

**DARWEN TOWN DEAL BOARD**

**ACTION MINUTES**

**FRIDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2020**

**VIRTUAL MEETING USING MS TEAMS**

**PRESENT: Board Members:**

Wayne Wild, Group Commercial Director of WEC Group Ltd (Chair of Darwen Deal Board); Phil Riley, Executive Member for Growth and Development BwDBC; Cllr John East, Leader of Darwen Town Council; Miranda Barker, Chief Executive of East Lancashire Chamber and Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board Director;; Janet Pearce, Chair of Keep Darwen Tidy; Glenda Brindle, Chair of Governors Aldridge Academy; John Wilkinson, Regional Director of Suez Recycling John Sturgess, and Chair of Darwen Town Centre Partnership.


**Support Officers**

Clare Turner, Town Centre and Markets Manager, BwD BC; Natalie Banks, Digital Communications Team Leader, BwD BC; Phil Llewellyn, Governance and Democratic Manager, BwD BC; Suzanne Jones, Assistant Director, Cities and Local Growth Unit, BEIS/DHCLG.

**Also Present**

Consultants - Graham Collinge; Richard Eastham and Philip Thornton.

	<b>ITEM</b>		<b>Key Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome, Introduction and Apologies</b>	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, apologies had been received from Cllr John Slater, Jake Berry MP, Martin Kelly, and Fazal Dad.  During the meeting the Board noted that due to technical issues, not all those due to attend the meeting had been able to join, including	<b>Noted</b>

		Gary Aspden, Councillor Phil Riley (part of meeting) and Phil Llewellyn (part of meeting).	
2.	<b>Minutes of the last meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July, Key Actions and Matters Arising</b>	The Minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.	<b>Approved</b>
3.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	<p>John East advised of his involvement with Darwen Tower and that he had sent his Register of Interest form to Phil Llewellyn.</p> <p>Glenda Brindle advised of her role as an unpaid Chair of Governors at Darwen Aldridge Community Academy (DACA) and that the proposed Cricket feasibility study was being discussed at Agenda Item 6.</p> <p>Wayne Wild advised of his former involvement with Darwen Football Club (was Chairman) but was now just a supporter, and that his company WEC are a club sponsor.</p> <p>Councillor Phil Riley noted that such interests were not Pecuniary, but should still be recorded.</p>	<p><b>Noted</b></p> <p><b>Noted</b></p> <p><b>Noted</b></p> <p><b>Noted</b></p>
4.	<b>Update on Town Investment Plan Work Programme</b>	<p>Graeme Collinge, Richard Eastham and Philip Thornton delivered a presentation (attached) which reminded the Board of the Steps in development and submission of the TIP, outlined the Work Programme, the Community Engagement process and lessons from the Check and Challenge process elsewhere.</p> <p>The Board discussed a long list of projects from the Council and partners that could be discussed and which would help pick out key themes, and it was felt that these could be explored further soon when Martin was back from leave and discussions with Graeme and partners could take place then.</p> <p>The Chair advised of his concerns that the Darwen bid was behind others in progression, and asked where the bid currently sat in</p>	<p><b>Noted</b></p> <p> Darwen TIP - Board Presentation 2 24.07.2</p>

		<p>comparison to others.</p> <p>Graeme Collinge advised that others were further on, because they had started earlier, but that there was enough time to develop and submit the bid by January. Suzanne Jones suggested that the best idea would be to work back from January and work out the key timelines from there, confirming the support from MCHLG and Arup that was available, and that they would be happy to attend a future meeting.</p>	
5.	<b>Draft Communications Strategy 2020</b>	<p>Natalie Banks submitted a Draft Communications Strategy for Board approval. The Board had previously considered and agreed a media protocol and terms of reference which defined specific responsibilities, behaviours and expectations with regard to communications by Board Members.</p> <p>The proposed Strategy aimed to advance a more proactive communications approach in support of the Board and the Town Deal.</p> <p>Subject to comment and approval, the proposed Strategy would be regularly reviewed and adapted to reflect the progress made in developing the Town Investment Plan, which also included significant opportunities for stakeholder engagement, as well as the need to manage the communication challenges and constraints generated by COVID-19.</p> <p>The Board discussed the most appropriate communication methods, agreeing that a dedicated website or page, separate from the Council, was important, whilst noting that effective Social Media was resource intensive, and currently such support was not available, the focus would be on using existing resources, and also promotion of a dedicated URL when available, setting up a Communications sub group, and use of non-digital methods such as bus shelters and notice boards.</p>	

