

Stocksbridge Town Deal Board

DATE AND TIME: Thursday 14th April 2022, 09:30 – 11:00

LOCATION: Miriam Cates Office, Maria House, Fox Valley Way & via Microsoft Teams

CHAIR: Miriam Cates

ATTENDEES:

Board members attending:

- • Miriam Cates, MP for Penistone and Stocksbridge (MC)
- • Julie Grocutt, Deputy Leader, SCC (JG)
- • Gillian Duckworth, Director of Legal & Governance, SCC (GAD)
- • Dave Cates, Redemption Media (DC)
- • Graham Silverwood, Stocksbridge Training and Enterprise Partnership (STEP) & Stocksbridge Community Leisure Centre (SCLC) (GS)
- • Chris Bell, Don Valley Railway Trust (C Bell)
- • John Crawshaw, J W Crawshaw Ltd (JC)
- • Yuri Matischen, MD, MLSBG (YM)

Also attending:

- Howard Varns, Senior Programme Manager, SCC (HV)
- Amanda Holmes, Communications Officer, SCC (AH)
- Sam Townsend, Sheffield City Region (Cities and Local Growth) (STo)
- Joy Grant, Project Support Officer, SCC (JCG)

Apologies:

- • Ian Sanderson, SLR Outlets
- • Matt Bartle, South Yorkshire MCA
- • Neil Curtis, Community Representative



Minutes

1. Item: Welcome and confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting and discuss any issues arising Miriam Cates

MC welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Brief introductions were made from Board members. Yuri introduced himself as the Managing Director of the Sheffield based major sports events company, MLS Contracts Ltd., Chairman of the BBraun Sheffield Sharks basketball franchise, and Director of Park Community Arena Ltd.

There were no issues arising from the previous minutes.

2. Item: Governance Declaration of interest – to declare any interests in items on the agenda - Miriam Cates

GS declared an interest in the Leisure Centre, and hydrotherapy pool.

JC declared an interest in Manchester Road and land ownerships.

CBell declared an interest in anything related to his employer, Highways England.

3. Item: Project Updates (Appendix 1 – Detailed Project Updates - March) Howard Varns



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- HV's Stocksbridge Towns Fund Board Paper: 14 April 2022 (embedded above) was emailed to everyone prior to the meeting with additional comments/key concerns outlined below:
- HV outlined that at programme level there were two areas of significant consideration and he has been looking at these with STo. They are looking to change around the funding so that it can be used to de-risk and deliver some things that have been problematic for the Council, particularly the education and skills hub. The other area is the LUF which is covered under Item 7.

Place making – project status remains at amber

HV reported that the place making project was in an acceptable position apart from the shop frontage which is an aspect of the place making scheme.

Key comments on paragraphs 1.2.1 to 1.2.4 of HV's paper were:

Car parking

- JG reported that the biggest complaint she gets is from wheelchair and pram users about vehicles parked on the pavement.
- There is the potential for more parking to be created in the space that is currently used for recycling.
- AH highlighted that in terms of the shop front scheme consultation, car parking was revealed to be a concern.
- HV wants to talk to Board in a couple of months' time about enforcement and issues with traffic flows, congestion, and illegal parking. There is not really any enforcement in Stocksbridge, and this would sort some of the issues.
- YM suggested that someone from highways should rethink the junction at Fox Valley Way because of the bus stop and problems with the bus getting in and out. HV said his instincts were that the costs would be prohibitive.
- CBell said with the place making it is imperative it is pedestrian accessible. HV said that the concept is to make it pedestrian first and that is what the High Street needs to be so people can use it safely and fully. HV said the junction is an issue, along with the bus stops.

Action: HV

HV to consult with Andrew Marwood to get a review and have a session also to talk to David Whitely with the Highways engineers and report back in terms of what is possible.

Community Hub & Library – project status remains at amber

- **Displaced Shop Owners** - see para 1.1.3 of HV's paper. MC and HV met with St Luke's and had a particularly good meeting. As a charity St Luke's are not allowed to sell any assets unless it is for at least an equivalent value and renting a unit would not be suitable for the charity. There is some availability for any displaced shop owners to buy a freehold on the High Street.
- **Land acquisition** – HV outlined that in terms of funding the land acquisition is now a priority to be worked through with the MCA. There is an assignment of cash and once the valuations are done it will be known exactly what is needed and then this needs to be pulled down.

