

Minutes of The Bishop Auckland Stronger Towns Board Meeting

Monday 23st August 2021, 12:00 – 13.00, Microsoft Teams

| Attendees: | | |
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| David Land | DL | Chair |
| Bishop Paul Butler | PB | Bishop of Durham |
| David Maddan | DM | The Auckland Project, CEO |
| Jonathan Ruffer | JR | The Auckland Project, Founder |
| Rob Yorke | RY | Teescraft, Private Sector Representative |
| Cllr Elizabeth Scott | BS | Portfolio Lead for Economy & Partnerships |
| Natalie Davison-Terranova | ND-T | Bishop Auckland College, Principal/Chief Executive |
| Rachel Edmunds | RE | Chair, Bishop Auckland And Shildon AAP |
| Cllr Kate Elliott | JA | Mayor of Bishop Auckland |
| Nik Turner | NT | Believe Housing |
| Also In Attendance | | |
| Susie Doyle | SSD | The Auckland Project, Head of Development |
| Liz Fisher | LEF | The Auckland Project, Place & Purpose Director |
| Geoff Paul | GP | Durham County Council, Head of Development and Housing |
| Graham Wood | GW | Durham County Council, Economic Development Manager |
| Jonathan Gilroy | JG | BEIS |

| Apologies: | | |
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| Dehenna Davison | DD | Member of Parliament for Bishop Auckland |
| Amy Harhoff | AH | Durham County Council, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth |
| Mike Matthews | MM | Private Sector Member |
| Helen Golightly | HG | North East LEP, Executive Director |
| Katy Severs | KS | Department for Work and Pensions |

| | Item | Action |
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| 1.0 | Welcome | |
| 1.1 | DL welcomed board members to the meeting and thanked all for their efforts in attending recent meetings often at short notice, to assist in the prioritisation of the Bishop Auckland Stronger Towns programme. DL commented on the scale of the opportunity for the town and the Boards appetite to deliver change had resulted in one of the largest Stronger Towns awards nationally | |
| 2.0 | Review of Previous Minutes | |

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| 2.1 | Members noted the minutes of the meeting of 9 August 2021 which had been circulated | |
| 2.2 | <p>ITEM 4.1 clarification on the precise routes to be improved under Stronger Towns Walking and Cycling programme.</p> <p>GW confirmed that several linking sections of route are set to be improved alongside some elements to be improved under the recently approved levelling up fund and planned Towns and Villages investment. Transport colleagues are preparing a plan showing the extent of proposed improvements which would be shared with the Board once completed.</p> | GW |
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| 3.0 | Declarations of Interest – if any | |
| 3.1 | ND-T issued declaration of interest on behalf of Bishop Auckland College as a delivery partner and co-funder on a number of the skills projects. | |
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| 4.0 | Town Submissions Update | |
| | <p>GW referred to the Stronger Towns Project Confirmations paper previously circulated.</p> <p>The paper and accompanying presentation highlighted the work undertaken since the Heads of Term offer and the working group sessions delivered to redefine the Stronger Programme from the £46.6 million TIP submission to the £33.2 million on offer.</p> <p>This also included specific requirements for submission to government by 31 August comprising</p> <p>Details of the projects being taken forward (including for each project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the capital/revenue split and the financial profile) • Overall capital/revenue split and financial profile for the Town Deal • A plan for addressing key conditions relating to those projects and the overall Town Investment Plan. <p>The Stronger Town Board were advised of the implementation of the prioritisation process previously agreed, providing a focus on project deliverability, funding, scalability, alternative funding opportunities and strategic fit. These considerations having been progressed with Board member input through a range of for a including a workshop sessions, a board update and a virtual meeting.</p> <p>Board members attention was drawn to the proposed funding allocations for Stronger Towns projects set out in paragraph 18 of the report. It was reported that the majority of prioritisation had been</p> | |

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| | <p>completed quickly although there was still a need to define the scope of the Town Centre Diversification project.</p> <p>The prioritisation workshop session highlighted a shared agreement that delivering significant improvement along North Newgate street was a shared goal, although the funded elements to achieve this remained the subject of debate.</p> <p>Strand one of activity - usable streetscape, includes proposals for a linking atrium between the Town Hall and Mining Art Gallery, along with a preference for partial enclosure of North Newgate Street to improve pedestrian dwell times.</p> <p>GW highlighted that various technical concerns remained and that the canopy proposal as well as alternative solutions for improved ambience / usable space were being looked at RY Commented on the opportunity do deliver a project of impact DL commented on the need to maximise the visitor flows along the Northern section of Newgate Street.</p> <p>Further development work was required to allow this aspect of the project to proceed. GP agreed to progress this matter with a further report to members in the near future</p> <p>The Second strand of Town Centre diversification focussed on gap funding support to deliver the re-use of the Former Beales Department Store(No 80. Newgate St) Board members were advised of developer interest. DL queried how confident GW was of securing reuse. GW confirmed that several developers had held detailed discussions with one visiting the site with a full technical team.</p> <p>Board members commented on developer interest and an aspiration for developers to commit to the town early in the project. GW confirmed that the listed status of No 80 Newgate St meant there were exceptional costs and the use of grant funding had been tested with State aid solicitors and was seen as appropriate.</p> <p>Board members agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) To note the outcome of the project prioritisation exercise . (b) To revised project grant funding profiles set out at paragraph 18 of the report (c) Approved the Chair to sign off project summary submission sheets in line with the agreed project profiles (d) To receive a further report setting out Board requirements across the next stage of the programme, addressing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The business case development and assurance process (ii) Communications and stakeholder engagement plans | <p>GP / GW</p> |
| <p>5.0</p> | <p>Any Other Business</p> | |
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| | <p>RY queries steps being taken to promote Bishop Auckland and whether a settles project list would enable the previously discussed CGI project to be progressed.</p> <p>GW confirmed that the intention was to progress with a CGI video promoting the changes and opportunities available in the town and that with the confirmed projects across all the regeneration funding programmes this would be progressed</p> <p>DL thanked all members for their participation and contribution to the Stronger Towns Fund Board for Bishop Auckland.</p> | <p>GW</p> |
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| | <p>Meeting Closed.</p> | |
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