

Stocksbridge Town Deal Board

DATE AND TIME: Thursday 4th November 2021, 09:00 – 10:00

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

CHAIR: Miriam Cates

ATTENDEES:

Board members attending:

- Miriam Cates, MP for Penistone and Stocksbridge (MC)
- Gillian Duckworth, Director of Legal & Governance, SCC (GAD)
- Cllr Julie Grocutt, Sheffield City Council and Stocksbridge Town Council
- Graham Silverwood, Stocksbridge Training and Enterprise Partnership & Stocksbridge Community Leisure Centre (GS)
- Chris Bell, Don Valley Railway Trust (C Bell)
- John Crawshaw, J W Crawshaw Ltd (JC)
- Ian Sanderson, SLR Outlets (IS)
- Dave Cates, Redemption Media (DC)

Also attending:

- Sam Townsend, MHCLG (STo)
- Howard Varns, Programme Manager, SCC (HV)
- Tammy Whitaker, Head of Property, SCC (TW)
- Joy Grant, Project Support Officer, SCC (JCG)

Apologies:

- Justin Homer, Area Lead, Sheffield City Region (Cities and Local Growth Unit)
- Mick Hood, Liberty Speciality Steels
- Colin Blackburn, South Yorkshire MCA
- Amanda Holmes, Communications Officer, SCC



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.

- 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, hydrotherapy pool and Item 7 – Project Change Recommendations.

- 3. Item:** New Co-Chair Arrangement - Miriam Cates

MC suggested that given the urgency of other matters, the new Co-Chair arrangement should be addressed at a future meeting.

- 4. Item:** Communications Update Howard Varns

AH's communication update Stocksbridge Towns Fund – consultation feedback v4 was emailed to everyone prior to the meeting.

HV highlighted the main messaging that was coming out of the consultation and the need to consider some of the community's views and their feedback on the projects.

Key points from the discussion which followed were:

IS highlighted that there was just under 190 responses across all the sessions added together in total so a small overall representative sample.

Shop Frontage - HV flagged that one third of respondents had identified shop frontage as a key issue and this featured strongly throughout all the consultations sessions in terms of specific designs.

Parking – There are improvements to parking but not a huge amount of increased spaces. JG highlighted that parking is an issue for wheelchair users because they have not been able to use footpaths because of parked cars. The other issue is that when the bypass is closed everything comes through the town.

Place making extends beyond public realm and GAD flagged that that is why it was called that in the bid to add a bit more scope to include the shop fronts.

- The pros and cons of the shop front scheme were discussed and HV flagged that the scheme would normally require some contribution from the shop owner.

- HV to talk to STo and colleagues on the placemaking as there is a budget and scheme that needs to be directed to make the most of the improvements.

Health and Wellbeing – HV highlighted that the comments from the consultation on the skatepark had been very well received but there are some concerns over anti-social behaviour. JG suggested that there needs to be better engagement with the local police to address issues at the skatepark and in other areas in the town. The skatepark is in a really good location in terms of its connection with the leisure centre and everything else that is going on there.

Trails - HV reported that Greg Challis has engaged with 2 cycling shops to try to secure an operator which would free up some budget in terms of capital headroom in that project. GC is also looking at modular increase in terms of scope of further improvements to pathways.

Skills and Education – The skills and education project stood out with positive feedback. In summary people are really pleased with the plan and the programme overall.

Actions: HV

GAD asked HV to bring a paper back to the Board on the shop front scheme.

HV to update CBell further on the trails project after this meeting.

5. **Item:** Overview of Each Project

Howard Varns

- Status
- Project Owner
- Current Budget Allocation
- Strategic Risks & Deliverability Issues

HV emailed a short presentation - Board_Project Updates_3 11 21.pptx to all Board members prior to the meeting for them to review and comment on.

Key points were:

- Sign off the business cases within the Council and its assurance function by February to allow submission to MHCLG in March.
- All 9 projects are in the process of being surveyed to a point where costs are stable enough to get strategies in place and to determine what liabilities will be in terms of the build and any operating costs.

Extension of Time for Submission - MC suggested that there are 2 reasons for asking for an extension – 1. Change of Chair and 2. Spiralling costs because of cost price inflation on materials and contractors.

- IS suggested if the Council occupy the building that when further office demand and co-working comes along the Board could ask the Council to move out to generate income.

Land acquisition - HV highlighted that there are land acquisition issues and that he and AH are to meet with the CEO at St Luke's to try and resolve some current issues.

- David Ambrose at SCC will be doing the negotiations with the landowners going forward.

