

Minutes

Meeting Title: Truro Town Deal Board

Date: 7th August 2020

Time: 13.30 to 15.30

Location: Microsoft Teams

Chaired by: Carole Theobald

Attendees: Voting Members: CC Bert Biscoe (BB), Nick Seaton-Burrige (NB), CC John Dyer (JD), Cllr Derek Green (DG), Rachel Hammond (RH), Simon Hendra (SH), Cherilyn Mackrory (CM), CC Loic Rich (LR), Mel Richardson (MR – left at 3.32pm), Alan Stanhope (AS), Carole Theobald (CT), CC Dulcie Tudor (DT) and David Walrond (DW)

Officers: Lucy Jones (LJ), Emily Kent (EK), Henry Seymour (HS – Government Advisor, BEIS), Phill Woods (PW).

Apologies: Voting Members: Roger Gazzard (RG), CC David Harris (DH), Alun Jones (AJ), Nigel King (NK), Nigel Knuckey (NK), Harry Pickering (HP)

Officers: Glenn Caplin-Grey (GC-G)

Minutes

1 Welcome and Apologies

- Apologies noted under Attendees above.

2 Declaration of Interest

- No declarations of interest were declared

3 Minutes of the last Meeting

- It was proposed by BB, seconded by NB and agreed by the Board that these minutes be adopted as an accurate record.

4 Matters arising not covered on the agenda

- **Advice from Government:** CT invited HS to provide a brief overview of the process TIP preparation process.
- HS introduced himself and explained he was providing procedural and strategic guidance to Town Deal Boards across South West.
- HS reiterated that each submission would be judged on merit and that quality was key, irrespective of the Cohort in which the application was submitted and that there was no advantage to submitting early.
- HS advised that there should be evidence of shared vision with stakeholders, and that the Board was able to build on existing engagement/consultations rather than all consultation having to be Towns Fund specific. He also noted the emphasis on consultation throughout the process.
- HS noted the importance of being compliant in terms of transparency and objectivity prior to TIP submission.
- HS advised that he was available to attend future meetings, provide updates, field questions etc.
- HS advised that the Government had not been prescriptive in terms of engagement in order to grant each town freedom to conduct in the way that best suits them. He reiterated ongoing engagement, not just establishing vision, that is central, but going forward and involving throughout development and evidencing strong reciprocity in TIP.
- BB enquired as to whether it was feasible to create an entity in order to assist development and delivery of projects, with the ability to acquire, own and dispose of assets. Was HS able to advise on whether this was possible and/or being done elsewhere.
- HS advised that timescales may not be appropriate for October submission of the TIP but that if it was possible to achieve over the next three months then it could be a possibility. He advised this would be more of a Council discretionary matter but that he could seek an answer from his central team and feed back to PW and LJ.
- **Action: HS to seek answer from central team and feed back to PW/LJ**
- **Action: PW/LJ to feed information from HS back to Board**
- HS confirmed that productivity and economic growth were central to the TIP. He advised that the fund is not intended to be socially minded in its impetus and would hope that alternative funding sources would be sought for projects with less economic output.
- PW advised that a recent TIP checklist document had been provided by the Towns Hub. LJ would circulate to the Board.
- **Action: LJ to circulate TIP checklist to the Board**
- **Comms appointment:** CT advised that Agile PR had been appointed as comms company, following criteria marking process. It was noted that meetings were being set up and it was hoped that activities would progress quickly.
- **Comms & Engagement Group:** RH noted that the group as it stands consisted of three members, RH, LJ and NK. AT 4pm on Monday 10th August, a brand workshop with Agile PR had been arranged, with the aim of gaining as many points of view as possible. RH invited other members to notify her if they were able to attend. She was hoping for 8 attendees.

- **Action: Board members to feed back to RH should they be willing to join the next Comms & Engagement Group meeting.**
- There was discussion regarding an announcement prior to the branding being created.
- RH noted that a press release had been sent out, and she had worked with Agile PR on the latest press release. She noted it was important to have a cohesive vision and brand.
- CT noted that a discussion regarding the timeline would be had later in the meeting in consideration of the time taken up with the accelerated funding process.

