

Blyth Town Deal Board Meeting

Friday 10 May 2024 14:30

(Blyth Workspace and Microsoft Teams video conference)

Member Name	Organisation	10/05/2024
Alan Ferguson (AF) - CHAIR	Fergusons Transport	Attended
Thom Bradley (TB)	Blyth Community Network	Attended
Scott Bullock (SB)	Newcastle College	<i>Apologies</i>
Lesleyanne Cassie (LC)	Jobcentre Plus	
Rev Canon Ian Flintoff (IF)	Blyth Churches Together	Attended
Greg Gavin (GG)	Blyth Town Forum	
Steven Harrison (SH)	Advance Northumberland	Attended
Steven Hume (SH)	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Northumbria	Attended
Martin Lawlor (ML)	Port of Blyth	Attended
Rt Hon Ian Levy MP (IL)	Member of Parliament for Blyth Valley Constituency	Attended
Sarah McMillan (SM)	Director of Economic Development & Growth, NCC	<i>Apologies</i>
Matthew Murray (MM)	Tharsus	<i>Apologies</i>
Cllr Kath Nisbet (KN)	Northumberland County Council	Attended
Heather Orton (HO)	North East Combined Authority	Attended
Cllr Wojciech Ploszaj (WP)	Northumberland County Council	<i>Apologies</i>
Tony Quinn (TQ)	ORE - Catapult	Attended
Jane Robinson (JR)	Newcastle University	Attended
Wendy Scott (WS)	Cultural Advisory Group	Attended
Cllr Warren Taylor (WT)	Blyth Town Council	Attended
Andrew Thelwell (AT)	Bede Academy	<i>Apologies</i>
Cllr Richard Wearmouth (RW)	Northumberland County Council	Attended
Jan Willis (JW)	Executive Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer), NCC	
Maureen Levy (ML)		Attended
Peter Graham (PG)	New Skills Consulting	Attended
Dan Ellis (DE)	Jam Jar Cinema Cinema	Attended

In Attendance	Organisation	10/05/2024
Cristina Armstrong (CA)	Project Manager, NCC	Attended
Reemer Bailey (RB)	Project Manager, NCC	Attended



Lara Baker (LB)	Programme Manager, NCC	Attended
Bev Harrison, (BH)	Regeneration Finance & Performance Manager, NCC	<i>Apologies</i>
Jenny Hindmarsh (JH)	Senior Programme Officer (Regeneration), NCC	Attended
Carol Jameson (CJ)	Regeneration Programmes Investment Manager, NCC	Attended
Elaine Maylin (EM)	Regeneration Investment Funding Manager, NCC	Attended
Lee Paris (LP)	Project Manager, NCC	Attended
Taylor Sharp (TS)	Business & Trade	<i>Apologies</i>
Rob Strettle (RS)	Energising Blyth Programme Team	Attended
Helen Swinburn (HS)	Projects Officer, NCC	<i>Apologies</i>

Notes of discussion:

1	Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence AF welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies and attendance are noted in the list above. Introductions from the Board to the new members.	Action:
2	Declarations of Interest DE – operator of the Culture Hub	
3	Minutes of the last meeting These were accepted as true record.	
4	Energising Blyth – Towards a refreshed Town Investment Plan – Long Term Plan for Towns development process RS ran through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LTPFT and the EB programme to recap for new members. Slide pack will be circulated around. Updated governance organogram provided. - Governance update – new members will be nominated to the Board through existing groups. Health rep – GP Jon Aust will be invited to join the Board. Small businesses – FSB and NE Chamber of Commerce have been contacted. Business network or something similar to be set up throughout 2024. Community reps – through Heart of Blyth. Governance return approved by DLUHC LTPFT themes mapped across to TIP themes – light touch refresh of TIP in order to identify what projects can come forward	



	<p>Focus on the first three years with ambitious long term vision as whole £20m not secured at this stage</p> <p>Invite to the Board to attend the engagement workshop at Blyth Football Club on 23rd May.</p> <p>AF noted that a lot of these dates are coming up soon and are close together – RS noted that there is already lots of good work to build on for the events.</p> <p>RS ran through eligible activities within the LTPFT themes</p> <p>RS provided an update on the emerging project pipeline – this will be tested out over the next month with the board and at engagement events</p> <p>4 projects emerging: Culture and Placemaking Programme Phase 2, Blyth Business Network, Town Centre Action Team, Transport and Connectivity package</p> <p>LTPFT is running concurrently with the current Energising Blyth programme</p> <p>IL – how do we connect Northumberland Line to the Town Centre to increase visitor numbers? How do we do this differently (eg an old/quirky bus)? LB – could be an opportunity for electric bikes at train stations to support electric bus scheme?</p> <p>RS - is this something we could use to draw investment in or do we want to use the LTPFT resource for this?</p> <p>LB – massive opportunity for leveraging in private sector investment.</p> <p>IF – Community led change really important through the bid process, consultation, project/programme design. How do we reflect that Blyth is made up of a group of communities, not one. Community organisations may need support, rather than having a framework imposed on them.</p> <p>JR – Very supportive of emphasis on culture and can we link to NECA plans for emerging culture programmes.</p> <p>WS – NECA ambition to go for a region of sport as a pilot and ambition to create culture and creative zones and test labs – opportunity to work with the community. Regenerative tourism and skills really important to consider and could be part of the cultural offer to grow the sector. Not a lot of young people to grow the industries so need to focus on this e.g. getting more people into film.</p> <p>HO - would welcome colleagues joining the existing cultural boards for NECA. Happy to make connections with Mark Adamson - would be good to get him involved.</p> <p>RS – where do we directly intervene through this opportunity and what needs to be a longer term opportunity/funded through other opportunities?</p> <p>JR - happy to link in with colleagues involved in the Gov Investment zones – opportunities.</p>	
--	--	--



