



ACTION NOTES

Title of Meeting: Bloxwich & Walsall Town Deal Board Meeting

Date: Wednesday 06 November 2024 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.

Present:

VOTING MEMBERS – Via Teams

Manjit Jhooty – Jhoots Pharmacy (Chair) Councillor Andrew (Deputy Chair)
Robert Judson – Homeserve
David Moore – Walsall Council
Rupert Fairfax – Fairfax Saddles / Chair of Bloxwich Advisory Board
Karl Woodward - Reach All Ltd/Chair of Walsall Advisory Board
Ray Flynn – University of Wolverhampton
Kevin Davis – The Vine / Mercian Trust
Mark Lavender – Walsall Council
Jatinder Sharma (JS) – Walsall College
Tarra Simmons (TS) – The Midcounties Co-operative

MEMBERS – Via Teams / Guests:

Richard Ackerley (RA) – Walsall Council
Alison Guerra (AG) – Walsall Council
Kelly Valente (KV) – Walsall Council
Natasha Mann (NM) – Walsall Council
Claire Wills (CW) – Walsall Council
Helen Kirk (HK) – Walsall Council
Eleanor Cooper (EC) – Walsall Council
Surinder Kaur (SK) – Walsall Council
Matthew Lloyd (MLO) – Walsall Council

Town Deal Board - Public - Recorded & Shared Meeting Session

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

1. Welcome and Introductions /Apologies

Deb Rajania, James Norris, Simon Tranter, Shaun Darcy, David Benge, Geoff Urban Hax

2. Declarations of Interest

Manjit Jhooty stated this part of the meeting would be recorded so that it can be shared with the public through our web site. There were no objections, so this part of the meeting will be recorded.

3. Minutes (Public) of the Previous Meeting

Surinder Kaur shared public minutes from the last meeting on 25 September 2024

Recorded & Shared Meeting Session– DRAFT VERSION

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

4. Bloxwich Advisory Board – Chairs Update

(Aim – RF to update Board members on the work conducted at previous AB meetings)

Rupert Fairfax provided an update: Since the last Town Deal Board, the Bloxwich Advisory met on the Thursday 24 October 2024.

Project Updates

- **Financial Updates:** RF reported that the financial updates were positive with no major issues reported. However, there was a concern about the increased budget for a Community Capital project following receipt of the pretender estimates. Work is now underway to reduce these to fall within budget
- **Vandalism Issue:** RF noted vandalism at KG 5 and emphasised the need for concrete plans to prevent future damage. He mentioned that this is a significant issue that needs to be addressed to ensure the sustainability of the projects.
- **CSTR:** Requested the Advisory Board to set the Final Applications deadline for the 31 December, allowing 3-4 months for due diligence, approvals, and finalising the Grant Agreement by 31 March 2025. This gives a full year to implement and use the grant funding by March 2026.
- **Community Capital:** One application into the programme has a significant funding gap officers and the applicants are working on the designs to hopefully get back within budget. All current applicants' projects are on track, and we are confident that we will deliver the outcomes and spend by March 2026. Financial spend 85% is on track.
- **Green Bloxwich:** Had completed RIBA stage 3, and the consultants are now moving this forward so that it can go out to the market early next year.
- **The Launchpad:** The taster sessions at the library have been underway for a couple of weeks, starting slowly but gaining momentum with our partners.
- Invitations for site visits have been sent out for November and December, only six slots per visit due to health and safety requirements on site.

5. Walsall Advisory Board – Chairs Update

(Aim – KW to update Board members on the work conducted at previous AB meetings)

Karl Woodward provided an update: Since the last Town Deal Board, the Bloxwich Advisory met on the Thursday 09 October 2024.

- **Power Bi:** We have had the link for the system, KW emphasised the importance of keeping project data up to date on the reporting platform Power Bi.
- **Active Public Space:** highlighted ongoing concerns about the Active Public Space projects, particularly the Adult Learning Centre and the Advanced Vehicle Centre, due to programme time restraints and increased forecast costs. He mentioned the potential need to consider a project adjustment.
- **Joint Bloxwich and Walsall Projects:** KW reported that the CRT programme was now complete and the designs for the joint Bloxwich and Walsall highway projects was

Recorded & Shared Meeting Session– DRAFT VERSION

continuing. The bus shelter improvements along the A34 are slightly delayed, anticipated to start by spring 2025.

- **Green Lane Bridge Event:** KW mentioned that an event was held on Monday to launch the Green Lane bridge pedestrian widening upgrades. Natasha was involved in the marketing for the event.
- **Community Capital Projects:** KW noted that the team aided a recently approved community project, resulting in progress with design costs and plans. Another project is in the process of completing a planning application.
- **Digital Skills Hub:** KW reported that the digital skills hub project is 95% complete, with 75 active headcounts. He attended the opening on October 18th and praised these state-of-the-art facilities and noted the involvement of Adobe in supporting the initiative.

Date and time of Next Town Deal Board Meeting 06.11.2024 – @14:30

Shared Session closed at: 14:45

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