



Towns Fund Board

Minutes - 24 July 2020

Attendance

Members of the Towns Fund Board

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Ninder Johal (Chair)	Owner, Nachural
Stuart Paul Anderson	MP for Wolverhampton South West
Simon Archer	Director, Bilston BID
Councillor Ian Brookfield	Leader of the Council, City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC)
Katherine Clough	University of Wolverhampton
Mal Cowgill	Principal and Chief Executive, City of Wolverhampton College
Ro Hands	Owner, Learn Play Foundation
James Holland	General Manager, Collins Aerospace
Maninder Mangat	Director, MM Consulting
Kevin Rogers	Executive Director, Paycare
Tutsi	Youth MP
Amit Sharma	Director, INCO
Cherry Shine	Director, Wolverhampton BID
Councillor Stephen Simkins	Cabinet Member for City Economy, CWC
Jane Stevenson	MP for Wolverhampton North East
Mark Taylor	Deputy Chief Executive, CWC
Patricia Willoughby	Head of Policy (Housing and Regeneration), West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)

In attendance

Armani Akbar-Roy	MAPM Project and Cost Management, Arcadis
Ross Cook	Director of Environment, CWC
Liam Davies	Head of City Development, CWC
Dereck Francis	Democratic Services Officer, CWC
Richard Lawrence	Director of Regeneration, CWC
Tony Marvell	Programme Manager, CWC
Mark McFadden	Senior Town Planner, CBRE
Simon Philips	Director, CBRE
Andrew Scragg	Youth Service Participation Worker, CWC

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Tim Johnson, Chief Executive, CWC, Pat McFadden MP, Ben Reid, Board Member of International Co-op Alliance and Professor Geoff Layer, Vice-Chancellor, University of Wolverhampton.

2 **Notification of substitute members**

Mark Taylor, Deputy Chief Executive, CWC attended for Tim Johnson, Chief Executive, CWC and Katherine Clough attended on behalf of Professor Geoff Layer, Vice-Chancellor, University of Wolverhampton.

3 **Minutes of the meeting of 3 July 2020**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of 3 July 2020 be approved as a correct record.

4 **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

5 **Towns Fund Action Tracker**

Resolved:

That the outcome from the action agreed at the meeting of 3 July 2020 be noted.

6 **Wolverhampton Town Investment Plan (TIP)**

Simon Phillips, Director, CBRE briefly recapped the discussion at the Board meeting on 10 July 2020 and presented a high level summary of the following projects intended for inclusion in the Town Investment Plan (TIP) Bid to be submitted to Government by 31 July 2020:

Employment and Skills and Addressing Blight

- City Learning Quarter
- National Brownfield Institute
- Wolves at Work

Regeneration Renewal

- Brewars Yard
- Horseley Fields

Changing Perceptions

- Artpark
- Events Programme

Enhancing Connectivity

- City Centre Public Realm Phase Two
- 5G Accelerator

Vibrancy and Footfall

- Bilston Market
- Wednesfield Interventions

The TIP bid was for £44 million capital and £4 million revenue funding. The revenue ask would be programmed to the end of March 2026. In terms of the match funding requirement for the TIP, this was largely to be identified and would need to go through the various approval processes, including CWC's Cabinet and the University's Board. Discussions were ongoing on the match funding and officers were comfortable with what had been included in the bid on that issue.

Councillor Ian Brookfield, Leader CWC said that there had to be a realisation that some of the projects in the Wolverhampton TIP would be funded from other sources. He asked whether there was pipeline of schemes if some of the projects are funded from elsewhere. Simon Phillips reported that if any of the projects were to fall out there would need to be a discussion with Government on any flexibility available. Regarding pipeline projects, he reported that a number of the projects had good opportunities to add a lot to the recovery that would benefit if we could have more money.

Richard Lawrence, Director of Regeneration, CWC reported that some projects were at concept level and would require more work, so some projects might increase in costs. He confirmed that there was a pipeline and that discussions would need to be had with Government on progressing pipeline projects as the bid progresses.

James Holland, General Manager, Collins Aerospace asked how sensitive the Government decision would be in relation to Covid-19 on how ready the City is and how quickly it can bring in additional employment to mitigate what we are seeing now post Covid-19. Richard Lawrence reported that the approach to the bid was responding to our recovery priorities across the city centre, Bilston and Wednesfield post Covid.

Resolved:

1. That the projects for the Wolverhampton TIP be approved.
2. The TIP bid be finalised and submitted to Government by the 31 July deadline.
3. That a copy of the finalised bid be forwarded to Board members.

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Forward Timetable

Simon Phillips Director, CBRE presented for information the timetable for the bid approval process.

Simon Phillips also reported on the outcome of discussions to produce a list of projects for the additional £1 million capital funding that was available to Wolverhampton to be invested “in-year” for schemes that have an immediate impact post-Covid. Government required an indication in the Town Investment Plan on what would be done with the £1 million grant but the detail would need to be included in a letter to Government by 14 August. Proposal for projects in the three centres, City Centre, Wednesfield and Bilston Wards and for cross cutting interventions across the three centres were proposed. Slides with the list of projects would be circulated to the Board and feedback was requested by 31 July 2020.

It was noted that the projects would be quick wins for the City and would make an immediate difference whilst some of the larger schemes come to fruition.

Resolved:

That further information the projects identified for the additional £1 million capital funding be circulated to the Board for comment and feedback by no later than 31 July.

8 **Future Role of the Towns Fund Board**

Resolved:

That the next meeting of the Board be scheduled for September 2020

9 **Future High Street Funds Update**

Richard Lawrence, Director of Regeneration CWC delivered a verbal update on Wolverhampton's Future High Street Fund (FHSF) bid for City Centre West. It was still anticipated that a response would be received from Government around autumn. The Council had retained access to its consultant support to assist with any clarifications from Government and an internal FHSF Board has been established within the City Council. Contact with Homes England, who were working in an advocacy role for the Government, were very positive and it was hoped that the Council would receive a positive outcome to announce to the Board in August/September.

In response to a request for an update on the West Midlands Combined Authority's (WMCA's) Bilston FHSF bid, Richard Lawrence agreed that there was an oversight role for the Board on the Bilston FHSF bid and the work with the Combined Authority on the Bilston Development Investment Plan. This point was being discussed at Director level. Patricia Willoughby, Head of Policy (Housing and Regeneration), WMCA added that she was happy to engage in discussion on the investments in Bilston and across the city and the Combined Authority was happy to lend support to projects wherever they could.

Councillor Steven Simkins, CWC asked that for the next phase of the Bilston FHSF, the elected Ward Councillors be kept updated on developments.

10 **Any other business**

No items of any other business were raised.