

Minutes of The Bishop Auckland Stronger Towns Board Meeting

Tuesday 21st December 2020, 12.30 – 14.30, Microsoft Teams

Attendees:		
David Land	DL	Chair
Jonathan Ruffer	JR	The Auckland Project, Founder
David Maddan	DM	The Auckland Project, CEO
Bishop Paul Butler	PB	Chair of the Brighter BA Partnership Board
Rob Yorke	RY	Teescraft, Private Sector Representative
Cllr Brian Stephens	BS	Portfolio Lead for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships
Cllr Shirley Quinn	SQ	Councillor
Natalie Davison-Terranova	ND-T	Bishop Auckland College, Principal/Chief Executive
Amy Harhoff	AH	Durham County Council, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy & Growth
Supporting		
Graham Wood	GW	Durham County Council, Economic Development Manager
Claire Barry	CB	Secretariat (Minutes) DCC
Stuart Timmiss	ST	Durham County Council, Head of Development & Housing
Lisa Quinn	LQ	Town Coordinator, Nicholls Group
Jonathan Gilroy	JG	Cities and Local Growth Team
Margaret Coates	MC	Cities and Local Growth Team
Graeme Collinge	GC	Genecon, Director

Apologies:		
Joy Allen	JA	DCC Councillor
Dehenna Davis	DD	MP for Bishop Auckland

Item		Action
1.0	Welcome/Introductions	
1.1	No issues were raised.	
2.0	Review of Previous Minutes	
2.1	Accepted as a true record	
3.0	Declarations of Interest – if any	
3.1	No declarations of interest were registered	

4.0	Town Board Submission Update	
4.1	GW noted the submission update built on recent information provided to Board members and covered issues relating to Project Development & Submission, Consultation, Governance and capacity support	
	The online consultation survey and associated Town Fund consultation website went live on 11 December 2020 and is to remain live until 4 January 2021. The survey analysis together with a summary of other Town wide consultations will be integrated into final report on proposed submission to Board on 22 January 2021	
	As at 20 December, the Facebook posts for the Consultation have reached 15,795 people. There have been 241 likes and shares through Facebook and 1058 post clicks on Twitter. This activity has generated 134 Completed surveys. These provide a balance of residents and non residents	
	The Vision has received a score of almost 4.4 out of 5. Further discussions are to take place regarding how this will be refined for the submission.	
	It was noted that all projects are attracting positive attention. With town centre diversification, heritage walking and cycling and the Heritage museum scoring best at present.	
	Reflecting on feedback from ARUP previous Market engagement events will also be referenced as part of the stakeholder engagement	
	DL enquired how this level of engagement would be received by the assessor; GC advised that the assessor has raised s regarding the Eastern Access road however it was noted that this relates to infrastructure whereby there may not be a lot of interest.	
	AH advised that further work is required to obtain a stronger sense regarding the wave of consultation and the wave of activity including the masterplan that will assist accessibility questions.	
	GW requested that Board members share the link to the consultation exercise and encourage their network to take part.	ALL
	JR advised that he would liaise with TAP and Kynren; GW is to provide the link to directly to them.	GW/JR
	GW is to provide an update at the next Board meeting on 8 January 2021.	GW

4.2	As reported to the Board in August, the Capacity Fund provided by MHCLG has been utilised in support of developing the TIP 1 submission.	
	There are additional desktop publishing cost required as the submission as this comes forward.	
	Additional specialist studies and feasibility requirements that total £807,000 for projects to reach the stage where they are fit for submission. Much of this is already underway but there is still a lot of work that is still required to be carried out.	
	The next stage is the development of the business cases. The remaining funding to support this is £37,159. GW advised that there will be significant challenges regarding the additional capacity requirement to get the projects ready for consideration.	
4.3	A direction of travel meeting with ARUP and other Town Fund Delivery Partners took place on 18 December 2020. This did not constitute a formal 'Check and Challenge' which is still to be carried out with ARUP and is scheduled for 14 January 2021. This is to form part of the run in to the submission of the bid.	
	AH advised that there is a very tight timescale whereby the date for the meeting is to be confirmed as soon as possible; GW is to liaise with ARUP.	GW
	The risk register details how submissions are to be developed. The requirement to demonstrate that an exceptional case exists for any submission over £25 million.	
5.0	Town Board Governance Arrangements	
5.1	The report provides an update on the governance requirement for the Town Boards. The requirements are contained in the Town Fund Guidance publication from MHCLG dated June 2020 and the Town Fund Prospectus of November 2019	
5.2	All Board papers to be published on the Lead Council's website; this will take place from January 2021.	GW
5.3	The Board Members are to provide profile information to GW by 6 January 2021 for review at the Board meeting on 8 January 2021.	ALL
6.0	Town Investment Plan	
6.1	GC advised that good progress is being made on the Plan. The introduction section is to be revised. There is a strong vision statement that is included.	
	It has been recognised that Bishop Auckland have the potential to push on County Durham Visitor economy and this has been incorporated into the Plan.	

	AH advised that the economic narrative is to be made clear regarding the scale of what is being undertaken, what is the vision in addition to what is being provided through the Town Fund and place Bishop Auckland more clearly as part of County Durham and the economies of scale. This is to be made as strong as possible to external bodies who do not know the area.	
	JR stated that the scope and size of what is being undertaken is to be highlighted; GC advised that now the vision statement is in place there is the opportunity to bring this back into the introduction.	
	GC is to circulate the document to the group are to review and provide any comments to GC by 5 January 2021; GW is to liaise with GC for an update to be provided at the next Board meeting on 8 January 2021.	GC GC/GW
	Bishop Auckland provides the opportunity to be viewed in the same light as Blackpool as an exemplary bid whereby it is necessary to detail the scale of the County Durham catchment. It was noted that this links to the Blackpool experience referenced in the ARUP session.	
	AH advised that this is a technical catchment and care is required to keep the narrative of national significance. Information regarding the future catchment and the national reach that Bishop Auckland can have is required.	
7.0	Any Other Business	
7.1	No issues were raised	
8.0	Date of the next meeting	
8.1	Friday 8 January 2021 at 12.30 p.m.	