



# Towns Fund Board

25 March 2022

**Time** 1.30 pm      **Public Meeting?** NO      **Type of meeting** Partnership Boards  
**Venue** MS Teams

## Membership

Ninder Johal (Chair)	Owner, Nachural
Stuart Anderson MP	Member of Parliament for Wolverhampton South West
Simon Archer	Director, Bilston BID
Councillor Ian Brookfield	Leader of the Council, City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC)
Mal Cowgill	Principal and Chief Executive, City of Wolverhampton College
James Crowter	Managing Director, Tecman
Adam Daniels	Regional Operations Director, Countryside Properties
Lindsey Flynn	Representative of Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership
Ray Flynn	Associate Director (Place), University of Wolverhampton
Ro Hands	Owner, Learn Play Foundation
James Holland	General Manager, Collins Aerospace
Tim Johnson	Chief Executive, CWC
Josie Kelly	Chief Executive Officer, Access 2 Business
Professor Geoff Layer	Vice Chancellor, University of Wolverhampton
Pat McFadden MP	Member of Parliament for Wolverhampton South East
Maninder Mangat	Director, MM Consulting
Ben Reid	Board Member, International Co-Op Alliance
Kevin Rogers	Executive Director, Paycare
Amit Sharma	Director, INCO
Cherry Shine	Director, Wolverhampton BID
Councillor Stephen Simkins	Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy, CWC
Jane Stevenson MP	Member of Parliament for Wolverhampton North East
Patricia Willoughby	Head of Policy (Housing & Regeneration), West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)
Janis	Youth Council Representative

## Information

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact Democratic Services or the Programme Manager:

**Contact** Darowen Jones, Programme Manager  
**Tel/Email** email: [Townsfund@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Townsfund@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

# Agenda

## PART 1 – Items open to all attendees

*Item No.*    *Title*

### MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS - PART 1

- 1        **Apologies for absence**
- 2        **Notification of substitute members**
- 3        **Declarations of Interest**
- 4        **Minutes of the meeting of 28 January 2022** (Pages 1 - 8)  
[To approve the minutes of the meeting of 28 January 2022 as a correct record.]
- 5        **Matters arising**  
[To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 28 January 2022.]
- 6        **Towns Fund Action Tracker**  
[To note the outcomes of actions identified at previous meetings.]

### ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION OR DECISION - PART 2

- 7        **Local Assurance Framework** (Pages 9 - 20)  
[To receive the Local Assurance Framework for approval.]
- 8        **Reallocation of Town Deal Funding**  
[To receive an update on proposals for reallocation of Town Deal funding.]
- 9        **Engagement and Communication Strategy**  
[To approve an update on the refreshed Engagement and Communication Strategy.]
- 10       **Town Fund Programme Plan**  
[To receive an update on the Towns Fund Programme Plan.]
- 11       **Levelling Up White Paper 'What Levelling Up Means for Wolverhampton'**  
[To receive an overview of the Levelling Up White Paper.]
- 12       **Programme Dashboard**  
[To receive a presentation on the status of the Towns Fund Projects:]
  - 12a    **Brewers Yard / Culwell Street**
  - 12b    **WM5G**

12c **Events Programme**

12d **Wednesfield Markets and Permeability**

12e **Bilston Markets**

12f **Wolves @ Work**

12g **Public Realm P2**

12h **Grand Theatre**

12i **City Learning Quarter**

13 **Any Other Business**

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## Towns Fund Board Minutes - 28 January 2022

### Attendance

#### Members of the Towns Fund Board

Ninder Johal (Chair)	Owner, Nachural
Stuart Anderson MP	Member of Parliament for Wolverhampton South West
Simon Archer	Director, Bilston BID
Councillor Ian Brookfield	Leader of the Council
Anthony Burns	Paycare
James Crowter	Managing Director, Tecman
Ray Flynn	Associate Director (Place), University of Wolverhampton
Ro Hands	Owner, Learn Play Foundation
James Holland	General Manager, Collins Aerospace
Tim Johnson	Chief Executive
Josie Kelly	Chief Executive Officer, Access 2 Business
Maninder Mangat	Director, MM Consulting
Amit Sharma	Director, INCO
Cherry Shine	Director, Wolverhampton BID
Councillor Stephen Simkins	Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy
Jane Stevenson MP	Member of Parliament for Wolverhampton North East
Patricia Willoughby	Head of Policy (Housing & Regeneration), West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)

