

Stocksbridge Towns Fund Board (STFB)

DATE & TIME: Monday 20 January 2025, 9.30am

LOCATION: Stocksbridge Community Leisure Centre, Moorland Drive, Stocksbridge, S36 1EG

CO-CHAIRS: Dr Marie Tidball MP, Yuri Matischen

ATTENDEES:

Board Members attending:

- Yuri Matischen, Stocksbridge resident - Co-Chair (**YM**) (Active Trails Representative)
- Marie Tidball, MP for Penistone & Stocksbridge -Co-Chair (**MT**) (Hopper Bus Representative) *-attended until 10am*
- Ian Sanderson, SLR Outlets (**IS**) (Community Hub 519 Representative)
- Graham Silverwood, Stocksbridge Training and Enterprise Partnership (STEP) & Stocksbridge Community Leisure Centre (SCLC) (**GS**) (Sports Hub Representative)
- Cllr Julie Grocutt, Stocksbridge and Upper Don, SCC (**JG**) (Oxley Park Representative)
- Kathryn Giles-Bowman, Stocksbridge business owner (**KG-B**) (Joint Shopfronts Representative)
- Gail Larking, Stocksbridge Business owner (**GL**) (Joint Shopfronts Representative)
- John Crawshaw, Stocksbridge business owner (**JC**) (Placemaking Representative)
- Hilary Osborn, Stocksbridge resident (**HO**) (Joint Community Representative)
- Charlotte Coleman, Sheffield Hallam University (**CC**) (Joint Education & Skills Representative)
- Tony Goddard, Liberty Steel (**TG**) (Joint Education & Skills Representative)
- Mark Hible, Sheffield City Council (**MH**) (Joint Community Representative)
- Liz Sedgwick, Valley Medical Centre (**LS**) (Health Representative)

Also attending:

- Sean McClean, Director of Regeneration and Development, SCC (**SM**)
- Michelle O'Neill, Programme Manager, SCC (**MO'N**)
- Helen Spivey, Communications Officer, SCC (**HS**) (via Teams)
- Johnny McQuillin, Finance Officer, SCC (**JM**)
- Heather Langdale, Cities & Local Growth Unit (**HL**)
- Lynne Bettison (PA to Marie Tidball in the Constituency) (**LB**)
- Jonathan Harty, Chief of Staff to Marie Tidball (**JH**) (via Teams, after 10am)

Apologies:

- Kate Martin, Executive Director City Futures, SCC
- Justin Homer, Area Lead, South Yorkshire Cities & Local Growth Unit

Guest speakers (Item 3: Design Workshop):

- Andrew Kennard, Landscape architect, FPCR Environment & Design Ltd (**AK**)
- Jess Thompson, Senior Associate Rider Levett Bucknall (Project Management) (**JT**)
- Will Smithies, Senior Project Manager, Rider Levett Bucknall (**WS**)
- Olivia Clark, Assistant Project Manager, Rider Levett Bucknall (**OC**)
- Dave Slack, Principal Engineer, Transport Projects, SCC (**DS**)
- David Whitley, Transport, Transport Schemes Manager, SCC (**DW**)

Apologies:

- Mark Gibbons, SCC Transport, Senior Transport Planner (Projects)

Minutes:

- Melanie Crawford, PMO, Service Support Officer, SCC (**MC**)

Item 1: Welcome, confirmation of minutes & issues arising

MT welcomed the five new members appointed to the Board in December and noted that the panel had been so impressed by the quality of applicants that additional people had been taken on, to build the capacity of the Board. LS will take on the role of Health Lead. HO and MH will share the role of Community lead, whilst TG and CC will share Education and Skills.

Introductions were made around the table and some background shared by new members:

LS: Works for Upper Don PCN managing 3 practices. Manager at Valley for fourteen and member of Executive Committee for Sheffield wellbeing (NHS and Social Services)

HO: musician specialising in community music and arts projects with a remit to improve health and wellbeing.

