

SOUTHPORT TOWN DEAL BOARD

MEETING HELD AT THE REMOTE - MS TEAMS ON 20 MARCH 2023

Attendees:

Rob Fletcher (Chair) (RF)	Ian Raikes (IR)	Rob Anderson (RA)
Andrew Booth (Vice Chair) (AB)	Cllr. Marion Atkinson (MA)	Sophie Bevan (SB)
Agnes Ng (AN)	Michelle Brabner (MB)	Stephen Watson (SW)
David Head (DH)	Peter Hampson (PH)	

In attendance

Dan Taylor (DT)

Officers in attendance: Andrew Dunsmore (AD), Callum Heap (CH), Clare Wright (CW), Heather Jago (HJ), Mark Catherall (MC), and Stephen Tant (ST).

9. APOLOGIES

Formal apologies were received from:

- Daniel Bimpson
- Dwayne Johnson
- Stuart Barnes

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

11. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2022 were circulated prior to the meeting and agreed as an accurate record.

12. GOVERNANCE

Membership Matters

Annual Review

Officers have carried out an annual review of information held on file for Board Members. The website and has been updated in addition to Mod.Gov also being reviewed. The website will be supplemented with progress information about the projects as and when required.

Membership Matters

The Board's Terms of Reference were updated last September. The website link has been updated accordingly.

There are a few proposed changes to the membership of the board due to recent or forthcoming staffing changes.

- a) Sophie Bevin is due to leave the Combined Authority (CA) shortly and proposes that her colleague, Daniel Bimpson take on the role as representative from the CA. Daniel intended on being here today but was unable to attend due to other work commitments.
- b) Susannah Porter's role as Chair of Southport BID has come to an end and it is proposed that the new chair, Dan Taylor take her place on the Town Deal Board.
- c) Dwayne Johnson is due to retire in the summer and has stepped down from the Town Deal Board. Stephen Watson will continue to act as the Sefton MBC representative.

Decision: It was agreed that Daniel Bimpson and Dan Taylor will be invited to join Southport Town Deal Board, representing the Combined Authority and Southport BID respectively.

Action: CW to issue welcome pack to the new members.

The Chair wanted to formally thank Sophie, Susannah and Dwayne for their valuable input and support, and wishes them all the best for the future. This was echoed by the rest of the board.

Governance

Monitoring and Evaluation

Projects follow Sefton's policies and procedures with internal monthly and quarterly monitoring. Board members receive regular updates at Board meetings and electronic updates in-between. Key documents are also shared with board members as part of the assurance framework with annual and bi-annual returns such as the Monitoring and Evaluation plan in December. The next monitoring and evaluation return is expected in June 2023.

Annual Review – Assurance Framework

As part of the annual assurance cycle and the First Line of Defence (FLOD), mechanisms are in place for Sefton to provide the Statement of Grant usage and Annual Assurance Letter. Details are provided in the Levelling Up Funds Local Authority Assurance Framework Guidance.

Change Control

Members have been made aware of the requirement to report change through the Project Adjustment Request (PAR) process. Copies of the PAR templates for Les Transformation and The Enterprise Arcade were circulated to members prior to the meeting for information and comment. No comments or queries were received and will now be submitted. The information reflects the projects updates previously shared with members.

RF queried the need for the PAR given there were no changes in the total spend or outputs for the projects. Officers confirmed that although the amounts had not varied the expected spend profile had and therefore a PAR is required to reflect the changes in programming and drawdowns for the projects.

13. PROJECT UPDATES

Project Updates

MLEC

MC provided an overview of progress to date.

The Business Case was approved by DLUHC in December 2022.

The planning application was submitted in July 2022 and due to design development, has an extended consultation period. Determination is due at the April Planning committee. As part of the planning process, most consultees have now responded.

The preferred operator (ASM Global) are now actively involved in key design meetings bringing practical experience and lessons learnt from their other sites. The design team are also incorporating feedback from site visits at similar venues.

The agreement to lease is being finalised.

Tender evaluation of the contractor package is complete with announcement due later this week.

Action: CW circulate the proposed press release to members when available.

In parallel with the planning application, the RIBA Stage 3 design work package was completed within budget despite current market conditions, cost pressures and maintaining the construction contingency. The design team are now progressing RIBA Stage 4 design work with the preferred tenderer.

RF queried if there have been any challenges or environmental concerns raised. MC confirmed that the proposals for the Water and Light Show have included some mitigation measures, such as limiting the use of lasers during key times of the year e.g., breeding seasons. Sensible approaches have been made along with incorporation of new techniques to minimise the impact such as the north island.

PH felt that it was important for the community to see progress of the physical works and not to be put off by criticism and 'doubters' as this is to be expected.

SW reiterated that progress has been at pace and is testament to MC and the team for the thorough but huge undertaking to get to this position. This was reiterated by the Board.

Social Value Capture – MC reported really positive social value capture through Contractor and will report further to Board on SV output at a later date.

Les Transformations

AD provided an overview of the Les Transformation project, the progress made with phase one as well future phases.

The preliminary design of phase 1 has been completed. The proposals and hard landscaping materials have been selected and consulted upon, with an internal review of the proposals now being undertaken.

To start the process, Traffic Regulation Orders (RTO's) have been advertised, with consultation with the statutory undertakers. Options for procurement of phase 1 are also being examined for commencement around August/ September 2023 (subject to the necessary approvals).

The directional and wayfinding reports are substantially completed with the final report due by the end of April.

