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|  meeting | Oldham Town DEal Board meeting | date | 28th June 2021 |
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| venue | Virtual meeting held over Microsoft Teams | time | 13:00 |
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| **present****apologies** | Barton, Emma - Director of Economy, Oldham CouncilBeckett, Jessica - Communications Manager, Oldham CouncilCourtie, Pete - Relationship Manager, Arts Council EnglandCox, Stephen - Head of Economic and Social Development, Mott MacDonaldDaSilva, Anna - Northern Roots Project Director, Oldham CouncilFlanagan, Mike - Centre Manager, Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre (Vice-Chair)Francis, Alun - Principal and Chief Executive, Oldham CollegeFrith, Roger - Head of Regeneration and Development, Oldham CouncilHague, Marcella - Policy Advisor, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Harris, Liam - Member, Oldham Youth CouncilHewitt, Sara - Markets and Town Centre Manager, Oldham CouncilHolbrook, Peter - Chief Executive, Social Enterprise UK (Chair)Khan, Nawaz - Regeneration Team Leader, Oldham CouncilLambert, Matthew - Senior Consultant, Mott MacDonaldLister, Graham - Arts and Cultural Adviser, Artbuilding ProjectsLockwood, Stuart - Chief Executive, Oldham Community LeisureLovat, Bill - Regional Director, The Regenda GroupMottahedeh, Leila - Deputy Area Lead, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial StrategyParker, Guy - Executive Policy and Research Officer, Oldham CouncilPenn, Jennifer - Regeneration Officer, Oldham CouncilShah, Councillor Arooj - Leader, Oldham CouncilStephens, Katrina - Director of Public Health, Oldham CouncilSutcliffe, Rebekah - Strategic Director of Communities and Reform, Oldham CouncilWatterson, Marc - Town Coordinator (North), Towns Fund Delivery PartnerWildman, Susan - Chief Executive, Oldham Coliseum TheatreWindsor-Welsh, Liz - Chief Executive, Action TogetherYousaf, Adnan - Real Estate Manager, The Cross GroupAbrahams, MP Debbie - MP for Oldham East and SaddleworthBloor, Jon - Head of Lifelong Learning, Employment and Skills, Oldham CouncilDawson, Beverley - Senior Manager (Capital and Projects), Arts Council EnglandEastwood, Richard - Equity Partner, Pearson SolicitorsHodcroft, David - Principal (Strategic Planning and Infrastructure), Greater Manchester Combined AuthorityHunt, Andrew - Programme Manager (Community Wealth-Building/Oldham Green New Deal), Oldham CouncilJago, David - Director of Finance/Chief Officer, Northern Care Alliance (Royal Oldham Hospital)Jenkins, Rosie - Local Growth Policy Advisor, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial StrategyLewis, Chris - Lead Youth Worker, Oldham CouncilLightfoot, Andrew - Deputy Chief Executive, Greater Manchester Combined AuthorityLockwood, Helen - Deputy Chief Executive, Oldham CouncilMcMahon, MP Jim - MP for Oldham West and RoytonPatterson, John - Chief Clinical Officer, NHS Oldham CCGRahim, Fazal - Project Coordinator, Oldham Interfaith ForumRayner, MP Angela - MP for Ashton-under-LyneRiley, Michelle - Owner, Cob and Coal TapWallin, Anna - Principal Consultant, Mott MacDonaldWilkins, Carolyn - Chief Executive, Oldham Council / Accountable Officer, NHS Oldham CCG |
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| item |  |
| **1.0** | **Welcome (Peter Holbrook/Councillor Arooj Shah)** |
| 1.11.2 | The Chair opened the proceedings by thanking those present for attending the meeting at relatively short notice, following the welcome announcement on 7th June that Oldham had been awarded £24.4m from the Towns Fund. He thanked the Board, Vice-Chair and Oldham Council (‘the Council’) for their commitment to developing the Towns Fund bid during the height of the pandemic. He commented that the grant offer was an excellent result for all of Oldham’s communities and stakeholders.The Chair congratulated Councillor Shah on her recent appointment as Leader of the Council. Councillor Shah extended thanks to the Board on behalf of the Oldham Labour Group for securing £24.4m to enhance Oldham town centre for the benefit of Oldham’s residents, visitors and businesses. She praised the strong alignment of the Towns Fund bid with local regeneration ambitions, as reflected in the Government’s decision to approve four major projects capable of transforming the high street and making the town centre a destination of choice for local people. |
| **2.0**2.1 | **Apologies for absence (Peter Holbrook)**Apologies were noted and two guests were welcomed: Marcella Hague and Leila Mottahedeh. |
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| **3.0** | **Notice of any urgent business to be accepted onto the agenda and reasons for that urgency (Peter Holbrook)** |  |
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| 3.1 | None |  |
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| **4.0**4.14.2**5.0** | **Declarations of interest (Peter Holbrook)**Since the last meeting in March, Stuart Lockwood had been appointed to the Board of Directors for the Northern Roots project.*Post-meeting note:*Rebekah Sutcliffe emailed the Chair to make a declaration of interest as the Executive Sponsor for Northern Roots.**Minutes of the previous meeting (Peter Holbrook)** |  |
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| 5.1 | The Chair thanked Maddy Hubbard, Engagement and System Change Manager at Action Together, and the speakers who supported the last meeting about community wealth-building and social value. The minutes of the meeting on 5th March 2021 were agreed as a true record and approved for publication to [www.oldham.gov.uk/towndeal](http://www.oldham.gov.uk/towndeal). |  |
