

Minutes

Meeting Title:	Truro Town Deal Board
Date:	10 th July 2020
Time:	13.30 to 15.30
Location:	Microsoft Teams
Chaired by:	Carole Theobald
Attendees:	CC Bert Biscoe (BB), Nick Burr ridge (NB), Glenn Caplin-Grey (GC-G), CC John Dyer (JD-joined at 2.25pm), Roger Gazzard (RG), Cllr Derek Green (DG), Rachel Hammond (RH), Alun Jones (AJ), Lucy Jones (LJ), Nigel Knuckey (NK), Cherilyn Mackrory (CM), Harry Pickering (HP-joined at 2pm), CC Loich Rich (LR), Mel Richardson (MR), Alan Stanhope (AS), Phill Woods (PW), Nigel King (NK), Carole Theobald (CT), CC Dulcie Tudor (DT) and David Walround (DW-joined at 2pm)
Apologies:	Simon Hendra (SH) and David Rodda (RD)

Minutes

Action

1 Welcome and Apologies

- Apologies noted under Attendees above.
- It was noted that LJ was recording the meeting for the purpose of ensuring accuracy for the minutes.

2 Declaration of Interest

- No declarations of interest were declared

3 Minutes of the last Meeting

- It was agreed that, going forward, all actions would be included in the text of the minutes for clarity and ease of reading.
- The minutes of the meeting held on 12th June 2020 were proposed by BB, seconded by AS and agreed.
- PW provided an update on the Towns Fund Support Officer. He advised that the position had been offered and the candidate was currently undergoing

pre-employment checks. Therefore, start date was yet to be confirmed but he hoped to have the candidate in position in the next two weeks.

4 **Matters arising not covered on the agenda**

- CT wished to welcome AJ back to the Board on a phased return following a period of ill health. She noted that NB had been sitting in for AJ during his absence. Due to his vast amount of experience, particularly in Truro, CT sought confirmation from Members that they would like NB to remain on the Board.
- It was proposed by BB, seconded by MR and agreed that NB would become a permanent member of the Board.

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

- PW shared a document which provided a summary of this processed, which he noted had previously been shared with the Board. The aim of this document was to hone the guidance from a 70+ page document into a manageable summary for Members to use as a reference to highlight salient points with regards to creating a Town Investment Plan (TIP). He noted that the guidance was hyperlinked into this document for ease of reference.
- Key points of the process were mapped out in this summary document and PW referred Members to a diagram on page 8 which mapped out the process in a visual format.
- PW noted the cohorts of July 2020, October 2020 and January 2021 for submission of TIP. He advised that the Government was already aware that no Cornish town would be submitting in the July cohort but that he was required to advise by the following Monday, 13th July, as to which cohort each town would be submitting within, so that would need to be decided at this meeting.
- PW noted that Arup were providing national support for the Towns Fund and that Louisa Philpot was the coordinator for Truro and acting support for all four Cornish Boards. He noted that Louisa has attended initial meetings with two of the Cornish Boards so far, and diaries were being aligned to facilitate that for the Truro Board. Louisa had also indicated that she would be happy to attend and listen into a Board meeting if Members felt that would be helpful. This can be discussed at the Inception meeting.
- PW noted that community engagement was a key part of the TIP.
- PW advised that he had, earlier that day, received further information regarding the TIP template which he had shared with the Town Leads.
- PW noted that Phase 1 of the TIP was developing a picture of the projects and that Phase 2 was about developing detailed project plans and business cases going forward.
- PW referred Members to the welcome pack that had been circulated which provided an introduction to Arup and the resources and support available to the Board in relation to the Towns Fund and TIP preparation. He also

referred to page 13 of this document which highlighted available topic experts which could also be utilised.

