

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of the MK: BLETCHLEY/FENNY STRATFORD TOWN DEAL BOARD held on THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER 2020 at 3.30 pm.

Present: J Cove (Chair & Chair - MK Dons SET), Councillor P Marland (Deputy Chair & Leader of Milton Keynes Council), I Stewart (MP for Milton Keynes South), H Chipping (Chief Executive - SEMLEP), H Hupton (Clerk – West Bletchley Council), J Mills (CEO - MK College), J Pickering (Business Development Manager - Network Rail), A Ravn-Aagaard (Treasurer – Consortium of Bletchley Resident Associations), I Revell (CEO - MK Community Foundation), T Roxborough (Special Projects Director - Milton Keynes Development Partnership), D Shephard (Clerk - Bletchley & Fenny Stratford Town Council).

Also Present: T Aldworth (Deputy Chief Executive - Milton Keynes Council), P Hammond (Area Manager MK Land and Tariff - Milton Keynes Council), M Smith (Infrastructure Programme and Broadband Manager - Milton Keynes Council), M Todman (Area Lead - BEIS) and R Tidman (Committee Services Manager - Milton Keynes Council).

Apologies: C Butt (Vicar of St Frideswides), O Mytton (Deputy Director for Public Health - Milton Keynes Council), Dr V Cathanboo (Westfield Road GP Surgery) and D Wetton (Commercial and Business Director - Network Rail).

TDB32 MINUTES OF THE MEETING 22 OCTOBER 2020 AND MATTERS ARISING

The Chair welcomed members of the Board to the meeting

The Chair invited comments on the draft minutes of the Board meeting held on 22 October 2020. P Hammond requested that A Ravn-Aagaard's title be amended and the note that she only attended part of the meeting be deleted.

RESOLVED:

1. That the minutes of the Board's meeting on 22 October 2020, as amended, be approved as a correct record.

TDB33 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

All Code of Conduct and Register of Interest forms had been submitted.

No declarations of interest were received.

TDB34 UPDATE FROM GOVERNMENT ON LATEST POSITION OF BID

M Todman provided an update on the latest position with the Bid. No further clarification had been sought by the assessment and moderation team and all information had been submitted that was required.

The Board were likely to hear more in early January and it was at that time there would be a Heads of Terms document and a figure offered for the financial value of the deal. The Board would have two months to decide which projects would fall into that funding envelope and then twelve months to prepare business cases.

RESOLVED:

1. That the update be noted.

TDB35 UPDATE ON EAST/WEST RAIL MEETING REPORT BACK

The Chair reported back on the recent meeting he attended with, amongst others: Network Rail; The East West Rail Company; London Northwestern Railway and Cemex. This had been a very useful and positive meeting.

The timing of the meeting aligned with the development of proposals for the Bletchley part of the East West Rail project, scheduled for early in the new year. The Town Deal Board sees renewal of the station transport hub as an important objective and the East West Rail company share this ambition.

Next steps are that East West Rail colleagues will convene a meeting in the new year with Council officers to review the outline scope and the Town Deal Board can then explore the potential of how its work can link with these proposals.

J Pickering advised that he will look at other, potential, areas of funding that could be leveraged into the overall station strategy and will follow up with colleagues who would be organising the next meeting.

J Mills commented that, as the major landowner opposite the station, MK College would like to be involved with conversations concerning railway station redevelopment at the earliest opportunity. She advised that with the College having recently completed a funding agreement with the Department for Education (DfE) it would be moving ahead with plans for the development of an Institute of Technology (IoT) opposite the station.

H Chipping stated that the whole strategic East West Link across the network was critical particularly the Cambridge and Bedford links. A Government funding commitment to completion of the Bicester to Bedford stretch, announced as part of the recent Spending Review, was welcomed.