5 Projects Progress Report

- AS noted that a paper had been circulated with the agenda.
- AS advised Members about the Theory of Change. He noted that a role of the Board should be to think carefully about what Theory of Change means to them, with a focus on prosperity.
- AS commented that there was a limit as to what volunteers were able to achieve without additional support.
- **Redundant space and buildings:** AS encouraged Members to consider a mechanism by which empty spaces can be purchased as they become available as her was not aware that think Cornwall Council had the ability to do this.
- **Pydar:** AS noted that this was a wider project than TIP. He reported that LJ and AS had positive meeting with the Pydar team. He felt that the Board needed to formally agree to a partnership with Pydar. He noted the importance of robust HoTs.
- **The Hive, University of Falmouth:** AS advised that he and LJ had met with the University of Falmouth who had made a presentation about The Hive, as outlined in the circulated paper.
- AS encouraged Members to revisit the Towns Fund Further Guidance. And referred to the tables on pages 41-45 as a reminder of the interventions.
- AS noted that more work was needed in developing culture and heritage, linking with tech, and the advent of 5G was an opportunity. He also noted that the Skills aspect needed further development.
- LR mentioned access to city and felt that the Board should have a view on this, even though they were not in a position to address infrastructure issues such as rail access.
- DW noted that there was a trend towards online learning and he would be interested in the Board hearing more from Falmouth University in terms of these plans going against current predictions.
- HS advised that the Board did not have to align with every aspect of framework as some would be more relevant for Truro. He also noted that it was acceptable to flag elements of aspiration which are not achievable through the fund but feel that need to be highlighted, with the Towns Fund acting as a wrapper for other funding opportunities.

- NB offered an update on the Lemon Quay project. He noted that summary was set out in circulated paper and noted that he had circulated a more detailed note earlier that today.
- NB noted that this briefing note detailed a large number of elements.
- NB advised that masterplanning was being undertaken at which point it would be clear which elements would fit with the TIP.
- It was noted that higher level discussions would be required in due course with key players such as owners of the Lemon Quay development, Transport and the bus company.
- NB hoped that the street furniture element of the project could be considered
- NB advised that they were currently considering the macro rather than the micro aspects at present. He acknowledged that a revenue stream would be required and would form part of any proposal but felt that was a discussion for another group.
- BB commented that climate change was a huge issue and noted that getting people into Truro whilst also encouraging zero carbon footprint was a challenge. He felt that commercialising 5G and putting this together with transport.
- BB felt that the focus should be on Fairmantle roundabout, with Newham as an economic hub on one side and the centre on the other.
- BB commented that Truro should be focusing on its geography and ability to encourage the creation of start-up businesses to make products to sell locally as well as online.
- DT noted that a focus on the Love Truro document was making the most of the water in the town centre.
- DT raised the issue of the Pydar Community Centre funding and enquired as to what happens next in terms of taking the project forward. SH noted that the information was available as part of the wider project evaluation.
- AS felt that this was for LJ to extract and include in the TIP.
- **Action: LJ to extract information regarding taking Pydar Community Centre project forward.**
- AS confirmed that he required agreement from the Board to create Heads of Terms, subject to LJ and PW sourcing costs, to be taken from capacity funding. AS noted that Cornwall Council was not able to produce the HoTs themselves due to them being the developer.
- It was proposed by AS, seconded by CT and agreed by the Board that LJ and PW seek costs for the production of Heads of Terms for the Pydar Community Centre project.
- **Action: LJ and PW to establish costs to produce Heads of Teams for Pydar project**

6 Accelerated Funding Projects

- A paper had been circulated with the agenda.
- CT noted that this the Board had been advised of this matter at the end of the last Board meeting and, due to the very short timeframe, had agreed to look at it in between meetings.

- CT advised that all projects had been through the project development group, headed by AS, followed by the project assessment group headed by MR.
- CT advised that this process had resulted in a shortlist of 9 projects for inclusion. She noted that the total had resulted in a £21k underspend, however confirmation had been sought that VAT must be included. She noted that this meant the figures on the circulated paper were incorrect.
- CT noted that the submission date was Friday 14th August but that there were internal processes to go through prior to this. She was seeking agreement on the nine projects from the Board.
- MR wished to thank DH and DW for the time spent going through this process.
- PW reported that the proposals would be taken to the S151 officer at Cornwall Council on Wednesday for sign off.
- LJ shared the list on her screen to facilitate discussion.
- LJ noted that two sets of projects were very similar, and the aim was to ask the project proposers to work together on these, namely the two lighting projects and the seating/street furniture projects. This would result in a final seven projects.
- LJ ran through each project, providing an overview as per the shared document.
- LJ noted that costs for the cycle parking project would increase due to VAT but also some costs that were not fully realised in the pro-forma.
- LJ referred to the list in the document of projects which were decided by the assessment group to be a better fit for the main TIP.
- NB indicated he was hopeful that the first element of the Lemon Quay could be included, to include seating, planters, lighting, electric boxes and signage provision for Lemon Quay.
- NB felt that the festive lights did not comply with the criteria as a capital spend and noted that it could not currently be predicted what social distancing measures would be in place by December.
- MB felt that the Boscawen Park project should be funded by the Environment Agency. LR noted that the Environment Agency had delivered the flood defence in Newham Quay and they should therefore be engaged. CM noted that she would be happy to assist in any flood defence package should the Board wish to put something together to seek funding. It was considered that this possibly did not need to sit in the accelerated fund.
- BB advised that this was City Council land and they were therefore riparian owners. He confirmed that the Environment Agency had been consulted extensively and been very helpful, but that Truro City Council were therefore liable for the works.
- LR was supportive of bringing water into the town.
- LR noted that the revenue spend needed to be considered with regards to the moveable gazebo on Lemon Quay. NB confirmed that it would not be taken forward if a sustainable model could not be established.
- DT raised concerns regarding the omission of Threemilestone Community Centre from the shortlist. She asked for clarify over the concern regarding timescales as she was aware that the project was 'shovel ready'.

