

BRIGHOUSE TOWN BOARD MEETING

Monday 23rd August 2021

Zoom Meeting

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Sophie Whittaker (Co Chair), Craig Whitaker MP, Councillor Blagbrough, Lesley Adams, Anne Colley, Jason Carlton, Richard Mitchell, Malcolm Silkstone, David Whitehead (Co Chair), Heather Waddington (WYCA), Atam Verdi (Aspinall Verdi), Xanthe Quayle (XQLA)

In Attendance: Shelagh O'Neill, Karen Houghton, Yatin Mistry, Robert Summerfield, Duncan Cooper

		ACTION
1.	Apologies	
	Richard Spensley, Steven Lee	
2.	Welcome and Introduction	
3.	Brighouse Town Deal Assurance Framework (August 2021)	
	<p>The following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 3.19 Project Variations. This talks about a 20% tolerance, queried whether this was a standard for CMBC for this type of project? Confirmed used guidance from WYCA's Assurance Process, so it is a standard percentage figure used. Bentley Project Management have been employed to develop the assurance framework and they used both the Towns Fund Prospectus and Guidance and then other assurance frameworks including WYCA's Assurance Framework. The matter has also been discussed with CMBC Section 151 Officer and Head of Legal & Democratic Services as representatives of the Accountable Body. Both are comfortable with this. Page 24, Business Case content requirements re. enterprise and inclusive growth. Keep under review. <p>Vote: To approve the Brighouse Town Deal Assurance Framework. All agreed</p>	
3.	Vote on Projects to take forward in the TIP	

		ACTION
	<p>MARKET REVITALISATION</p> <p>The Market Revitalisation project was discussed and a number of options were presented. These were effectively do minimum - some minor works and repair and maintenance, option 2 was to redevelop the market site, relocate market temporarily bringing it back in a new configuration with new stalls etc, option 3 is the option in the TIP document, redevelopment with residential and commercial on upper floors with market on ground floor and then option 4 was effectively an option where we look at undertaking a mixed use development on the current market site, residential on upper floors, potentially retail and leisure on ground floor and then explore options for identifying a large enough and appropriately located alternative site for the market.</p> <p>The Board expressed some concerns about the lack of factual information upon which to base their decision. It was explained that the purpose of the overall reconciliation exercise was to apportion the funding bid of £24.92 between the respective projects reduced to the actual offer of £19.1M.</p> <p>At this stage all four options would progress, if the marketplace project was determined by the Board to progress, and further detail would be all be worked up for inclusion Green Book business case.</p> <p>Further discussion then took place around the detail, and the market itself. Members of the Board agreed that Brighouse was a market town and as such the market was an important element of the towns character.</p> <p>Further questions were raised about the “match funding” element and how a reduced funding envelope might affect this, which officers addressed.</p> <p>The matter was then put to the vote and it was agreed that the project would be taken forward however the Board couldn’t commit at that point as to what proportion of the £19.1M is allocated to this project. Comfortable with the project in principle but explore options going forward.</p>	

INDUSTRY 4.0 SKILLS

The Board expressed general disappointment about the standard of presentation that had been made by the project sponsors at an earlier sub meeting in August. One major concern was that that presentation didn't seem to be tailored to Brighouse. This led to further discussion about the possible displacement of funds into other areas of Calderdale and what safeguards could prevent that. The Board were, however, concerned that they should be doing something for apprenticeships and youth.

Further concern was then expressed about the vagaries of the project sponsors' proposals and some consideration and discussion was given to removing this element from the TIP proposals.

The Board was further advised that some of these concerns had already been shared. The importance of the project was confirmed and it was reiterated that without it the TIP would be mainly public realm focused. Advice was given that the college needs to be 'front and centre' to give substance and liability. It was further reported that the college are confident by building those employer contacts and building apprenticeships, the project will be profitable. Although there is further work to be undertaken as too much has been done thus far in isolation, this would a beneficial project for young people and Brighouse in particular.

Following further discussions around the transferability of monies from one project to another **KH took an action to raise this with MHCLG to find out if this was possible**, and if so, are there any limits on this.

Members of the Board again expressed concern about the lack of detail and raised other questions relating to match funding requirements.

After discussing the Public Realm (see below) the Board again returned to Industry 4.0.

