

Background

In September 2019, the UK Government announced an additional £1.325bn funds to be added to a single pot of funds targeted at stimulating regeneration of towns, town centres and high-streets, taking the sum total of this pot to £3.6bn. These additional funds are referred to as “Town Deal Funds” and are aligned to “whole town” proposals, not just town centres.

Inherent to this announcement, 101 towns were identified, towns which had a proud industrial and economic heritage but had not yet benefitted from recent economic growth. In the Borough of Sefton, Southport was named as one of these towns, all of which were invited to participate in a process intended to culminate in the submission of bids of up to £25m, to support the delivery of innovative regeneration plans.

Objective of the Fund

The objective of the Town Deal Fund is to drive the economic regeneration of towns to deliver long-term economic and productivity growth via:

- **urban regeneration, planning and land use** – ensuring towns are thriving places for people to live and work, including by increasing density in town centres; strengthening economic assets including local cultural assets; site acquisition, remediation, preparation, regeneration, making full use of the planning tools to bring strategic direction and change
- **skills and enterprise infrastructure**- driving private sector investment and ensuring towns have the space to support skills and small business development
- **Connectivity** – developing local transport schemes that complement regional and national networks as well as supporting the delivery of local digital connectivity

Most importantly, local communities must have a say on how the money is spent.

The administration of these funds will be delivered as a two-stage process:

- **Stage 1:** providing capacity support to places to put the structures and vision in place in order to move to the next stage of agreeing a deal (estimated 6 months)
- **Stage 2:** places to use their locally owned Town Investment Plan to put together a business case to apply for funding for interventions (timeframe as yet unknown)

Government named the Lead Authority as Sefton Council for Southport’s Town Deal and set out the role of the Lead Authority, which is to:

- Convene the Town Deal Board
- Make clear the governance structure and decision-making structures and ways of working of the Town Deal Board which should be made public
- Define the area the Town Deal Board will represent on a map (using boundaries defined by ONS)
- Ensure that the Town Deal Board aligns with the governance standards and policies of the Lead Council including whistle blowing, conflicts of interest and complaints
- Be open by default about Town Deal Boards whilst recognising commercial sensitivity
- Ensure that all evidence and supporting documents will be made publicly available

Government set an initial requirement to complete a written “readiness statement” which was completed and submitted by Sefton MBC on 19th December 2019 and to establish a Town Deal Board which should hold its first meeting no later than January 2020.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 Purpose and Objectives of the Board

1.1 The Purpose of the Board is to produce a Town Investment Plan

1.2 The Objectives of the Board are to:

- Define strategy and vision for the town
- Develop and agree an evidenced based Town Investment Plan
- Develop a clear programme of interventions
- Serves as an advisory board to the local Council
- Co-ordinate resources and influence stakeholders

2.0 Board Membership

2.1 The **Chairperson** will be a locally-invested business leader, nominees proposed by the Lead Local Authority, and approved by the Board, having taken into consideration a number of factors including the ability to meet all the essential requirements of a Board Member and in addition, a demonstrable ability to:

- understand the public, private, voluntary and community sectors
- run an effective Board and manage relationships with both shareholders and stakeholders
- ability to influence and persuade and communicate with others towards achieving the purpose and ambition of the Board
- competently manage conflicts that may arise through competing/conflicting interests of the Board members and key stakeholders
- ensure that the business is discussed in line with the agenda and ensure that everyone's views are heard and discussed, clear decisions are reached, accepted and follow-up

The Chairperson is invited initially for a term of office for 24 months, with options to extend for a further 12 months.

2.2 The **Vice Chair** will provide leadership in guiding the Board in the absence of the chair.

In the absence of the Chair, the **Vice Chair** will:

- Preside over meetings of the Board in line with responsibilities of the Chair
- As required, fulfil other responsibilities of the chair, consistent with Boards polices and Terms of Reference

2.3 The Board will be comprised of not more than 22 members.

2.4 Selection and appointment of the **Board Members** will be led by the Lead Local Authority, Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council. It is the Council's responsibility to ensure that the Board should include:

- All layers of local government, Mayoral Combined Authority, Town and Parish Councils, Local Enterprise Partnerships
- Local business and investors
- Community representatives
- Local MPs (Members of Parliament)

The Board may also include:

- Local BID (Business Improvement District)
- Job Centre Plus

- Anchor Institutions
 - Arms-length bodies and other non-governmental agencies
- 2.5 Duration of Board Membership will be for a period of 24 months initially, with options for extension with the agreement of the Board and the Lead Authority.
- 2.6 The selection and appointment process of Board Members will be invitation-led and the following criteria will be taken into consideration:
- Demonstrable passion and commitment to the development of Southport's future
 - Record of commitment of time and resources into local social and economic infrastructure
 - Willingness to engage with the Local Authority and Town Deal Board, abiding by the Terms of Reference of the Town Deal Fund Board and its Code of Conduct and Decision-making processes
 - Respected and credible local community leader
 - Ability to meet the time commitments of the Board and attend Board meetings regularly
 - Domain knowledge or expertise, pertinent to the business of the Board
- 2.7 Board Members will not substitute with a deputy if unable to attend.
- 2.8 Board Members will be required to adhere to the governance standards and policies of the Lead Council including Whistle Blowing, Code of conduct (including declaration of conflicts of interest and the Nolan Principles on Standards in Public Life) and complaints.

