



Blyth Town Deal Board Meeting
Wednesday 28 September 2022 10.00
 (Microsoft Teams video conference)

Present:

Thom Bradley (TB)	Blyth Community Network
Scott Bullock (SB)	Newcastle College
John Hildreth (JH)	Energy Central Steering Group
Lesley Knighting (LK)	Jobcentre Plus
Martin Lawlor (ML)	Port of Blyth
Wojciech Ploszaj (WP)	Northumberland County Council
Tony Quinn (TQ) (CHAIR)	ORE - Catapult
Glen Sanderson (GS)	Northumberland County Council
Wendy Scott (WS)	Cultural Network
Rob Strettle (RS)	Energising Blyth Programme Team
Andrew Thelwell (AT)	Bede Academy
Richard Wearmouth (RW)	Northumberland County Council

In Attendance:

Lara Baker (LB)	Programme Manager, NCC
Fiona Ford (FF)	Project Manager, NCC
Jonathan Gilroy (JG)	BEIS
Bev Harrison, (BH)	Regeneration Finance & Performance Manager, NCC
Carol Jameson (CJ)	Regeneration Programmes Investment Manager, NCC
Elaine Maylin (EM)	Regeneration Investment Funding Manager
Lee Paris (LP)	Senior Programme Officer, NCC
Taylor Sharp (TS)	BEIS
Helen Swinburn (HS)	Projects Officer, NCC

Notes of discussion:

1	<p>Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence TQ welcomed everyone to the meeting. New members Lesley Knighting and Scott Bullock were introduced.</p> <p>Apologies Alan Ferguson, Fergusons Transport Robin Earl, Advance Northumberland Ian Flintoff, Blyth Churches Together Helen Golightly, North East LEP Rob Hamilton, North of Tyne Combined Authority Ian Levy, Member of Parliament for Blyth Valley Constituency Matthew Murray, Tharsus Rick O'Farrell, Northumberland County Council Jane Robinson, Newcastle University Phil Soderquest, Blyth Safety Network Cllr Warren Taylor, Blyth Town Council Jan Willis, Executive Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer), NCC</p>	Action:
2	<p>Declarations of Interest Port of Blyth's involvement in Energy Central Campus around land. NCC as project sponsor for a number of schemes. Advance Northumberland's interest in NEP1.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of the last meeting These were accepted as true record.</p>	
4	Programme Business Case Presentations/Recommendations	
4a	<p><u>Outline Business Case – External Appraisal Report - Recommendations for Decision on Bebside to Town Centre Cycling and Walking Corridor</u> CJ - Turley were the external appraiser. There are recommendations and specific conditions outlined in the paper circulated but there are no 'red flags'. It is recommended for approval to proceed to FBC. We would like Boards approval to submit the Summary Document, revise the OBC and move to FBC. LB – we are keen to take on the recommendations from the appraisal report and update the majority ASAP so that these are reflected in the Summary Document. Once the report is updated, the Regeneration Programmes and Investment Team will then approve the updated version. Board approved.</p>	
4b	<p><u>Outline Business Case – External Appraisal Report - Recommendations for Decision for Regent Street Improvements (Northern Gateway Phase 2)</u> CJ – Aecom were the external appraiser. There are suggestions for enhancements and the key concerns and specific conditions are outlined in the paper circulated. It is recommended for approval to FBC and to delegate final approval to Programme Board. Board approved.</p>	
4c	<p><u>Outline Business Case – External Appraisal Report - Recommendations for Decision for NEP1 – Infrastructure – Capping Beam</u></p>	

	<p>LB gave an overview of the revised project. CJ – Ekosgen were the independent appraiser. Specific conditions are outlined in the paper circulated. Subject to today's discussion we would like to issue the Summary Document and provide a Project Adjustment Request to DLUHC</p> <p>ML - these are essential works to support the dock operator procurement process. To what degree can the subsidy control advice be shared or discussed separately as we hit an issue with the Jack-up vessel and sharing learning would be useful? CJ – Advance Northumberland would have to be approached, we will ask them. TQ – are we confident on subsidy control? CJ – the Legal Team have signed off on the level of information received and commented that it was at a higher level than previously. LB – there has been significant funding into NEP1 with no issues to date and they are returning massive rewards for the area. The appraisal is really helpful, the BCR is slightly optimistic on job figures so we are working with JH to alter those in the Economic Case before we submit the Summary Document. TQ – I would like to commend the Team on finding a project that can deliver such a benefit at short notice.</p> <p>Board are happy to proceed.</p>	CJ
5	Programme Performance – update from LB	
5a	<p><u>Financial re-profiling</u></p> <p>Summary slide shared with Board. On both FHSF and Town Deal there have been some changes in the past few months brought about by the submission of the OBC and changes in the forecast expenditure as it's been 12 months since the Project Confirmation Documents were submitted. We have reported to Towns Funds on both the projects and the programme and updated the figures. We've reported internally also through the MTFP and updated the figures so NCC are aware of what the capital demands on the budget will be over the next 5 years. Town Deal and FHSF spend have been accelerated to meet the deadlines and to push back NCC's capital contribution. All projects currently remain within the programme wide budget envelope and that includes the Project Delivery Support Budget.</p> <p>AT – the delay on ECLH, what does that do to the completion date? ML – it is early 2024 but there is no specific date as yet. AT - if we are looking at delays into 2024 the academic year for the first year of those courses is impacted. Is there any chance to expedite as beyond December 23 puts recruitment in jeopardy? LB – unfortunately there have been delays in getting the contract in place but the ECC Company Project Manager is working on expedition with strategic partners to find the best solution appreciating that it is critical to get the Hub up and running ASAP. It is recommended that Steve Rutland is contacted. TQ – this is a valid concern, ML and TQ to take an action to follow this up with the ECLH Board and Steering Group. RS – I can also raise this at the ECC Group on Friday.</p> <p>TQ – the major spend appears in 23/24, are there any capacity issues or are we comfortable we can deliver? LB – the cost of delivering the Culture Hub is a significant part of that spend funded by FHSF with their deadline being 21 March 2024. We have resources with the Design Team at RIBA stage 3,</p>	ML/TQ