#### In Attendance

Heather Clark	Head of External Funding and Digital Projects, CWC
Liam Davies	Head of City Development, CWC
Shelley Humphries	Democratic Services Officer, CWC
Darowen Jones	Programme Manager, Kinver Solutions
Richard Lawrence	Director of Regeneration, CWC
Simon Lucas	Senior Regeneration Officer, CWC
Ayesha Malhan	Regeneration Officer, CWC
Julie Obada	Head of Skills, CWC
Marianne Page	Service Lead - Transport Strategy, CWC
Ballal Raza	Programme Manager, CWC
John Roseblade	Head of City Transport, CWC
Peter Taylor	Regeneration Manager, CWC
Ruth Taylor	Senior Regeneration Officer, CWC
Peter Thomason	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)
Joanne Till	Markets General Manager, CWC
Isobel Woods	Head of Enterprise, CWC

*Item No. Title*

- 1 **Apologies for absence**  
Apologies were received from Towns Fund Board members Janis, Youth Council Representative and Kevin Rogers, Executive Director, Paycare.

Apologies were also received from Crissie Rushton, Visitor Economy Manager, City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC).

2 **Notification of substitute members**

Antony Burns attended for Kevin Rogers.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

4 **Minutes of the meeting of 26 November 2021**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of 26 November 2021 be approved as a correct record.

5 **Matters arising**

A matter was raised in respect of minute 9d on the Events Programme and how the programme would be distributed between the City Centre, Bilston and Wednesfield. It was proposed to arrange a stakeholder meeting prior to the next Board meeting to progress the plans forward.

Resolved:

That a stakeholder meeting would be arranged to discuss the Events Programme.

6 **Towns Fund Action Tracker**

Darowen Jones, Programme Manager, Kinver Solutions presented the Towns Fund Action Tracker which outlined the outcomes of actions agreed at the last meeting.

Resolved:

That the outcomes from the actions agreed at the meeting of 26 November 2021 be noted.

7 **Towns Fund Board - Refreshed Terms of Reference**

Darowen Jones, Programme Manager, Kinver Solutions presented the refreshed Terms of Reference for approval and highlighted key changes.

The document had been updated to reflect the changes in membership agreed at the meeting of 26 November 2022 and to include Darowen Jones as the Programme Manager going forward.

Resolved:

That the Towns Fund Board - Refreshed Terms of Reference be approved and adopted.

8 **National Towns Fund Update**

Peter Thomason, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) provided a verbal update on the National Towns Fund. It was reported that the programme was now moving on to the delivery stage and, from a national perspective, working through business plan submissions for approval.

It was noted that the assurance framework was currently under revision and development to ensure the programme aligned with other funding streams to make the process more user friendly.

Resolved:

That the National Towns Fund Update be received.

9

### **Levelling Up Fund**

Richard Lawrence, Director of Regeneration, City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) provided a verbal update on the Levelling Up Fund bid. It was reported that £20 million had been received for tranche one for the City Learning Quarter project and noted that there was also a Towns Fund contribution.

It was reported that the project was in a position to procure a contractor and was just awaiting the final funding prior to starting on site. Project leads were currently awaiting guidance on the second round of funding. Once this was achieved, the project would potentially be on track to open in late 2024.

Thanks were extended to MPs on the Board for their support.

It was noted that the visit to Wolverhampton from Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities had been positive and generated a great deal of interest in the City Learning Quarter and other work progressing in the City. Jane Stevenson MP echoed this and pledged to continue to push for growth in Wolverhampton.

Resolved:

That the verbal update on the Levelling Up Fund be received.

10

### **Towns Fund Business Case Submissions: Tranche 2a**

Darowen Jones, Programme Manager, Kinver Solutions provided an update on the Towns Fund Business Case Submissions: Tranche 2a.

It was reported that the submission for Tranche 2a deadline was on 13 January 2022 and the four projects had been submitted successfully. These included the Arts Park, Bilston Market, City Learning Quarter and Wolves @ Work and the presentation provided an update on the progress of these.