- There was some discussion about the appropriateness of non-Board members joining TTD Board meetings. It was agreed that Council officers who are not aligned with the Board would attend meetings by invitation only.
- Submission date was then discussed at length. CT advised that there was general feeling among Members that an October submission date was preferable but there was concern as to what the situation would be should the TIP not be ready for submission in time. CT also queried the resubmission date as March.
- PW clarified that the realistic choices at this point were either October 2020 or January 2021. The advice CC have heard is that October may be prudent in terms of showing intent and ambition but January would not necessarily disadvantage them.
- PW also clarified that the deadline for resubmission was March 2021, so a January deadline would result in a tighter deadline if resubmission was required.
- PW was then asked to clarify the process with the TIPs going through Cornwall Council. He confirmed that he was in discussion with Glenn Caplin-Grey in terms of ironing out that process and aligning the Town Board deadlines with the requirement for Cornwall Council sign off.
- PW noted that there had been discussion around a Forward Plan for the Board and that this would be important in establishing all deadlines to ensure they could be hit and ensure there would be no delays.
- There was discussion around aiming for October but with January as an option to provide slippage. CT noted that her understanding was that this was not an option and if the Board opted for October, it would have to be submitted if not ready, with the chance to resubmit.
- PW advised that it was his understanding that deferring to January cohort having initially indicated October submission may be possible.
- **PW ACTION** – to clarify submission process and whether slippage from one cohort to another was possible. PW
- LJ confirmed that her preference would be October due to the tight timeframe of resubmission if a January submission was rejected. She noted that although the Government had indicated that there would be no difference between cohorts but there was nevertheless a risk that funding and support availability may change and that this was a risk.
- PW clarified the process around submission, confirming that Cornwall Council are the lead Council and therefore the TIPS would need to go through cabinet prior to submission. He advised that Cornwall Council would be submitting the TIPs on behalf of the Boards.
- Members felt that clarification would be helpful from Cornwall Council as to what exactly the Cabinet intended to do. Whilst they understood the requirement for sign off, they hoped that the Cabinet would not be looking to alter the TIP.

- PW advised that his understanding was that Cornwall Council would not be looking to alter the plans which had been put together by the Town Deal Boards and this had certainly formed any discussion to date, but he would take that away and clarify. **PW ACTION** – to clarify CC position on TIP sign off.
- It was also noted that Cornwall Council would have some responsibility for delivering some of the projects identified in the TIPs and would therefore would have engagement with the process as they would be signing off on projects.
- BB expressed concern about October submission date and the ability to produce a high quality TIP with the time remaining until this deadline. He urged Members to consider the scale of the task at hand before making a decision on the earlier date. He noted that the data in the TIP would be rigorously interrogated and the Board needed to be sure the submitted document would stand up to this scrutiny.
- DT requested clarification around the Accelerator Fund, and it was noted that the deadline for this submission was 14 August.
- It was noted that the deadline for the Board to produce the TIP in time for submission in October was the Cabinet meeting prior to that deadline so that would be the date they would work to. It was noted that the Cabinet meetings were on 16 September and 4 November so an October deadline would mean the TIP being presented to the Cabinet by 16 September. There was concern that, given drafting and proofing time, this allowed six weeks to create the TIP including the community engagement process and production of robust data.
- Some Members felt that submission in October, assuming the TIP was approved by Government, would allow three additional months in which to work on delivery of the plan.
- It was also noted that the initial submission was relatively lightweight and aspirational and that this may be achievable by the October deadline.
- As the Town Lead who would be producing the TIP, Members deferred to her judgement as to whether she felt it was feasible to produce a high quality submission prior to the October deadline.
- LJ commented that achieving the first step in the two step process of identifying the outline projects was achievable, with the second stage of developing those projects into business plans being done at a later date.
- Another consideration was working with external stakeholders, with some Members feeling they would be able to keep third parties better informed and engaged within the shorter deadline of October.
- CT invited each member of the Board to indicate their preference for October or January submission.
- It was agreed to proceed with an October submission date, subject to confirmation from Cornwall Council as to their expectation as to their input at the Cabinet approval stage, the ability to defer to January should October not prove feasible and with a robust timeline in place to achieve this deadline.

