### Minutes

### MEETING: OLDHAM CENTRE BOARD MEETING DATE: 24th March 2022

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VENUE: Performance Space, Gallery Oldham, TIME: 14:30

Greaves Street, Oldham, OL1 1AL

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| 1. **PRESENT** | Barton, Emma | Director of Economy, Oldham Council |
|  | Catherall, Harry | Chief Executive, Oldham Council and Accountable Officer |
|  | Cezair, Donna | Chief Executive, First Choice Homes Oldham |
|  | Flanagan, Mike | Centre Manager, Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre |
|  | Francis, Alun | Principal and Chief Executive, Oldham College |
|  | Gordon, Alison | Assistant Director of Business, Innovation and Enterprise Policy, Greater Manchester Combined Authority |
|  | Hewitt, Sara | Town Centre and Markets Manager, Oldham Council |
|  | Hughes, Margaret | Zutti Fashion **(Vice Chair)** |
|  | Khan, Nawaz | Regeneration Team Leader, Oldham Council |
|  | Lees-Jones, William | Managing Director, J.W. Lees & Co **(Chair)** |
|  | Lewis, Christopher | Strategic Lead, Creating a Better Place, Oldham Council |
|  | Lockwood, Stuart | Chief Executive, Oldham Community Leisure |
|  | Lewis, Chris | Lead Youth Worker – Youth Service |
|  | Roberts, Paul | Spindles Programme Director, Hive Projects |
|  | Robinson, Joanne | Regeneration Officer (Technical) |
|  | Rothwell, Frank | Managing Director, Manchester Cabins |
|  | Siles, Tanya | Communications, Oldham Council |
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| **2.APOLOGIES:** |  |  |
|  | Ashraf, Kashif | Asian Business Leaders |
|  | Aspinall, Gail | Capital Programme and Special Projects Manager, Oldham Council |
|  | Abrahams, MP Debbie | MP for Oldham East and Saddleworth |
|  | Beckett, Jessica | Communications Manager, Oldham Council |
|  | Bloor, Jon | Assistant Director Economic Growth & Recovery, Oldham Council |
|  | Dawson, Beverley | Senior Manager (Capital and Projects), Arts Council England |
|  | De Silva, Anna | Project Director, Oldham Council |
|  | Fraser, Nigel | Regeneration Team Leader, Oldham Council |
|  | Garrick, Jesse | Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy |
|  | Harris, Liam | Member, Oldham Youth Council |
|  | Hunt, Andrew | Green Energy and Sustainability Manager, Oldham Council |
|  | Jago, David | Director of Finance/Chief Officer, Northern Care Alliance (Royal Oldham Hospital) |
|  | Jenkins, Rosie | Local Growth Policy Advisor, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy |
|  | Kipling, Shelley | Assistant Director Communications, Strategy and Performance |
|  | Lister, Graham | Arts and Cultural Adviser, Artbuilding Projects |
|  | Lovat, Bill | Regional Director, The Regenda Group |
|  | McMahon, MP Jim | MP for Oldham West and Royton |
|  | Penn, Jennifer | Regeneration Officer, Oldham Council |
|  | Shah, Cllr Arooj | Leader, Oldham Council |
|  | Stephens, Katrina | Director of Public Health, Oldham Council |
|  | Windsor-Welsh, Liz | Chief Executive, Action Together |
|  | Wildman, Susan | Chief Executive, Oldham Coliseum Theatre |
|  | Rayner, MP Angela | MP for Ashton-under-Lyne |
|  | Wallin, Anna | Principal Consultant, Mott MacDonald |
|  | Yousaf, Adnan | Real Estate Manager, The Cross Group |

