

Corby Town Deal Board

Tuesday 28th January 2020

6:30 pm in the Council Chamber, The Cube, George Street, Corby

Present:-

Councillor Tom Beattie
Jonathan Waterworth
Valerie Finke
Charles Amies
Georgina Ager
Helen Willmott
Lyn Buckingham
Lorna Dodge
Dan Pickard
Jack Gordon
Simon Phipps
Atul Joshi
Steven Norris
Councillor Owen Davison
Paul Thompson
Inspector Scott Little
Harriet Pentland
Gary Blackman
Nick Bolton

Corby Borough Council
Corby Borough Council
Corby Borough Council
Homes England
Tresham College
Made In Corby
CENTARA
Love Corby
Corby Business Group
Sovereign Centros
Sovereign Centros
Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH)
Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH)
Rural Area Forum
SEMLEP
Northants Police
Parliamentary Assistant to Tom Pursglove MP
TATA
Electric Corby

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Norman Stronach (Corby BC), Councillor Jean Addison (Corby BC), Hilary Chipping (SEMLEP), Tom Pursglove MP, Cath Conroy (One Public Estate) & Ian Achurch (Northamptonshire County Council).

2. Welcome & Introduction

Councillor Beattie was acting as Chair for the meeting. Councillor Beattie welcomed all attendees, noting the diverse range of organisations represented.

It was noted that the purpose of this inaugural meeting was to establish a Board structure and agree terms of reference, and to give an overview of the purpose of the Towns Fund and agree a mechanism for enabling Corby to “work-up” a full bid to Government to secure release of funding for investment and improvements.

3. Town Fund Presentation

Jonathan Waterworth and representatives of Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH) gave a brief power point presentation explaining the background to the Towns Fund scheme and the obligations placed on the Board.

The presentation outlined the scope of the work involved in developing a Town Investment Fund Plan for submission to Government. Potentially a £25m funding pot was available for the town.

The three key objectives that needed to be addressed were urban regeneration, planning and land use; skills and enterprise; and connectivity. Stage 2 Guidance was awaited from Government to provide more detail on the process, confirm timelines and the criteria by which any bid would be evaluated.

LSH had been engaged to assist with compiling baseline evidence to support the bid and assist with engagement and consultation with stakeholders. Visioning workshops would be facilitated by LSH.

It was intended that the Board would develop a Town Investment Plan which included projects which met the Fund's criteria. This Plan would be submitted to Corby BC for final approval and submission to Government.

Establishment of a Board representing a diverse range of stakeholders was a vital first step. Corby BC had allocated resource to support the Board directly and through the engagement of LSH.

The timeline for developing the Bid was ambitious. The Plan needed to be developed and submitted by Summer 2020.

It was noted that input from the parished areas was important to the process. Although the area covered by the bid was restricted to the urban centre there were likely to be issues of mutual interest. It was further noted that Corby BC had already suggested amending the suggested Government catchment area are the bid; these suggested amendments were being considered.

It was suggested that the views of young people were of particular importance in ensuring that the town developed to meet their future needs in housing, employment, culture and recreation.

There was a need for all stakeholder groups to be engaged and any projects were sustainable.

Whilst "My Town" was the central Government website associated with the scheme, it was intended to develop a local communication strategy. It was important that all communication channels were explored, particularly to contact "hard to reach" groups.

The Council's agreed Local Plan needed to be a core document to develop projects. It would provide a good starting point for discussions. LSH recognised that there were key local strategies and policies already in place which would promote and contribute to discussions and development of objectives. The outcome of local engagement of stakeholders was also of key importance.

Ensuring small and medium size business were fully engaged was of importance. It was suggested that a presentation to a Corby Business Group breakfast meeting may be appropriate.

ACTION – Dan Pickard to investigate the possibility of a presentation slot at a future breakfast meeting of the Corby Business Group.

It was further suggested that LSH may wish to involve Tresham College in facilitating capturing the views of younger residents.

ACTION – Georgina Ager & LSH to discuss potential stakeholder involvement through Tresham College.

It was confirmed that Corby BC had received capacity funding from Government to support the initial development of the Plan. This was in addition to the potential £25m funding pot.