PW

- PW confirmed he would take that deadline to Government but with the caveat around it regarding deferment to January if necessary.
- PW assured the board that LJ and the Board have the full support from Cornwall Council in terms of resource provision.
- BB emphasised the importance of analysing economic data to inform the plan. LJ highlighted the issue that economic data preceding the current Covid pandemic was less relevant than it would otherwise have been and that data and Government interventions are changing all the time. BB felt that everyone would be in the same situation but that the baseline and longer term data was important all the same especially in consideration of issues such as climate change.
- CT noted the Board's commitment to move forward with this piece of work as a matter of urgency, with the support of the Economic Growth Team.

6 Terms of Reference for Sub-Groups

- CT apologised that the draft had not been circulated in advance of the meeting.
- CT clarified the two sub-groups as follows:
 - Projects Assessment Group – MR with DH and SH
 - Project Development Group – led by AS, with BB and NK and supported by LJ
- LJ shared the draft ToR document on the screen and noted she was emailing it to Members as well.
- LJ indicated that working parties could be set up underneath these two sub-groups as required.
- LJ outlined that the Assessment group would be responsible for devising the methodology for the methodology for prioritisation and scoring of themes for inclusion in the TIP. She noted that these themes would be similar across towns and noted that MR had been in touch with other Boards in this regard.
- LJ outlined that the Development Group project development and looking at future vision with TIP and that this group had already met. She noted that a number of working parties were listed, including Lemon Quay, Transport, Public/Private Partnership, Community Services.
- 3-5 members of each sub-group, with Chair to be a member of the main vision group.
- The sub-groups will aim to meet at least once a month (more if necessary, recognising need to be agile) and report back to the main Board and decisions to be referred back to the board at least 5 days before monthly meeting. Working parties can be created as necessary and dissolved as necessary by a two-thirds majority of the relevant sub-group.
- MR raised concern about frequency of meeting in consideration of timescale for producing TIP. CT noted that she had requested clarification as to whether the Cabinet would consider TIPs under delegated powers or hold a special meeting.

- **PW ACTION** – to establish whether TIPs will be considered at September meeting, under delegated powers or whether a special meeting of the Cabinet will be held. PW
- There was some discussion about best practice in producing a TIP. PW commented that the guidance had been shared that morning and needed to be examined in more detail, and that the Towns Hub would be able to support the Board in a lot of these areas and that the inception meeting with Arup would help clarify matters and the date for this is in hand.
- It was agreed that DW would join the Project Assessment Group.

7 **Project Progress Report**

- CT wished to note her thanks for AS for all the work and noted that the length of the report did not do justice to all the background work he had done.
- LJ noted that the document was a summary of the work undertaken to date set out the vision and key objectives and implementing three simple tests as to whether the projects (i) meet the criteria as identified by the Government, (ii) can be delivered in time and (iii) there is any match funding available. Looking at project groups.
- LJ reported that the group had looked at provision project groups within this and individuals/groups to take these forward:
 - **Transport**
 - AS and LJ have had meetings with Rebecca Riley (RR) who is going to give an outline information on possible projects coming forward in terms of cost, timescale, impact etc. from position of Officer. Project Development Group to then advise on priorities that should be put forward. AS noted that transport is probably the most complex of the projects to be considered.
 - AS raised key questions firstly as to whether the Board wanted to consider are the relocation of the bus station which triggers possibilities on the river and opposite side of the main road and that he was pressing RR to confirm the feasibility of and secondly linking Boscawen Park with Newham and considering a pedestrian and cycle way across the river although he was aware that this would be an expensive project for the Town Deal Board to consider.
 - LJ advised that she had asked RR to look at a list of projects and advise as to feasibility and costs. LJ noted the RR had advised that a new bridge was an expensive and complex undertaking.
 - BB advised that the bridge at Boscawen Park would be unlikely to fall under RR remit, as it was on Harbourmaster land and SSW own the lock gates.
 - Regarding the bus station BB commented that the only feasible option was to relocate to Garras Wharf and he considered whether Cornwall Council would be willing to look to purchase the Staples site as an alternative parking solution. It was noted that there was a feasibility study in existence about the relocation of the bus station which was

undertaken during the redevelopment of Lemon Quay. It was also noted that there was an area of contaminated land in vicinity of Garras Wharf which would also need to be considered as this would affect costs and feasibility.