MH: Works for SCC -has sports development background and thirty years' experience working for charitable organisations focusing on community engagement.

CC: Forensic Psychologist at Sheffield Hallam Uni -Deputy Head of Institute of Social Sciences. Specialises in skills and career development of young people and

research into prevention and reduction of youth crime. Has a crossover interest in the tracks and trails project as a keen runner and cyclist.

TG: Learning and Development Manager at Liberty Steel site in Stocksbridge since 2008. Also has responsibility for Rotherham site. There are 800 people at the Stocksbridge site and their families who will benefit from support around training and skills development.

Minutes of previous meeting (Nov 2024)

Post meeting note: minutes now approved.

Action: MC to upload final version to website within 10 working days of the meeting.

Item 2: Governance & Declaration of Interests /MHCLG Compliance checks-internal review

Declaration of Interest

MT advised that new members and existing members (where appropriate) need to sign a declaration of interest form. Any interests at all such as trusteeship/ governorship at a local school should be declared -it is better to overstate than risk missing something.

Action: MC to circulate the standard form to all members. All declarations to be returned within 1 week (by Monday 27 Jan)

Governance Review:

Review of governance structure will be taken by SM as an item to Transport and Regeneration Board in February. Standard checklist to be used to ensure that the Board is compliant.

Action: As above, declarations will need to be received by next Monday to take to the Transport meeting. SM to share findings following the meeting

JG asked about the background to this. SM clarified that it had arisen from a petition to Strategy and Resource Committee in May last year. This is an outstanding item. The committee will need to show that STF Board is compliant in terms of how the Towns Fund Board operates. The guidance is more stringent than for the other boards run by SCC.

Action: SM to provide note on checklist and formal date of meeting. Links to be provided to the petition and the meeting where it was discussed.

Work to be carried out around comms strategy including press release re new Board members and photo, social media updates.

At a later stage, comms needed to explain the status of the Board, that there is no pecuniary interest, pay or expenses and that the Board is not part of SCC.

Item 3. Design Workshop-Public Realm

M'ON explained that before Christmas, the Board had arrived at an accepted scheme for Placemaking which was based on the purchase and demolition of Bargain Booze and the Factory Shop and the creation of a town square. There has however been some difficulty in purchasing the Factory Shop, and a request from the Board to reallocate money to release additional funds for the Community Hub, and to fund Stage 2 projects which attract match funding. An options note was provided to the Board offering a number of options to save money against the scheme. The preferred two options were 1. to remove the purchase of the Factory Shop from the Scheme and 2. to look at possible changes to the highways proposals. It was noted that any changes to the carriageway would involve a requirement to ensure accessibility and improve active travel.

It was noted that car parks would also be discussed (although this is a separate project), as the removal of the factory shop purchase and demolition would remove the potential to use the space for parking.

Printouts of the draft designs were shared -electronic version to be emailed following the meeting.

The team were introduced and JT explained that AM would work through the options. The aim was to get direction from the Board around their objectives in terms of what they wish to deliver for Stocksbridge, but not the detail. More design work would then be carried out to be brought back to a subsequent meeting.

Placemaking

AK explained that page 1 of the plans shows priorities for Manchester Rd -public realm, streets, spaces and Highways. The pack shows implications to design of taking out the factory shop.

Car parks to South of red area show public car parking -based around expansion of service yard at back of factory shop.

YM clarified that the purchase of the factory shop is now not an option due to cost and the fact that it is now being marketed as residential. The board must understand that omission and move forward on that basis.

DS highlighted that a key driver in the current scheme is the narrow pavement and close proximity to the zebra crossing -footfall to the Community Hub is anticipated to increase. A discussion was held around the fact that the pavement is currently not very safe for people using wheelchairs, pushchairs, elderly people.

Connectivity from Fox Valley to the High Street for walking and cycling would require the path to be minimum of 2m wide. This would link businesses further along.