- LJ advised that the assessment group could only assess based on the pro-forma that was submitted and this highlighted that the final piece of funding to be secured was not available until September and there was therefore a concern over deliverability. DT confirmed that this funding had been agreed.
- MR said that the three community centre projects were not being dismissed but should be considered as part of the TIP.
- There followed a debate about the difference between the community centre projects, with the Pydar centre not currently being in existence whilst Threemilestone was shovel ready and St Clement Street already had plans in place.
- DT requested that inclusion of the Threemilestone Community Centre be reconsidered.
- MR and DW noted that the assessment group had assessed 19 projects within a very tight timescale, considering them against the intervention framework and in the letter from Government and that they had acted in good faith. It was noted that they had only been able to assess projects as they had been put forward.
- DW commented that this process could be opened up in future.
- SH commented that he felt the Boscawen Park works should be moved to the main TIP to allow for further investigation and that the additional funds be added to the street furniture proposal to include Lemon Quay.
- Projects taken back with delegated authority for project groups to reconsider and LJ to finalise for Monday.
- AS proposed deferring Boscawen flood defences to the main TIP and transferring these funds to fund both Threemilestone and St Clements Street Centre, with the remainder to be added to the street furniture project to include NB's request to include Lemon Quay. BB seconded this proposal.
- It was proposed by AS, seconded by BB and agreed by the Board that LJ revise the proposal and rework the funding allocation as above.
- **Action: LJ to revise Accelerated Fund proposal to remove Boscawen Flood defences, include Threemilestone and St Clements Community Centres and use the remainder of the funding to incorporate Lemon Quay into street furniture project.**
- It was noted that the Board was not quorate with CM and MR having left the meeting. It was agreed that AS would write up his proposal and circulate to other members of the Board for approval, but it was noted that there was already majority approval for the proposal and that, due to timescale, the practical work needed to move forward in the meantime.
- **Action: AS to write up his proposal as above and circulate to the Board for approval.**

7 TIP Development

- CT noted that, due to time restrictions, items 7 and 8 would be taken together.
- CT commented that, due to the timescale, she felt that the Board consider moving to a January submission deadline for the main TIP.

- AS commented that he had previously been keen on October but now acknowledged that there was a lot of work required and was now recommending January.
- LJ advised that there was more detail on the projects and an understanding as to the level of work involved in realising these projects. For example, she noted that the Harbour Quays project is ambitious, involves the Environment Agency who are currently undertaking work that is not reporting back until October. She also noted that there would be much more information on the Pydar development once they have been through the planning process which would be in the autumn which would be too late for October submission.
- LJ felt that the Board would end up with a much stronger TIP given longer to prepare. She noted that community engagement may still produce strong projects and that the timescale would not allow these to be worked up in time for October submission.
- SH requested sight of the Love Truro document. LJ noted that it was not in the public domain but that she had thought it had been shared with Board members.
- **Action: LJ to circulate the Love Truro document.**
- BB noted the advice earlier in the meeting by HS in terms of quality being key. He was in agreement of a move until January and would like to see the Board agree via email in advance of the next Board meeting, a work plan to take the Board through to January submission.
- BB also commented that external experts should be recruited in to draw on professional resources.
- EK advised that Officers would be led by the Board in terms of submission date. She noted that Louisa Philpott at Arup could program support work in based on timescale and Officers would advise her of this change.
- PW confirmed that he has already confirmed with HS that this transition was possible and that he would advise HS regarding this change.
- It was agreed by the Board to defer TIP submission to January 2021.
- **Action: PW to advise HS that Truro submission would be deferred to Cohort 3, January 2021.**

8 **Timeline and Work Plan Update**

- Covered under item 7 above.

9 **Update on the Towns Fund Process/Govt. Guidance & Town Hub Support**

- PW advised that he would be working in the background to plan out January submission in terms of the Council's internal approval processes will keep informed through LJ and work plan.

10 **Briefing sessions for Board members**

- LJ noted that the Culture and Heritage group were interested in having a session so she would look to organise a session outside the Board for interested parties.

12 **Any other Business**

- Thanks were noted for all the work that had gone into the accelerated fund process by all involved.
- There were no further items of business to consider.

13 **Date of Next Meeting**

- 4th September 2020