



Northumberland County Council

Blyth Town Deal Board Meeting
Wednesday 04 November 10.30am
(Microsoft Teams video conference)

Present:

Alan Ferguson (AF) Thom Bradley (TB) Margaret Coates (MC) Ken Dunbar (KD) Jonathan Gilroy (JG) Martin Lawlor (ML) Rt Hon Ian Levy MP (IL) Tony Quinn (TQ) Jane Robinson (JR) Cllr Glen Sanderson (GS) Rob Strettle (RS) Lee Tennant (LT) Andrew Thelwell (AT) Mark Warnes (MW) Cllr Richard Wearmouth (RW)	Chair: Fergusons Transport Blyth Community Network BEIS Advance Northumberland BEIS Port of Blyth National Government ORE Catapult Newcastle University Northumberland County Council Northumberland County Council Newcastle College Bede Academy (Emmanuel Teaching School Alliance) Active Northumberland Northumberland County Council
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In Attendance:

Helyn Douglas (HD) Anne Lawson (AL) Carol Johns-McLeod (CJM) Elaine Maylin (EM) Peter Graham (PG)	NCC NCC NCC NCC New Skills Consulting
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Apologies:

Angela Cosimini (AC) Helen Golightly (HG) Trevor Gyllenspetz (TG) Rob Hamilton (RH) Matthew Murray (MM) Cllr Kath Nisbet (KN) Vicky Potter (VP) Wendy Scott (WS) Warren Taylor (WT)	Frameworks North East LEP Northumberland Estates North of Tyne Combined Authority Tharsus Northumberland County Council Jobcentre Plus, DWP Cultural Network Blyth Town Council
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Notes of discussion:

1	<u>Declaration of Interests</u> AF requested that outstanding Declaration of Interest forms are completed and returned urgently as they are a governance requirement for the Board.	Action PS, DP, JW
2	<u>Minutes of the last meeting</u> Accepted as a true record.	

<p>3</p>	<p><u>Governance (AL)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outstanding Pen portraits AL reminded the Board members if you have not already done so please complete and return urgently as they are a governance requirement for the Board. • Amendments to Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct (attachment 1&2) AL updated the Board regarding minor alterations to both documents as per the documents circulated. • Vice-chair nominations (attachment 3) 2 nominations were received - Tony Quinn for the Private Sector and Cllr Richard Wearmouth for the Public Sector. AF proposed and IL seconded both. Unanimously agreed by the board. 	<p>DP, JW</p>
<p>4</p>	<p><u>Town Deal 2020/21 (AL)</u></p> <p>AL updated on this project. The Northern Gateway Phase 1 Project is to refurbish Bowes Street East and West and the area in front of Wilkinsons. The £750k is early 2020/21 Town Deal money awarded by the government which will be spent by the end of this financial year. Work is scheduled to start in January, weather dependent, this will avoid the Christmas busy footfall period especially given the current COVID lockdown situation as December is anticipated to be a critical time to trade.</p> <p>Al provided a summary of the consultation on the scheme. There has been an online consultation and we have also written to residents and businesses asking for feedback. The headline comments are 83 positives, 25 negatives, 19 around pedestrianisation and reduced parking, 34 on improving shop fronts and quality of shops and 11 mention ASB. The comments will be fed into the next stage of scheme development.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p><u>Future High Street Fund (FHSF) (RS)</u></p> <p>RS updated that NCC have completed a clarification exercise with Government regarding the FHSF application, a process that all applicants to this fund were asked to undertake. We are now awaiting the outcome expected this Autumn. AF stated that Covid could impact on the outcome given Government focus on this. RS advised that it will be important to remain flexible in the development of the TIP to be able to react to the outcome of the FHSF application when announced. The Town Deal community consultation raises the Town Centre as a clear area of concern and clearly it is anticipated that a successful FHSF application will have a major positive impact on this and will be a key co-funding element of the TIP submission.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>(Slides were shown for all sections in item 6 and circulated after the meeting)</p> <p><u>Town Deal Town Investment Plan (TIP) Development</u></p> <p>AF stressed the importance of having this strategy agreed and acknowledged the amount of work done by the team to score projects, etc, and pull this information together as the timescales are very tight.</p> <p>RS recapped the 4 workstreams that lead us to the submission of the TIP in January</p> <p>–</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Blyth Regeneration Framework and Evidence Base, 2) Consultation & Engagement Feedback on which AL has done a great job, this feedback forms part of the evidence that goes forward around what the community and businesses want to see, 3) Project Identification & Prioritisation that CJM and EM have done a lot of work on around scoring and how the projects fit the objectives, and; 	