It was noted that the business cases for the final three projects were due for submission on the 22 March 2022 and the timelines and submission processes were outlined. Assurances were offered these were on track to be submitted on time.

Resolved:

That the presentation on the Towns Fund Business Case Submissions: Tranche 2a be received.

11

### **Assurance Processes**

Darowen Jones, Programme Manager, Kinver Solutions delivered the presentation on the Assurance Processes. The presentation provided an overview of the governance being developed and strengthened around Towns Fund projects in the lead up to the final business case submissions scheduled for March 2022.

It was reported that the Transformation Office was now in operation to ensure uniformity across all projects, detailed processes developed, and risk assessments had been undertaken. Senior Responsible Officers (SROs), Project Leads and Managers were now in place ready to take projects forward.

In response to a question around communications, it was confirmed SROs were aware of the communication and engagement plan and this was part of their role. It was noted that the SROs, along with Project Leads and Project Managers would be visible and accessible to constituents to assist or answer any questions. The first stakeholder engagement meeting had been held which was to be closely followed by another meeting including traders.

A concern was raised around ward members' awareness of Towns Fund Project activity in their ward area and the need for ensuring they were involved in all engagement, notified of work being carried out in their constituencies and allowed the opportunity to contribute to project delivery. It was requested that members be briefed at each stage of the project. It was acknowledged that this was a valid point and ensuring all stakeholders were included would be at the forefront of the communication and engagement planning.

The concern around engagement was echoed and concerns around funding being redistributed if the business case wasn't submitted in time for the 4 February 2022 deadline. It was confirmed that the project was going through a rigorous process however the 4 February deadline was for the first draft of the business case and not the final submission.

Resolved:

1. That the presentation on Assurance processes be received.
2. That elected ward members be kept informed and offered the opportunity to engage with projects in their constituencies at all stages.

12

### **Programme Dashboard**

Ballal Raza, Programme Manager, CWC; Darowen Jones, Programme Manager, Kinver Solutions; John Roseblade, Head of City Transport, CWC; Isobel Woods, Head of Enterprise, CWC and Julie Obada, Head of Skills, CWC; Ruth Taylor, Senior Regeneration Officer, CWC; Ray Flynn, Associate Director (Place), University of Wolverhampton; Simon Lucas, Senior Regeneration Officer, CWC; Peter Taylor, Regeneration Manager, CWC and Richard Lawrence, Director of Regeneration, CWC each provided a high-level update on their respective projects. The presentations and work undertaken against each project were commended.

12a

### **Brewers Yard / Culwell Street**

Ballal Raza, Programme Manager, CWC provided a verbal update on Brewers Yard / Culwell Street and extended thanks to Board members for support in reaching this stage of progression.

It was reported that the project was moving forward positively and on track to submit planning applications. Assurances were offered that ward members from East Park and Heath Town would be included in engagement. No slippage had been reported and allowances had been made in the plans for inflation.

**12b WM5G**

Darowen Jones, Programme Manager, Kinver Solutions provided a verbal update on the WM5G accelerator project. It was reported that funding agreement had been received and approved by Council and grant payment was due to be paid to WM5G in line with requirements.

**12c Events Programme**

Isobel Woods, Head of Enterprise, CWC shared the news that British Art Show 9 had gone live in the City and been met with a positive response. Board members were notified of the off-site activities included in the programme and encouraged involvement where possible.

Darowen Jones, Programme Manager, Kinver Solutions highlighted that a key priority for the events program was to engage with the Wolverhampton and Bilston BIDs to ensure early involvement. A further update on this would be provided shortly after the meeting.

**12d Wednesfield Markets and Permeability**

John Roseblade, Head of City Transport, CWC provided a verbal update on Wednesfield Markets and interventions project which had had the £2.51 million funding approved, a business case outlined and was at initiation stage. The success of the bid was attributed in part to stakeholder engagement which had been hugely positive and inclusive of traders, MPs and elected ward members. There were plans to expand this group along with a walkthrough of the site.

A query was raised around what was in place if, whilst working through the business case, it became apparent that more funding was required. It was confirmed that the £2.51 million was the envelope the project was working within, however plans to attract further funding had been written into the business plans over the three-year life of the project. In the event that no further funding was available, it may be necessary to curtail the project. Assurances were offered that if this happened, plans would be reviewed with engagement with stakeholders to ensure the best possible impact was made with the money available.

