

Newark Town Board Meeting

Friday, 1st March, 2.00pm – 5.00pm

YMCA Conference Room, Lord Hawke Way, Newark

Attendees and Apologies – Please find attached

1 Welcome

Tony Aspbury and Councillor Rowan Cozens welcomed everyone to the meeting

2 Introduction – Matt Lamb

Matt Lamb, Director of Planning and Growth, Newark and Sherwood District Council provided an overview of the agenda. He provided an overview of the Newark Town Investment Plan from Summer 2020 and its priority projects.

3 Presentation – Newark College

Penny Taylor MBE, Head of Newark College and the Air and Space Institute (ASI) introduced the Construction College Centre of Excellence, showing a timelapse of the physical build of the Construction College, some key statistics before welcoming Cheryl Butong who shared her experience of securing employment after completing her plumbing course. Afterwards, Penny introduced the Air and Space Institute, the courses it provides and recent student success stories. Penny finished her speech with showing a video of Emily Evans, who talked about her experience with ASI and how it was instrumental to her new employment in the aviation industry.

4 Presentation – YMCA Community and Activity Village

Steffen Benbow, Executive Director, YMCA Newark and Sherwood shared the journey of securing funding and constructing an exemplar Community and Activity Village in Newark. He shared the courses and classes the facility currently hosts and an overview of the facility itself. Steffen then provided an overview of the key statistics and the board listened to some of the users of the facility about their experience. Steffen outlined an ongoing commitment to reach out to young people across Newark & Sherwood.

5 Presentation – Newark Heart

Bonnie Mitchell, Assistant Business Manager, Economic Growth and Visitor Economy, Newark and Sherwood District Council introduced the project and shared the future events programme, she then introduced Cate Martin, Director of BeanBlock Café in Newark Town Centre.

Cate Martin from BeanBlock Café shared her experience as a CIC owner, resident and parent taking part in Newark Heart events and how the experiences created help to make Newark feel like home for her. The family focused cafe also benefitted from being engaged with the various events.

6 Presentation – Newark Castle Gatehouse

The board then welcomed Sarah Clarke, Project Development Manager, Newark and Sherwood District Council who provided an update and overview of the Newark Castle Gatehouse project. She also spoke about the benefits of the proposed scheme and the proposed timeline.

7 Presentation – 32 Stodman Street

Christian White, Senior Pre-Construction Manager of Stepnell, the contractor for the scheme spoke about the redevelopment of Stodman Street from a large vacant retail unit to upper floor residential with ground floor retail units. He also talked about the community engagement that has happened, work with the education sector and the eco credential of the scheme.

8 Presentation – Long Term Plan for Towns Fund

After a short break, Matt Lamb provided an overview of the Long Term Plan for Towns Fund, the timeframes involved, the data and opinion harvested to date to capture the Towns challenges and opportunities, and initial LTPFT's boundary and funding profile over 10 years. Matt then introduced the Newark Town Centre Masterplan and Design Code, the vehicle for capturing a future LTPFT Vision for the town, including physical, spatial, and management priorities, interventions and incentivisations.

9 Presentation – Newark Town Centre Masterplan and Design Code

Steve Walker, Director, Allies and Morrison presented the progress so far from the Newark Town Centre Masterplan and Design Code work. He shared the draft vision and the 6 emerging principles from the community engagement exercises so far.

10 Matt Lamb took the floor again and invited attendees to discuss priorities for focus and investment within the town and each table presented their summary, key findings include:

- Supportive of focusing on Town Centre regeneration work including improvements to Market Place and more activities, there is also support for greening the town centre.
- Community safety measures are supported, potentially looking at lighting solutions.
- Need working using a multi-agency approach.
- A need for more people and activity, from housing, use of upper floors, events, and reasons to go into the centre other than just transactional services (experiences and leisure for example).
- There is an issue of institutional investors or owners who have no interest in the town and it is hard to engage with them.
- Newark Castle Station crossing is acknowledged as a pinch point in terms of accessibility.
- The town could benefit from better and increased marketing promotion to attract young people and promote local businesses.

- Hotel provision should be investigated.
- Is there opportunity for housing for students in town centre?
- Active transport routes should be more joined up (including barriers such as road and heritage).
- There is perceived to be an issue getting from the periphery of the town to the town centre and parking.
- There is perceived to be a wayfinding issue getting from the train stations to the town centre.
- Activities on the water and along the riverside should be supported.
- The Neurodiversity Umbrella project received praise for adding vibrancy and improving perceptions of the town centre last Summer.
- Better connection of North Gate retail park and the town centre was highlighted.
- A hopper bus or similar solution to transport people into the town centre was suggested.
- The large number of independent businesses in Newark town centre was raised as a unique position along with the creativity it encourages and interest it brings for visitors.
- The vehicle access and associated traffic along Carter Gate, a pedestrianised area, was discussed.
- The heritage and historical aspects of the town were noted as being part of the reason people like living in Newark.
- More activities for young people and families were raised as a need to attract people into the town centre.
- Increasing vacant shops were noted as an eye sore and general decline in retail.
- The Market Place was recognised as a central area to host more events and music performances.
- Provision for improved and additional Community spaces in the town centre to meet wider community needs beyond shopping.
- Activating adjoining streets to the Market Place with markets was suggested.

Potential specific projects raised:

- Transformation of Newark Market Place to support events, al-fresco dining, and experiences.
- Canal and River Trust raised a potential replacement of a bridge to form a circular route and the development and enhancement of Newark Dry Dock, the largest inland facility of its type in England.
- Steff Wright introduced a potential project of a football stadium.
- Beaumont House Hospice Care require a bigger space and new site.
- The redevelopment of Saint Marks Shopping Precinct given its poor contribution to the centre currently and its significant extent of retail footprint.

11 Conclusion

Matt Lamb concluded the event with future governance requirements that will be needed. This would not preclude consultation with all, both inside and outside of formal meetings but would be necessary for development and sign off of our LTPFT Vision and

Investment Plan. Matt also advised that there would be another meeting on the 27th March with more to follow up to the summer submission date.

Meeting concluded at 5.11 pm.

Next Meeting – 27 March 2024