Initial feasibility work has been undertaken to review traffic movements and opportunities for improved accessibility and public realm and Marine Lake Access and Connectivity Study.

Funding sources to fund development of further work (City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement - CRSTS and Active Transport Fund ATF4). Report anticipated in April on future phases and programme of work.

RF queried the timescales and movement of spend out of year. AD confirmed that enabling works will commence as soon as possible but the main works have been programmed after the main tourism season.

RA requested a copy of the design proposals when finalised.

Action: CW to circulate further detail when available.

AN was keen to understand the connectivity and potential predicted traffic movement impacts between phases of work and the need to avoid conflicts. AD confirmed this was an important aspect of the next stage design work.

Enterprise Arcade

CW provided an overview of the Enterprise Arcade project. The project is progressing and achieved some key milestones. Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission for the proposed works in the Bank Building were approved in January 2023.

Procurement of the delivery team is underway with the project managers now carrying out a detailed review of the RIBA stage 3 Design work to form part of the tender document package. Contractor engagement to commence April with the proposed work to run over the summer. Works are still expected to be substantially complete this financial year.

RF queried the operator discussions. CW confirmed they are still ongoing, and the operating model options are being explored.

Building Better Customer Experience

CW provided an overview based on the information provided by the Employment and Learning Team.

The recruitment for a delivery lead is now taking place by Southport College and new modules are being developed. The modules will be based on 7 key principles.

- i. An overview of customer service expectations and the importance of providing excellent customer service - customer service etiquette, communication skills, problem-solving and conflict resolution.
- ii. An introduction to Southport's customer service environment and the specific challenges they may face - understanding of the equalities, local culture, customs, and expectations of customer service.
- iii. Training in customer service processes and procedures - how to handle customer complaints and requests, how to use customer service software, and how to use customer service as a relationship-building tool.
- iv. A review of customer service best practices - strategies for building customer loyalty and creating a positive customer experience.
- v. An introduction to the use of technology for customer service - overview of the various customer service tools available and how to use them effectively.
- vi. A review of customer service metrics and how to measure customer service performance - understanding of the various metrics used to evaluate customer service and how to use them to improve performance.
- vii. An opportunity for practice customer service strategies and tactics in a simulated environment.

In relation to Equality, Southport already has embedded a range of strategies in place to ensure equal access for all but will take up the offer from the Council to test out some of the modules with a range of focus groups.

The focus groups will identify any diversity that may be flagged up within the modules in relation to physical, visual, hearing needs etc of the client group and consider issues around cultural awareness within customer care and interaction.

Southport College are currently engaging with a range of employers and linking in with Invest Sefton and signed up to the Caring Business Charter.

MB was able to add that a flexible approach will be taken, addressing local business requirements.

RF queried the length of course that will be on offer. MB confirmed that modularisation means that courses can be based on need, from 1-day sessions, short term courses or longer-term programmes. The Business Relationship team at Southport College are working to identify what is needed and developing the modules accordingly. Some businesses may share resources for quick upskilling of existing staff to fulfilling gaps in employability skills or demand may dictate specific in-depth training for specific organisations.

14. PROGRAMME UPDATE

Programme Update

Consultation & Engagement

CW confirmed that consultation and engagement has taken place at a project level to progress the detailed design stage. At programme level, the youth voice / shadow board

discussions have taken place with representatives from the college and Southport Learning Partnerships. After reviewing the terms of reference and aspirations of the group, we are looking at utilising existing networks rather than put pressure on resources by creating additional reporting structures.

As part of the review of existing information, the Future Southport pages used for digital engagement will be undertaken and updated.

Officers attended the inaugural Sefton Huddle facilitated by Invest Sefton in February. This is a new networking group for digital and creative companies. The Enterprise Arcade project was presented and received positive feedback from those in attendance. There was also positive social media coverage after the event too.

15. AOB

AOB - Social Value

As part of capturing the local and borough wide social value impact of the Town Deal projects, 5 key themes are being developed:

- 1) Employment related opportunities for key priority groups, in particular; local car leavers and local (30-mile radius) apprenticeships. Linking in with the Employment & Learning team, Invest Sefton and local employers.
- 2) Educational opportunities for the next generation; initiatives with local schools and colleges. Discussions have commenced with Southport College and Hugh Baird. Career events and mock interview sessions have taken place with more planned.
- 3) Innovate ideas & contribution to Sefton's environmental and sustainability goals. Links with the eco centre have been made, exploring the possibility of utilising the immersive technology to showcase the projects.
- 4) Use of local supply chain (within 30 miles).
- 5) Health and well-being initiatives for both the project team and local community. Linking into existing and emerging policies/initiatives such as the Child Poverty Strategy, caring Business Charter etc.

The activities undertaken have a notional value and will be tracked throughout the life of the programme.

SW stated that there will be opportunities to extend the reach of the Caring Business Charter and social value links through work experiences, mentoring and raising career aspirations. SW asked Board Member organisations not yet signed up to consider the Charter.

PH felt that positive communications were key to address the queries on why the projects were selected. Cllr Atkinson confirmed that the Town Investment Plan was based on comprehensive engagement with the local community. The projects were identified by the community for the benefit of the community. The Board reiterated that consultation was seen as an exemplar scheme nominated for the breadth and depth of community involvement.

DT queried the role of the BID and link with the business community.

Action: CW to arrange a meeting with BID to provide an overview of the Town Deal programme and potential links for future engagement opportunities.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The dates of the next meetings have been scheduled as follows:

10th May 2023, 08:30am

12th September, 08:30am

12th December, 08:30am