It was noted that the Board would be informed promptly of any slippage and what that would mean for the project. As with all of the Towns Fund projects, contingency plans had been developed and inflation had already factored into business plans. Work had been ongoing with a consultancy to forecast possible inflation over the life of the project. It was noted support would always be given from MPs for any future funding bid opportunities, but Board members were asked to be mindful they may not always be successful despite best efforts.

A concern was raised around the timing of the visit to the Wednesfield market and the meeting that followed as these events had fallen during the busy Christmas period meaning traders found this challenging to fit in. Concerns were also raised around the 4 February deadline. Assurances were offered that the 4 February 2022 date was for the start of the business case review process and it was confirmed that 21 February 2022 was the deadline for business cases to be ready for scoring.

A plea was again made to ensure ward members were kept abreast of all activity surrounding projects in their respective areas as there were concerns around missed opportunities for involvement or additional support from ward members. Assurances were offered that ward members would be involved with stakeholder groups and any further site visits.

#### **12e Bilston Markets**

Simon Lucas, Senior Regeneration Officer, CWC provided a verbal update on the Bilston Market Project which had secured funding. It was reported that designers Greig and Stephenson and consultants Faithful and Gould had been procured and had been developing a scheme within budget. It was reported that topographical utilities and grant surveys had been undertaken to inform the process and to highlight and mitigate any significant risks. It was noted that inflationary and contingency plans had been included within the work. It was hoped that if there happened to be an underspend, this could be used to add further value to the scheme on top of what was planned.

It was highlighted that the scheme would be delivered in three strands. The first would be to maximise the visual transformation of the site with a canopy and signage to promote the positive change happening within. The second included plans to transform an area in use whilst the market was operating by day into a usable area for events in the evening. The final intention was to ensure the scheme attracted new customers whilst maintaining the interest of the existing customer base. It was noted that the project would be progressing through to engagement with members and stakeholders shortly.

#### **12f Wolves @ Work**

Isobel Woods, Head of Enterprise, CWC provided a verbal update on the Wolves @ Work initiative to support Wolverhampton residents into employment or other opportunities. It was reported that the Towns Fund was supporting a service that was already established to grow and expand further. Extensive work was being undertaken to incorporate and include young people as a response to youth unemployment in the City. Work had also been undertaken in partnership with local businesses to review recruitment processes and understand what employers are looking for.

It was noted that recruiting had been ongoing over the past few weeks to undertake the new work made possible by Towns Fund and it was hoped work coaches would all be in place by March 2022.

It was acknowledged that the Towns Fund was not focused only on growth in terms of building new environments, but growth in terms of social value with employment and recruitment opportunities and the Wolves @Work initiative was commended.

#### **12g Public Realm P2**

Ruth Taylor, Senior Regeneration Officer, CWC provided a verbal update on the Public Realm Project. It was reported that the project was the second of three phases in the City centre programme. Plans for phase two included an improved public realm that served as a link from Darlington Street to the new Interchange with

an infrastructure to support active travel, such as cycling and walking, as well as new event spaces.

It was highlighted that the options appraisal was close to completion and consultations were being held with key stakeholders such as Transport for West Midlands and International Express. A robust governance had been developed around this project including a member reference group which met monthly. The business case was progressing well and there was confidence that this would be ready in draft for the first deadline. As with other projects, inflationary pressures were being factored in.

#### **12h National Brownfield Institute Block A**

Ray Flynn, Associate Director (Place), University of Wolverhampton provided a verbal update on the National Brownfield Institute Block A. It was highlighted that its location on the Springfield campus site played an important role in relation to other key projects in the City, such as Brewers Yard, and formed part of the City's ambition to become a national centre for sustainable construction.

It was noted that the National Brownfield Institute scheme had completed on 24 January 2022 followed by a successful visit from Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on 27 January 2022.

It was reported that the original propositions had been revised to refocus from a business incubation scheme to an outreach and engagement hub for schools and colleges with a focus on employability and skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

It was noted that the business case was being refined supported by Darowen Jones, Programme Manager, Kinver Solutions. Special thanks were also noted for the support from Tony Marvell, the previous Programme Manager.