		<p>Natalie advised that a draft webpage would be available for the Board to consider at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The Board is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the contents of this report; and</li> <li>2. Approve the draft Communications Strategy 2020, as set out at Appendix 1.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Noted</b></p> <p><b>Approved</b></p>
6.	<p><b>Update on Accelerated Town Deal Capital Projects</b></p>	<p>The Chair submitted an update report on Accelerated Town Deal Capital Projects.</p> <p>The Board meeting on 10 July considered and approved three project proposals - Darwen Tower, J4 Skate Park and AFC Darwen - to benefit from the Government's early award of an additional £750,000 to accelerate their delivery.</p> <p>The report provided further detail on the three project proposals and gave detail of an additional request for feasibility funding support for an emerging project proposal - ANCA, Aldridge North Cricket Academy - which complemented the emerging development of a Darwen Sports Village opportunity of both scale and quality.</p> <p>There was potential to develop an elite cricket academy (including state-of-the-art indoor bowling and batting lanes with a Premier League standard square and outfield) for local boys and girls, hosted and operated by the Aldridge Education Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), supported by the coaching and development programmes of Lancashire County Cricket Club and the English Cricket Board, with links to Darwen Cricket Club. There was also the opportunity to make this facility the permanent home of Lancashire</p>	

County Cricket Club's women's team.

A similar facility (BACA) costing £2M has been recently established by the Aldridge Education MAT in Brighton with Sussex County Cricket Club and the English Cricket Board.

It was proposed the Town Deal provided up to £25,000 to match an in-kind contribution of the Aldridge Education MAT to undertake a feasibility analysis to assess the planning and delivery implications in bringing forward this proposal while setting an overarching vision for ANCA and the Skate Park at the Darwen Vale site.

Subject to Board approval, this feasibility analysis would accelerate consideration of ANCA as a priority project within the Town Investment Plan. The project sponsor would be the Aldridge Education Multi-Academy Trust.

John East suggested that the Sports Village vision could also include Bowling and Darts.

The Chair, acknowledging that the meeting would soon close, asked that full details of the four schemes be sent to all the Board.

**Recommendations:**

The Board is asked to:

1. Note the contents of this report;
2. Request the Chair confirms to Government by the deadline of 14 August the Board's intention to allocate the additional funding support of £750,000 to accelerate the delivery of three projects (Darwen Tower, J4 Skate Park and AFC Darwen) and undertake a feasibility analysis (ANCA), as outlined in this report;

**Noted**

**Approved**

		<p>3. Note the Chief Executive of Blackburn with Darwen Council will provide a letter of assurance to Government in support of the Board's three projects and feasibility analysis;</p> <p>4. Authorise the Director of Growth and Development and Chief Executive of Blackburn with Darwen Council, the Board's accountable body, to finalise funding agreements with the sponsors of the three projects and feasibility analysis, based on the information set out in this report, consistent with Government guidance and the Council's assurance framework; and</p> <p>5. Request regular update reports on the progress made by the three projects and the feasibility analysis.</p>	<p><b>Noted</b></p> <p><b>Approved</b></p> <p><b>Approved</b></p>
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Items for Next Board Meeting</b></p>	<p>The Board discussed items for the next Board Meeting, with Miranda Barker suggesting that the list of potential projects from the Council, Darwen Town Council and others could be considered. In response to a question from Janet Pearce on whether the 3 identified schemes were definite, the Chair confirmed they were not definite, but were the schemes that would be put forward to Government, with the Cricket Academy a possible fourth scheme, and that Board Members could advise of other potential schemes that they were aware of.</p> <p>Natalie Banks confirmed that a draft webpage would be available to consider at the next meeting.</p> <p>The Board also discussed use of the original set up money from the Government to enable some advertising in bus shelters etc, and it was suggested that Martin Kelly look at this and John East advised that the Town Council would see what funds they could make available.</p> <p>The Chair also requested that the Consultants submit a timeline working backwards from January 2021 that showed the key stages leading to submission in the most effective way.</p>	

8.	<b>Any Other Business</b>	None.	
9.	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> August 2020 at 2pm and then every two weeks at 2pm on a Friday or as arranged following consultation with the Chair.	<b>Noted</b>