

**Minutes of The Bishop Auckland Stronger Towns Board Meeting
Friday 19th June 2020, 12:30 – 14:30**

Attendees:

David Land (<i>Chair</i>)	DL	Chair
David Maddan	DM	The Auckland Project, Chief Executive Officer
Cllr Brian Stephens	BS	Portfolio Lead for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships
Geoff Paul	GP	Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth (Interim), DCC
Graham Wood	GW	Economic Development Manager, DCC
Dehenna Davidson	DD	MP for Bishop Auckland
Rob Yorke	RY	Private Sector representative - Teescraft
Susie Doyle	SD	The Auckland Project, Head of Development
Natalie Davison-Terranova	ND-T	Principle - Bishop Auckland College
Bishop Paul Butler	PB	Chair of the Brighter BA Partnership Board
Helen Golightly	HG	CE, North East LEP
Bill Fullen	BF	CE, Believe Housing
Amie Glass (<i>Minutes</i>)	AG	The Auckland Project, Project Coordinator
Cllr Shirley Quinn	SQ	Counsellor
David Anderson	DA	Town Council
Paul Robson	PR	Department of Work and Pensions
Joanne Howey	JH	Senior Executive Officer, BA MP's office
Nik Turner	NT	Believe Housing

Apologies:

Mike Matthews	MM	Private Sector Member
Jonathan Ruffer	JR	The Auckland Project, Founder

Item		Action
1.0	Welcome & Introductions	
1.1	GP confirmed that it is his last day as interim director. New director Amy Harhoff will be joining the Board in his place.	
1.2	Amie Glass (AG) from The Auckland Project will be providing secretarial support to the Board Meeting.	
1.3	DM offers Vinovium House as a venue for future Board Meetings.	
2.0	Review of Previous Meeting (20th March 2020)	
2.1	DL asks attendees if there are any conflicts of interest. No conflicts raised.	
2.2	ND-T notes an inaccuracy in the minute ' <i>the college is new, so requires little funding.</i> ' ND-T clarifies that the college is in its 13 th year and they will be putting forward proposals for funding in areas such as technology/digital. GW acknowledges that infrastructure	

	within the building is ageing and this could form part of the issues we address in the Stronger Towns Bid. DL commented that it may not be for STF to fund.	
2.3	GW clarifies that the initials 'RY' are Cllr Rob Yorke and 'DY' was a typo, this should be 'DL' David Land.	
3.0	Matters Arising N/A	
4.0	Declarations of Interest N/A	
5.0	Future High Street Fund Submission	
5.1	GW provided an update on the Future High Street Fund (FHSF) submission, which was made on 8 th June 2020. Presentation tabled.	
5.2	Regarding the probability of success, GW advises that the view from consultants Genecon/Arcadis is that, as a technical piece of work the bid figures came together well and the logic was sound. Hopeful of a decent settlement, clarification has been received on several occasions from colleagues within the MHCLG that there is the expectation for most places to receive between £5-10m.	
5.3	The optimum bid issued was approximately £19.9m. GW explains that a minimum level of co-financing is included because some of the projects worked on as part of the proposal had so much co-financing in them that they began to count against the benefit cost ratios. We have therefore reduced down from the £25m ceiling to help drive up the ratio.	
5.4	The submission is now in the appraisal process and technical queries are anticipated.	
5.5	Notification of award is expected in Autumn 2020 – late August/early September.	
5.6	DL queries if a consultation period is necessary. GW advises that we need to get Comms out locally - the Council website can be used as a reference point for the programmes we are driving forward. A Consultation Plan will be reviewed, and key stakeholders and traders engaged.	
5.7	PB raises that there were a lot of lessons learned during the Masterplan consultations with Ryder and this learning should be incorporated. GW concurs.	
6.0	Stronger Towns Guidance	
6.1	The Stronger Towns Bid Guidance document has now been received and is included within the meeting documents.	

6.2	<p>There are six schemes within the Masterplan. DL suggests breaking up into sub-groups to develop individual themes to then bring back to this forum:</p> <p>MM to lead on Digital Connectivity and Local Transport BP to lead on Arts, Culture and Heritage ND-T to lead on Skills and Infrastructure Cllr BS to lead on Urban Regeneration Planning Rate</p>	<p>MM BP ND-T BS</p>
6.3	<p>GW concurs with the above approach and advises that it is in line with the guidance.</p>	
6.4	<p>DL asks meeting attendees to agree on when we wish to submit the bid – July 2020, October 2020 or January 2021. The decision is reached to submit in January 2021 as this affords the most time to collate a successful bid.</p>	<p>Approved</p>
6.5	<p>GP comments that a Plan of Action from now through to submission in January should be developed so that we have a clear understanding of the elements of work to be included and coordinated. Discussion also to be had to identify what capacity of consultants/technical experts we require and where, in order for budget to be allocated.</p>	
6.6	<p>DL concurs with the above. Clarity of the overall vision and plan/objectives will afford the sub-groups direction. Consultants should be aligned quickly and involved in Board Meetings to ensure constant flow of feedback.</p>	
6.7	<p>PB queries if subgroups can be made up of a mix of Board Members and other wider members of the community, such as Heritage England. DL approves of involvement of other groups from the outset.</p>	
6.8	<p>GW advises that the bid process has two phases - upon approval of the submission in January 2021 which sets out the project vision, we would move into the detailed project development business case phase.</p>	
6.9	<p>DL comments that attempting to integrate the FHSF with the Stronger Towns bid may prove difficult as we do not receive the outcome of the FHSF until September 2020. Proposal to increase the frequency of Board Meetings to fortnightly so that we can get the bigger vision/objectives for this bid agreed. DL to issue meeting invites through to January.</p>	<p>DL</p>
6.10	<p>GP proposes that development of a Town Investment Plan is the first thing that the Board should commission to provide the foundations for building the bid.</p>	
6.11	<p>The decision was reached to directly award Genecon as lead consultant and programme manager for the bid writing. This is subject to review of their fees and budget available. DL to set a budget offline with GW.</p>	<p>Approved DL</p>

6.12	GW will request Geoncon to submit a proposal for pulling the bid together, a fee schedule and list of sub-consultants, to be brought back to this forum for approval.	GW
6.13	Total overall budget available for preparation of the bid is confirmed as £162k.	
6.14	GP comments that there should be a review of works that could be done in house in order to save on consultant fees. The Investment Plan and Economic Baseline Report are suggested as works to be completed internally.	GW
6.15	DL suggests finding an empty building within the high street to be used as a hub to display plans, CGI's and virtual reality to inform and engage local people with the proposals. DM advises that TAP can look at the possibility of one of their properties to host this.	DM
7.0	Capacity Funding Proposals	
7.1	Further work is required on key infrastructure constraints such as: - high level work surrounding the Eastern Access Road approx. £20k - modelling and design works for Tindale Junction approx. £15k. DL confirms that we should look to do this works further down the line in the decision making process regarding Stronger Towns.	
7.2	DL advises that we need to be able to construct a robust argument if we want to get the boundary lines of the town adjusted. DD happy to initiate conversations with neighbouring MPs regarding this.	DD
7.3	GP notes that Tom Frater did comment at the last Board Meeting that the issue of boundaries would be a difficult ask.	
8.0	AOB	
8.1	N/A	
	Meeting Closed.	