Efforts were being made to ensure the sustainability of the scheme and, as before, potential inflation pressures had been accounted for.

It was noted that previous visits to the site had been beneficial and other Board members were encouraged to visit once it was appropriate. It was agreed that other Board members be invited to visit this and other project sites to gain an understanding of the progression of the work.

#### **12i Grand Theatre**

Peter Taylor, Regeneration Manager provided a verbal update on the Grand Theatre project. The business case had been submitted on 14 January 2022 and set out the benefits of the acquisition of 66-70 Lichfield Street adjacent to the existing theatre building. The new space would facilitate community outreach as well as growing the existing audience base through the Friends of the Grand group and releasing auditorium space and providing accommodation for theatre groups, which would all maximise income for the theatre.

It was reported that the Council's revised purchase offer for the property had been due for consideration at an external freeholder board meeting before Christmas

2021. This meeting had been deferred until early February, although it was anticipated that there would be some feedback following this. The purchase offer had been supported by an evaluation report which also set out the funding position of the project.

The risk of inflation had also been factored into the plans. The options of purchase and compulsory purchase were being both explored along with implications for each. Caution was urged to ensure that the asset was secured for the right price.

It was acknowledged that the project would be of great benefit to the City in terms of community outreach.

## **12j City Learning Quarter**

Richard Lawrence, Director of Regeneration, CWC provided a verbal update on the City Learning Quarter. It was reiterated that final funding was awaited but otherwise the project was ready to begin. Planning was in place and

It was anticipated that there would be a confirmed contractor within the next few months with a view to commence work in around six months.

Resolved:

1. That members of Towns Fund Board be invited to visit all project sites when appropriate to do so.
2. That an events update be provided to Towns Fund Board members following the meeting.
3. That the Programme Dashboard update presentation be received.

## **13 Engagement and Communication Strategy**

Darowen Jones, Programme Manager, Kinver Solutions provided a verbal update on the position of the Engagement and Communication Strategy. The presentation outlined key points around delivery building on the successes seen in Bilston, Wednesfield and the City Centre.

A query was raised around the Copper consultancy and if they were still supporting the projects. It was noted that Copper consultancy had laid the groundwork and developed principles and the project leads were now working on putting these into practice as the projects moved forward.

It was noted individual project leads had begun development of engagement and communications plans tailored to each project.

A query was raised around how to align all the projects' engagement strategies. It was noted that standardised key themes, priorities and messages at programme level would be embedded through all projects alongside each project's own priorities.

Resolved:

- That the Engagement and Communication Strategy be received.

## **14 Any Other Business**

There was no other business.



# **Local Assurance Framework**

## **Town Deal**

**Wolverhampton Town Deal Board**

**City of Wolverhampton Council**

08.03.2022 – v2

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## **Introduction**

This Local Assurance Framework (LAF) sets out how City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) and Wolverhampton Towns Fund Board (The Board) will effectively undertake their respective roles in relation to good governance and delivery of the projects being funded through the Town Deal. The LAF is a requirement of the Towns Fund and identifies the roles to be undertaken by The Board, by CWC as the Accountable Body and by the Business Leads of projects. This includes the process of ensuring value for money, appraisal, business case development and risk management.

The Board and CWC are fully committed to ensuring the highest standards of governance, accountability and transparency across all aspects of activities in relation to the Town Deal and will review the LAF annually and make any changes necessary to ensure consistency and full compliance.

The framework sets out the structure and roles that each organisation will undertake and the processes and policies that will apply to the decision making and oversight that are required in managing the Town Deal programme.

Adherence to the framework should ensure:

- Accountable decision making
- Responsible use of public money including achieving value for money
- Effective monitoring and evaluation

The framework is jointly owned by the Town Deal Board and CWC. It was approved by both organisations in March 2022 and is subject to an annual review.

## **The Towns Fund**

Wolverhampton is one of the 101 towns in England selected to develop “Town Deals” with funding designed to increase economic growth with a focus on regeneration, transport, connectivity, skills and culture.

A Town Investment Plan (TIP) for Wolverhampton including Bilston and Wednesfield was submitted to government 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020 and included 11 projects to be funded and delivered. 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 DLUHC confirmed that Wolverhampton will receive up to £25m funding from the Towns Fund, which was a reduction from the TIP request of £48.3m.