| 5.2 | The Chair thanked those members of the Board who had responded to the request for feedback on the last meeting. If anyone had experienced difficulties using the online survey or wished to provide feedback via another route, they were encouraged to contact the Chair directly. |  |
| **6.0** | **Procedural business and any items accepted as urgent business (Peter Holbrook)** |  |
| 6.16.2 | The Towns Fund Delivery Partner had outlined the Board’s role during Phase 2 of the Towns Fund process:**Membership:** using relevant voices and skills to execute the local vision**Assurance:** fulfilling a check and challenge role**Maintaining momentum:** staying sighted on progress of business case development within timelines**Focus:** ensuring business cases stay aligned with the Town Investment Plan (TIP) and planned outcomes for Oldham**Managing risks and issues:** putting in place risk mitigation measures / solving unforeseen issues as they arise**Decision-making:** if difficult but necessary trade-offs arise**Ambassadors:** continuing to communicate and engage on the vision**Holding others to account on commitments:** such as the implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan**Celebrating progress and success**There would be a review of the Board’s Terms of Reference, membership, roles/responsibilities and training opportunities at an annual meeting of the Board in late July/early August. Broad and inclusive Board membership remained essential to designing and delivering projects with maximum returns for local communities. Therefore, Board members were once again encouraged to contact the Chair with possible nominations, especially private sector representatives/substantive employers with a good strategic overview of the town and borough. |  |
| 7.0 | **Substantive business (Peter Holbrook/Roger Frith)** |  |
| 7.17.27.37.47.57.67.77.87.97.107.117.127.137.147.157.167.177.187.197.207.217.228.08.19.09.19.29.39.49.59.69.710.0 | **i) Grant award/Heads of Terms**The grant offer of £24.4m related to four of the five preferred projects: Northern Roots, Flexible Workspace, Relocating Tommyfield Market and Making Space for Live Performance. Although the Board had requested £41m, £24.4m was a great success, especially given that only four of the 30 latest Town Deals announced had a value of £25m or more.The bid assessors declined the fifth project, the Minewater Heat Network, because they felt it offered limited alignment with the intervention framework and the objectives of the Towns Fund.  Bid assessors cited limited links to ‘Remediation and/or development of abandoned or dilapidated sites’ due to the development being underground and to ‘Skills infrastructure’. They also stated that the high-level delivery plan did not provide confidence that a project of that scale and/or complexity could be delivered as planned. The Council had since been exploring alternative funding sources for the project in support of the Green New Deal sustainability goals, in liaison with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) heat network delivery unit.The Heads of Terms confirmed that Oldham must prioritise the four projects within the funding envelope being offered. If the priority projects identified for funding did not progress, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) could not guarantee that funding could be assigned to alternative projects or that, if it was, those would be to the same value. This might result in an overall reduction in the amount of funding received. The Heads of Terms went on to state that funding for individual projects would be subject to successfully completing Phase 2 of the Towns Fund process (including detailed project development and business case assurance at the local level). Finally, the Heads of Terms confirmed that the Town Deal would cover a period of up to five years, to March 2026 (compared to March 2024 for the Future High Streets Fund or FHSF, through which Oldham had secured a further £10.75m for town centre regeneration projects).The Board was required to accept the grant and support the return of signed Heads of Terms to Government by 29th June 2021. A financial profile, a draft monitoring and evaluation plan, and project confirmation forms would also need to be returned by 31st August 2021. Importantly, Oldham would have 12 months to produce and assure final business cases according to local assurance processes and submit Summary Documents to MHCLG. The final business cases and Summary Documents would be developed with support from Mott MacDonald, the consultancy appointed to help draft the TIP. All business cases would need to pass through local assurance mechanisms with oversight from the Board. The final business cases would potentially be submitted at various intervals over the 12 months, with prior agreement from MHCLG. MHCLG would only require sight of the Summary Documents but reserved the right to call in any business case to be assured centrally. MHCLG would need to review and be satisfied with the completed Summary Documents before releasing funding.