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| ITEM |  |
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| 3.0 | **Notice of any urgent business to be accepted onto the agenda and reasons for that urgency -** None |
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| 4.0 | **Declarations of Interest –** No new declarations of interest to be added |
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| 5.0 | **Minutes of the previous meeting (19th November 2021)** |
| 5.1 | It was confirmed that Liam from the Youth Council attended via MS Teams, otherwise the minutes were agreed as a true record. |
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| 6.0 | **Procedural business and any items accepted as urgent business** |
| 6.1 | **Towns Fund project business case update (Emma Barton)**  Emma Barton provided the following update:  Mott MacDonald have been appointed to work with us to produce the business cases for Oldham’s Towns Fund programme, which are:  ● Tommyfields market relocation into the spindles  ● New office space within the spindles  ● Creating space for performance with a new theatre  ● and a Visitor Centre / accelerate early phases for the Northern Roots project |
| 6.2 | **Spindles – Office Space and Tommyfields market**  The decision was taken to produce a single Full Business Case (FBC) for the two projects based in the Spindles Shopping Centre as an Outline Business Case (OBC) had already been produced for the programme as a whole. As the two Spindles business cases will have require consistent management and commercial arrangements, there is anticipated to be a significant amount of crossover between the two.  ● With approvals in place for the demolition works – they are due to start imminently with some site mobilisation now Wilmott Dixon a local contractor has been appointed  ● A full planning application has been submitted – this will go through due process over the next couple of months  ● Mott MacDonald are in the process of finalising the joint business case for the market and office space, with external interest already being registered for the new space. Early sight of the draft documents is anticipated in April. |
| 6.3 | **Making space for live performance – new theatre**  ● Barker Langham are appointed to progress the operational business plan for the new venue.  ● The Arts Council are supporting the model and direction of travel  ● Value engineering and some redesign work has been completed to help keep within the cost envelope for the scheme. There is still some work to do on this, but with concerns noted about national inflation and material costs the healthy contingency uplifts are justified.  ● Business case is well underway by Mott MacDonald with anticipated completion by the end of May |
| 6.4 | **Northern Roots**  **●** Turner and Townsend have been appointed to manage the delivery of the project and to produce a Project Execution Plan, Procurement Strategy, Risk Register and Project Register  ● Work is underway to integrate these documents into the FBC by Mott Macdonald and completion is anticipated in April.  ● Cost consultants Ryder Hunt are currently reviewing the cost allocations for risk following the revision of the risk register. |
| 6.5 | The main ask of the board is to seek preference about sign off for the business case documentation.  Option 1) small task groups to review separate projects and feedback to the next board in June before submission  Option 2) review all documents together at the next board meeting - might be a bit of a heavy session  **Resolution: Option 1 agreed** |
| 6.6 | **Future High Street Fund update (Emma Barton)**  Future High Street Fund Update  The FHSF business case focuses on three town centre projects: the Egyptian Room, Accessible Oldham and the Prudential Building – with £10m funding allocation |
| 6.7 | **Egyptian Room**  A key thread of our strategy is creating a diverse cultural and leisure offer which would boost the night-time economy, increase footfall, dwell time and visitor numbers. The Egyptian Room which is an exemplary restoration of Victorian Architecture with historic significance - the building has been refurbished to effectively a shell condition ready for fit out by an end user.  The proposed fit-out of the Egyptian Room is to be funded by the Future High Street Fund to enable the Council to attract an established food market operator – we are anticipating news within the next 48hours as to whether this has been secured.  However, we hope to start on site and mobilise the appointed contractors in April with practical completion due at the end of the calendar year. |
| 6.8 | **Accessible Oldham –**  Is a programme of public realm and connectivity improvements with the town centre to ensure people of all ages and mobilities can access services and shops. With early phases now on site at Henshaw Street, by our delivery partner, Rowan Ashworth Ltd. the programme will take 3-years to complete (weather depending) and will help accelerate the establishment of the new town centre park. |
| 6.9 | **Prudential Building**  The Prudential Building is a unique project to repair the external and internal fabric of the Grade II listed building to create a 21st Century business incubator and innovation facility situated opposite the Oldham Metrolink stop on Union Street. It is one of the buildings identified by Historic England as being of important historic significance and features on the Victorian Society’s national list of top ten most endangered buildings.  The building was acquired by its current owner in 2010 and has stood largely unused since that date and the visual appearance is of an empty and decaying building on a prominent town centre site. It is in a significant state of disrepair, attracting anti-social behaviour, presenting health and safety risks, and posing aesthetic issues as a gateway building for those arriving in to or leaving Oldham town centre. Urgent improvements are necessary to safeguard the future of this important heritage asset.  We now have approval to acquire the building which could take up to 12 months depending on the speed of engagement from the current owner – however this is huge milestone achieved in delivering the Town Centre Vision for bringing this heritage building back into use to support growth in our local economy. |
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| 7.0 | **Substantive business** |
| 7.1 | **Eton / STAR – new investment opportunity - Harry Catherall**  Harry said expressed the importance of providing a balanced message which recognises that we have some strong existing providers, but that we are very happy to be working towards providing a new 6th Form College offer via Eton/Star.  The 6th form college will accommodate 500 people and will give its students access to the best universities in country and introductions to top employers. The aim of the project is to uplift Oldham’s entire 6th Form provision and Eton/STAR are onboard with that. We will work together on the admissions arrangements.  The preference is that the site will be located in the Town Centre, site yet to be agreed. The aim is that the provision will be open in 3 years (2025). Harry confirmed that Eton/Star have confirmed that they will be making a long term commitment to Oldham. |
| 7.2 | Alun Francis said that said that Oldham College believes this to be a great opportunity for Oldham. Oldham College’s offer caters to a different market – the Oldham College and Eton/Star College offers with be mutually reinforcing as Oldham College students tend to stay more locally for education and jobs, whereas students at the new provision are more likely to seek university provision and jobs outside the borough. It is a hard fact that unless from a wealthy background, Oldham residents do not generally get the opportunity to go to the best universities – the purpose of this project is to bridge that gap. The chair congratulated Harry on the great news. |