3.0 Meeting

- 3.1 Meetings will be held monthly for a period of approximately two hours, at an accessible and appropriate venue within the town of Southport
- 3.2 Secretariat support will be provided by officers of Sefton Council, recording the business, decisions and actions of the Board.
- 3.3 The Council will be responsible for ensuring that the Town Deal Board:
- aligns with the governance standards and policies of the Lead Council including whistle blowing, conflicts of interest and complaints
 - The meetings are open by default in terms of how the Board conducts its business whilst recognising commercial sensitivity i.e. agendas, minutes and decisions will be published
 - Ensure that all evidence and supporting documents will be made publicly except where exempt by virtue of commercial confidence.
- 3.4 The meetings will not be open to attendance by the press and public.
- 3.5 Agendas, decisions and actions agreed by the Board will be made available to Members of the Public via Mog.Gov operated by the Lead Authority.
- 3.6 Costs of hosting the meeting will be met by development resources managed by the Council. Costs of travel to Board meetings will not be met, but reasonable pre-approved expenses to carry out agreed business of the Board, may be met.

4.0 Decision-making

- 4.1 All board members have a responsibility to ensure that adequate discussion of issues occurs before decisions are made.

- 4.2 The Board has power to make all decisions in respect of the production of the Town Investment Plan. In due course, dependent on government's evaluation of the Investment Plan, further responsibilities of the Board may be defined with respect to the development of specific Business Cases.
- 4.3 The Board does not have sovereign power over the decisions and resources of any single organisation but may exercise persuasion and influence to achieve the primary objectives of the Board with respect to multiple stakeholders and organisations.
- 4.4 Board Members are expected to attend regularly, and meetings will be diarised to ensure optimal attendance. However, if Board members are not able to attend, they are still required to read the board papers and make their views known to the Chair of the Board in advance of the Board meeting.
- 4.5 If consensus cannot be agreed by the Board, in the first instance, the Chairperson will mediate towards satisfactory resolution, based on an evidenced-led approach. If the Board still cannot reach consensus, decisions will be made on the basis of voting by simple majority of those attending.
- 4.6 In the event of a tied-vote the Chair will exercise a casting vote.

5.0 Board Responsibilities

- 5.1 The primary responsibility of the Board is to produce The Southport Town Investment Plan
- 5.2 Government Investment will be determined based upon the strength of the Town's Investment Plan which will:
- articulate a Vision for the town, complementing agreed or emerging local economic strategies
 - set out a clear understanding of the area, focusing on its assets, opportunities and challenges
 - set out the Investment Priorities to drive economic growth
 - be supported by clear evidence and targeted investment into the economic infrastructure listed around the objective of the fund
 - make full use of existing powers, particularly in planning
 - complement other pre-existing strategy docs and build on these
 - align with Local Industrial Strategy, Skills Advisory Panel analysis, local environmental strategies, Local Plans, Spatial Development Strategies and Local Transport Plans
 - be cognisant of wider strategic approaches being taken through Northern Powerhouse, and other pan-regional strategies
 - align with government's clean growth objectives
 - not conflict with UK commitment to greenhouse gas emissions target of net zero by 2050
 - capture existing and local government initiatives and suggest better ways of co-ordinating investments in one place
 - provide a high-level description of priority areas for the short, medium and long-term activity that can be funded locally
 - include projects that can be supported by public investment (including through the Towns Funds) with high level cost estimates
 - Set out ambitions for private sector investment and community involvement

6.0 Delegating Tasks and Powers

- 6.1 Sub-committees may be established by the Board to act as Task and Finish Groups for specific and appropriate elements of the Board's business. The Board should agree what Sub-Committees are required.

- 6.2 Additional non-Board members may be invited to provide skills, resources, insight and capacity to the task but must abide by the decision-making structures, Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference of the Board.
- 6.3 Each Sub-Committee should be chaired either by a Board Member or a Board-approved nominated representative.
- 6.4 Progress on tasks of the Sub-committees should be updated and reported to the Board, to a schedule agreed by the Board as appropriate to its agenda.
- 6.5 Procurement processes for any goods or services will be governed by the Financial Regulations and Procurement Procedures of the Council as the accountable body.

7.0 Code of Conduct

- 7.1 One Code of Conduct will cover all Members of the Town Deal Board with respect to its purpose and objectives and its sub-committees supporting the development and delivery of Southport Town Investment Plan. Supporting Officers will abide by the Code of Conduct of their own organisation.