CWC and Town Deal Board accepted the offer 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021 of £25m across 10 projects.

The Towns Fund is being administered by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

The projects being delivered will each require the development of a Green Book compliant business case which will need to be locally assured. To undertake this role CWC has set up a process which will follow this Local Assurance Framework and government guidance to assure the business cases.

Once government has approved the summary of the business cases projects will commence delivery. Delivery of individual projects and the wider Town Investment Plan will continue to be overseen by the Town Deal Board.

## **Governance**

### Wolverhampton Town Deal Board (The Board)

The Board has clear systems, rules and practices and processes in place to ensure that decisions are made on a transparent basis, by the members. Members of the Board work within the agreed governance structures and will always demonstrate the highest standards of conduct. Any third party involved with The Board or who is providing a service to The Board will be made aware they are expected to act within the governance system and that their conduct is expected to be consistent with the standards applicable to members of The Board.

The Nolan Principles of Public Life underpin the LAF and all board members are expected to adhere to them, these are:

- **Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in the public interest.
- **Integrity:** Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity:** Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Openness:** Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so.
- **Honesty:** Holders of public office should be truthful
- **Leadership:** Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

The Board will operate in line with its Terms of Reference.

The Accountable Body for the Town Deal is City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC).

The Board is responsible for assurance of the Town Deal projects.

CWC as the Accountable Body is the ultimate decision-making body.

Structure of the Board: The Board will comprise a maximum of 30 members including a minimum of one member from the CWC to represent the public sector plus one member representing the community and voluntary sector. The Board composition will be reviewed once a year.

The Board is committed to diversity based on all protected characteristics and will encourage engagement and representation from across all communities.

Governance information such as Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct and Declarations of Interest and membership list is published, together with information on future board meeting dates and is available on the website.

The Town Deal governance structure is as follows:



The Board provides assurance and scrutiny of the Town Deal programme through discussions at The Board. Any financial decisions are decided by The Board and CWC.

### Scheme of Delegation

The scheme of delegation is for decisions to be made by The Board.

A decision which is made in contravention of the process will be invalid based on non-compliance unless The Board has given prior approval for variation in the decision-making process.

Any decision that needs to be made by The Board that does not fit within the timeframe of the scheduled meetings can be decided through written procedures. All members of the relevant board will be written to with the appropriate documentation that would be presented in the same manner as it would be to The Board. Each member will then be able to reply with any concerns and their approval/rejection to the chair, who will confirm the decision.

Any decision coming forward by written procedures will be done so at the discretion of the Chair of The Board.

### Policies and Procedures

#### Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest

The Board's Code of Conduct, which is published on the website, outlines the expectations of Board members when acting in capacity as a Board member of Town Deal Board. The code includes Conflicts of Interest and outlines the process for Board members to declare and report interests, ensuring impartiality and the avoidance of perceptions of bias.

It includes guidance on pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, individuals must declare, outlines the process that Board members follow for declaring interests and explains the process for requesting an exemption.

Individual registers of interests for Board members are updated on an annual basis.

### **Publication of reports and information**

The Board papers are published on the website. These are published in line with the Best Practice Guidance in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, meeting agendas and papers are published five working days before the meeting takes place and draft minutes of the meeting are published within 5 working days of the meeting taking place.

Any declaration of interest made at the meeting will be included in the minutes.

The Board follows CWC's document classification policy in terms of how documents are classified as public, controlled, or restricted.

Information which is not to be placed in the public domain is treated as exempt. Exempt information is defined in the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 which amends Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. Following 7 exemptions can be used:

- (1) Information relating to any individual.
- (2) Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
- (3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Authority holding that information).
- (4) Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultation or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
- (5) Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
- (6) Information which reveals that the authority proposes:
  - (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
  - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
- (7) Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation, or prosecution of crime.

The Board has in place appropriate data protection arrangements in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. The data provided by promoters is the responsibility of the promoters to make sure it complies with the appropriate legislation and that the data is accurate and correct. CWC is the data controller for Board Members data and any other data they collect including data around projects and programmes.