CPO for Regeneration

- GAD outlined that the first step is to take a report to buy properties and if this can't be managed by negotiation then permission would have to be sought to consider CPO. HV added the need to demonstrate purchase at best value and if CPO is put on the table, it gives the option of going on a premium above best value which avoids some CPO costs and gives some headroom for negotiation. GAD added that it would be the Co-operative Executive that would need to approve this.
- GAD highlighted that this is the prime case for a CPO as it is a scheme that needs development in a specific area and there is private ownership and some work has been done on where the land ownership sits

PTE

HV flagged to MC the current situation with the PTE who have concerns in terms of the market where operators are concerned about recruiting bus drivers for core services. HV recommended that the focus is now on the community transport.

Funicular

HV highlighted that there had been a notice in the government's budget for monies for tourism and culture which may re-fund the funicular project. HV has looked at the scheme as described in the announcement and asked MC to see if this is possible.

Actions: IS, HV, MC and DC

IS asked for a schedule which related to the land that is needed to see where the deals are up to.

HV to set up another session with IS and RLB re land acquisitions.

MC to have a direct conversation with the PTE.

DC asked HV to circulate any updates to all Board members via email.

6. Item: Manchester Road Community Hub

Howard Varns

- Pre-application Feedback
- Library Layout and Building Configuration
- Public Space

HV emailed Community Hub Commercial Discussion_HV Board_Nov.doc to board members prior to the meeting and asked the Board for some decisions today on the project to enable him to take it to that further level of design and to get it costed to meet the deadline.

Key comments from the discussion which followed were:

- There are lots of options about reconfigurations. Right now it's about something viable that can be tested and that adds up.
- Without a CIC where there are trustees who are prepared to take personal liability for that asset then it still comes back to the Council in terms of being the ongoing custodian of the building who will need to consider the possible revenue risks as there is no budget or agreement for the Council to take any liability.
- DC highlighted that this did not match what was put into the bid so the vision for the building is getting defined by the finance rather than making the finance work around the vision of the Board. There is demand within the town for commercial space and co-working space would help pay for it.
- HV outlined that there are options for it to all change as demand materialises and his discussions with SCC's S151 Officer is that the Council is not prepared to take a lettings risk or any speculative risk on occupation.
- DC flagged that a lot of the consultation feedback is that people like the architecture which gives a mandate to go back to the drawing board to see what could be achieved with the building to make it work.
- IS said the uses and the use of the floor plates can change but it is going to need a redesign anyway and based on the footplate shrinking it may be better to work with what is already there. One of the comments from the consultation was why are we knocking it down?

7. Item: Project Change Recommendations

All

HV referred to the document that was emailed to everyone prior to the meeting and which had a few discussion points on.

Recommendations

- HV to talk to STo and JH to see if it is possible to get an extension of time and to go into the next cohort because a lot of what has been done doesn't meet the brief.
- MC suggested starting again in terms of what the building looks like so giving the option of working with what is there and then exploring

ownership as a CIC which would be better in the long term and take the risk off the Council.

- STo advised that the government now have a formal process for extensions and he would email that to HV with all the details but nothing is guaranteed. The deadline for this is 3 months before our submission date which would be before Christmas. The extension time is considered on a case-by-case basis and it could just be a particular project that gets extended or several because some business cases may get through and get funding released early. STo said that this seems like a case that fits the criteria.

Community Interest Company

- DC said the government had announced that they are trying to bring forward a scheme about community asset control but there is no detail yet. HV suggested that this could be a pathfinder scheme.
- GAD is starting to explore a community capacity building with the Council and the possibility of getting that into Stocksbridge. The Council's role in that would be to help the Board to do that.
- IS suggested that it starts off in the ownership of the Council and it morphs into and transfers over to a CIC e.g. a 5-year pre-let is secured on Floor 2 and then a serious effort made to go to market.
- IS said that in the initial stages when the Council own it and run it, they can report to the embryonic Board that is setup so Council and community work together.
- MC said if it is redesigned now, it would provide the opportunity to tie that in with the potential shop front scheme and have continuity across the whole thing with the same Architect doing everything.

Actions: HV/MC

HV to request an extension of time, vision in and then start concept design to get to costs and possibly look at reusing the building.

MC to call the Minister, Neil O'Brien, to ask for an extension of time and how to formally go about requesting that.

8. Item: Finance Update

Howard Varns

HV provided key updates as follows:

Placemaking – HV said the placemaking is being costed by the civil engineers and the costings should be available within the next 2 weeks.

HV reported that from the data there is around 30% cost increase on capital projects depending on their nature over the last 12 months.

For the building to be affordable it needs to come in with contingencies of about 35,000 square feet. Something that is 3 floors and slightly smaller in

terms of footprint. That would mitigate the concerns regarding the capital delivery costs that would bounce back on the Council. The other side of the equation is the revenue costs so as soon as the building is finished someone will have to pay for it to operate. HV has drafted a paper in terms of business rates on the current design with some assumptions against occupancy at £12 per square foot.

9. Item: Any Other Business

None for this meeting.

10. Item: Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 16 December 2021, 10:00-11:00hrs