

BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE

On Wednesday 31 March 2021 at 10.30am

To be held via a Teams Virtual Meeting

MINUTES (PUBLIC)

IN ATTENDANCE

VOTING MEMBERS

Councillor Patrick Harley, Dudley MBC
Councillor Mike Bird, Walsall MBC (**Chair**)
Councillor Ian Brookfield, City of
Wolverhampton

NON VOTING MEMBERS

Tom Westley, Black Country LEP

INVITED GUESTS

David Stevens, Sandwell MBC
Dr Helen Paterson, Walsall MBC
Sarah Middleton, The Black Country
Consortium Ltd
Lara Smith, The Black Country Consortium
Ltd
Simon Neilson, Walsall MBC
Helen Martin, Dudley MBC
Richard Lawrence, City of Wolverhampton

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

Kevin O'Keefe, Dudley MBC
Tammy Stokes, Sandwell MBC
Councillor Maria Crompton, Sandwell MBC
Stuart Everton, Black Country Director for Transport
Tim Johnson, City of Wolverhampton Council

Notes of Meeting held on 17 February 2021

Decision 21/0011

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)

BCJC 31/03/21 – MINUTES (PUBLIC)

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 21/0012 Resolved (unanimously)

The public be excluded from the private session during consideration of item 12.

Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)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 – HUB TO HOME TRANSPORT INNOVATION CENTRE AND TEST TRACK PROJECT: VERY LIGHT RAIL AND AUTONOMOUS TECHNOLOGIES – NATIONAL INNOVATION CENTRE PROJECT (SEPB8) - Grant Agreement Capital Funding

Lara Smith referred to the report previously circulated and explained that the full funding amount required for the Innovation centre is £13m, of which £12,350,000 is being funded from the Getting Building Fund (GBF). Due to the ambitious timescales for the GBF programme and the need to spend / draw down on grant funding quickly, the priority has always been to prioritise project claims, against the GBF programme. The Programme Management Office (PMO) are now recommending that the final funding gap on the VLR scheme of £650,000, be allocated and approved against the Growth Deal over-programming (Growing Places Fund).

Decision 21/0013

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 approve the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to enter into a Grant Agreement with Dudley Council to the value of £650,000 to deliver the Local Growth Deal Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Hub to Home Transport Innovation Centre and Test Track Project: Very Light Rail and Autonomous Technologies – National Innovation Centre project with delivery to commence in the 2020/21 financial year.

Growing Places Fund – WOLVERHAMPTON CANALSIDE (SEPPL145) - Change Request – Amendment to the existing Grant Agreement

Lara Smith referred to the report previously circulated and explained that following agreement to the grant for this project to aid with business relocation costs, Outputs detailed at 3.7 of the report have been captured in the new reshaped Canalside North and Canalside South projects. The PMO still deem the project as good value for money however the Outputs need to be removed to ensure that they are not double counted.

Cllr Brookfield commented that this project has been very successful and opened up various pieces of surrounding land and is now drawing in more funding for various other projects.

Decision 21/0014

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 approve Sandwell Council to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Wolverhampton City Council, to deliver the Growing Places Fund (GPF) funded elements of the Wolverhampton Canalside project with delivery to conclude in the 2020/21 financial year.

Note: this request relates to the removal of outputs, as the scope of the original project has changed significantly.

Land and Property Investment Fund – PROGRAMME EXTENSION AND REPROFILE

Lara Smith referred to the report previously circulated and explained that this report is to request an extension to the LPIF programme for both spend and outputs as some projects have been impacted by the unforeseen effects of Lockdown brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Revenue funding is also required to ensure that the programme is monitored by the Team through to completion. West Midlands Combined Authority are very supportive and approved extension of the timeframe at their board in January 2021.

Decision 21/0015

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 Black Country Land and Property Investment Fund Programme be re-profiled to allow expenditure and outputs to be claimed up to March 2025.
- 2.2 approves the programme management costs are extended for a further year to March 2026, to ensure that the expenditure and outputs are audited in line with the Black Country Assurance Framework.

Getting Building Fund - PROGRAMME APPROVAL FOR CAPITAL AND REVENUE FUNDING

BCJC 31/03/21 – MINUTES (PUBLIC)

Lara Smith referred to the report previously circulated and explained that this request is for approval of the programme management costs that have been allocated to the Black Country (funds previously known as Get Britain Building Fund GBBF). Walsall Council will administer the funds and the Programme Management Office (PMO) at the Black Country Consortium Limited and Walsall Council as the Accountable Body will share the revenue funding on a 60:40 basis. Walsall Council as the Accountable Body in addition, will also claim the “contingency fund” to cover the external appraisal costs as well as any legal costs incurred.

The original agreed funding profile has been changed for all projects in the West Midlands and the new funding profile was issued by the WMCA to all 3 LEP’s in the region – this is detailed in Table 2 of the report for each of the 3 Black Country projects.

Councillor Brookfield asked for clarification of 2.1 second bullet point in the report and Lara confirmed that Walsall Council will initially cover the legal costs and these will need to be claimed back by Walsall Council and paid from the “contingency funding” allocation.

Decision 21/0016

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) to use the revenue funding and capital contingency funding for:
 - Walsall Council to carry out its role as Accountable Body to the Getting Building Fund (GBF) programme.
 - Walsall Council to cover (reclaim) the costs of the external legal and technical fees in support of managing the programme.
- 2.2 Approves the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to enter into a Grant Agreement with the Black Country Consortium Limited for the Management and Administration functions of the Getting Building Fund (GBF).
- 2.3 Approves the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to proceed to re-profile the Getting Building Fund (GBF) projects Hub to Home Transport Innovation Centre and Test Track Project: Very Light Rail and Autonomous Technologies – Innovation Centre (Dudley Council), and the National Brownfield Institute Phase 2 - Construction and Delivery (University of Wolverhampton).

PRIVATE SESSION

(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 17 February 2021 – Private Session

Decision 21/0017

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 17 February 2021 be confirmed as a true record.