

BRIGHOUSE TOWN DEAL BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held Wednesday 24th October 2023

Meeting Room 1, Brighouse Library, HD6 2AF

Present:

Councillor Howard Blagbrough (Chair)
David Whitehead (Co-Chair)
Councillor Sophie Whittaker
Lesley Adams
Colin Gordon
Richard Mitchell
Malcolm Silkstone
Ann Moffatt

In attendance

Councillor Courtney
Jess Thompson
Shelagh O'Neill
Adrian Gill
Mary Farrar
Tina Glover (Project Centre)
Paul McRae
Matthew Nicholson
Rob Shipway
Daisy Wilde
Zakariya Ali

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed Board members and officers. The meeting was declared quorate.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Craig Whittaker MP, Councillor Atkinson, Jason Carlton, Lorraine Bailey, Shannon Prendergast, and Louise Reed.

3. Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest reported.

4. Minutes for Approval

Agreed that the minutes of the last meeting were a correct reflection of the meeting.

a. Matters arising.

There were no matters arising.

5. Communications update (report by Stephen Naylor, Waverley Consulting)

Chair welcomed renewal of Waverley contract, thanking SN for his contribution to the programme.

SN provided an update on communications. Focus of activity has been the plans for the market, which are receiving positive feedback. He stressed the importance of a constant flow of information to ensure stakeholder support was maintained. This will be particularly important over the coming months as work begins on key projects, so it was important to be clear on the timeline for the market and public realm projects. The Board noted the importance of ensuring the community understood that the market would remain in the short-term.

SN reported positive feedback to social media posts. Asked how these were managed, SN reported that they were reviewed in conjunction with the chair and where a response is needed, SN manages this. An example highlighted by the Board of the success of the social media campaign was a recent request for a stall from a new trader.

The Chair thanked SN for his presentation.

POST MEETING NOTE – Renewal contract is not yet in place. However, Council officers have agreed with SN that he is to continue providing services as quoted. Current appointment has contingency sum included that can be used to cover any fees in advance of renewal contract being in place.

6. Panel feedback (report by Matthew Nicholson, Calderdale MBC)

MN provided feedback from the first meetings of the Markets Panel and Public Realm Panel. The Board was reminded that the Panels had been established to facilitate scrutiny and support of project development.

Regarding the Markets Panel, MN reported that plans for the temporary market had been well received. Discussions also centred on designing out crime and proposals for tendering for the works.

The Public Realm Panel had focused on plans for a road safety audit, vehicle movements, and linking to the parking strategy which was a separate Board item for this meeting.

The Chair welcomed the panels as useful and speeding up business.

7. Parking review (presentation by Mary Farrar, Calderdale MBC and Tina Glover, Project Centre)

Parking has been a cause of concern for the Board. MF and consultants Project Centre attended the meeting to provide an overview of Calderdale wide parking strategy, and a bespoke Brighouse parking strategy or Parking Area Plan.

A. Parking strategy

Transportation is developing Parking Area Plans for the six towns, starting with Brighouse and Todmorden. These strategies will inform the Town Centre Improvement Programme.

The Calderdale Parking Strategy aims to consider all users, prioritise bus, rail and active modes and deliver a more modern parking offer and customer experience. The Local Parking Area Plan will aim to contribute to reduce transport emissions; consider future development and the provision of EV infrastructure.

Surveys will be carried out of all car parks and on-street parking within the study area and begin in mid-November. Various options will be considered and their potential impact. A draft strategy will be prepared and shared with the Board in due course.

b. Parking place plan

TG reported examples of good and poor-quality parking can be seen across the town and the strategy provides an opportunity to identify and act on these. RM noted the impact of parking

on Bradford Road which creates traffic problems, and it was noted that this was the kind of issue that the surveys will pick up.

Once completed, MF committed to circulating the draft plan to the Board. It is expected that work will last 4 months, with work commencing mid-November.

SN noted the importance of communications for conducting the survey given the high priority parking is given by the community and other stakeholders.

DW asked whether the plans are to encourage shifts to cycling, noting safety concerns prevents cyclists travelling to the town centre. It was also noted the lack of facilities for cyclists, such as cycle hubs. MF confirmed this is one of the ambitions of the Council, but also to future proof car parking for changes such as electric cars and keeping blue badge spaces. Regarding topography of the town, it was noted that the proposals do take account of this for cyclists and Councillor Courtney highlighted the growing use of electric cycles.

RM noted the presence of off-road parking such as Cliff Road, and the impact this has on traffic flows.

The Chair noted the condition of buses on the town's networks and the pollution caused.

B. Scheme Proposals

MN provided an overview of current parking proposals within the scheme, noting that the scheme was about pedestrian priority through the town centre which necessitates the removal of some on street parking.

Key areas where parking is proposed to be removed are in the pedestrianised sections of Commercial Street and Bethel Street, on Park Street to create wider safer pavements, and around Thornton Square to create the new civic space. It was recognised that the key area for further discussion was Canalside next to the Bethel Street car park.

Action: MN to review options to provide additional parking at Canalside

The Board noted that the plans for parking presented as part of plans for Bradford Road included a change of direction for cars parking on the road. The Board urged this to be reviewed citing safety concerns.

Action: MN to review Bradford Road parking proposals.

The Chair highlighted concerns to deter cyclists from using pedestrian areas for public safety reasons.

The Chair noted the importance of keeping the Board fully informed of progress of the parking strategy and thanked MF for her presentation.

8. Wilko's (update from Jess Thompson, Calderdale MBC)

JT reported that a planning application has been submitted for the site and she will return to the Board with more information. Guidance and support from the Board will be welcome. It was agreed that board members could attend a meeting with the site owner/developer if one could be arranged.

9. Any other business

RS reported he had met with the Environment Agency to discuss concerns raised by RM regarding plans for flood alleviation works preventing next year's Gala. He noted that the Environment Agency stressed the urgency of the works and that the plans would impact the land earmarked for next year's Gala. The Chair expressed regret the Gala might not be able to go ahead as planned but that the flood works must take precedence. The Board agreed though RM stressed the potential long-term impact that preventing this year's Gala might have.

RS reported that the Environment Agency would attend the December meeting of the Board to present an overview of their new Business Plan.

JT reported work is ongoing to repair subways. It was noted that work had begun but they had succumbed to further acts of vandalism and adverse weather conditions.

10. Date and venue of next meeting

The Board asked that RS review options to bring forward the planned meeting for the 19th December.

POST MEETING NOTE – A revised date has now been agreed, the Board meeting will now take place 12th December 2023, commencing 6 pm at Brighthouse Library.