- **Naming of the building** – see 1.1.6 of HV's paper – HV outlined that the building needs to be described differently as people have no idea what a crossover hub is. Suggestions were made around giving the building an identity in terms of the name it is known as and its functionality. YM added that all of this is bringing some enterprising spirit to the area and some of that into the naming of this facility. YM suggested that some young people should be asked what they think, and it is the sort of thing that could be taken out to the schools to get a name via a local competition.
- HV said if some revenue funding could be unlocked then it could solve problems with the community hub. MC said the bus service is equally important to the bid and it is crucial. AH added that it went down well at the public consultation as a popular and needed facility.

Action: MC

MC to ask Matt Dixon to broker a meeting with the PTE.

Sports Hub – RAG rating remains at Amber

- In addition to what was outlined in HV's paper, paragraphs 1.3.1 to 1.3.3, the following comments were made:
- **Parking capacity** – HV outlined that there is a concern particularly on Saturdays and Sundays when the leisure centre car park is full. HV is keen to stop scope creep and put a cap on it now.
- **VAT issue** – GS highlighted the VAT issue with the football club and the rugby club and that there is potentially an issue because neither the football club nor rugby club had been contacted about this issue. James Barnes of SCC is dealing with that.

Football hub - RAG rating Amber

- GS highlighted the VAT issue with the football club and the rugby club as detailed above. On the 3G pitch there is a stakeholder meeting which has been organised for some time but has not worked with the timescale and managing the location so far. GS had conversations with local junior football clubs to try and talk to them about optimum use of the 3G pitch. They would potentially be core users, 5-9pm every evening and all day at the weekend. They have looked at various formations of the diverse sizes of pitches and spoken to the Project Officer. This is expected to be a well-used resource but the stakeholder meeting is critical to fully understanding local demand
- **Car parking** is an issue because if the leisure centre is full or almost full then it will cause an overflow. If sufficient parking is not provided it could cause congestion on the local roads.

- AH said that a local resident of Woolley Road had raised concerns and the Project Officer had met with her and alleviated a lot of her concerns particularly about the position of the pitch which is further back than she thought. AH to talk to other residents. GS added that there were no plans to remove the concrete grandstand now. In terms of traffic management around the Pavilion, GS said there should be parking directly adjacent to the pitch. MC suggested that the responsibility is put on the clubs who use the pitch to tell parents that they cannot park in certain locations and put a social responsibility on the club to not allow that to happen. JG said it would be a dangerous precedent to turn any green space into car parks.
- YM suggested getting on with the 3G pitch and the car parking can be addressed later.

Oxley Park

- As outlined in HV's paper.

Active Travel – Trails

- As outlined in HV's paper.

Hydrotherapy Pool – moved from red to amber

- In addition to what was outlined in paragraphs 1.6.1 and 1.6.2 of his paper, HV reported that there is still work to be done on the business model with the leisure centre because one of the conditions on the hydrotherapy pool was around the deliverability and sustainability of it along with demand. Energy prices could influence their heated pool so they may not cope with the huge increase in energy costs, so costs are going to have an impact.
- **VAT** – GS has had a further meeting with their accountant and VAT specialist to apply for a VAT clearance to HMRC explaining the project, the background and the detail. HMRC have been asked to confirm in writing with 100% clarity that there would be VAT zero rating on the project, subject to that the leisure centre are in a position that they want to manage the project and the fallback position is that if the response from HMRC is negative then SCC will manage the project.
- GS outlined that he had discussions with the NHS and the local neuro care centre and a hydro therapist and other providers who are all incredibly positive. There is a document that outlines the full needs analysis which GS will forward to everyone to provide some background.
- GS said that there is nothing in place in terms of contracts, but he was confident that they can get someone in there every day e.g., the neuro care centre does block bookings and they would be using that facility straight away. STo confirmed that he was happy as a funder that those conditions can be met.

- HV wants to stress test energy costs so there is not an issue in the future and it ends up not being able to operate.

Rivers

- As outlined in HV's paper.

