



## **ACTION NOTES**

**Title of Meeting:** Bloxwich & Walsall Town Deal Board Meeting

**Date:** Thursday 8 September 2022 10.00am-12.00Noon

**Venue:** Microsoft Teams 'Virtual' Meeting

**Quorum -** Minimum of 6 voting members, with at least one representative from: Private, Local Government and Communities membership categories, together with Walsall Council.

### **VOTING MEMBERS – Via Teams**

Jhoots Pharmacy / Group (**Chair**) - Manjit Jhooty  
Walsall Council – Shaun Darcy  
Walsall Council – Mark Lavender  
Fairfax Saddles / Chair of Bloxwich Town Deal Advisory Board – Rupert Fairfax  
Reach All Ltd / Chair of Walsall Town Deal Advisory Board – Karl Woodward  
OneWalsall – David Bengé  
University of Wolverhampton – Ray Flynn  
West Midlands Combined Authority – Patricia Willoughby  
Walsall College - James Norris  
Mercian Trust / BCLEP Board– Kevin Davis

### **MEMBERS – Via Teams**

Walsall Council – Alison Guerra  
Walsall Council – Kelly Valente  
Walsall Council (Note taker) – Jayne Hadley  
Walsall Council – Lucy Clarke

### **GUESTS – Via Teams**

Walsall College – Deb Rajania  
Walsall Council – Liz Stuffins

### **PUBLIC SESSION**

Mark Lavender stated this part of the meeting would be recorded. There were no objections to this.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised the first part of this meeting will be in public session for agenda items 1-5, then the meeting moves into private session.

#### **1. Apologies**

Midcounties Co-operative – Tarra Simmons,  
Walsall North – Eddie Hughes MP,  
Walsall Council – Philippa Venables,  
Walsall College – Jat Sharma,

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McDonalds - Doug Wright,  
Walsall Council - Councillor Andrew,  
Homeserve USA – Robert Judson,  
ZF Lemforder – Tim Kibble,  
Walsall Council – Bryte Legister,  
Walsall Council - Elizabeth Connolly,  
Walsall Council – Jon King,  
Walsall Council – Simon Tranter

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

None were declared.

### **3. Minutes (Public) of the previous meeting**

Lucy Clarke shared public minutes from the last meeting on 27 July 2022.

The minutes were then accepted as an accurate record, Manjit Jhooty confirmed, and Rupert Fairfax seconded this.

### **4. Bloxwich Advisory Board – Chair’s update**

Rupert Fairfax provided an update:

- Meetings of the Bloxwich Advisory Board have taken place and have been well attended.
- An update on attendees – Robert Judson who attends from Homeserve and is now CEO of Homeserve USA. Rob Gilham is a new attendee from WHG replacing Julie Haywood. We are also joined by Louise White, Transformation Programme Manager, Walsall Together.
- We have been kept up to date and happy with progress on projects, with detailed presentations so far on Digital Access and Incubation Centre. The Green Bloxwich Project update delivered by Liz Stuffins provided an excellent presentation which has been circulated for input/comment. A site visit is being arranged for October.

#### Questions/Comments

*Manjit Jhooty thanked Rupert Fairfax for his update and stated it was good to hear this Board are being involved and a site visit being arranged.*

### **5. Walsall Advisory Board – Chair’s update**

Karl Woodward provided an update:

- There has not been a meeting since the previous one in July.
- 5 schemes have been submitted to the Government and understand we have received feedback which has been positive.

## **PUBLIC**

- The other projects are on track, lots of dialogue taking place and have now received due diligence for these.

### **6. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Mark Lavender advised – the next meeting dates are to be confirmed expected to fall between 4-6 weeks, dependent upon the need to respond to government timetables etc.

Future meetings have therefore not been confirmed during this period due to time constraints with government timelines. We will also look to set into place meeting dates for the year ahead.

Recording was stopped at this time.

**Public Session closed at 10.13am.**

## **PRIVATE SESSION**

**(Exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act, 1972) (as amended)**

### **7. Notes of the previous meeting**

Notes of the previous private meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2022 were agreed as an accurate record. Manjit Jhoothy agreed, and this was seconded and confirmed.

Lucy Clarke provided an update on private session actions.

### **8. Bloxwich Town Deal Programme – Programme Development Updates**

Mark Lavender advised that the update was covered by the presentations of the projects later on the agenda.

### **9. Walsall Town Deal Programme – Programme Development Updates**

In the absence of Philippa Venables and Bryte Legister, Mark Lavender provided updates on the Walsall Town Deal Projects:

As approved by the Town Deal Board in June 2022, the required paperwork was processed and submitted to government for the following projects, following signature by the Councils' Section 151 officer:

- Construction Skills Academy
- Advanced Electric Vehicle Technology Centre
- Active Travel & Connectivity Programme
- The Digital Skills Hub
- The Community Capital Programme

## **PUBLIC**

The paperwork submitted (Summary documents Change Requests and M&E plans etc.) have passed Government reviews and are now entering the payment stage with payment expected in September 2022.

For the remaining Walsall Town Deal projects:

The Active Public Spaces programme will now be submitted in September 2022.

The Town Centre Theatre and Creative Industries Enterprise Centre projects will now be submitted in December 2022, as further time is required to complete the Business Cases and associated paperwork for these projects.

### **10. Town Deal Business Cases for consideration and agreement**

#### **Bloxwich Town Deal Programme**

Mark Lavender reminded board members that the project documents requiring consideration for approval were uploaded to the Teams folder. Mark then took the meeting through one projects' documents in detail, as an example of the work and levels of detail required etc.

