

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Newark Towns Fund Board Meeting held on Friday, 20 November 2020 at 8.00 am.

PRESENT: Councillor D Lloyd, Leader, NSDC - Chairman

Ben Sumner, Director of Engagement and Partnerships, University of Nottingham

Darren Scott, Team Manager for National Careers Service

Fiona Anderson, Economic Partnerships Manager, NTU

Gary Headland, CEO Lincoln College Group

Jane Hutchinson, Town Centre Development Manager

Jo Bradley, Business Development Lead, YMCA

Johanne Thomas, Urban and Civic

John Robinson, Chief Executive, NSDC

Cllr Keith Girling, Deputy Leader, NSDC

Kerri McGarrigle, Chair of Newark Business Club

Lesley Owen-Jones, National Heritage Lottery Fund (Arm's Length Body representative from DCMS)

Linn Beaumont, Partnerships and External Relationships Manager for the Canal and River Trust (Newark)

Matt Colborne, Managing Director, EM Digital Media

Matt Lamb, Director of Growth & Regeneration, NSDC

Mick Baker, Councillor, Farndon Parish Council

Neil Cuttall, Economic Growth Business Manager

Nicola McCoy-Brown, Place Manager, Group Manager Growth and Development, NCC

Cllr Ronnie White, NSDC

Sandhya Ward, Homes England

Simon Witts, Founder & CEO, Aviation360

Steff Wright, Chief Executive, Gusto UK

Tom Marsden, Lincoln College Group

Tony Aspbury, Chairman of Development Committee, Newark Showground

8.0 Apologies for absence

The following apologies for absence were received:

Darren Burke, Nikki Burley, Tom Cartledge, Richard Coppell, Ian Dagley, Andrew Fox, Derek Higton, Jackie Insley, David Jones, Alan Mellor, Madeleine O'Sullivan, Karl Tupling.

9.0 Minutes from the meeting held on 11 September 2020

AGREED and noted.

10.0 Declarations of Interest

Fiona Anderson – NTU has an interest in the supply chain and logistics project.

11.0 Terms of Reference & Membership Update

The report outlined the proposed update to the Terms of Reference and Membership for Newark Town Board.

SW sought clarification regarding the five year/long term vision of the Board. NC confirmed that the report was trying to establish whether the Terms of Reference for the Town Investment Plan were fit for purpose. ML confirmed that one of the reasons that the Board formed was the Town Investment Plan and Town Fund. Over the course of 2021 and beyond the Board and possibly sub-groups could be established to help move priorities and projects forward to drive future change. Membership could also be amended (e.g. Police and Health colleagues). JR commented that the Board over time would change and may in time extend into Sherwood, which would be reviewed as the Board progressed.

AGREED that the Board:

- (a) support and adopt the updated Terms of Reference;
- (b) approve the change of membership as follows:
 - (i) Mr J Gelsthorpe (Business Representative) had withdrawn from the Board and replaced by Mr R Gelsthorpe to represent Pratt & Gelsthorpe. The requisite paperwork had been completed.
 - (ii) Mr S Baker had vacated his post at the Nottingham Creative Quarter (NCQ), the space be held vacant pending further discussion with NCQ; and
- (c) Members take an action to review the website and ensure that their individual Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct, Declarations of Interest and Biography are up to date.

12.0 Town Investment Plan – Update on negotiations with Government

ML updated the Board on discussions with the Government following the submission of the Newark Town Investment Plan on 31 July 2020 and confirmed that it would be a matter of weeks and this side of Christmas for an announcement. Cohort 1, Newark was one of 13 Towns nationally to submit its proposals as part of cohort 1 and was the only Town in the East Midlands to do so. The first 7 Towns had been announced, after publication of the agenda, as follows:

- Blackpool £39.5m
- Torquay £21.9m
- Darlington £22.3m
- Barrow-in Furness £25m
- Norwich £25m
- Warrington £22.1m
- Peterborough £22.9

AGREED that the progress to date be noted.

13.0 Town Investment Plan and Accelerated Funds Projects Updates

ML updated the Board on progress of various projects within the Town Investment Plan, with specific reference to the Accelerated Fund projects which required spend by March 2021.

Newark Live Stock Market and Lorry Park – The 18 November 2020 meeting of the Council’s Economic Development Committee ratified a series of feasibility works and how the Live Stock Market and Lorry Park could be re-located. The Council was working with a third party which was pursuing the opportunity of establishing the live stock market at the Newark Showground site. Colleagues at Newark Showground, the Council and the third party were working through how to make the proposals a reality. The budget regulatory requirements were being pursued to make a gateway site happen. Site plans were provided at the meeting for the Board. It was expected that a public consultation regarding the A46 dualling would be undertaken prior to Christmas by Highways England.

