

## Recorded & Shared Meeting Session – DRAFT VERSION



# Walsall Council

## ACTION NOTES

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

**Date:** Wednesday 29 January 2025 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 (RJ) – Homeserve  
David Moore (DM) – Walsall Council  
Rupert Fairfax (RF) – Fairfax Saddles / Chair of Bloxwich Advisory Board  
Karl Woodward (KW) - Reach All Ltd/Chair of Walsall Advisory Board  
Ray Flynn (RFL) – University of Wolverhampton  
Kevin Davis – (KD) The Vine / Mercian Trust  
Mark Lavender (ML) – Walsall Council  
Tarra Simmons (TS) – The Midcounties Co-operative  
David Bengé (DB) – One Walsall  
James Norris (JN) – Walsall College

### MEMBERS – Via Teams / Guests:

Richard Ackerley (RA) – Walsall Council  
Kelly Valente (KV) – Walsall Council  
Helen Kirk (HK) – Walsall Council  
Eleanor Kenwick (EK) – 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 will be recorded and subsequently placed onto the Town Deal Website and shared with the public, covering agenda items 1-5, then the meeting will move into private session.

## **Recorded & Shared Meeting Session – DRAFT VERSION**

### **1. Welcome and Introductions /Apologies**

Hannah Cashmore, Simon Tranter

### **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 06 November 2024. The minutes were accepted as an accurate record by Manjit Jhooty and seconded by Karl Woodward.

### **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 16 January 2025.

**Active Travel and Connectivity Programme:** Highlighted the completion of improvements to the canal towpaths, road junction improvements, and the widening of the bridge next to Homeserve on the A34. There is a slight delay in the installation of new bus shelters, but it is expected to be completed during the coming financial year.

**Construction Skills Through Regeneration Programme:** Mentioned the successful use of GAP funding to kickstart projects, including the construction of 10 new affordable homes in Bloxwich. Other sites are being considered for GAP funding to unlock further projects that also support local training etc.

**Community Capital Programme:** Updated that the board has approved applications from five community-based organizations to carry out improvements to their buildings. The team is finalizing details to contract the approved projects so that these can be tendered.

**Bloxwich Launchpad:** Provided an update which aims to create new incubation space and a digital access centre in the heart of Bloxwich town centre. The project is expected to open in April or May, with an open day scheduled for February.

**Green Bloxwich:** The initiative, which aims to carry out significant improvements to local parks based on feedback from local people and park users. Planning permission is being sought, and tendering is expected to take place within the project timeline.

### **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 Board met on the Wednesday 08 January 2025.

## **Recorded & Shared Meeting Session – DRAFT VERSION**

**Walsall Advisory Board Meeting:** Shared the financial risk and programming, marketing communications, and joint projects with Bloxwich. He highlighted the importance of maximising efforts to ensure the success of the projects.

**Financial Risk:** The meeting started with a discussion on financial risk and programming, ensuring that project leads and officers are updating registers and financial reports.

**Community Capital Funding in Walsall:** Karl mentioned that Walsall had less money for Community Capital funding but delivered more projects. The smaller projects addressed local needs effectively, and the team provided support to avoid shortfalls.

**Project Monitoring:** There has been some slight slippage in projects, but it is being closely monitored and managed by officers and project leads.

**Funding Opportunities:** Officers have been able to unlock additional funding opportunities to enhance projects, sometimes requiring pauses to consider other funding pieces.

**Active Learning Centre:** Mentioned challenges around design and funding. The programme Leads is being adjusted to accommodate these issues, but it is progressing well.

**Creative Industries Project:** Acknowledged the pressure on the team due to the nature of the building and heritage considerations. The project is expected to begin in March 2025.

**Digital Skills Centre:** Is open and active, emphasised the importance of maximising efforts to ensure the success of the centre and other projects.

**Date and time of Next Town Deal Board Meeting 19.03.2025 – @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).**