

Minutes of The Bishop Auckland Stronger Towns Board Meeting

Friday 9th October, 12.30 – 14.30, Microsoft Teams

Attendees:		
David Land	DL	Chair
David Maddan	DM	The Auckland Project, CEO
Jonathan Ruffer	JR	The Auckland Project, Founder
Susie Doyle	SD	The Auckland Project, Head of Development
Rob Yorke	RY	Teescraft, Private Sector Representative
Cllr Brian Stephens	BS	Portfolio Lead for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships
Graham Wood	GW	Durham County Council, Economic Development Manager
Natalie Davison-Terranova	ND-T	Bishop Auckland College, Principal/Chief Executive
Amy Harhoff	AH	Durham County Council, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth
Mike Matthews	MM	Private Sector Member
Cllr Shirley Quinn	SQ	Councillor
Cllr Joy Allen	JA	Councillor
Jonathan Gilroy	JG	Cities and Local Growth Team
Margaret Coates	MG	Cities and Local Growth Team
Graeme Collinge	GC	Genecon, Director
Helen Golightly	HG	North East LEP. Executive Director
Ronnie Graham	RG	Ryder

Apologies:		
Liz Fisher	LF	The Auckland Project, Engagement and Curatorial Director
Bishop Paul Butler	PB	Chair of the Brighter BA Partnership Board

Item		Action
1.0	Welcome	
2.0	Review of Previous Minutes	
2.1	No Comments.	
2.2	GW to circulate draft TIP Structure document as per item 7.1.	GW
3.0	Bid Development	
3.1	Within the next four weeks the Board need to agree a collective TIP proposal that we are comfortable with to go out to consultation during November 2020. The priorities identified within the thematic work streams will be taken forward into a more detailed workshop session to be arranged for Friday 23 rd October 2020.	GW

3.2	AH comments that the Board need to consider what other engagement outside of the public consultation needs to take place, such as ministerial engagements.	AH/DL
3.3	DL comments that the Board need to get business owners around the town involved in consultations as the proposals will affect them.	DL to arrange
4.0	Work Stream Updates	
4.1	Culture and Heritage	
4.1.1	<p>JA updates that in terms of the heritage and culture offer some key ideas for development were tabled such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a Transport Museum in partnership with the North East Bus Preservation Society at the Arriva bus depot site. • An arts and cultural quarter towards railway street. • Exploring potential for a gallery space. • A Football Museum for the Bishop Blues. • Discussions regarding the Stockton and Darlington Rail trail. 	
4.1.2	JGR notes that it may be more cost and time efficient to focus on what we already have developed within the town and ensure ideas are integrated. DL confirms this point is to be discussed during a scheduled thematic leads workshop session in 2 weeks' time.	
4.2	Skills	
4.2.1	<p>ND-T updates that in terms of skills some key ideas for development were tabled such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing issues around digital poverty by creating a public facility for accessing PC capacity with support and training. • Provision of infrastructure technology training within a town centre location for SME businesses to support growth and remove barriers to entry. • Training for the visitor economy. • Upgrade facilities at the college for Health and Social care sectors to allow additional capacity. • Partnership between the job centre plus and college to support young people into positive job outcomes. 	
4.3	Urban Regeneration and Enterprise	
4.3.1	RY updates that the regeneration and enterprise work group have identified the following opportunities:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A historic, visually attractive Market Town. • TAP/Kynren offer providing opportunity for growth of an international tourist market. • Potential for further private investment. • Catchment area of approx. 180,000 people. • Good emerging small business growth. • Well established links. 	
4.3.2	<p>The regeneration vision is to build on the above to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve a sustainable transformation of Bishop Auckland. • Create an internationally recognized cultural tourist destination, with world class attractions. • A vibrant town centre that meets the needs of a local and wider population. 	
4.3.3	<p>The Auckland Project has invested circa £200m into Bishop Auckland and it was agreed that good accessibility to these attractions needs to be assured via the Eastern Access Road. Work is ongoing with DCC to carry out the feasibility study for this.</p>	
4.3.4	<p>AH proposes that the Board commence at risk with some of the appraisal work behind the Eastern Access Road in advance of the planned workshop. No objections were raised. Agreed to start the work.</p>	AH
4.3.5	<p>Proposals for a vehicular bridge for emergency vehicles and a pedestrian bridge to provide a circular walking route are also being explored.</p>	
4.4	Connectivity and Infrastructure	
4.4.1	<p>MM updates that digital offers opportunities and solutions across all theme groups. Hitachi advised on solutions for smart cities, smart retail, smart transport, smart parking, smart organisations etc.</p>	
4.4.2	<p>Work group identified the following as key:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity – a digital platform for solutions to operate on. • Traffic management. • Visitor management. • Opportunity to connect care sites to share real time data on their situation. • Access to digital equipment for families and organisations. (DCC dispose of approx. 1000 computers per year – proposal to divert these to families and help the skills agenda.) 	
4.5	Next Steps	
4.5.1	<p>Board agreed that a workshop will be arranged on Friday 23rd October 2020 for the work stream leaders to come together, cross reference ideas and confirm a common vision.</p>	

4.5.2	GC advises that by early November 2020 we need to be in the drafting stage.	
5.0	TIP Development	
5.1	Vision/Logic Chain Progress	
5.1.1	RG (Ryder) tabled a presentation. GW to circulate to Board post meeting.	GW
5.1.2	GC (Genecon) tabled a presentation. GW to circulate to Board post meeting.	GW
5.1.3	AH queries if the visitor number forecast in the Genecon presentation is slightly conservative given the scale of future plans for visitor attractions. TAP to update and confirm latest numbers.	DM
5.1.4	AH comments that the identified weakness of 'Limited visitor infrastructure, including accommodation' should be drawn upon more strongly.	
5.1.5	AH notes the importance of rooting the offer in Bishop Auckland within the broader context of County Durham in order to draw out more significant strategic economic benefits.	
5.1.6	DM queries if there is a report that can be commissioned on the accelerator effects of creating a hub in a county, perhaps referencing work done elsewhere in Cornwall or Alnwick. GC agreed to take discussion offline with SD.	GC/SD
5.1.7	DL raised the issue of CGI activity and GW agreed to discuss offline and finalise before the next Board Meeting.	DL/GW
6.0	Future High Street Fund (FHSF)	
6.1	GW updated that MHLGC recently issued a clarifications exercise on the basis of a national review of the benefit cost ratio, which necessitated some tweaks to the technical spreadsheets and formula. This work has now been completed and will be submitted back to MHLGC on Monday 12 th October 2020.	
7.0	Communications Protocol	
7.1	GW to circulate a draft communications protocol for comment and table a final version at the next Board Meeting for ratification.	GW
8.0	Any Other Business	

8.1	MG, JG comment that they are encouraged by the progress of the Board so far and the vision that is emerging.	
9.0	Date of Next Meeting	
9.1	The next Board Meeting is Friday 13 th November 2020 at 12:30.	
	Meeting Closed.	