A discussion was held around the difficulty of walking and cycling in Stocksbridge due to its geographical location and layout and the fact that the demographic of Stocksbridge is above the national and local average. Although people may walk for

leisure, when needing to access the GP, shops etc many people needed to use cars, so parking was felt to be more of a priority than encouraging active travel.

AK clarified that the improvements referred only to the part of the journey from Fox Valley to Manchester Rd. This would involve investing in improvements to bring the path to a modern standard, suitable for pushchairs and wheelchair users.

JT stressed the need to look at the big picture, eg when discussing how many crossings are needed, what are the crossings for?

A discussion was held around the new 519 building being a focus for increased footfall. Places to stop and rest are also needed -public realm to be a place not just pavement. Many shops are closed during the day, opening after 5pm so that is a consideration, although it may change.

It was noted that as there was only one opportunity to spend the cash it was important to get it right. The highways work will be covered by funding provided the SYCA who are contributing £3 million to the overall STF programme. Any work carried out on Highways needs to be signed off by Highways as they own the asset.

SM explained that there is SCC policy around acceptable standards for the highway. If a project touches the highway, then as part of the project, the pavement must be brought up to standard. This is similar to Building Control, where 'consequential improvements' are required to existing buildings.

The 519 building could be delivered without touching the highway. The designs for this are shown on p3 of the plans pack. This includes a pedestrian link (stepped) between Hope St and Manchester Rd and retains trees and parking in the carriageway as existing. In this scenario a step free route is available from Edward Street and Hope Street car park. To the right of the hub there is already a ramped area. This would not comply with access regulations but could be used as existing. Spaces for loading and disabled access would need to be included but could be determined at a later stage.

Page 4 of the plan shows parking off the carriageway. DS explained that a number of at-grade crossings had been recommended with the aim of reducing speed of traffic and making Manchester Road more pedestrian friendly. These crossings require traffic to travel up a ramp and so act as speed calming measure to support the introduction of a 20mph limit.

Discussion was held around the enhancements shown on page 5 and proposed changes to the bus stop outside the hub. It was noted that this was close to the entrance to the factory shop and pub. DS clarified that this would be a stop only, not a stand, so should not cause a significant obstruction.

Materials for the central reservation were discussed. DS clarified that this would be imprinted concrete. This gives a perception that the lanes are narrow and so has a traffic calming effect.

It was discussed that the option to remove the Factory Shop from the scheme would mean that the central market square idea could not be realised. The benefits of this were the cost and programme savings from not purchasing the Factory Shop. Options to purchase it through CPO (compulsory purchase order) had already been explored as discussed at previous meetings and would have been more expensive.

The risk of scope creep was raised and the fact that work is being carried out to a fixed budget. It was therefore important to be clear on the principles that were wanted by the Board, eg a gathering place for the community, rather than details on the plan.

Pages 4,5,6 and 7 of the plans show options for enhancements of the existing public realm.

It was noted that there is already room for loading at the back of the precinct so this may not be a priority. There was a concern about the planting being maintained and the fact that if it was grass it would be used as parking in any case (as people currently use the pavement and crossing).

It was discussed that any trees/removed would need to be replaced but this could take the form of mitigative planting elsewhere.

It was discussed that for the area in front of the precinct the Board wished to maximise parking. However, this would need to be controlled. DW informed the board that surveys data is available showing that abuse of parking regulations is at the level of about 33% in this area. Discussions are ongoing with Parking Services Enforcement Group around locations that are remote from the city centre.

DS noted that was important to maintain visibility at the crossing points. It could be that loading was allowed at certain times, or possibly blue badge holders only. AK noted that in the areas where parking could not be increased it may be possible to use space for bikes or motorbikes.

A discussion was held around how long restricted parking should be allowed - 30 mins would not be long enough as most people will be parking to do shopping. With factory shop space removed (which would have provided additional parking), other options are needed, eg relocation of parking.

