

BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE

On Wednesday 17 February 2021 at 10.30am

To be held via a Teams Virtual Meeting

MINUTES (PUBLIC)

In attendance:

VOTING MEMBERS

Councillor Patrick Harley, Dudley MBC
Councillor Danny Millard, Sandwell MBC
(sub)
Councillor Mike Bird, Walsall MBC (Chair)
Councillor Ian Brookfield, City of
Wolverhampton

NON VOTING MEMBERS

Tom Westley, Black Country LEP

INVITED GUESTS

Kevin O'Keefe, Dudley MBC
David Stevens, Sandwell MBC
Dr Helen Paterson, Walsall MBC
Tim Johnson, City of Wolverhampton
Sarah Middleton, The Black Country
Consortium Ltd
Lara Smith, The Black Country Consortium
Ltd
Tammy Stokes, Sandwell MBC
Simon Neilson, Walsall MBC
Helen Martin, Dudley MBC
Ruth Taylor, City of Wolverhampton
Stuart Everton, Black Country Director for
Transport

Councillor Bird welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting which was being held in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Councillor Bird advised that the requirement for meetings to be quorate still applied and should the meeting become inquorate (less than 3) due to technological issues, then the meeting would be adjourned for a defined period to allow for reconnection.

Councillor Bird then asked each participant to confirm that they could see and hear proceedings. Cllr Bird confirmed that the meeting was quorate and welcomed any members of the public viewing the meeting online.

Apologies

Councillor Maria Crompton, Sandwell
Richard Lawrence, City of Wolverhampton

Notes of Meeting held on 9 December 2021

Decision 21/0001

Councillor Bird moved approval of the minutes of the meeting on 9 December 2020 which was put to the vote by way of a roll-call of BCJC members. The motion was subsequently declared carried and it was

Resolved (unanimously)

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2020 be confirmed as a true record.

Matters Arising from the notes of the previous meeting

None

Declarations of Interest

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended):

To agree that the public be excluded from the private session

Decision 21/0002 Resolved (unanimously)

The public be excluded from the private session during consideration of items 12 and 13.

Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)

Black Country Local Growth Deal – ACCESSING GROWTH SPRINGFIELD INTERCHANGE (SEPPL44) – Change Request - Amendment to the Existing Grant Agreement

Lara Smith referred to the report previously circulated and explained that the aim of this project was to substantially enhance and create a sustainable access from the Wolverhampton interchange to the new campus. This will enable students from the wider area to access the new learning opportunity. The project will considerably revitalize this part of the City centre. The project was completed in 2017. Following on from the most recent audit and project closure visit by the Accountable Body, it has been highlighted that Land Remediation as a direct output was incorrectly captured at the time of project bidding. At that point in time in the Growth Deal Programme, the Initial proposal form did not capture any Transport related Outputs. The Change Request is to amend the measure of land remediated (1 Hectare) to length of new cycle way (0.5 km). This change is required due to a clerical error in declaring the 1 hectare of land associated with the Springfield Campus Development as a direct output when it should have been identified as an indirect output. In addition, the development has resulted in further outputs being achieved that were not originally identified, these being 0.2 km of road resurfaced and 0.412km of footway resurfaced.

Councillor Bird commented that he felt this is an excellent scheme.

Decision 21/0003

Councillor Bird moved the recommendations that were put to the vote by way of a roll-call of BCJC members. The motion was subsequently declared carried and it was Resolved (unanimously) that the Joint Committee

- 2.1 approves the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) for the Growth Deal to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Wolverhampton City Council, to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Accessing Growth Springfield Interchange project with delivery to commence in the 2020/21 financial year.
- 2.2 Notes that this change request relates to a change in outputs for the Springfield Interchange scheme.

Black Country Local Growth Deal – FAB KIT - PTP Ltd (SEPP11) Change Request – Amendment to the Existing Grant Agreement

Lara Smith referred to the report previously circulated and explained that the project has been successful to date with the applicant having overachieved on all of their outputs, with the exception of business assists. The proposed change is requesting an extension to enable the project to fully deliver the contracted target.

PTP wish to reduce their match funding commitment as the organisation were the subject of a virus attack on their IT system and the Sage financial system was lost. There are no records from that period now that could verify the balance of the match funding to be claimed. To date £156,728.84 has been verified leaving a deficit of £43, 273.16.

The project has always been found to be good value for money and as the project has consistently over-achieved on all other aspects of the scheme, it is recommended to remove the outstanding balance of match funding. An updated Benefits Cost Ratio (BCR) has been provided to ensure that the proposed changes are not detrimental to the Value for Money element of the scheme.

Decision 21/0004

Councillor Bird moved the recommendations that were put to the vote by way of a roll-call of BCJC members. The motion was subsequently declared carried and it was Resolved (unanimously) that the Joint Committee

- 2.1 approves the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) for the Local Growth Deal to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Performance Through People (PTP) Ltd, to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Fab Kit – PTP Ltd project with delivery to continue up to the 2023/24 financial year.
- 2.2 This change relates to reprofiling the business assists over a longer time period and the reduction of the match funding for the project.

