



Halifax Development Board Meeting



Minutes of meeting held Thursday 17 February – 6.00pm

Meeting held Via Teams

Attendees

Cllr Tim Swift
Cllr Megan Swift
Cllr J Scullion
Cllr Stephen Baines
Cllr Bob Metcalf

Tracy Harvey
Stephen Bullock
Rev Hilary Barber
Alison Haskins

Janet Whitlow (CMBC)
Shelagh O'Neill (CMBC)
Zohrah Zancudi (CMBC)
Rob Summerfield (CMBC)
Emma Martin (CMBC)
Zhenya Bibby (CMBC)

Apologies

Chloe McNeill
Cllr Roger Taylor
Lee Kenny
Kate McNicholas (CMBC)

Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Cllr Tim Swift welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes of previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

Cllr Tim Swift requested an update regarding the mobile squash courts and potential demonstration.

Action Point: JW/RS to follow up with Lee Kenny.

Hughes Corporation

RS had contacted a consultancy firm that have produced large building wraps for sites in Leeds. They have provided a few options, however it was urged that due to the land being in private

ownership, any discussions and/or decisions on this, should be made after the land assembly had taken place.

It was reported that alternative staff car parking provision for current tenants of the Hughes Building is currently being pursued.

It was agreed to revisit item this after phase 2.

Halifax Music Festival

CLlr Swift confirmed that funds for the Halifax Music Festival Bid had been agreed in principle at the previous meeting, but it would be further discussed under Balance of Funds Item.

Declaration of Interests

No declarations.

Bus Station Update

Adam Kendall Ward provided an update on the ongoing development of Halifax Bus station.

Proposed improvements;

- Single fully enclosed passenger concourse
- Improved interchange between services
- Access for all level boarding
- Safe and secure waiting environment
- Improved setting for historic buildings
- Contribute to a reduction in carbon
- Compatible with A629 phase 2 project

Key Dates:

September 2021 Construction

October 2021 – February 2022 Phase 1

27 February 2022- April 2023 end of Phase 2 beginning of Phase 3

April 2023 – End of Phase 3 beginning of phase 4

Summer 2023 End of phase 4

Phase 3 will see;

- Temporary changes to bus services and movement of bus stands
- Passenger access restricted
- Temporary travel centre to be relocated
- Public toilets to be closed
- Pick-up and drop-off area closed, with alternative provision set up on Northgate

It was noted that the toilets will be closed on site during the phase 2 of the development, and that WYCA were currently negotiating alternative provision near the market.

It was reported that communication on the developments will include visual posters and customer notices in and around the bus station and town centre, leaflets at the travel centre and continued signage. In addition, staff will be available on site in the early stages of phase 3 to answer any user queries and concerns. Metro and YourVoice website will publish regular updates, YourVoice is to host a live Q&A function on their platform. Updated timetables with QR codes will be positioned on stands both on site and on the street, this is in addition to social media updates and adverts.

It was also reported that bus pads had been installed throughout the town to mitigate the low kerbs, a town wide improvement to provide level access to buses.

Cllr Swift opened the session for a discussion

RS welcomed the installation of a changing places facility, adding it will compliment the one already installed at the Piece Hall and those planned for Halifax Leisure Centre and Train Station, this will serve to make the town centre a more accessible destination.

Cllr BM noted concerns that the construction phase and the planned revised vehicle entry and exit points of the bus station will increase pressure on the junction (Northgate and Winding Road), and potentially cause a further traffic build up.

AKW confirmed that they are aware of the added pressure and have consulted WYT. In regard to turning right onto Winding Road, AKW confirmed that they were looking for solutions to alleviate any added pressures that would arise.

AKW confirmed that once in operation this exit point would serve 8-12 buses per hour and this would be kept under observation and revision.

RS recommended WYCA discuss the phased developments with RSA before they relocate to Northgate.

AKW confirmed that there is a dialogue open with RSA, and this will continue with the development of the site.

High Street Task Force

<https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/>

JW presented the item on the High Street Task Force, a government initiative (set up before the pandemic) that seeks to facilitate targeted and specialised regeneration in northern towns.

JW confirmed that Halifax had produced a successful bid, and that the task force would soon be arriving in Halifax to gather information for their assessment. The task force will be joined by a team of people comprised of members of the cabinet, cross party representatives, town users and businesses.