DW advised that there is an option to regulate the traffic/ parking -eg look at 2/3/4 hour restrictions on car parks that SCC has control over, to increase turnover. For people that work in the precinct there could be restrictions on Manchester Rd towards Deepcar on one side only. This however is some distance and is already used. For staff who do not live in the village, they tend to park in Lidl.

It was noted that the Coop building has a car park with an area for recycling which could potentially be removed to make room for further parking.

It was discussed that the Wayfinding and Access scheme has a separate budget, but this and the Highways could be considered as 1 scheme contributing to improved parking. There are issues with some car parks - eg need for resurfacing.

AK outlined the plan on page 7 which shows Manchester Road as it exists at the top of the page and with proposed highways enhancements at the bottom. This option shows a compliant accessible ramped access between Hope St and Manchester Rd. This would require a significant amount of space, and path and levels infrastructure. It has not yet been costed and the team are not clear how much it would be used given the nature/shape. MO'N clarified that this design was contingent on SCC owning the land next to the Factory Shop, now that we will not own the shop itself. AK clarified that the plan was drawn as per community hub proposals. Handrails may be needed as the route was steep.

Page 8 shows another option - compliant route with ramps, integrating wheelchair users with other pedestrians.

A discussion was held around the opportunity to create a gathering and performance space in this area, between the Factory Shop and the Precinct. AK advised that the land rises steeply so a large space would need to be stepped. Inclusion of a 1m high wall would assist with this and provide a stage area. Consideration would need to be given to the potential noise and disruption to local residents. Issues were discussed around accessibility and whether a compliant route could be provided whilst also providing the gathering space, due to the gradients. It was noted that currently some residents who use motorised scooters access the precinct via Johnson St. JT advised that further designs could be drawn up to prioritise the space whilst highlighting accessibility issues and risks. It was further noted that there would need to be a source of power and water if the space were to be used for events.

The board stated that the gathering space was a higher priority than the compliant ramped access proposals.

A discussion was held around the risk of anti-social behaviour within a public open space, noting that there are addiction issues within the town. Lighting would be important.

AK referred back to page 3 of the plan which shows pavements from the car park. The route is narrow and steep but it connects the car park to Manchester Rd so is more holistic instead of being a dead end.

JT asked about the pedestrian experience and connections to Fox Valley. It was noted that flagstones that had been used in previous schemes were dangerous and a different material eg tarmac would be preferable.

SM asked about timescales to draw up the options and whether a Teams interim update could be used to discuss these.

MO'N raised the issue of public art, which is a requirement under the funding. A discussion was held around the need to make this meaningful for the town and options such as including it as a part of the wayfinding (eg a mural, paving). It needs to be a permanent feature eg sculpture, mural, street furniture, railings or fencing. Local schools could be approached. Any proposal must be approved by planning. JT gave an example of a scheme in Calderdale where fencing was designed from metalwork to incorporate features of the town's heritage eg brass band, river.

Action: HO and CC to lead on this.

DW mentioned that if further surveys were needed around Manchester Rd parking, March was a good time for this. Further discussion took place around the Coop and potential to use the car park there. As the land is owned by the Coop this would involve discussions with the Coop and Legal Services.

A discussion was held around disabled car parking spaces on Hope St, next to the Hub and pharmacy. It was noted that the key parking time was 9-11am, related to use of services such as GP and pharmacy. Further parking could be created by punching through the planting. Lower Johnstone St and Edward St were possible alternatives. It was noted that the introduction of the Hopper bus service may resolve some of the issues.

Shopfronts

Options for shop fronts were discussed.

The board preference is for SCC to carry out two full designs to two example units, and then to make assumptions around the other units. The board prefer to put a set of requirements on grant seekers to ensure that their buildings are eligible, and to do surveys and a value assessment up front on application to decide if a building meets the criteria to proceed.

JT noted risks around these assumptions, the need for a significant contingency, and possible first come first served scenario as the Council will not know each project cost until we start on them. SCC will not be able to forecast how many units will be completed.