**ii) Project allocations**The Board and the Council would need to decide how to allocate the £24.4m amongst the four approved projects. The Council’s proposal was to divide the £24.4m equally between the four projects, which would mean £6m for the Flexible Workspace based on the maximum allocation limit within the grant offer and £6.133m for each of the remaining projects. The Council would use capital reserves to address the funding gap for the Flexible Workspace, Relocating Tommyfield Market and Making Space for Live Performance projects. Other match funding for the four projects would come from various partners including Oldham Coliseum Theatre (‘the Coliseum’) and Transport for Greater Manchester. The four projects were at varying stages of development and delivery.MHCLG had provided general and project-specific funding conditions to be addressed during the business case development phase. These would be considered in full at the next Board meeting.When the Chair invited feedback and questions, Susan Wildman welcomed the grant award and thanked the Council for preparing to meet the gap in funding for the approved projects. She commented that funding pressures were severe given the pandemic and felt the Council’s position reflected a belief in the ability of the projects to make a genuine difference to local people.The Chair welcomed the Council’s very significant offer of match funding, commenting that it would most likely avoid the need to reprioritise and/or scale back projects that were all widely accepted as vital to achieving the local regeneration vision. The generous offer and general commitment to regular partnership working meant there was every likelihood of the four projects proceeding as first envisaged.Liz Windsor-Welsh congratulated the Board for securing the resource. She reflected on her early concern that local people were often unable to input into strategic projects, and suggested learning from the MHCLG feedback that consultation and engagement had been limited to date. Ideally there would be a general mechanism for people to understand, influence and interact with the corporate process around project selection. The last Board meeting had enabled members to consider how local people might be involved in project design and development, with a focus on reducing inequalities. Although some projects were more advanced than others, all would need meaningful engagement plans alongside project delivery plans, not least of all to consider equality impacts. Roger Frith concurred, stating that there was a need for thorough consultation and engagement throughout the Towns Fund programme to build on recent consultation relating to the likes of Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre, Northern Roots and Tommyfield Market.Alun Francis commented that the grant was an encouraging starting point for town centre regeneration yet called for a stronger narrative for Oldham. He stated that the business cases would need to demonstrate connectivity between the four projects, and then between the four projects and other developments in the town centre such as the FHSF projects and schemes at Oldham College. There would need to be strong evidence of projects providing employment, wealth and community benefits. Roger Frith concurred and stated that the narrative in the TIP would be revisited and strengthened to inform the business cases.When asked by Stuart Lockwood, Roger Frith confirmed that the project leads had been briefed about the potential for each project to receive c.£6m. They and others in the Council were as confident as they could be that the projects remained viable/deliverable.Councillor Shah agreed with the comments from Liz Windsor-Welsh and Alun Francis, repeating the Council’s commitment to making the town centre relevant to local people and putting residents’ voices at the centre of project design and delivery. She encouraged Board members to help shape the narrative for the town, not only in terms of directing investment but also marketing the town centre effectively.Graham Lister congratulated the Board for securing the grant and concurred with earlier comments about the pressing need for consultation and engagement, noting that such work for Making Space for Live Performance had been hindered by the pandemic and past uncertainties about venue location. Engagement work would ideally recommence at pace and continue for the duration of the Towns Fund programme and beyond. There had been excellent work to date by the Council, Coliseum and others, yet more could be done to support audience building.Emma Barton reflected that project design and delivery had commenced even before the launch of the Towns Fund, and that much work had gone into drafting the TIP as a team and reflecting Board members’ views. There had been some consultation but more needed to follow, potentially supported by widening the membership of the Board to bring in new partners. The Council would continue to review and refine the Oldham Town Centre Vision and strengthen the TIP narrative in support of the final business cases, in consultation with the Board.Pete Courtie added his congratulations about the grant award and commented that Arts Council England had part-funded the recent Oldham Cultural Strategy involving extensive consultation. A meeting was now planned with the Council to explore the potential for revenue support from the Cultural Development Fund to build capacity for Making Space for Live Performance.When asked by Pete Courtie, Susan Wildman acknowledged the Coliseum’s capacity challenges as demonstrated during last week’s reopening of facilities and welcomed the notion of additional revenue support. Although present times were more challenging, the Coliseum had nearly reached the previous ambitious fundraising target for a new performance space and had maintained excellent relationships with supporters. News of the Towns Fund grant backed by the Oldham Town Centre Vision was expected to give both the Coliseum and external supporters confidence in helping to fund the project.**iii) Recommendations**The Board agreed to the following recommendations from the Chair: 1. Accept the £24.4m grant offer and support the return of signed Heads of Terms to Government by 29th June 2021.