ML noted that given the current livestock market was redundant there may be an opportunity to utilise any underspend in ‘Accelerated Funding’ towards demolition and securing the site. Further updates if this were to be the case would be presented to future Board(s).

TA endorsed what had been said and felt that there would be an intensive management process at the Showground to endorse this. The Council’s help was essential to deliver this project. Concerns however were raised regarding the third party costs of developing this. TA welcomed the role in managing and co-ordinating this process. ML confirmed that a political decision would be made to match budget capacity with that of good will in terms of Council activity.

YMCA Community & Activity Village – continued to move forward. First final ‘Newark Towns Fund’ business case which was ready to be assessed. Tender exercise for construction of the building had been concluded with negotiation with preferred contractor ongoing.

Newark Construction College Expansion (Accelerated Fund) – had been granted planning permission. Tender process was taking place in accordance to the timetable.

Former M&S Building, Stodman Street – Commissioned an Architect and viability team. It was proposed to start an internal demolition in March 2021, alongside the submission of a planning application for the redevelopment.

AGREED that the progress of accelerated fund projects be noted and invite regular project updates of all TIP projects.

14.0 Communications Plan

NC informed the Board on the communications campaign to date and the planned approach for the next 3 months in highlighting the outcome of the Town Investment Plan

negotiations with Government. NC suggested that all Board members be involved in the 3 – 6 months communication plan.

TM suggested that Newark college students be used to help with the communication plan, the students were very capable and willing to help. S Wright agreed with this proposal and commented that a younger generation should play a significant part regarding communication.

S Witts and G Headland commented the need to reach out to the national picture and report as Newark, Nottinghamshire in the plan as there was often confusion with Newark, New Jersey.

JT – Volunteered on Comms and engagement and offered her support regarding this.

AGREED that:

- (a) the development of a Communications Plan led by Newark & Sherwood District Council Communications Team be supported; and
- (b) Members express an individual interest in participating in the component videos, story boards, articles, press releases and other communication mechanism to promote the key messages to members of the public.

15.0 Discussion

DL provided an update regarding the progress to date and commented on the issue at present with the Parliamentary Select Committee Report regarding how the Town was chosen. DL reminded the Board of the very clear challenges Newark faces with social mobility, earnings, educational attainment, town centre decline, and the views of residents. At the appropriate time messaging would remain very clear why Newark is entitled to funding and importantly that with this funding we are a Town that can demonstrate delivery, ambition and working across partners and sectors. The aspiration remains to put Newark on a regional, national, and global map.

Covid-19 updates – How we proceed, diversification fund to move us forward.

Business Support Grant – launched two weeks ago. Several different grants available, the Council was doing everything possible to help businesses, which in turn would help the public.

NC – confirmed that over 400 businesses had received grants. A small grant programme had been launched three weeks ago to help businesses develop their websites and help them build resilience through their websites, 100 businesses had been helped to date.

NC – a marketing campaign had been prepared and ready to launch when appropriate to say that local towns, including Newark, Southwell, Ollerton and Edwinstowe, were open and safe and were asking local people to support their local retailers.

NC – Kick-start Programme, asking businesses to work with colleges, a bid had been submitted for 52 kick-start placements. Lincoln College Group led, who had been excellent partners to date. The Council would provide 7 placements, other local businesses had also taken up these placements.

NC - introduced the Council's newly appointed Town Centre Development Manager – Jane Hutchinson.

TA – commented on the unfortunate Midlands Today report, regarding parking in the town centre and enforcement. It was suggested that the Town Fund and other good news stories should be reported.

DL – suggested that ML and NC establish a Comms Sub-Group to capture all the comments put forward. ML confirmed that he would invite the YMCA; Urban & Civic; and the Council to form a Comms Sub-Group.

ML – Suggested that in addition strategic updates on Strategy and Tip projects the Board may benefit from operational updates to address the 'Little and often' understanding of what was happening on the group. This could include Shop Local, Shop Safe Campaign and work with front line staff (especially those in enforcement roles, across organisation) on the importance of them being the face and ambassadors for the Town. A report would be forwarded to the next Board meeting by JH.

16.0 Any Other Business

SW informed the Board that business had not been good for the Newark show ground during the pandemic, they however were hosting a Nottinghamshire show in May 2021, it was suggested that communications take place with the Showground in order to make a big announcement regarding the May 2021 show.

Further to the earlier update regarding Newark Traffic Wardens and the issues of them not working with traders/shoppers, it was suggested that they have further training as they were considered ambassadors for the town. They should engage with the motorist not just issue a fine.

NC informed the Board of a virtual meeting platform – Collab, which was currently being used by the Newark Business Club. SW provided an update regarding Collab and its capability. NC and ML were keen for the Board to use Collab, for the next meeting.

Meeting ended at 9.05 am.