### **Accountability and transparent decision making**

The Accountable Body, through the Council's Section 151 Officer, is accountable for the proper use and administration of the Town Deal funding, all of which falls under the annual audit of CWC's accounts, and for ensuring that decisions are made in accordance with this LAF or any other framework which may instead apply.

The Council will have responsibility for managing and administering funds on behalf of The Board, reporting on performance, and ensuring appropriate governance and assurance procedures are in place.

The Council's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring the decisions and activities of The Board related to the Town Deal conform with legal requirements with regard to equalities, social value, environment, Subsidy Control (formerly State Aid), procurement etc.
- ensuring that funds are used in accordance with the conditions placed on each project.
- ensuring (through the Section 151 Officer) that the funds are used appropriately.
- ensuring that this LAF (or any other which may instead apply) is implemented and adhered to.
- maintaining the official record of The Board proceedings and holding copies of all relevant documents relating to the Town Deal.
- ensuring The Board decisions at formal meeting are recorded by way of minutes, and the minutes of each meeting are reported to the subsequent meeting to ensure accuracy. Minutes, agendas, and reports are published on CWC's website
- Responsibility for the decisions of The Board in approving projects (for example if subjected to legal challenge).
- ensuring arrangements are in place for audit of Town Deal funding as per Local Authority spend. The annual audit recommendations are reported to The Board. In addition, The Board and the Accountable Body have agreed timescales and operating practices to support the effective implementation of decisions. This will also include a process for monitoring delivery and specification of what information is required from project owners.

- The use of Town Deal resources is subject to the usual local authority checks and balances – including the financial duties and rules which require councils to act prudently in spending; these are overseen and monitored by the Section 151 Officer.
- While it may put in place procedures and promote proper practice, and monitor and report on the effectiveness of these, the Accountable Body is not responsible for any deficiencies in the administration of public monies among funding recipients and partner bodies. In the event of any shortcomings coming to light it will seek to safeguard, and recover where appropriate, the relevant monies.

The Accountable Body would only refuse a decision of The Board if it were:

- Not procedurally valid, or
- Illegal, or
- would lead to the available budget being exceeded.

If a situation did occur whereby the Accountable Body had significant concerns about a decision The Board had taken, or proposed to take, then an urgent meeting within 5 working days would be convened by the Section 151 Officer of the Accountable Body with key stakeholders from both The Board and the Accountable Body.

There will be a clear separation between Business Leads (i.e. CWC led schemes) and those advising on decision-making (the Accountable Body role), to ensure The Board are acting on impartial advice.

Awards of funding delivered by external partners (not CWC) will be accompanied by a written funding agreement between the Accountable Body and the project delivery setting out the split of responsibilities and specifying provisions for the protection of public funds, such as arrangements to suspend or claw back funding in the event of non-delivery or mismanagement.

As a minimum, these agreements will include:

- Details of the project and outputs to be delivered in a specified timescale
- Arrangements for payment (up front or in arrears, quarterly or other)
- Arrangements to suspend or claw back funding in the event of non-delivery or mismanagement
- Monitoring requirements, including the metrics and frequency of reporting
- Publicity obligations and arrangements

The agreement will be signed by the Section 151 Officer (or equivalent) of the promoting organisation and by the Section 151 Officer of the Accountable Body who has the final sign off on funding decisions.

## **Section 151 officer**

The Accountable Body will ensure they address the five principles of the CIPFA guidance:

- Embed a corporate position for the Section 151 officer at the Council
- Create a formal/structured mandate for the Section 151 officer
- Embed good governance into decision making
- Ensure effective review of governance
- Ensure appropriate skills and resourcing

All Board documents which have a financial implication will be provided to the Section 151 officer/delegate, and where decisions are being made the Section 151/delegate will have the opportunity to comment.

The Section 151 officer will ensure their oversight of the proper administration of financial affairs within the Town Deal programme continues throughout the year programme (2020/21 – 2025/26). This will include attendance at The Board where possible, and at a minimum at least one meeting each financial year.

A regular programme overview is given at The Board meeting on at least a bi-monthly basis to update on performance, any issues and risks and mitigations of each project.

## **Engagement with Stakeholders**

The Board is committed to effective engagement and collaboration with all its partners and stakeholders to effectively undertake its role and advocate for its area.