	<p>4) TIP and Town Deal - how do we develop the TIP, what is the focus of it and where next for the town deal and the project pipeline that we need a decision on today so we can begin to focus on the suit of schemes that will go forward in January 2021.</p>	
<p>6.1</p>	<p><u>Work Stream One (RS)</u> Regeneration Framework RS updated that the vision and objectives have been developed around growing town, vibrant town, connected town, inclusive and sustainable town. We consulted upon the vision and objectives during October, collected evidence to underpin the objectives (with further work to take place in November), supporting information has been produced (glossy design, maps, project concepts images, etc), all of which forms the basis of the TIP and inform potential town deal projects. Work on this carries on in November and December as part of workstream 4.</p>	
<p>6.2</p>	<p><u>Work Stream Two (AL)</u> Consultation & Engagement Feedback The consultation on the Blyth Regeneration Framework ran for 2 weeks, it was online and had its own section on NCC's webpage. AL thanked Helyn Douglas for her work on setting up the webpage. The online survey was communicated by email across the town, through social media and via partners. We are delighted at the 250 responses received. A workshop was held with Bede Academy school council. This builds on the previous waves of engagement which are all available online.</p> <p>AF commented that at a Chairs meeting recently members were pleased with the 100 responses received at the time so will be even more pleased with 250 responses. AL acknowledged that Blyth is usually good at letting us know what they think and responding to this type of activity.</p> <p>It was approximately 50/50 between male and female respondents, the average age range was slightly younger than previous consultations. AL thanked AT for sharing the consultation throughout the schools and noted that both pupils and parents had responded.</p> <p>Out of the 250, 233 are residents, 34 work in Blyth, 13 have a business in Blyth, 7 are studying in Blyth and 13 'other'.</p> <p>AL will be running focus groups with businesses over the coming weeks and asked that the Board supply 3 business contacts who are not on the Town Deal Board who we could invite to get involved in these sessions.</p> <p>Responses:</p> <p>A full response report will be circulated, including consultee views on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Town Deal vision • the Town Deal objectives overall • Best things about Blyth • Worst things about Blyth • Objective 1 - Growing Town • Objective 2 - Vibrant Town • Objective 3 – Connected Town • Objective 4 – Inclusive & Sustainable Town <p>It was noted that several of the key asks / wishes / concerns from the community are already being worked on through the FHSF programme and through Project Aurora with Northumbria Police, and potentially through the Shaping Places for Healthier Lives programme with Public Health England.</p>	<p>All Board Members</p>

