



Walsall Council

ACTION NOTES

- Title of Meeting:** Bloxwich & Walsall Town Deal Board Meeting
- Date:** Wednesday 15th November 2023 14:30 – 16:00pm
- 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

Present:

Manjit Jhooty – Jhoots Pharmacy (Chair)
Robert Judson – Homeserve
Dave Brown – Walsall Council
David Moore – Walsall Council
David Bengel – OneWalsall
Rupert Fairfax – Fairfax Saddles / Chair of Bloxwich Advisory Board
Ray Flynn – University of Wolverhampton
Shaun Darcy – Walsall Council
Mark Lavender – Walsall Council

MEMBERS / ADVISORS – Via Teams

Alison Guerra (AG) – Walsall Council
Richard Ackerley (RA) – Walsall Council
Kelly Valente (KV) – Walsall Council
Keith Beech (KB) – Walsall Council
Natasha Mann (NM) – Walsall Council
Claire Wills (CW) – Walsall Council
Dean Stephens (DS) – Walsall Council
Helen Kirk (HK) – Walsall Council
Deb Rajania (DR) – Walsall College
Eleanor Cooper (EC) – Walsall Council
James Dennison (JD) – Canal & River Trust
Kaye Davies (KD) – Walsall Council
Richard McVittie (RM) – Walsall Council
Surinder Kaur (SK) – Walsall Council (Note taker/Actions/Minutes)
Isabel Clarke (IC) – Walsall Council
Matthew Llyod (MLO) Walsall Council

Apologies

Jatinder Sharma, Liz Stuffins, James Dennison, Kevin Davis, Tarra Simmons, Kaye Davies, and Sharlene Smith, Philippa Venables

PUBLIC MEETING FINAL VERSION

Manjit Jhooty stated this part of the meeting would be recorded. There were no objections to this.

Surinder Kaur started recording the meeting at 2:32pm

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The first part of this meeting will be in public session for agenda items 1-6 then the meeting will move into private session.

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

PUBLIC SESSION

1. Welcome and Introductions

Introductions were provided to the group by: Richard McVittie, attending for Liz Staffins.

2. Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

3. Minutes (Public) of the previous meeting and actions update

Surinder Kaur shared public minutes from the last meeting on 11th October 2023.

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

4. Bloxwich Advisory Board – Chair’s update

Rupert Fairfax provided an update on the November 2023 meeting;

All projects were progressing well and on target, exciting projects in the pipeline with no major concerns.

Updates /presentations had been provided on all Bloxwich projects within the programme which were all progressing well with no current concerns, diligent work taking place.

Marketing and Comms is progressing as follows.

- Update received re Verto and its links to Microsoft enabling dashboard style reports to be presented in the future, allowing all to see what was taking place with projects.
- Initial cost estimates for Green Bloxwich coming in higher than expected, staff are working to reduce these.
- The Incubation Pace & Digital Access centre work is on track, and the name of the facility is developing well and short listed to three names.
- Work had started on the Active travel junction improvements including road crossings and associated cycling and walking routes.
- Work has recommenced at the Bloxwich canal improvements and is progressing well, complimented by a positive press release for Canals & River Trust work and improvements on 10th November 2023.
- Discussions on the focus for Comms & Marketing looked at improving / raising the awareness throughout local communities where the works are taking place etc. RJ agreed to meet with KB and NM to discuss how we could better communicate all of the significant work that’s taking place or planned.

PUBLIC MEETING FINAL VERSION

5. Walsall Advisory Board – Chair’s update:

Karl Woodward provided an update on the 31 October 2023 meeting, much progress has been made since the previous meeting across a number of outstanding projects.

- Power Bi and Verto presentations and updates were shared and help with the understanding of how projects are developing including their risks and milestones.
- Comms & Marketing updates and presentation was shared and updated informing members present of the previous and forthcoming events.
- The Creative Industries project is at RIBA stage 4, planning submitted.
- Active Public Spaces and Adult Learning Centre design works are progressing well.
- The Construction Skills Academy construction works are progressing well and on schedule.
- For the Digital skills project, design proposals for the four units now purchased are presented, layout was shared, looking to open early 2024.
- Community Capital projects has a healthy and active pipeline, the first two for consideration and agreement were presented and supported.
- Some projects have finance issues in terms of cost and budgets etc. and are aware of the risks.
- Actions were completed and closed; all projects are progressing significantly well.

6. Marketing & Communications – Update

NM and colleagues to provide the following update/s

- Saddlers Centre: CGIs published on social media and issued to wider media, received mixed responses but lots of engagement.
- Guildhall: Andy Street visited on 10 November, media presence, drafting comms and working with Urban Hax to look at fleshing out a plan for comms moving forward.
- In the process of looking at plans for signage at key sites to communicate with residents about plans. Arranged on 20 November 2023 for the Local Democracy Reporter will visit to discuss plans for the Guildhall including a view of latest floorplans.
- Lots of focus on media engagement help raise the profile of regeneration in Walsall, local democracy reporter also visiting the town centre, will look to do similar tours/interviews in other areas.
- On Friday 10 November 2023, we held a follow-up photo call to show the progress of the canal towpaths. The photocall was attended by Mayor of the West Midlands Andy Street which strengthens the messages produced.
- A press release was issued on Monday 13 November followed by a series of social media posts across all main channels. 3D scan video provided by Urban Hax to be edited into shareable videos for social media. Looking at signage solutions to cover the outside of the building and communicate to residents about the plans.

The date of the next Town Deal Board Meeting – 19.12.23 @14:30

Public Session closed at: 14:50

PRIVATE SESSION

PUBLIC MEETING FINAL VERSION

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