



Minutes of the Boston Town Deal Board Meeting

Date: 9 September 2021

Present: **Board Members:** Neil Kempster (Chair) - Chestnut Homes, Claire Foster (Vice-Chair) - Boston College, Councillor Paul Goodale - Boston Borough Council, Professor Val Braybrooks, MBE - University of Lincoln, Richard Tory - Boston Big Local, Matti Pajula - Metsa Wood, Simon Beardsley - Lincs Chamber of Commerce, Jacqui Bunce - NHS, Councillor Danny McNally - LCC, Greg Pickup - Heritage Lincolnshire, Alison Fairman, BEM - Community, Councillor Paul Skinner - BBC and Andy Lawrence - Port of Boston

Observers: Stephanie Dickens - Matt Warman's Office, Mick Lazarus & Pete Holmes - BEIS, Halina Davies - LCC and Warren Peppard - LCC

Town Deal Delivery Team: Michelle Sacks, Clive Gibbon, Luisa Stanney, Sharon Warner, Tim Sampson and Martin Kay
Ivan Annibal - Rose Regeneration

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Matthew Van Lier, Lydia Rusling, Robert Barclay and Nick Worboys.

2 Minutes of the Boston Town Deal Board Meeting held on 8 July 2021

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 8 July were agreed as a true record - proposed by PS and seconded by VB.

3 Progress Report

IA reported that the table of activities for each of the projects set out in the progress report were signed off on 15 July. The report also outlined the breakdown of funding and the initial profiling.

The Government had given Town Boards the opportunity to reprofile at the end of September and the Town Deal Team would take advantage of that once the deliverability of all projects was clear - it was an evolving process that would enable the tightest fit of projects in the programme.

NK stated that the country was in a period of price inflation and the Team and project sponsors should be aware of that when developing the business cases. ML was keen to understand where there were any issues as it would be useful to carry out future casting to see where there could be challenges. It was noted that two projects had already achieved their capital spends and other bigger capital projects would not commence for another year or so.

IA explained that the report gave an update on each project and gave a clear idea of when they would reach full business case. All business cases should be completed within a year of receiving the funding offer, followed by a period of 5 years to complete the projects. The profile had been agreed with Government.

PE21/Leisure - a key element of the project would be supporting the relocation of the swimming pool onto the Ingelow Manor site (adjacent to the current site of the pool). There was ongoing dialogue with the Council about the provision of the balance of funding for the development. It was clear that there could not be a period of time when the community did not have access to a swimming pool - therefore the project had to be completed prior to the commencement of the Mayflower project. The business case should be completed for March 2022, with an anticipated completion date of 2023/24.

Mayflower - this was the flagship project and a dedicated project manager would be appointed. There were no major concerns over the issue of moving the pool prior to commencement of the Mayflower project. Full business case to be completed by March 2022.

St Botolph's Library - an early claim had been submitted for funding which had received a favourable response from the Government and the team were awaiting confirmation that payment may be made in September 2021.

Centre for Food and Fresh Produce - the project was progressing but was challenged by the need to change the ratio of revenue to capital funding to enable the overall programme to operate within the strict revenue thresholds imposed on it. The team were positive about the delivery of this project and an October 2021 timescale for completion of the full business case was realistic.

Healing the High Street - this project was looking to scale up its operation from the activities implemented using the advance funding in 2020. Further detailed discussions would take place around the inclusion of the Shodfriars scheme into this project to ensure that there is an overall strategy. Business case completion date of October 2021 could slip slightly but no longer than December 2021.

Connected Living - further work was required on this project to get to the full business case stage by December. There may be some issues around the delivery of this project.

Boston Rail Station - planning for this project was well established. It was anticipated that the full business case for the project would be ready by January 2022. Conversations were also taking place with two of the project managers and Lincolnshire County Council who were pulling together a bus infrastructure proposal with Stagecoach and were looking how to sync the offer.

Next Steps - Meetings would be arranged for both Sub-Groups as part of the local assurance process - 3 sessions would be required in October, December and March before sign off by the Board. The allocation of the proposed dates for the completion of the full business cases would form the next stage of programming the work of the Board. Boston Borough Council's Section 151 Officer would also have to sign off each business case.