2. Agree in principle to the proposed Towns Fund grant allocation of c.£6m each for the four projects, up to a maximum of £24.4m.
3. At the next Board meeting, revisit the Board’s Terms of Reference, membership, training opportunities, roles and responsibilities, and Community Engagement Sub-Group.

Rebekah Sutcliffe commented that the Cultural Partnership Board had discussed place marketing last week and was entering the final stages of consultation work overlapping with the Towns Fund. She and Councillor Shah suggested inviting one member, Shelley Kipling (the Council’s Assistant Director for Communications, Strategy and Performance), to join the Board to ensure joined-up working.The Chair reflected that the Towns Fund offered primarily capital funding even though community and economic development work often required revenue funding. Conversations would therefore need to continue with possible funders such as LocalMotion. Whilst important to respond to funding opportunities wherever possible, there would always be times when it was difficult to propose shovel-ready proposals capable of satisfying short timescales and strict criteria. It was for that reason that the Council had opted to delay its submission to the Levelling Up Fund beyond round one in June 2021.The Chair expressed the view that there could be no social justice without economic justice and called for an ongoing focus upon skills development, enterprise, business development and job creation. He commented that, now more than ever, the economic prosperity of Oldham town centre depended on it becoming a destination of choice for local people with many different retail and leisure options.**iv) Vote**When asked to vote by the Chair, the Board members voted unanimously to accept the £24.4m Towns Fund offer and return signed Heads of Terms to Government by 29th June 2021.**Next Steps (Peter Holbrook)**The grant offer would prompt much additional work over the coming year, including community engagement. Board members would need to bring ideas and solutions and not simply observe the challenges. They were encouraged to contribute during and between meetings, for example by contacting the Chair to discuss ideas or propose agenda items.**AOB (Peter Holbrook)**The next meeting of the Board would focus upon the business case development phase, which would involve supplying specific data requested by MHCLG. It would also focus upon new funding programmes such as the Levelling Up Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund.The Board would receive regular updates on the Minewater Heat Network project in future given its relevance to meeting climate change targets.\* Adnan Yousaf joined the meeting \*Liz Windsor-Welsh asked about the timing of the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process, expressing support for including communities in project governance and co-design at the earliest opportunity. Roger Frith committed to accelerating the process as an integral part of the business case development phase.Reflecting on earlier comments about marketing from Rebekah Sutcliffe and Councillor Shah and noting the previous good work led by Action Together, the Chair suggested organising a meeting of the Community Engagement Sub-Group before the next Board meeting. This would focus upon ensuring active participation and ownership in the project design/delivery phase and build upon discussions back in March. Although some people would perhaps always feel disengaged, the EIA process and associated work could be a lens to help the Board choose the most effective courses of action. Rebekah Sutcliffe suggested inviting project sponsors or senior responsible officers to the Sub-Group meeting to take stock of recent work, including the response to the pandemic. Liz Windsor-Welsh offered to liaise with the Chair and staff at the Council to agree a list of suggested invitees. The Board members would receive the session details and be welcome to attend.Councillor Shah commented that the best way to ensure success was to implement projects properly and to take residents on a journey. The Council was committed to making local voices heard and to resourcing work to finalise project details that reflected community priorities. It would need to use traditional *and* innovative routes to engage with communities.Emma Barton commented that it was important to reflect on wider membership opportunities and reflect the voices of the communities, residents, voluntary sector and town centre businesses and partners. Reflections were always welcome and helpful.The Chair thanked Adnan Yousaf for his generous offer to provide input into the Flexible Workspace project over the coming months.**Time and date of next meeting:** TBA for late July/early August 2021 |  |
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