

Corby Town Deal Board

Friday 6th November 2020

Meeting via ZOOM

Present:-

Lorna Dodge (Chair)
Councillor Tom Beattie
Councillor Jean Addison
Tom Pursglove MP
Valerie Finke
Kyra Joy
Georgina Ager
Paul Thompson
Hilary Chipping
Lyn Buckingham
Dan Pickard
Sandy Cruickshank
Atul Joshi
Paul Ilko
Ian Achurch

Love Corby
Corby Borough Council
Corby Borough Council
MP for Corby
Corby Borough Council
Tresham College Student Ambassador
Tresham & Bedford Colleges
SEMLEP
SEMLEP
CENTARA
Corby Business Group
Cities and Local Growth Unit
Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH)
Tata Steel
NCC

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Helen Wilmott, Simon Phipps, Cath Conroy and Charles Amies. Jonathan Waterworth and Steven Norris hoped to join in during the course of the meeting.

2. Minutes and Actions from the previous meeting

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 2 October 2020 had been circulated.

On Page 4, the joint presentation for Love Corby and the Business Group had been arranged for 26 November and invitations would go out in the following week. All Board members were also welcome to attend.

It was noted that Norman Stronach had retired from the Council recently and the Board wished him well. Jonathan Waterworth would act as Head of Paid Service until Vesting Day.

3. Highlight Report

A copy of the Project Board Highlight Report (Nov 2020) had been circulated and the following achievements since the previous meeting were noted:

- The Accelerated Funding of £750,000 had been received and updates on projects would be provided later in the meeting.
- Town Deal Board Visioning Statement had been amended and would be presented later in the meeting.
- A Business Engagement Group and Community Engagement Group were being formed and should be up and running in the next week.
- Due to Covid-19 the marketing company, Nems, would carry out engagement via the telephone rather than face to face.

Key decisions for this meeting were:

- Final agreement on the Visioning Statement.
- Agreement on the engagement plan structure.
- Agreement on the potential project direction for the Town Investment Plan.

Targets for the next period were:

- Engagement with the community groups and businesses to gather ideas and thoughts throughout the process.
- Setting a date for the market research company to carry out engagement with Corby residents and receive report back.
- Setting up an Advisory Group from a small number of members from the business and community groups to be part of ongoing discussions on the Town Fund details throughout the projects.

Tom Beattie queried the implications of the new lockdown on the timetable and it was confirmed that arrangements had been reviewed and amended to minimise the impact as far as possible.

4. Accelerated Fund

A briefing note had been circulated providing an update on the six successful projects as follows:

- Partial pedestrianisation of George Street - Highways were working up feasibility designs and had confirmed timescale could be met.
- Cycleway infrastructure Improvements to link town parks - procurement underway via a framework to meet timescale.
- Corporation Street public realm and market improvements - Grant Agreement complete and purchasing underway.
- Market walk site remediation - Grant Agreement and structural surveys complete and report pending. Procurement underway for works to start in January 2021.
- Outdoor gym equipment for Tresham College - Grant Agreement due to complete in the following week. Student consultation underway and procurement to follow for January start. Installation expected to commence 4th January 2021 and to take one week to complete.
- Play area equipment replacement – tendering to be carried out in November.

It was asked if the Council would have any input into the design for the George Street improvements. It was confirmed that a number of different ideas were being explored and it was understood that the preferred scheme/s would be shared with the Council and the Board, hopefully by the end of November. Pressure would be kept up on the County Council.

5. Engagement Plan Timeline

The Engagement Plan Timeline had been circulated. Activities during November included telephone engagement, setting up the voluntary advisory group, creation and promotion of a dedicated website for the Towns Fund, engagement with Tresham students and the Business/Community groups seminar.

Ian Achurch outlined an interactive map-based system used to undertake a successful consultation on active travel recently which may be helpful. It was easy to set up and free to use.

Action – IA to provide contact details.

The Chair outlined the intentions for the dedicated website which would be open and transparent and include all the project information. It would form a major part of the engagement plan, particularly to get round Covid restrictions. It would also accommodate multiple surveys. Time was tight but the aim was to go live in three weeks' time. Members were asked to assist in promoting the website as widely as possible.

Best practice from other areas was queried and it was explained there was no standard website approach. Landing pages were similar but the content depended on more local/unique features. Comment was made that some areas were further forward with their Town Plans (eg Bedford

and Milton Keynes submitted and Northampton was due in December) and it was worth looking at these as they were published.

Atul Joshi confirmed that liaison was taking place with MHCLG and initial submissions were being examined for learning points, however, some pre-dated the guidance. Valerie Finke also confirmed that work was taking place via Government consultants on sharing best practice on webinars and blogs and linking similar towns together.

6. Visioning Statement

Atul Joshi presented the proposed visioning statement which had been updated on the basis of discussions at the previous meeting. It was suggested that 'state of the art education, health ...' in the first paragraph required some clarification. This would be amended and the final version circulated to the Board.

7. Potential Projects

The proposed intervention projects were presented under the three key themes of Urban Regeneration, Skills & Enterprise Infrastructure and Connectivity:

- Chisholm House/Sixth Form College – Sovereign was very pleased to be working with Bedford College to offer a new 6th form facility in the heart of the town centre. Georgina Ager explained this would be multi-use facility to bring people into the town and cater for the increase in young people in the coming years. It was intended that it would be a modern and funky space incorporating an array of low carbon technologies. The cost estimate was £6m it was hoped to start in 2022 if possible but 2023 at the latest.
- Market Walk East – a mix of uses for the site were being considered including art gallery, digital/community hub, cultural centre, etc. Sustainability in the long term was a major consideration. This was a key gateway site and offered great opportunities and comments/ideas would be welcomed.

Lyn Buckingham commented on the need to provide opportunities for local residents to come together to combat loneliness, etc, especially as the number of flats going up in the vicinity was increasing.

It was asked if there were any similar sites elsewhere which could provide inspiration. Bristol and Hastings were suggested but this site was somewhat unique in being a blank page and offering a golden opportunity to create a mix of uses to meet local needs. The emphasis on care/feasibility/sustainability was noted.

The inclusion of something for young people would be helpful as this came up a lot and also provision for small work spaces for creative/digital start-up businesses. There were units in Northampton which may provide ideas and details would be shared.

Action – HC to forward details of Vulcan Works units to VF.

- Intelligent Sensor Network – potential was being explored to create a network to collect real-time information on how Corby operated, including traffic, crime, energy use, air quality and more. This could bring great benefits and provide valuable intelligence in designing services, etc. Initial ideas were being drawn up to share with the Board.
- Train Station to Town Centre – via Cottingham Road and Oakley Road, including cycle network.

Action – any further comments/ideas to be forwarded to VF/AJ.

8. AOB

None.

9. Close of Meeting

Meeting closed at 11.00 am, next meeting 10 am, 11 December 2020.