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| 7.3 | **Oldham Economic Review Update - Alun Francis** |
|  | As chair of the of the Oldham Economic Review Board Alun thanked the Chair for the invitation to speak about the Oldham Economic Review.  The findings of the review were published yesterday, with a long and shorter version of the report being available. The shorter executive summary was circulated to the board. Oldham Council will decide if it wants to accept the recommendations of the review. |
| 7.4 | Due to time constraints Alun didn’t propose to go through the whole detail of the review, but said he would cover the rational and some key points  The review panel comprised of independent members from a range of public, private and voluntary organisations, and national and local expert witnesses were invited to give evidence.  Two important concepts that have come out of the process are; the challenge of turning around a post-industrial town such as Oldham, and the move from an old economy to a new, more complex economy – we need a clear vision of what success might look like – and we need to play the long game - ie to make a long term plan and stick to it. |
| 7.5 | Oldham is home to a significant number of manufacturing firms as well as enterprises in other fields, and an analysis of the opportunities and a strategy to support the sector was recommended. We need to recognise the changes in Oldham’s economy, and acknowledge that future employment will not all be concentrated in the Town Centre. We also need to be clear on how we can achieve an improvement in skills (and remove duplications of provision) in order to improve the quality of jobs available. |
| 7.6 | Another key point is the importance of working more proactively and efficiently with our neighboring partners and make the GM structures work better for us. None-economic factors such as renewal of civic pride and social purpose are also very important. More funds will be available through the Levelling up agenda and we need to take advantage of this – if we get things moving together in the right direction then we should see a real change for the better by 2030.  The Chair thanked Alun for talking to the board about the review. |
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| 7.7 | **Oldham Partnership – Harry Catherall** |
| 7.8 | Harry explained that a review of Oldham Leadership Board (and other Partnership Boards) is taking place. The new Oldham Partnership Model will have a strategic level overarching board with a high level agenda. Some of its aims are to attract investment (to 2030), to be ambitious, push the boundaries, and extend the conversation within a framework. A variety of sessions are to take place on the development of the Oldham plan, and to establish the structure/boards that will be required to operate within the model, for example it will include a delivery board. A paper is being drafted and will be consulted on, and this will be brought to the next board meeting. |
| 7.9 | The chair welcomed the review, and that Oldham Partnership will be an independent entity, with a small number of high quality groups to drive progress. |
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| 7.10 | **Town Centre Procurement – Harry Catherall** |
| 7.11 | Harry Catherall explained that Business Engagement Events have been taking place for the past 7 months and are focused on how Oldham businesses can access help. The aim is to strengthen the supply chain, and ensure that Oldham Businesses get access to contract work and also assisting on social value etc. Two workshops are to be set up (in May and June) in addition to meet the buyer events.  Emma Barton said that she is working on recruiting extra resources as the aim is that businesses can be provided with a one person contact, rather than dealing with a number of Teams on different aspects of business support. |
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| 7.12 | **Spindles Redevelopment – Paul Roberts** |
| 7.13 | Paul Roberts tabled a presentation on the Spindles Redevelopment. The planning application was submitted three weeks ago. The project consists of three main parts being:   * the Workspace element, (a new innovative workspace which will include a co-working space for new local businesses and some Oldham Council Services), * an archive store and * the Market and Events Space.   The aim is to bring new people in, and to create increased footfall and wider investment. The retail area will be condensed. The CGI’s provide an idea of how the different elements could look and the building will provide a much better link to Parliament Square.  The important redevelopment timelines were discussed – Wilmott Dixon have been appointed as main contractor and the demolition of TJ Hughes is due to start on site next month in April, with the full main works starting over the summer with the new facilities being operational early 2024. Wilmott Dixon Construction Limited as made social value commitments of Circa £10.5 million.  It was confirmed that the events provision will be continuous ie The QEH will not be closed until the Spindles events space has opened. There is demand for the office space – including from the Council and its health partners and there is also an operator interested in taking on the co-working space.  **Action - The masterplan portal link which contains information on all projects to be circulated to the board** |
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| 7.14 | **Questions from Board Members** |
| 7.15 | Harry Catherall said that it is encouraging that developments are being undertaken in the town centre by private business using private funding – for example he was recently invited to the opening of a renovated performance and events venue on Ashcroft Street, in the former Billingtons dance studio. |
| 7.16 | Sara Hewitt asked about Social value in relation to the Towns Deal projects – will we be prescribing what we are expecting? Harry Catherall responded yes, we should be spelling out our expectations in relation to social value – this is something we could discuss at a future board meeting. |
| 7.17 | The vice chair commented on parking issues within the Town Centre. She explained that there is an issue with broken pay and display machines and people are receiving penalty letters which say that if the machine is not working then the visitor should go somewhere else. She expressed concern that this leads to visitors frequenting other town Centre’s and does not encourage visitors to come back to Oldham. Harry Catherall agreed that we need to get the basics right – and that a parking strategy for the Town Centre and the rest of the borough is required. |
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| **8.0** | **Closing Remarks – Chair (William Lees-Jones)** |
|  | The chair explained that the next meeting will be very important as it will represent the next stage in the sign off of the Towns Fund business cases. He also encouraged members of the board to volunteer for the small tasks groups that will be set up to review the Towns Fund business cases before sign off at the board. Meeting dates will be agreed when deadlines are established. |
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| **9.0** | **Date / Time of next meeting - Chair (William Lees-Jones)** |
|  | * June / July 2022 – tbc * October / November 2022 – tbc |
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