Growing Places Fund – DUDLEY CANAL TRUST (TRIPS) LTD (SEPPL125) – Change Request – Amendment to the existing Grant Agreement

Decision 21/0005

This report was presented in private session and a decision was made following consideration of the confidential information.

Land and Property Investment Fund – SANDWELL HOUSING GAP FUNDING – PHASE 1 (SEPPL87) – Amendment to the existing Grant Agreement

Lara Smith referred to the report previously circulated and explained that this funding is for two Council owned sites – Stanhope Road, Smethwick and King Street, Wednesbury. There has been some delay in finalising the Grant Agreement, however the project has continued to progress at risk and good progress has been made. A change request has been brought forward, as the financial forecast for the grant award has changed, and differs to what is scheduled in the contract with the Accountable Body.

Decision 21/0006

Councillor Bird moved the recommendations that were put to the vote by way of a roll-call of BCJC members. The motion was subsequently declared carried and it was Resolved (unanimously) that the Joint Committee

- 2.1 approves for the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) for the Land and Property Investment Fund to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Sandwell Council to deliver the Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF) funded elements of the Sandwell Housing Gap Funding - Phase 1 project with delivery to commence in the 2020/21 financial year.
- 2.2 Notes that this change request relates to the financial forecast for the grant award being changed and differs to what is scheduled in the contract with the Accountable Body.

Growth Hub – Growth Hub EU Transitional Business Readiness – Grant Agreement

Lara Smith referred to the report previously circulated and explained that The Department for Business, Energy and Industry Strategy (BEIS) is making a grant available to the Black Country LEP Growth Hub for the purpose of delivering EU Transition Business Readiness for the Black Country region. is additional revenue funding to the 2020-2021 core grant funding awarded to Accountable Bodies for Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) for their Growth Hubs. The Grant can only be spent on certain agreed Growth Hub activities for issues connected with the ending of the transitional period for the UK leaving the EU on 31st December 2020.

Decision 21/0007

BCJC 17-02-21 – MINUTES

Councillor Bird moved the recommendations that were put to the vote by way of a roll-call of BCJC members. The motion was subsequently declared carried and it was Resolved (unanimously) that the Joint Committee approves for the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to enter into a Grant Agreement with the Black Country Consortium Ltd for the additional award of EU Transition Business Readiness Growth Hub Grant Funding up to £136,050 with delivery to commence in the 2020/21 financial year.

CONSTITUTION AND TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2021 – Review of the BCJC Governance

Simon Neilson referred to the report previously circulated and explained that following a request from the Association of Black Country Authorities Chiefs Executives and Leaders, the Single Accountable Body (SAB) at Walsall and the Programme Management Office (PMO) at the Black Country Consortium Ltd have been looking at ways to streamline and simplify the approvals process but ensuring appropriate Governance is maintained at all times. The suggested process to remove the Advisory Board and add 3 additional Joint Committee meetings is detailed fully in the report. The Black Country LEP Board, Heads of Regeneration Working Group and the Advisory Board have been fully appraised of the recommendations and endorse them for approval.

Councillor Brookfield welcomed the change.

Decision 21/0008

Councillor Bird moved the recommendations that were put to the vote by way of a roll-call of BCJC members. The motion was subsequently declared carried and it was Resolved (unanimously) that the Joint Committee

- 2.1 approves the removal of the Advisory Board, with Black Country Heads of Regeneration taking responsibility for wider consultation, including briefing Cabinet Portfolio Holders
- 2.2. the addition of 3 extra Black Country Executive Joint Committee meetings in 2021 as shown in Appendix 2 to approve key projects. Noting that if there are no items on the Forward Plan, the associated Black Country Executive Joint Committee meetings will be cancelled.

PRIVATE SESSION (Public Summary)

(Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended))

Notes of Previous Meeting held on 9 December 2020 – Private Session

Decision 21/0009

Councillor Bird moved the recommendation which was put to the vote by way of a roll-call of BCJC members. The motion was subsequently declared carried and it was

Resolved (unanimously) That the Private Session notes of the meeting held on 9 December 2020 be confirmed as a true record.

Growing Places Fund – DUDLEY CANAL TRUST (TRIPS) LTD (SEPPL125) – Amendment to the existing Grant Agreement

Decision 21/0010

Councillor Bird moved the recommendations that were put to the vote by way of a roll-call of BCJC members. The motion was subsequently declared carried and it was

Resolved (unanimously)

Following consideration of the confidential information in the Private Session report, it was resolved unanimously that the Joint Committee :

- 2.1 approves Sandwell Council to proceed to amending the funding repayment schedule with the Dudley Canal Trust (Trips) Limited, funded from within the Growing Places Fund (GPF), with delivery to continue in the 2020/21 financial year.
- 2.2 Note that this change request relates to a repayment holiday and change to the current loan repayment arrangements due to the impact that COVID-19 has had on the organisation.