RESOLVED:

1. That the update be noted.
2. That the Business Development Manager, Network Rail be asked to work with his colleagues in the East West Rail Company to arrange a meeting with MKC officers and other stakeholders, early in the new year to share their evolving station redevelopment proposals.

TDB36 ACCELERATED PROJECTS UPDATE

P Hammond provided an update on the Accelerated Projects. Regarding the Redways the topographic survey had been received in draft form and a tree survey and biodiversity report had been commissioned. Once received and considered alongside the topographic survey, the final alignment would be determined. MKC Highways team had appointed and designated a senior engineer to oversee the delivery of the Redway routes.

Regarding the former Fire Station, MKDP had completed its purchase in October and undertaken a review of potential interim uses. This had led to the decision to demolish the building. The demolition procurement and planning processes are now being progressed in parallel. The demolition works are being tendered prior to Christmas, with anticipated bid deadlines prior to the end of January. A prior notification (planning) application has already been submitted. This is a 28-day application which means that determination is scheduled prior to the calendar year end.

RESOLVED:

1. That the update be noted.

TDB37 OUTLINE OF DELIVERY PLAN

T Aldworth indicated that the Council had set out the next key steps for projects in the Town Investment Plan. This was, currently, a high-level plan and more analysis was required once the Board had been advised what the overall funding envelope was that they were working to. The Council will contact partners to get more granular details to present to the Board at their meeting in February including draft terms of references for the implementation groups.

M Todman advised that The Town Funds delivery partner have organised a seminar on the development of business cases and more details could be found on their website – www.townsfund.org.uk. He also commented that Treasury had recently changed the 'Green Book' criteria used to assess business cases.

RESOLVED:

1. That an update of the Delivery Plan be brought to the next meeting of the Board.
2. That draft Terms of Reference for the Implementation Groups be brought to the next meeting of the Board for their agreement.

TDB38 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – NEXT STEPS

The Chair introduced the item by commenting that it was important as they move into the next phase that engagement with the community and key stakeholders continued.

T Aldworth outlined the plans for engagement as part of the post submission phase. She noted that to do this effectively would require additional external support. The options to achieve this include reappointing HYAS on either a three or six-month basis or, alternatively, securing consultancy support from elsewhere.

Partners unanimously agreed that due to the excellent work that HYAS had done in the previous stage of the project they would endorse seeking to appoint them to this next phase for a six month period. This longer time frame would ensure continuity during the next stage of the programme.

In terms of the specification, partners noted concerns around engagement particularly with the elderly who may not have access to the internet. Other suggestions for community engagement were to identify local clubs, diverse community events and regular events and schools and colleges. Contact with religious groups would improve diversity and the rail company may be able to share information with for example those passengers who are season ticket holders.

J Mills also offered use of the College communications team for wider communication activities as required.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Board agree to extend the HYAS arrangement for 6 months to get further through the development of the bid and delivery plans.

TDB39 UPDATE ON BUDGETS

M Smith set out that a £173k capacity (forward) funding allocation had been received from MHCLG. It was forecast that this would be enough for the work that needed to be undertaken to the end of March '21 but that contingencies had been put in place in case they were needed.

RESOLVED:

1. That the update on the budget be noted.

TDB40 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

The dates for the next meetings were confirmed as:

Thursday 4 February 2021, 3.30pm – 5.30pm

RESOLVED:

1. That the Board note the dates of the next scheduled meetings.

TDB41 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

J Mills formally reported that the College had signed the capital funding agreement and the licencing agreement with the DfE and the Institute of Technology, therefore, formally exists and would be launched in the new year. It has secured £26 million of capital investment for a purpose-built facility in Bletchley and offshoots in Oxford and Reading.

H Chipping advised that the SEMLEP Economic Recovery document was now live on their website.

A Ravn-Aagaard advised that parking was currently an issue across most of Bletchley and this would continue to be an issue with any new development. She suggested that it may be appropriate for the Board to consider setting up a subgroup to address this issue.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 4.20 PM.

DRAFT