Following a short discussion it was noted that:-

- Amion (who had carried out the benefits cost ratio work for the St Botolph's project) were providing technical support. The cost of this support would be met from the capacity funding.
- In relation to the St Botolph's library and Blenkin Memorial Hall projects, ML was pleased to announce that they had been approved by Government, to draw down funding which would be paid out in October. This amounted to £860,000. Boston Borough Council would be receiving 5% of the funding in mid-September for project development - this was not new funding, just money being paid early. IA would align and account for the 5% when submissions were received. NK thanked ML for the excellent news.
- There was a query in relation to the delivery of the Connected Living project and the profiling of expenditure would be scrutinised to ascertain if the project could be delivered. This matter would be discussed further at the next Board meeting where a detailed breakdown would be given.
- The Team would pull together a table of dates for Sub-Group and Board meetings which would be flexible until project sponsors were nearing completion of their full business cases.
- The Board thanked ML and PH for their assistance behind the scenes on the Boston Town Deal.
- A proposal on how to spend the 5% of funding from Government would be submitted to the next Board meeting for discussion.
- The Board and Town Deal Team would gradually make the transition of moving from a bid based group to a delivery group. Tim Sampson had joined the Team as a Business Manager to look after and resolve the financial transactions.
- The monitoring and evaluation plan was noted.

4 Accelerated Funding Update

The accelerated funding report was circulated to the Board. Most of the projects were either complete or nearing completion. The next step would be to prepare news releases/PR around the success of the accelerated funding projects.

ML welcomed this news and would be happy to receive the draft communications to include a quote from the Government office. Separate discussions would also take

place with project leads to get updates out onto the social media channels. There had been some social media releases in relation to the 3G pitch and High Street work, but all communications should be coordinated. It was noted that Distract would be engaged to carry out PR work for the Boston Town Deal Board and Connected Coast Board.

ML confirmed that Government Ministers were also showing an interest in visiting places that had received funding. CF was due to have a Minister visit for the Digital Academy which unfortunately had been postponed. MS suggested that MVL would also welcome a visit to Haven High Academy to show Ministers around the language lab and the 3G pitch, having received funding from the Empowering Communities Scheme and the Accelerated Funding Scheme.

5 Levelling Up Fund

IA reported that Officers were awaiting the outcome following on from the submission of the bid for Levelling Up funding. Since the submission, Officers had been asked to complete a further form by MHCLG to confirm that the approach did not have public subsidy (formally state aid) implications. Officers had worked with State Aid specialists, Freeths, to complete the form and were satisfied that this was the case.

The Board noted the current position.

6 Communications

The Towns Fund Communications and Branding Guidance from MHCLG was circulated to the Board. Board members agreed that it would be beneficial to see a PR plan in place for communications, which could be released at different stages of the process and when moving into the delivery phase. MS asked Board members to share any communications within their own organisations.

SW confirmed that Distract were on board to assist with the communications and contracts were ready to sign.

The Board noted the progress made by the Team and agreed that the draft Annual Report circulated with the meeting papers should be adopted and used as a communication tool. The Annual Report had been produced in the same format as the Town Investment Plan.

7 Town Board Development

IA reported that the Connected Coast Board had recently held a Workshop to look at five key areas - terms of reference, secretariat, public sector processes, training and skills audit and stakeholder engagement and communications. Katie Willard (Towns Fund Hub Consultant) had assisted the Board with the Workshop and MS confirmed that feedback from Board members was positive and they agreed that it had been a useful session.

IA asked the Boston Town Deal Board if they would also like to take advantage of having a similar session with Katie. NK was conscious that Board members were busy

people and suggested a session be tied in with a future Board meeting. The Board agreed that this was the best way forward and the session would be arranged by the Team.

8 Any Other Business

Boston College - CF extended an invitation to colleagues on the Board to visit the College to see how the accelerated funding had been spent. There would be an official opening at some point in the future, but the visit would be an opportune moment for the Board to look where the Mayflower building would be situated and other improvements at the College. LS would liaise with CF's PA to make the arrangements for the visit.

Visitor Economy Workshop - MS reported that Visit Lincolnshire had arranged a workshop recently at the Boston United stadium. Some Board members had attended and put their views forward on the visitor economy and how the four Lincolnshire Town Deals could share experiences and maximise the benefits for Lincolnshire. Areas of discussion included skills, heritage, transport and health and wellbeing. It was proposed that these type of sessions would be held quarterly with individual themes. Locations for the sessions would be around Lincolnshire. It was agreed that Boston Town Deal Board had given members the benefit of networking, interaction and collaborative working and it would be great to see that extended throughout Lincolnshire.

The papers for the Visitor Economy Workshop had been circulated to all Board members so for those who had not been able to attend, there was still the opportunity to put their views forward.

Historic Place Panel - MS reported that the Historic Place Panel were visiting Boston on 28 and 29 September. The Panel were keen to hear about what was happening in Boston and what the challenges and opportunities were in the area. They would have a walking tour of the town centre, visit the Port and spend time with Officers and other organisations to discuss current projects. The Panel would produce a report after the visit which could be used for business case development for future projects and the next stage of the Levelling Up fund process, if successful.

9 Date of Next Meeting - 11 November 2021

The Board agreed that the next meeting would be held in person, rather than virtually. Details to be confirmed.