4. Corby's Challenges and Opportunities

Representatives from Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH) facilitated a brief workshop session to allow attendees to register what they thought were the key challenges for the town and the local community.

Comments included the following:-

- That Corby continued to have ambitious plans for growth and development to see the population of the town continue to increase. There had been positive growth in recent years in housing, jobs and services. This growth needed to be sustained.
- There was a need to continue to diversify the skills of the local community and continue to attract investment. Digital connectivity was a key objective.
- There had been good housing growth in the area and this needed to be sustained, including around the fringes of the town centre as well as on the “new” estates. The housing needed to continue to be of a high quality.
- It was important that there was high-tech skills training available locally and that the local education providers were fully involved in discussions on future growth.
- There was a need to build skills for the future. Investment in the digital structure was important. Green spaces should be protected and further cultural and social opportunities developed for the local community.
- There was a need to create an effective vision for the town. The decline in the traditional “High Street” was noted, with consumers and investors doing things differently. Any “vision” needed to address this issue and look ahead.
- Smaller businesses should continue to be encouraged and should work alongside the bigger businesses to ensure the continued growth of the local economy.
- There needed to be better communication between business and education providers to ensure that any skill deficits were addressed. Investment in culture/arts and open space was important.
- It was important that the growth achieved in Corby was continued and that local residents were encouraged to invest in Corby through shopping locally and investing in local amenities. It was important that the space and buildings in the town centre were fully utilised.
- Alternative uses for the buildings and space in the town centre should be explored. It was important that the town centre be maintained at the “heart” of the local community.

- Investment in local health care and education was important. The relationship and connectivity between local rural communities and the town should not be forgotten.
- Digital skills of particular importance, local education and training providers should be a focal point.
- Youth provision around the town needed to be improved, particularly for older teens.
- It was important for young people to feel they have a future in the town and do not drift away. Provision of local public transport in the town and with local rural communities was important.
- Corby has adapted and grown; this needed to continue. Any opportunities that arise should be investigated and pursued.
- Develop the local skills set and promote apprenticeships.
- Some of the commercial stock in Corby on the industrial estates was dated and needed investment. Corby had good “start-up” facilities but struggled when those starter businesses wished to expand. There were restrictions on growth.
- Provision of facilities and activities for young people was important to assist in reducing anti-social behaviour in the town.

LSH confirmed that the views expressed would be noted and contribute to future development of the vision and objectives of any final bid.

5. Approve Terms of Reference

A draft terms of reference for the Board to adopt had been circulated.

It was noted that Made In Corby was omitted from the Membership section of the Terms of Reference.

ACTION – Jonathan Waterworth to amend the Terms of Reference to include Made In Corby.

A query was raised as to whether the Board could consider nominating Corby for the “Town of the Year” competition.

ACTION – Jonathan Waterworth to investigate the “Town of the Year” competition parameters and whether this was a matter for the Board, or for consideration by another body.

The list of organisations represented on the Board was included. It was suggested that further consideration be given to the potential for a representative from an organisation representing young people be included. The Board felt it was important that a young person’s perspective be included within the Board’s future deliberations.

It was suggested that an organisation such as Groundwork UK or Adrenaline Alley be approached.

ACTION – Jonathan Waterworth to consider an additional invitation for Board membership to an organisation predominately working with/or for young people in the town.

6. Appointment of Chair and Deputy Chair

Nominations were invited for the position of Chair of the Board. The nomination of Lorna Dodge was received.

RESOLVED that:-

Lorna Dodge be elected as Chair of the Corby Town Deal Board.

Nominations were invited for the position of Vice Chair of the Board. The nomination of Councillor Tom Beattie was received.

RESOLVED that:-

Councillor Tom Beattie be appointed as Vice Chair of the Corby Town Deal Board.

7. Proposed future Board meetings

A list of potential dates for future Board meetings had been circulated.

RESOLVED that:-

The Board would meet on:-

- Tuesday 17th March 2020
- Tuesday 19th May 2020
- Wednesday 22nd July 2020

8. Close of Meeting

Meeting closed at 7:35 pm