It was noted that communication with owners and tenants has been difficult. A discussion was held around whether a grant scheme would be better and lead to more take-up. Reassurance would need to be provided to owners around whether this would be taxable as recent grants for COVID were taxed. It was noted that a recent shopfront improvements scheme in Penistone had not been taxable.

It was discussed that the scope of the grant would be cosmetic -historical defects would not be picked up. Shop owners could opt out if they wished.

JT advised that works could only proceed if electrical works, lighting etc were safe. When improving the canopy, structural defects could not be ignored. All shops will need structural and asbestos surveys. It could not be assumed that all were the same as some may have had internal divisions. There is a contingency sum for surveys. If shop owners have received grants in the past they may not qualify but this is unlikely to be relevant to this size of business in this area.

A discussion was held around land at the between the precinct and the Palace Mall which is blocked off. This seems to be private land and an arrangement between the individual owners, rather than a public right of way.

Action: MO to check with Highways as to whether this is a public right of way or not.

It was noted that it was possible to work on one shop front at a time if need be. This may avoid any possible legal disputes, eg from scaffolding being up and the potential impact on business.

Decisions, Objectives and Actions

Decisions

- The footway widening on the north is accepted and therefore the subsequent alterations to southern section of the adopted highway are also accepted.
- MO'N/Design Team to review the design to look to extend the loading/blue badge bays to standard parking. If this can be achieved, there is also an aspiration to increase the amount of parking outside the precinct as much as possible by removing the landscaping. This also needs to be balanced with Council policies on greening, SUDs and the Street Tree Partnership requirements.
- The Board did not want SCC to progress any work on looking at reducing stay times in existing off- street car parks that SCC manage in Stocksbridge - Edward St, Hope St, part of Lidl, Johnson St. This investigation work started as a way to try to increase turnover of spaces and the amount of short stay spaces available in the town.

The following options re Co-op car park to be explored:

- Hub Car Park (1) Redesignation of the Sheffield City Council parking areas in the Co-op car park as Hub car parking spaces.

and/or

- Co-op Parking (2) The opportunity to discuss with the Co-Op for additional parking spaces to be developed for general parking that had been previously used as a waste and recycling area.

and/or

- (3) The opportunity to identify further parking spaces designated for the Hub at the rear of the Co-op car park.

Objectives

- Maximisation of parking, specifically parking for shoppers over loading/blue badge
- creation of public realm area and spaces for people to stop and rest

- Improve connectivity between Fox Valley and Manchester Road
- Improve accessibility particularly for the elderly, disabled or those using mobility scooters. However, the board noted that the other objectives should be prioritised

Actions

- Community Hub anticipated project cost to be confirmed this month
- SCC will tell RLB how much there is available to spend on the highway scheme
- SCC will report back developed options to the board, taking into account feedback provided today.

Item 4. Programme & Project updates: (Ref: 2501 STF Board Report v1_00; Appendix 1 2501 Board Report -Capital Project Status -Final)

Hopper Bus service

This is moving forward. SCC requires two approvals to move into the grant funding agreement. Capital approval is due today (20/01). Transport committee approval for revenue spend to be in place by 12 Feb.

Timeline for launch is then dependent on actions the provider needs to get in place for the service to launch. Meetings are ongoing between the provider and SCC to identify and complete those actions.

SYPT route information to undergo a standard update at the end of April. The bus provider is currently suggesting that service launch will be in line with that.

SCC have paid a deposit on the first three buses and have written to the bus company to set out the timeline for the remaining funding.

MON informed the board that the route is available and will be circulated. Information is that the majority of infrastructure (bus stops) is already available and there is an option to operate on a hail and ride basis. SM advised that once capital approval is agreed this will be in the public domain.

Action: HS to include in comms update

Oxley Park

Majority of work is complete. Outstanding element is the enlivening of the EV charging points in the car park. This is awaiting some electrical information/works to the leisure centre.