Bus Service and Post 16 Hub Education and Skills project – RAG ratings Red

- In addition to paragraphs 1.8.1-1.8.4, and 2.2 of his paper, HV reported that deliverability is key for the Council because they do not want to put interventions in place when the funding is not around.
- **Bus Service** - The advice from SCC's transport services team and the PTE was that when this was put together it would be revenue funded. HV has discussed this with STo to see if he can switch some capital into revenue to give the bus service a better chance of being sustainable and then when the revenue is no longer available it can pay for itself.
- MC said she was not averse to switching the funding all around to do whatever can be done to optimise all the budgets, but it is about getting the passenger levels up to sustainability. It is a proven model, and it is up to 3 years' subsidy to allow the bus company to bring the passenger levels up to a break-even point. The whole point of basing the entire bid on the financial model that has been successful in Penistone was to use this kind of model. The whole model was based on gradual withdrawal of subsidy over 2-3 years when it will not be needed. Bus services 25 & 26 have lost their subsidy because they are about to break even. It is a constant fixed cost model because they are leased buses which means it is maintained and there is a fixed cost every single month, so they know in advance their costs.
- HV added that there is scepticism about demand and the next path is to have a formal response on costs and service level and look at all options to get variant options in terms of the funding back but there is the challenge of four times the pressure on the farebox to incorporate the lease costs.
- MC flagged that the costing in the original bid was based on the actual real-life costing of a bus that is already operating and is being successful rather than presumed projections
- HV outlined that there will be a tender process and relevant parties will be sent the opportunity to bid. MC said the fact is now there is a similar bus that has broken even in 18 months and another one that is going to break even in 2 years (in the bid it said it would take 3 years to break which was very generous).
- MC suggested that HV arrange a meeting with the bus operator and STo just for clarity and to confirm the costs that an actual community operator would have and to see if this could be classified as capital rather than revenue for at least some of it.

- **Post 16 Education and Skills** - Northern College will provide services so long as they have some protection on costs but there is currently no strategy to give them this protection.
- Northern College is a specialist outstanding provider of adult education and that is why they were approached first. HV said the problem is that no-one wants to pay a commercial rent and an end user is needed before the business case is submitted.

Actions: HV & STo

HV to consult with the bus operator and STo . MC asked HV to benchmark directly with the bus operator in terms of the most sustainable operating model and the costs that underpin that and work and to work out if there is any way that it can be called capital by making it a grant.

STo to check the position in terms of the markers for capital/revenue

4. Item: Finance Update

- As outlined in HV's paper.

5. Item: Board Member Update

Amanda Holmes

Yuri Matischen and Neil Curtis were welcomed to the Board. Update is as Item 3.1 of HV's paper. AH said this has been updated on the website. Neil could not make today's session but will be along to the next meeting.

6. Item: Communications and Consultation Update

Amanda Holmes

- In addition to Appendix 4, AH thanked everyone who supported her at the recent consultation event.
- Car parking was one of the main things that was discussed at length. The Saturday session focused on the High Street and people responded really well to the shop front scheme.
- They did a separate piece of work up at the park talking to Woolley Road residents. JC suggested that name badges should be worn by Board members for the consultation session. AH intends to break up the projects to have pop up sessions, specifically on Manchester Road. Oxley Park and the Sports Hub were done in February. AH has circulated some feedback on the Manchester Road session that has just been done.
- AH addressed JG's concerns about providing feedback to the businesses on the shop front scheme by saying that at the consultation she told businesses she would be in touch with them to provide an update. A letter will be sent out to them asking for permission to get into their buildings.
- AH met with some managed workspace providers who have reported a real uplift since the pandemic. AH to organise a trip for any Board member who wants to have a look at how these are run (they are 50% owned by the local authority) to understand what that model is.

Managed Workspace:

ALL

AH asked people to let her know if they were interested in joining the visit to the Barnsley Business Village during w/c May 9th.

7. Item: Levelling Up Fund – Round 2

HV reported that in addition to paragraphs 5.1 to 5.2.4, STo outlined that SCC has four bids because they have six MPs that are funded within their boundary, two were successful in round one so the remaining four bids can be submitted and will be eligible. STo added that the deadline for LUF2 is 6 July 2022 and with up to four bids. Announcements will be made in the autumn with at least some spend by March 2023.

Action: GAD and HV to take this back and understand what they need to do to co-ordinate the LUF2.

8. Item: AOB

Post meeting note: GS raised the Health and Wellbeing strategy which he had not heard anything of for months.

He did not want this project and work to be forgotten. His understanding is that the descriptive piece of work should be with procurement to issue to tender to a minimum of three organisation one of which must be Sheffield University. Many hours have been spent including meetings with Sheffield University to get this piece of work ready.

It is the smallest project at circa £30k but it could (will) be a particularly important project.

9. Item: Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 26th May 2022, 11:00-12:30hrs