The Active Travel and Community Capital project business cases were presented to this meeting in June. They included details for both Bloxwich and Walsall programmes in one combined Business Case. Today the summary documents for the Bloxwich programme are being presented for approval so they could be submitted

Approval for the Walsall elements had already been received. Now approval was sought for the Bloxwich elements so these could be processed and submitted to Government in September 2022.

#### **a. Green Bloxwich Programme**

- Liz Stuffins provided an update on the Greening Bloxwich project:
- Green Infrastructure/Regeneration opportunities, sites for development are King George V Park, Bloxwich Park and Promenade and Leamore Park.
- Buildings requiring refurbishment were also discussed.
- Project objectives were discussed.
- Links to Strategic Objectives discussed.
- Project ideas listed.
- Stakeholder engagement had taken place with Ward Councillors, user groups, schools and resident survey with 500 responses received.
- Preferred concept plans and building projects were shared for each site.
- Allotment projects referred to.

Karl Woodward commented that with the designs there is huge potential for a green sustainable footprint and asked what the thought process was to bring this green footprint into the actual buildings themselves?

Liz advised that the team had worked with consultants on this, their biggest focus initially being insulation – i.e., cladding the existing building, but other green initiatives will be dealt with in the second phase.

Mark Lavender added that there were other opportunities around green initiatives with the Construction Skills Training Centre and conversations with Registered Social landlords are also taking place around reducing carbon footprints.

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*Manjit Jhooty commented that there are good levels of engagement, and it would be good to see this for each project.*

### b. Promotion of Construction Skills Through Regeneration

Mark Lavender provided an overview of the project via the briefing pack. This programme aims to seek proposals from land and property owners to improve existing and develop new housing across the Bloxwich Town Deal area. To be successful, all construction works must be linked to the use of local labour and supply chains, together with training and apprenticeships for local people. Further details will be available in early 2023.

### c. Incubation Space & Digital Access Centre

Mark Lavender provided an update:

- This project came from the work to develop the Town Deal Investment Plans (TIP's), and subsequent work that identified gaps in provision etc.
- There is currently no provision within the town centre dedicated for Bloxwich residents who for example are digitally excluded. This project will provide space in the town centre for digital learning, access to the internet, together with learning spaces and act as a recruitment venue for locally delivered provision, including any new Town Deal initiatives.
- The Incubation Space elements will be similar spaces to those currently successful in the marketplace including Urban Hax in Walsall and the Custard Factory in Birmingham. Creating professional space for existing and the creation of new businesses, with support etc.
- A programme of support is being developed for new businesses.
- Preferred options for its location are being developed.

## **11. Walsall Town Deal Documents submitted to Government**

### a. Project Summary Documents

#### Active Public Spaces

Mark Lavender provided an update:

- This project is linked to Town Centre Masterplan, within Gallery Square and Park Street and aims to create a connected gateway that encourages people to visit and dwell within the town centre within this attractive environment.
- It will also link into a range of planned improvements to the canal basin and local network

#### Request of the Board

Mark Lavender advised there were 6 Project Summary documents to submit to Government by next week and asked the Board to approve submission of these 6 documents on or before next week to secure the resource required to take these forwards.

Manjit Jhooty, as Chair, requested agreement – **the Board agreed and recommended (22/TDB/005/R) submission of these documents for the projects listed below:**

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1. Active Public Spaces
2. Active Travel & Connectivity Programme
3. Community Capital Programme
4. Promotion of Construction Skills Through Regeneration
5. Green Bloxwich Programme
6. Incubation Space & Digital Access Centre

### b. Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

Mark Lavender provided an update for all projects and shared the M&E Plan:

- M&E plans are submitted for each project
- The plan sets out in one excel spreadsheet all the Bloxwich projects with outcomes and outputs.

Alison Guerra advised that each Town Deal has its own plan, which contains mandatory indicators that must be reported on twice yearly.

- Each plan will help form the projects individual grant agreements and offer letter. The team will use these milestones to identify project performance. All plans had been circulated for board members to view.
- The plan will also be a central focus for performance/Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating and will champion success and detail any shortfalls. We will be evaluated by Government as a programme. We will also commission our own evaluation process so we can look at what works and what also hasn't perhaps worked well. This will support us to gain external funding, post Town Deal as required.

### c. Project Adjustment Requests

Government contacted us in August to open project adjustment requests, the closing date for their submission is 9<sup>th</sup> September.

Mark Lavender took the board through the proposed submissions and changes, included within the Teams briefing pack updates.

### Request of the Board

Mark Lavender – asked for the Board's approval to submit the project adjustment requests as set out.

Manjit Jhooty, as Chair, asked if Board Members agreed - **the Board agreed and recommended submission of these documents (22/TDB/006/R).**

## **12. Forward Plan**

This item was discussed within earlier items on the agenda.

## **13. Any Other Business / Date of Next Meeting**

### Any Other Business

## **PUBLIC**

*(i)Ray Flynn thanked officers for their work on the projects and offered partnership working and assistance from the University of Wolverhampton, who have links with the Brownfield Institute, on projects such as the Construction Skills Project and also learner engagement, CPD activity, research and development.*

### Dates of future meetings

Manjit Jhooty requested that dates be added in the diary as soon as possible and thanked the whole team for their hard work.

**Meeting closed at 11.40am**