	<p>ML – How do we bring people back into town rather than just the beach. How do we link ECLH to the town centre? Cultural and wayfinding maps?</p> <p>RS – Yes there have been talks of an energy festival. All needs to be explored further. Cultural map around the town centre would be useful.</p> <p>ML – Are there specific delivery requirements per year we need to meet.</p> <p>RS – Roughly £2m per year. Gateway review approach to release endowment funding. Linked to spending windows in government. Focus is on a 3 year detailed Investment Plan.</p> <p>TQ – Good to use some of this money to maximise Phase 1 of EB so that the two aren't seen as two separate schemes</p> <p>RS – Linkages into first phase of programme could be really important but how much should be spent on this and how much can be brought in.</p> <p>TQ – Are they funding pots the community bid into? In terms of a long term plan there hasn't been a focus on short, medium or long term priorities. What are the immediate priorities.</p> <p>RS – Not here yet in terms of profiling as need to speak to partners. Should have more of an idea on this within a month or so. Can be profiled to match to need. NCC could manage funds but would need to involve partnerships and Board.</p> <p>TQ – Could we use funding to leverage some private sector funding in?</p> <p>LB – Culture hub and market place currently surrounded by beautiful properties with a high vacancy rate but have been left for so long landlords cannot refurbish them. Council could come in and repurpose these properties.</p> <p>WT – Practical examples of how proposed commercial property fund could operate in the town centre – LB has provided example of properties around Market Place. There could also be community ownership.</p> <p>DE – Plugging gaps on what we haven't been able to do. There are lovely properties in Blyth in disrepair but we need private capital investment to bring them back to life. Infrastructure isn't there at the moment and we don't want Blyth to just be known for STEM.</p> <p>RW – Ownership, challenge and having revenue in the council to get on the phone to say why are you leaving your property in this state.</p> <p>LB this is done through empty homes project but could this be done with businesses?</p> <p>RS is there a join up between property gap funding and business network.</p> <p>DE – Commercial awareness around this for landlords. Demand will grow particularly for first floor areas.</p> <p>WS – Could we look at design guides for the businesses.</p>	
--	--	--



	<p>TB – Tonys point about building on what we have already been able to achieve has to be part of long term solution. Don't lose sight of the fact that its's 10 years and we don't need to do everything now.</p> <p>Funding mechanisms for this – Heart of Blyth, Community Chest, investment through NECA.</p> <p>IL – Martin Trindor owns many buildings in Blyth and an estate agency – very keen to be involved in this work.</p> <p>ML - I really welcome engagement with local businesses in the town centre. There are concerns about low visitor numbers in the town centre but also they feel that the changes made particularly around parking are actually making it harder for them to operate as businesses and for customers to visit their shops.</p> <p>NO - Targeted approach needed to make maximum impact. Upper floor living - could we leverage private sector money to convert some of these properties into community led housing. LB would barrier ownership be an issue. RS/LB will look into this.</p> <p>DE – Are there any successful case study models we could look into</p> <p>CA - Stove Network in Dumfries & Galloway could be used as an example – architecturally interesting buildings.</p> <p>TB – also one in Sunderland and Saltburn</p> <p>Town Deal Board were supportive of the work to date and were asked to provide further feedback after the meeting and to come to the stakeholder workshop on 23rd May.</p>	
5	<p>Culture Hub – Introducing the Operator and Branding</p> <p>DE – provided a presentation on Jam Jar as the new Culture Hub operator and the brand that has been developed.</p> <p>Basic sign up website will be available over next couple months – get people invested. Very keen to get people signed up and work together.</p> <p>Strategy to be shared with the Board in terms of sharing this information in the public domain. Aiming for website to go live from 17th May 2024.</p>	
	<p>Culture & Placemaking Programme – Branding</p> <p>Will launch Summer 2025 alongside the new visitor attraction – creating a sense of destination and heritage.</p> <p>TL – Fantastic and very supportive of it – when can we get behind it?</p>	



	<p>DE – Wants it very grass roots and out there without any 'big splash'. Ideally after the Keel Row is demolished then they will be open to doing something bigger.</p> <p>LB – Demolition application going in this week.</p> <p>RS - Comfortable with people discussing it but wait until after the 17th to talk about it on social media etc. need to make sure key partners are briefed.</p> <p>DE – Monthly e newsletter on what's happening from a regen perspective will be developed.</p> <p>IL – Will be happy to share the name now around town if people ask.</p> <p>DE – Will be aiming for the 17th for socials and website to be live.</p> <p>IL – Could A5 flyers be printed and Ian is happy to drop off at businesses. Will help to get the message out.</p> <p>DE – Planning to do partnership working at Blyth Live, town council events etc. so keen for people to come and talk to them.</p>	
6	<p>Town Deal DLUHC Performance Return</p> <p>LB shared update on Performance for Town Deal and FHSF. Information is in the slide pack which will be sent out. Any comments required before 20th May 2024.</p>	
7	<p>Project Updates</p> <p>Slides will be circulated as not enough time to run through.</p>	
8	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>RS wished JH well as she leaves NCC and moves onto new opportunity later this month.</p>	
9	<p>Date and time of next meeting – tbc</p>	