Phase 2 projects

3G pitch

In principle, match funding will be available from the Football Foundation (FF). MON noted that the costs quoted by the FF are by no means finalised and there is no design or survey information. £600,000 is ringfenced on the basis of the current forecast of £400-600,000 requirement. A total committed sum from the board of £750,000 is required, including £600,000 ringfenced sum, and costs/contingency of

£150,000. This includes £39,000 spent to date on design of pitch, fees and planning for the original Leisure Centre site, now not going ahead.

The current commitment is for £30,000 for site investigation surveys to go ahead. Football Foundation will procure the surveys. It was discussed that there is potential for £30,000 of the funding to be lost however it is not possible to move forward without spending this money. A letter of comfort will also be required that works to the Bracken Moor lease are underway and the Council's intended outcome. Formal submissions for the funding will be in July this year. Bracken Moor is in support. Stocksbridge Park Steels are in support of the scheme and will act as lead applicant.

Sports Pavilion/ Track and Trails

The current budget stipulates unallocated funding after Phase 1 projects and Artificial Pitch expenditure forecasts are accounted for. This implies there are funds for the remaining Phase 2 projects including the cricket pavilion and Trails Project.

MON raised the point that the unallocated funds are likely to be required by the Placemaking, Shop fronts or Wayfinding schemes. These costs are still forecasts and have not been market tested.

It was noted that the Track and Trails project mirrors the Steel Valley Project in some respects though STF are focusing on areas linked to the Underbank Reservoir and co-investment of £500,000 from Yorkshire Water, on walks and trails, buses and car parks..

Community Hub (519)

519 building is to be a library, skills and education hub, with flexible event space, and potential for a hospitality/catering space.

Contractor derogations have been agreed and instructed. A new construction programme is awaited from the contractors. Start on site will now be 1 month behind – dates are reflected in the current SCC report. An introduction to the contractor and their proposals for a group of the Board will be set up before the next Board meeting.

A stakeholder meeting will be held to explain the works before start on site.

Northern College

There is an understanding by the Board that Northern College have been approved as the provider. There is a Memorandum of Understanding – status unknown - but no legal contract.

Action: CC/TG and IS (CC/TG as Skills and Education reps on the board) to liaise with IS (Board lead representative for Hub 519) to clarify what documentation is held.

MC to send plans for 519 building to new members.

Build period for 519 is 1 year -fit-out to be completed after that period. £250,00 has been allocated for fit out of all spaces. Laura Hayfield in SCC Employment and Skills team has expressed an interest in deploying outreach staff at the Hub and is applying for a grant.

Action: TG to liaise with Laura.

Land Acquisitions

The schedule is outlined in the Board report. Purchase of properties are due Jan 25 with vacant possession to follow after various periods. All currently in Legals.

Bargain Booze is at the stage of exchanging contract to buy -to be signed off by Head of Property Services. The possibility of using the site as a compound for the 519 build was discussed -the contractor's current request is to use Edward St car park.

Action: Any suggestions to be given to MO'N to pass to contractor.

Item 5. Comms and engagement

As part of the communications plan, a picture has been taken of the full Board with new members, to be released following the meeting.

Item 6: Finance (*Ref: 250116 Briefing Note-STF Spend to Date Information v1_00*)

JT noted that the cost of the community hub (519) had increased but this was offset by the removal of the plan to purchase the shop factory shop. YM noted that it was hoped to save £1.5million, some of which would be redirected to the 3G pitch.

There was a discussion around the fact that the costs for the community hub were being finalised but indicative costs were needed for Placemaking. There were no conditions on the funding from SYMCA. The application is at Final Business case stage.

Separate meeting to be arranged with Chairs, MON and JQ to discuss finance due to time constraints.

Item 7. AOB.

None

Date of next meeting: Mon 7 March, 9.30am, Stocksbridge Community and Leisure Centre.