The task force will be joined by the local group and will have a 45 minute walking tour of Halifax to identify its main challenges. The group will then assign specialists within the areas highlighted as the challenges, who will then go on to formulate a plan to address the challenges.

JW requested that if colleagues had any examples of how best to conduct the tour – or if anyone had any similar experiences or examples of how best to approach this, then could they be sent to the next Town Board for consideration.

JW confirmed that this was an ongoing process.

Cllr Swift opened the item for questions.

TH asserted concerns that the task force have only allocated 45 minutes for the tour.

Cllr Swift raised concerns that the specialists may disagree with the local task force over what the challenges are and how the challenges would be best overcome.

Future High Street Funds

JW provided an update on the Future High Street Fund.

JW confirmed that Halifax were successful in bidding for 11.7 million from the fund, and that a delivery group were now in place to embark on the development of:

- Borough Market
- Victoria Theatre
- Public Realm

More details will be provided at the next meeting.

In terms of the Borough Market, JW confirmed that the following areas had already been identified for improvements;

- Roof
- Albany Arcade (extend event space)
- under the clock
- Public toilets

It was commented that the success of the bid, meant that the developments are now bound to the funding T&Cs. These will be monitored via peer review of all stakeholders, who will measure all the developments against the funding requirements (this will link to increased and sustained footfall).

JW confirmed that the funds must be spent by March 2024.

The delivery teams were aware of the time constraints and the speed required by the developments, the current priorities were getting the projects out for tender.

Action Point: this remains an agenda point, with regular stakeholder and progress reports.

Cllr Swift reported that he appreciated that this had been slowed by COVID and staffing issues, and agreed that FHSF remains on the agenda to provide the Town Board with regular progress updates.

Cllr BM added that the roof needs repairing to ensure a water tight environment before any further developments are made.

JW confirmed that the roof was the first of the construction priorities.

Balance of Funds

It was noted that the Town Board had agreed to fund the Halifax Heritage Tours and also the Halifax Music Festival at the previous meeting.

Cllr Swift added that going forward the Town Board could fund 1 or 2 further events with a maximum of 2-3 future events (especially if events can be match funded), this would be on the understanding that the funding was singular one-off allocation.

AH confirmed a preference for a more open application process through which to apply for funds, and advised Halifax Town Board to be careful with the funds, in case they are needed for any emergencies in the future.

EM confirmed that with the approved recent Bids taken into consideration there was; £93,800 remaining in the budget.

RS suggested using some of the funds to create a town masterplan, this would encourage the setting of new priorities, and would help to form a vision for the town and align it with the developments.

HB asserted that in addition to the physical construction and development that the town is undergoing, there needed to be a social and cultural dimension, to assess lived experience of the town. How do we use the town? How can we use the town? and how do we want to use the town? Could lived experience be used to both question and answer varying degrees of levelling up?

Cllr Swift added that experiences of residents from all areas of the town need to be considered as a part of the lived experience assessment.

RS agreed that the developments are more than the physical improvements, and this could be incorporated into the masterplan and vision.

Any Other Business

It was agreed that the next meeting should be in person, Room D was requested due to its capacity to offer a hybrid meeting style.

RS discussed the heat mapping exercise that was currently taking place across Major Projects, and explained that this was to ensure that Capital projects don't impact on the day to day workings and functioning of the Town.

The interactive map will be available on the Next Chapter website, and it will measure the impact in terms of areas under construction and development in Halifax and Calderdale. It will be a useful resource that will illustrate where the developments are taking place and how they relate to each other. It will be used to plan projects and it can be shared with urgent utilities works. The aim is to provide assurance that the developments and construction have been planned effectively.

Cllr BM questioned the vacant retail park on Pellon Lane and asked if members had any information on this.

RS confirmed that they will seek to find out who owns the park, and query what is happening with the site.

Cllr Swift thanked Town Board members and closed the meeting.

Action Point: ZB set meeting dates and circulate them to Town Board Members.

Date of next meeting

7 April 2022 6pm

Decision Log

Action Points:

- Funds to be issued to Halifax Music Festival and Halifax Heritage Tours
- Provide a formal and open process for organisations and businesses to bid for event funds from the Town Board
- RS to look into costings for development of a masterplan.
- Masterplan can be used to gain insight into lived experience of the town.