service and it will be rolled into future years.

MC said that this project is hugely important to the community and can only be viable if the operator can claim back the concessionary fares and elderly people in the community can use the service free.

HV added that SYMCA will engage with the service operator to undertake a strategic review of services and ensure that the timetables work together and align. He added that SYMCA are keen for the service to link with the Town Council and that this strategy outlined in recent discussions would offer better coverage and sustainability. He added that it may take three months to move this forward and there is a 60 day lead to register a new service. All agreed that it was important to progress this project for the community.

Post 16 Hub - Skills and education: HV said that a positive meeting had been held with Northern College and an MOU has been drafted which will allow NC to build the Stocksbridge project into their business plan. He asked if DC would look over the MOU as Project Champion and DC and AH will liaise on comms once all is agreed. KGB said that there had been some discussion locally about the sixth form plans. DC outlined the background to the previous plans for a Post 16 Hub at Stocksbridge School which was the basis of the earlier skills and education project, there was a good deal of support for this project, but the Minerva Trust Board decided in January 2022 not to progress with it. It was discussed that this should be mentioned in the skills and education section on the website.

Actions: Progress conversations with SYMCA re the Hopper Bus and revisit the expressions of interest for the Hopper Bus (HV)

Review MOU with Northern College (DC)

5. Review of Future Phases (Priority and Delivery Approaches)

HV recapped on the Board's strategy to deliver the town centre projects as a priority.

YM said that discussions at the workshop session with the procurement team had given confidence that the cost plan estimates were robust but also contained significant contingency which we expect to be able to then use to deliver the other projects in the programme. But it must be understood that Phase 2 projects were nevertheless "at risk" and the Board should be honest about that. If tender prices are unexpectedly high or

value-engineering options are viable then those projects may not happen in the way we would wish. But our ambition and strategy to deliver this is robust. GS said we are delivering (phase one) projects and the rest just need to be revisited to see if they are the best ways of delivering the outputs and benefits for the community. JC added that it was important to be honest that this strategy is driven by cost uncertainty which is why phase 2 projects are currently on hold, once contracted then we should be able to fund the remaining projects. We just have to get real contract prices. DC added that there was still the ambition to deliver across the programme and that was the aim but phase 2 is conditional on phase 1 costs. MC added that resources would not have allowed all the projects to be delivered at the same time even if budgets were not under pressure and phasing was a practical approach to ensuring delivery. HV outlined that any shortfall in phase 1 budgets would need to be taken from phase 2 budgets and could be returned when there was cost certainty around the programme priorities. The Board agreed that funding can be moved from Phase 2 to Phase 1 projects.

GS said that if there is likely to be less money in the phase 2 projects this made it even more important that these funds were spent effectively to the benefit of as many groups and clubs as possible.

3G pitch: GS said that the 3G pitch is in phase 2 and this was positive as it would give the Board time to review options for locations and ensure the right outcome for the town. JC said that it may be possible to look at match funding. HV discussed that the two options at the moment were the school and Bracken Moor and pre-app requests had been submitted for both sites. YM said that the school pitch is close to houses, and this may be an issue in obtaining planning permission for a new 3G pitch. GS said that a step-by-step approach should be taken and the next step will be to review the information which comes back from the pre-app. HV asked if there could be a way to bring all the sports clubs and organisations together in Stocksbridge to work together and how best to invest. GS said he would liaise with JC on how to engage with them.

6. Parking Strategy for the High Street

HV said that officers and Board members will shortly need to engage with Manchester Road stakeholders / businesses about the changes and improvements but also about parking which is something that local businesses owners are always keen to discuss at engagement sessions. Ahead of this some options and a strategy around managing parking provision should be agreed. This will need some technical input from the highways team. It was discussed that there may need to be some “behaviour change” around business owners and staff not using those spaces closest to local businesses to ensure a good turnover of spaces for customers. KGB talked about her experience of parking as a local business owner and how her customers and staff use the various car parks around the town. She said it was important to understand fully any implication of charging for parking. DR added that there was currently a 30-minute minimum stay on

the bays on Manchester Rd which is not enforced. MC said that any proposal to charge for parking needs to be very carefully considered as would have wide implication. DR added that it would be necessary to undertake initial engagement with businesses to understand staffing numbers / current car parking needs. It was discussed that AH will liaise with KGB and GL to progress this and organise a survey of local businesses between Lidl and the Co-op. The next workshop on February 15th will focus on parking and HV will invite highways colleagues to attend.

DR further added that in any engagement with businesses we should also ask about internet speed. DC is researching options around fibre / high speed internet access. DC said it was imperative that be progressed during building work on the hub / placemaking as this would be the ideal time for ducting to go in. Further discussions are to be undertaken with Pine Media who operate in Stocksbridge.

Actions: survey current parking activity / arrange workshop session with highways input (AH/HV)

7. Land Acquisition

In order to secure the properties required to deliver the Hub and Town Square projects the Council's Chief Property Officer needs to approve transactions once contracts with landowners are agreed. HV provided an update to Board members about these transactions, Board members agreed things were moving in a positive direction.

Actions: ongoing updates and discussions with the property team (HV)

8. Item: Financial update

Natalia G

NG and HV provided an update on costs to date. HV noted that NG was leaving SCC to take up a new position. The Board thanked NG for her work on the Town Deal over the last 18 months.

Item: AOB

All

9. Item: Next (Workshop) Meeting: February 15th, Stocksbridge Library (theme – parking)