Examples of The Board's engagement activities include:

- Regular engagement with the local media on The Board's work.
- Board members regularly speak at local events, such as those organised by business membership organisations.
- Regular social media updates and website coverage of the Projects
- A Stakeholder and Engagement Plan has been produced for the Towns Fund work and is regularly reviewed and update.

## Project Approvals Process



CWC will liaise with the Business Lead throughout the process, ultimately taking a recommendation to The Board for approval. Following which a Summary Document of the business case or change document will be submitted to DLUHC for assessment.

The final business case is to be submitted by the Section 151 officer or equivalent (CEO, MD, FD) of the project. Projects will need to meet the following key milestones:

1. A detailed 'Green Book' compliant business case has been completed detailing the project and its alignment to the 5-case model. 'The Checklist1' published by HM Treasury should be appended to the business case to confirm that all stages have been completed.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/935527/Green\\_Book\\_guidance\\_checklist\\_for\\_assessing\\_business\\_cases.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/935527/Green_Book_guidance_checklist_for_assessing_business_cases.pdf)

2. A Benefit Cost Ratio must be provided
3. Details of any changes to the project from the initial Towns Fund submission with reasoning behind these changes.
4. Confirmation of the status of all co-funding with details of the sources of funding and the timeframe for when the co-funding will be confirmed.
5. A risk register identifying the key risks and the project manager responsible. The risk register needs to be scored and include a mitigation plan.

The Board and the Accountable Body will progress assessment of the projects as follows:

1. The Accountable Body will carry out an assessment of the submitted draft business case in line with the requirement of the LAF and feedback to the projects on any further requirements.
2. Once the full business case (FBC) is submitted to the Accountable Body, a final recommendation whether to fund the project or not including any conditions which would be set will be prepared to The Board.
3. The Board will approve, reject, or request additional information.
4. The Chair of the Board and CWC S151 officer will sign off the FBC
5. Once ratified the summary of the business case will be submitted to DLUHC for sign off. Final deadline for submission 22 March 2022.
6. Once a Summary Document or business case is agreed by DLUHC the project can start delivery.
10. The Accountable Body and The Board will monitor and carry out an audit of processes on the delivery of the project and the outputs.

### **Changes to projects**

In the event that a project has, in the opinion of The Board or CWC, significantly changed (by 10% or more) from what was originally proposed (i.e. spend profile, outputs and outcomes, or delivery). CWC will request a written response detailing how and why the project has changed against the agreed objectives with DLUHC from the Business Lead.

If it is agreed that the project can be amended the Business Lead will be required to complete a project adjustment form issued by DLUHC. Once completed and approved by The Board and CWC, the form will be submitted by CWC to DLUHC for consideration.

The Board and Accountable Body will be provided with quarterly performance reports by the Town Deal programme manager. If it is reported that a project is delayed (commencement/completion/outputs/outcomes) by 3 months or more then the project will be reported as a High-Risk project.

### **Risk management**

A risk register is maintained of all projects and this is updated on a regular basis. The risks of each project are rated using a scoring matrix based on likelihood and impact that each risk presents. A set of mitigations is also included.

Based on the risk register and as part of the programme overview report, high risk projects are highlighted to The Board.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Town Deal provides a unique opportunity to better understand what policy interventions are most effective in driving economic growth and living standards at the town level. This

improved understanding will rely on the frequent collection of high-quality data to enable the ongoing monitoring of progress and the evaluation of the Fund's impact. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Town Deal will ensure that Government has better evidence of what policy levers work best to improve connectivity, spatial organisation, skills, and local authority capability in towns.

CWC is committed to undertake monitoring and evaluation of the Town Deal programme for the 9 projects and to submit monitoring information to DLUHC twice a year or as requested.

Business Lead will be provided with a table of the indicators which must be reported on.

The principles of programme management will be for CWC to manage the key programme risks, through proactive engagement with Business Leads and developing a system of regular reporting.

All projects will be subject to a post-project completion report; this will ensure CWC follows best practice using recognised project and programme management techniques to ensure sound decisions have been made.

## **Communications**

Branding requirements will be set by DLUHC. Each Business Lead will be given the branding guidance which includes details for press and publicity and marketing and branding materials. Each project is contractually obliged to conform to the branding guidance as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding. Prior to issue all publicity must be sent to CWC's communications team for review.