The Chair asked the Board for confirmation that they wanted to move this project forward and CW summarised the position as he saw it in that if it was the KITs proposal, the Board should either accept it or not. He noted that it was up to Calderdale College and associates if they want to put in a further bid to be considered at a later date. He finished by saying that for the purpose of tonight it has to be based on the one project. Therefore, the question is do we accept what KITs are asking us for or don't we? He finished by proposing that the matter be put to a vote.

Members of the Board again mused on whether a provisional approval could be given and again wondered if funding could be redistributed at a later date. Concern was also expressed that there wasn't much time to develop alternatives or to firm up this proposal (within 3 – 4 days). Board again recognised that this project served a key objective but remained concerned about the lack of overall detail.

KH reminded the Board that in the TIP, the project did include Calderdale College in the development and delivery mechanism. The evidence is clear that there is a need for youth and skills development in Brighouse. Members of the Board agreed that there should be some skills funding included as otherwise the TIP would just deliver public realm and trees.

Potential synergies between this project and the delivery of the market were also considered ie would the ultimate market development provide a background to bring through younger entrepreneurs as a location for them to sell their products. CW suggested the proposal be amended to take account of this.

		ACTION
	<p>The matter was then put to the vote in the following form:</p> <p>No money to KITTs but keep £500k or thereabouts to be allocated to the Industry 4.0 project in order for Calderdale College to come up with a proposal if possible, in the next few days. If that is not feasible, the £500k could be re-distributed into the Market scheme for something to do with youth and skills.</p> <p>The motion was carried.</p> <p>PUBLIC REALM:</p> <p>XQ delivered a summary of the overall proposals.</p> <p>The Board discussed synergies relating to the forthcoming A641 project and how the final phasing of this might inform the need to include some elements in the TIP and vice versa eg the Owler Ings new bridge proposal as part of the A641 scheme. Points were raised about how important this bridge proposal was in terms of helping to relieve overall congestion.</p> <p>It was noted that in some respects this makes decisions difficult, the Board might be able to move money, but by time we understand what is included in that we may have had to commit what we want to do. Although Thornton Square is significant, the opportunities are much greater if the Owler Ings proposal does go through as this opens up the Canalside and could push development around to the other side. Members also queried why Briggate had been afforded a lower assessment level than Thornton Square and wondered if there was a particular rationale for this?</p> <p>XQ reminded the Board that the rationale had been described in the TIP and explained that it was based, in part, on the offer of dwell space and civic uses. She also commented on the timing of the above and confirmed that the TIP team had been working with the A641 team to understand this alignment.</p> <p>The Board then asked further detailed questions on the presentation and projects which XQ responded to. The Board was again concerned that there was a still a level of detail which was unknown making their decision difficult.</p> <p>There was then a detailed discussion around costings and the required savings. CW expressed concern that the proposed costings were inflated and suggested that the proposals should be worked up in further detail. He requested the consultants and Officers come back with some proper costed options. He stated that the projects should go through as initially intended until such time as the business cases had been built up and proposed a vote on that basis.</p> <p>The Chair seconded this.</p> <p>The vote was then taken on the basis that the three projects be put forward as they were initially intended without any of the savings identified at this stage. As per the TIP.</p> <p>The motion was carried.</p>	

		ACTION
4.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>RM asked if another vote on the market would be required. Chair confirmed that this was not the case as we had a deadline of the end of the month and the Board had agreed not to commit to a costing but take the matter forward as a concept and develop the project further within the business case.</p>	
	<p>JC then advised that the Communications and Marketing sub-group had now met and were looking for some budget, not sure at what point we need to bring that forward.</p> <p>Chair elaborated that the Comms and Marketing sub-group were Cllr W, JC and LA and that they had met several times to discuss the strategy going forward about public consultation and stakeholders etc. She explained that they were looking to engage a PR consultant, and that they were in obtaining three quotes to circulate via email to the Board. The intention was to use the remainder of the previous Town Board budget of £78k. She confirmed that, as it became available, further detail would be circulated for a decision.</p> <p>JC further advised the Board that the sub-group had met with the Todmorden group in what had been a useful exercise to identify lessons learned.</p> <p>LA added that the sub-group had also put out something through Visit Brighouse recently. No comments yet.</p> <p>RM asked for further details of the sub-groups and KH took an action to circulate further details of each and arrange the first meeting.</p> <p>CW asked how far ahead the Todmorden group were in terms of comms and if it is worth following their lead which would save a lot of work.</p> <p>Chair responded that we were on with that and the sub-group would keep in contact with them.</p>	
5.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>TBC</p>	