- BB also commented on the suggestion to create a 5G bubble at Pydar Street and voiced concern that this would isolate the area from the rest of the town. He would fully support a project to implement 5G on a town-wide basis.
- BB then raised the issue of the strategic transport potential of all four Town Deal Boards to come up with a transport plan for connections between all four towns, producing a joint fund of around £20m which may appeal to Network Rail. This may, in turn, address climate change challenges with regards to traffic congestion and carbon emissions within towns.
- Roger advised that there was an ERDF grant application had been submitted which included a planning application for the bridge.
- LJ confirmed that a meeting was being arranged between the Chairs, Vice Chairs and Leads of all four Town Deal Boards in the near future. Members considered that the issue of a joined up approach to transport could be considered on that agenda.
- **Redundant spaces and buildings**
 - NK advised that the primary hurdle had been in contacting building owners many of whom are pension funds but he has been engaging with as many as possible as well as Charterwood. Hoping to establish in new few weeks who is interested in working with the Board.
 - NK felt that the Board needed to identify land that is about to be developed and whether they would be interested in support from the TIP.
 - The question was raised as to whether the Board had any ambition to own property. CT advised that her understanding of advice provided by David Rodda at a previous meeting was that this would not be the case, and that funds would be granted a business or commercial developer who the Board would work in partnership with which would fit within the TIP.
 - BB posed the question as to whether the Board might need to look to incorporate itself in order to own property even in the short term in order to expediate delivery of projects (example given of refurbishment of a row of shops) and that ownership by a dedicated body, either the Board or a third-party body set up by the Board, may be prudent in some cases. It was noted that this would be based on the outcome of NK work and would be examined on a case by case basis. The issue of liability was raised, with the Board needing to consider exposure to risk as property owners. It was noted that procurement of land carried less risk.
 - The question was raised as to whether there was the requirement for additional business space in the town and that it needed to provide economic benefits to the town. NK advised that his feeling was that the Board should be looking to support existing commercial and residential developers in the town who know their business.

- It was noted that there was an appetite from developers to convert vacant commercial space into residential property, particularly on the waterfront, due to the fact it is more lucrative.
- NK noted that areas to be considered, in terms of falling demand for retail space and the possibility of affordable residential offerings in the Boscawen Street and King Street areas. It was noted that the Board need to consider the economy of the town in reducing the amount of retail space. It was also noted that a reduction of office workers in the centre would decrease spend within the town.
- BB raised issues such as 5G, accessibility and encouraging entrepreneurship as key issues in driving the town centre as an attractive proposition to businesses.
- **Pydar**
 - LJ reported that a number of items had been added under Pydar but clarified that they did not necessarily only relate to that area, for example there may be other suitable sites for a community centre, but Pydar had been identified as one possible site.
 - LJ noted that she and AS had recently had a successful meeting with Rob Orchard and James Windsor regarding the Community centre.
 - DT has agreed to lead that project area.
 - AS noted that although the project as a whole was bigger than the Towns Fund, with Treveth Holdings leading on the project with Cornwall Council as the developer but that the Board was in a position to have some input into its development.
 - AS confirmed the estimated cost of the Community Centre at £3m.
 - LJ updated that regarding the Hive (Falmouth University building including incubation business centre), she and AS had a further meeting on 29 July to discuss this project further, including consideration of IT and skills development.
- **5G**
 - RG updated Members that he has been in talks with BT who had confirmed that 5G was due to be implemented in Cornwall in 2023. He reported that technical surveys have taken place in the city centre and have established feasibility. BT are hopeful that the Government will approve the scheme and that there is a possibility of the scheme being brought forward, or the centre being used as a test bed.
 - RG noted that provision of 5G would improve connectivity as a whole.
 - RG confirmed that costing isn't known at this stage.
- **River Access**
 - LJ to send information out following the meeting.
- **Lemon Quay**
 - Need to prepare and prioritise a wish list and brief proposal.
 - Looking for a Member to examine previous information/surveys that have been undertaken and compile a proposal, feeling that HG might be best placed to do so.
 - A public meeting has taken place and a list has been created of things that would like to be seen on the site.