	we are engaging with Procurement Services on the best strategy for securing a contractor to carry out the works (likely 2-stage tender by Framework), Advance Northumberland are supporting on Technical Project Management side and FF is the Project Manager.	
5b	<u>Business Case progress</u> Purple on the slide shows complete and after today more dates will be highlighted purple. LB and LP are working to get today's OBC Summary Documents in to DLUHC on Friday. Outstanding for Town Deal is ECC P2 which will be covered later in the agenda, but it will be submitted within the DLUHC deadlines.	
6	Project Performance – update from LB	
6a	<p>Culture Centre & Market Place and Bridge St Improvements (The Link) – RIBA Stage 2 concept design is finalised and floor plans are fixed. This stage has been complex balancing demand on the facility to maximise interest from potential operators and users and against rising costs. There has been a cost increase and a separate report will be sent to Corporate Finance to discuss the allocation of the Project Delivery Support Budget. We are working to secure an operator and expect the procurement document to be published late October with an appointment late November and the OBC finalised in December with input from the operator. Site investigations have taken place in the last couple of weeks. RS – we have also continued to positively engage with the community and stakeholders as the project has developed in the last few months.</p> <p>TQ – the visual shared are very useful, can we have visual representations for all projects for Board? LB – yes but we would only share plans that are confirmed. RS – in the meantime the design information shared at the showcase event can be found here: https://haveyoursay.northumberland.gov.uk/economy-regeneration/blyth-town-forum-showcase/</p> <p>Culture and Placemaking Programme – the Summary Document approved by Board was submitted to DLUHC, a Project Steering Group has been established, a positive scoping meeting has been held with the Town Council Clerk, we are undergoing recruitment and commissioning tasks and there is a new project space in the Keel Row.</p> <p>Energy Central Campus Phase 2 (Institute) – RIBA Stage 2 design costs and the desktop ground investigations will inform designs. We will have the OBC mid-October and will bring it to Town Deal Board on 30 November.</p> <p>Hotel and Restaurant – this is linked to the strategic site acquisition so there is no further progress. We hope to have movement in the next few months.</p> <p>Bowes St, Church St and Wanley St Improvements (Northern Gateway Phase 1) – this is going really well and regular updates are being shared. The Project will complete this Winter.</p>	LB

	<p>Energy Central Campus Phase 1 (Learning Hub) – demolition and enabling works start in October, the 2nd stage tender report is expected on 30 October, there is slippage to January 24 from December 23 on the start of the site and planning permission has been granted with conditions.</p>	
7	<p>Comms Update – update from LP <u>Showcase event, review and summary report</u> On the day we had The Big Gear Change, Northumbria Police, music and art activities and the feedback generally was positive. Footfall comparison for earlier Thursdays in July showed an increase on the day of the event. We had 130 responses to the surveys the vast majority were from residents and from the 25 – 74 age range which highlights the need to engage with schools and other community groups. Culture Hub & Market Place, Regent St Improvements (Northern Gateway Phase 2) and Bebside to Town Centre Cycling & Walking corridor survey responses were overall supportive.</p> <p><u>Pride of Place</u> The launch event is this Thursday in the Project Space in Keel Row where the Caravan Gallery material will be on display.</p> <p><u>Project Space</u> This is in the unit that was previously Shoe Zone in the Keel Row.</p> <p>TB – interest was generated by the event and the event boards are up in the Keel Row for people to see. Visuals do make the difference for people to see the project and what's happening but having people in the hub to share information and timescales is also useful.</p> <p>RS – thank you to all who helped with the showcase and to the Keel Row Team, it went well on the day and we hope partners felt it beneficial. The boards will remain in the project space but the project space is also available for other activities and we will continue to work with TB.</p>	
8	<p>Any Other Business <u>Review of Board membership - including the process for renewing current members and adding new members</u> FF - arrangements have changed since the Terms of Reference (ToR) 2 years ago and the governance has also changed so updated versions will be brought to the next Board. Board membership was approved on 17/09/20 and in the ToR it states: to review every 2 years; members are eligible for reappointment; and membership is by invitation only. We have two requests from local independent businesses to be considered. We will do a review and write to current members to ask if they are happy to commit for a further 2 years and also review the declarations of interest. The Chair and 2 x Vice Chair roles will remain for consistency. RS – there is some guidance from Government which would be useful to refer to and benchmark against and also to consider the Heart of Blyth setup given the links back to NCC.</p>	FF
9	<p>Date and time of next meeting: Friday 4th November 2022 14.00 - 15.30pm TBC</p>	