	<p>TIP development and each of the projects will use the information from the consultation to inform the project development for each strand to be carried forward. A consultation report from the latest consultation will be circulated and placed online to help with this.</p>	<p>AL</p>
<p>6.3</p>	<p><u>Work Stream Three (CJM)</u> Project Identification & Prioritisation CJM provided an overview of the process - worked with PG from New Skills and ARUP who both provided advice, NCC undertook a call for projects, long list assessment (scored, ranked, raw scores, proposed, compared pipeline with consultation feedback).</p> <p>17 proformas submitted to the call for projects, £45.5m town deal ask against a total project value of £99.8m. The proformas broken down by intervention theme were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban x6, • Enterprise x4, • Arts x4, • Skills x2 and • Transport x2. <p>Projects were scored based on the information submitted by project leads within the proformas. All of this information will be presented as part of the TIP demonstrating the process undertaken to identify projects.</p> <p>There were 3 project package options presented to the board. Each package contained all five of the highest scoring projects, plus those additional projects linked to a particular theme. The purpose of this was to show the Board the different types of choices available based on thematic emphasis.</p> <p>Option 1 package – 5 highest scoring projects plus Town & Connectivity Option Package 2 – 5 highest scoring projects plus Business & Growth Option Package 3 – 5 highest scoring projects plus Inclusive Growth</p> <p>GS thanked everyone and said it was clear to see that lots of work has been done, it is an important scheme to support and we will support it. GS left the meeting at this point.</p>	
<p>6.4</p>	<p><u>Work Stream Four (RS/CJM)</u> Town Investment Plan Development & Town Deal RS updated that the TIP is an evolved version of the regeneration framework submission document being prepared for Government in January. It will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the overall vision and objectives for the town, • how it shapes and delivers change for the future • planned and future investment (e.g. FHSF) • the ask from the Town Deal • the focus of the projects • selection of proposed projects, • project grouping • meeting the challenges from the community <p>The TIP is not the end of the process, the TIP is meant to initiate change and could make the case for other projects not available through the town deal.</p> <p>The TIP needs to have evidence of needs, opportunities and consultation feedback on all 4 Blyth Town Deal objectives:</p>	

- **Growing Town** - skills, opportunities, jobs, existing investment and building further on existing investment - where should the town deal intervene?
- **Vibrant Town** – the community care, community housing and neighbourhood renewal is important, partnership working and a culture change.
- **Connected Town** - transport into and around the town is critical working alongside big schemes such as the Northumberland Line and Moor Farm roundabout.
- **Inclusive & Sustainable Town** – Skills are a key driver, and we must include the community in these jobs for the future. Sustainable by building the reputation of the town as a centre for clean growth.

Town Deal Project Pipeline

On the basis of the above TIP context CJM set out the proposed option - Town Deal Project Pipeline at this stage. This will allow NCC to work with a focused set of project sponsors on project development during November including taking account of the comments made by the Board re co-funding opportunities etc.

A final recommendation on the TIP and projects to be included in the Town Deal will be made at the Board in December.

RS confirmed the next steps during November are:

- develop the project pipeline
- make a first draft of the TIP
- undertake business engagement sessions
- undertake check and challenge sessions with each project sponsor
- draft detailed project proformas by 20th November,
- project assessment w/c 24 November
- final project selection proposal presented to the Board 02 December.

Several board members requested more time to reflect on the projects, packages and scoring matrices before giving a view on the proposed shortlist for further review during November.

The Board agreed that the presentation would be circulated for review by board members by COP Thursday 5th November.

All agreed that project officers should meet with chair and vice chairs to review comments on Friday 6th November to confirm the proposed option for further development during November, noting that final shortlist will be decided at full board 2nd December.

It was noted that several of the projects on the potential pipeline might be subject to other potential funding streams. This will be explored further during the next phase – check and challenge – to ensure that we achieve maximum benefit for the town using the span of funding streams available.

It was noted that the programme of proposed works needs to reflect the public consultation. All project leads to consider in next phase of project development.

Each project included in the TIP has to undergo a Green Book Assessment process, so outputs are key to show value for money and accountability.

RS reiterated to the Board that the comments and feedback today were hugely valuable and that if anyone would like further information or to chat through the proposals please contact the officer team or via the Chair / Vice Chairs.

**Action RS
circulate**

**Action AL to
arrange**

Project leads

	EM confirmed she will add the lead partner details to the slides for information before they are circulated.	EM
7	<p><u>Any Other Business</u> None reported.</p> <p>AF thanked the Officers and PG for their hard work and stressed that it was important that we get something out of this opportunity for Blyth.</p> <p>RS thanked the Board for their support.</p> <p>AT also thanked colleagues and stated there are some exciting projects being proposed offering great possibilities for Blyth.</p>	
8	<p><u>Date of next meeting:</u> 2nd December 2020, 09:00 – 10.30</p>	