- **Water**
 - LJ reported that they are examining feasibility and will report back at a later date.
 - LJ noted that she had had useful conversations with the Environment Agency.
- **Boscawen**
 - RG reported that main item is the Cornwall Nursery site which is to be moved to the Idles site, which is available but there are no fixed plans at the moment and further work is required.

8 Accelerated Funding Announcement

- CT advised that £750,000 additional funding had been offered to the Board by the Government. She noted that a letter had been circulated.
- It was noted that the proposal needed to be submitted by the 14th of August and therefore a decision was required from the Board in the current meeting due to the requirement to also get Cornwall Council sign off as lead Council prior to the deadline.
- LJ shared a presentation which outlined the suggestions she had received so far, largely from AS and RG from projects on their lists.
- LJ advised that the funding needed to be spent by March 2021.
- LJ reported that initial ideas for projects included:
 - Repairs, decoration and cleaning of shop fronts and town public spaces.
 - Pop up shops in vacant premises, complementary to existing retail with a focus on supporting local Cornish producers.
 - Additional seating in the town.
 - Funding for manning road closures for temporary pedestrianisation, with current funding running out in mid-August 2020.
 - Trading hearts and markets set up of stage and PA system – potential for encouraging cultural activities such as outdoor theatre.
 - Digital infrastructure – links into issues such as improvements to CCTV and radio system to deal with issues in prompt manor.
 - Lemon Quay and Compton Castle site – repurposing for TIC/visitor centre, providing a Truro gateway.
 - People’s Palace building at Victoria Gardens – lottery project which has been worked up but did not receive funding so could be re-examined
 - Transport – Rebecca Riley had suggested a temporary order for quiet lanes for cycling for an 18 month period before full working up of project.
 - E-Bikes and e-bike delivery system for local businesses.
- CT considered that there was not time in the current meeting to adequately consider these proposals, and that she felt that some of them did not fit in with the wider remit.
- CT suggested that the Board come together before the next Board meeting to consider a short list of these suggestions and consider how they fit in with the TIP and the guidelines, and where spending by March 2021 could be achieved.

- PW advised that the sign off will need to go through a Section 151 Officer to ensure accountability. As soon as a timing has been established, Boards will be informed.
- PW advised that as much pace as possible be applied in the meantime in order to ensure adherence to deadlines, once established.
- CT hoped that a week would be adequate, and that the intention was to have a worked up project plan by Friday 7th August.
- Additional suggestions – to be fed into LJ
 - LR – additional suggestion to improve accessibility for the less mobile, such a dropping curbs.
 - Consideration of projects in Threemilestone that would benefit from this funding.
 - Promotion of path walks using new signage etc.
 - Suggestion of testing the assessment criteria to be used for the wider TIP.

9 **Timeline and Submission Date**

- CT and LJ to talk about timelines
- Next meeting will be 7th of August at 1.30pm
- Cabinet dates to be considered in terms of future meetings.

10 **Written Procedures**

- The procedures are now being put together and followed.
- This item will be on the next agenda for the next Board meeting.

LJ

11 **Briefing Session for Board Members**

- A meeting has taken place involving Nathan Cudmore but it was felt that this session had not achieved its objective in terms of advising the Board on connections between future economic strategy and direction, and what the Towns Fund can do and to give broad linkages between those areas.
- CT asked the Board whether, having recently gained momentum, they still felt these briefing sessions were necessary.
- LJ advised that Cultural Compact would like to talk to the Board or project group and that it might also be prudent to invite Rebecca Riley to discuss transport in more detail as this is an important and complex matter.
- CT requested that these conversations happen outside Board meetings.

12 **Any other Business**

- There were no further items of business to consider.

13 **Date of Next Meeting**

- 7th August 1.30-3.30