

Town Deal Board and Crawley Economic Recovery Taskforce (CERT)

Wednesday, 2nd November 2022

Meeting Notes

ITEM	ACTION
<p>1. Welcome, apologies and minutes of the previous meeting Chris Maidment (CM) welcomed everyone to the meeting and extended a special welcome to Emma Smith as the new Area Lead for the South East, Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC).</p> <p>Apologies received from Councillor Atif Nawaz, Paul Scrivens, Darren Ford, Sally Brown, Abi Cunliffe-Hall, Tony Middleton, Jonathan Rowe, Peter Rainier, Richard Lennard, Neil Cooper, Kathryn Ripley, Louise Blackwell, Steve Burston and Jo Ward.</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting (21st September 2022) were accepted, noting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Lynn Hainge (LH) confirmed that Crawley’s funding bid was submitted on 30 September 2022, following the approach agreed at the last Town Deal Board and we are awaiting a response from DLUHC. Crawley BC is making preparations for the next steps with a focus on delivering stakeholder engagement and cost of living activity in Q4 of year 1. A copy of the final submission will be circulated with the minutes of today’s meeting. 	<p>LH</p>
<p>2. Towns Fund project updates</p> <p>1A Innovation Centre – Clem Smith (CS) presented an update on the Innovation Centre including the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of the delivery objectives • Planning approval granted 1st November 2022 and tender process for works contract has commenced. • Positive discussions ongoing with potential anchor tenant • Anticipated completion of building works and Centre opening by Dec 2023. • Summary of project expenditure for Q2 and forecast. • Priorities for next six months include appointment of project director, works mobilisation, appointment of marketing agent, launch marketing campaign and commence tender process for managing agent CIC. <p>1B Invest in Skills – Vicky Illingworth (VI) provided a verbal project update, highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder of the 3 core delivery strands: Construction skills hub, new further education skills training infrastructure and expansion of university level and higher education training provision to help Crawley students boost qualifications and progression pathways (supporting new Institute of Technology - IoT). • Invest in Skills sub-group continues to meet regularly and recently hosted a visit from BT for Education. • Construction costs have increased significantly, resulting in a review of the size of the construction hub and IoT building in order to meet budgets. • Decision taken to integrate construction hub with the IoT to reduce running costs, mitigate risks and be compatible with the agreed masterplan for the Crawley College campus. • A number of equipment purchases have been pushed back to align with construction timescales; this is reflected in the latest financial profile. • Projected spend for 2023/24 is likely to be re-profiled into 2024/25. • Following submission of the business case, DLUHC requested further information in relation to value for money, benefit:cost ratios and additional benefits – this information was provided in late August and we are awaiting a response from DLUHC. 	

<p>Ana Christie reported that the Chamber is seeing increasing pressure within the construction sector with contractors only allowing quotes to be valid for 1-2 days, highlighting the need to be aware of shorter lead-in times. VI will contact Claire Witz with regard to the Local Skills Improvement Plan.</p>	VI
<p>CM invited Emma Smith to comment on the potential delays to projects. ES responded that she does not anticipate any interference with funds that are already committed and suggested that the next fiscal statement will be looking more at future funding. ES highlighted the need to maintain local assurance procedures and ensure that any changes are reflected in the project adjustment process. ES will report back some of the issues highlighted today to colleagues and press for updates, continuing to liaise with the Town Deal Board through Nigel Tidy.</p>	ES
<p>1C Green Business Infrastructure Grants Pillar 1 – Nigel Tidy (NT) presented a project update including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overarching objective to progress the drive for Net Zero in Crawley and incentivize more skilled green jobs in this sector • Primary focus on micro-enterprises and small businesses (<50 employees) • Scheme will offer 3 grant options (business investment, development and start-up) of up to £175k. • Crawley BC to go out to tender for business advisors in the next 2-3 weeks – to shape and promote the programme and assist applicants with drafting compliant applications. • Anticipating no change to original spend profile i.e. £150,000 in 2022/23. • Programme includes tender process for the business advisors in Q3, launch of the scheme in Q4 and delivery of the first rounds of calls for grant applications by April 2024, followed by a mid term review. <p>CM asked if the scheme will target specific organisations who may wish to apply or adopt a more passive approach. NT confirmed that the business advisors will be expected to actively seek out potential, eligible applicants and support them through the grant application process.</p> <p>1C Green Business Infrastructure Grants Pillar 2 – Steve Sawyer (SS) provided a verbal update including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambition to form a Local Energy Community (LEC) of Manor Royal businesses to make it easier and cheaper to install and manage the decarbonization of the BID and the businesses that operate there. • Intention to start with solar PV before expanding into other areas • Re-Energise Manor Royal Group (chaired by Tim Rose, Elekta) identified the need for a delivery partner. Following a competitive process, a delivery partner has been appointed. • SS invited members of the Town Deal Board to attend the Manor Royal Matters event on 10 November, which will include a soft launch of the LEC and announcement of the delivery partner. • Anticipate seeing the first installations from April/May 2023 onwards • Key risks to the programme include the sign off process for companies and lead-in times for the procurement of assets. <p>Karen Hayes highlighted the need for robust governance processes for this project, including the recording of declarations of interest from involved parties. This will be particularly important for auditing purposes.</p> <p>4B Manor Royal Business Environment Improvement Schemes - SS reported positive progress with four micro parks now complete and a fifth (The Base) due to open in the next few weeks. Referring to ES’s previous comments about funding, SS highlighted that in order to meet delivery targets, the BID is operating at a degree of risk and any prospect of funding being withdrawn would be deeply concerning.</p> <p>The project is moving into detailed design for the next three park projects at Woolborough Lane, Crawter’s Brook and Manor Royal Central (opposite Jaguar Land Rover). The latter site is being prioritised as it is coterminous with the first Superhub location in Manor Royal (funded by the Crawley Growth Programme).</p>	

<p><u>The Town Deal Board noted the project updates</u></p> <p>CM thanked SS and others for their respective project updates and welcomed the positive progress being made.</p> <p>ES reiterated CM’s comments and would welcome the opportunity to visit Crawley and see these excellent examples of what is being delivered through the Towns Fund. ES was particularly pleased to see so many examples of ‘green’ projects coming forward.</p> <p>Henry Smith MP agreed that it would be good to visit some of the projects being delivered and affirmed his understanding that any funds already committed should be safe. If anyone has any specific issues they would like to raise in relation to this, Henry invited them to email him directly at henry.smith.mp@parliament.uk.</p>	
<p>3. Towns Fund outstanding business cases</p> <p>3A Manor Royal Gigabit - Simon Jones (SJ) provided an update on the project which aims to bring gigabit connectivity to businesses in Crawley. Earlier this year, Crawley BC engaged Analysys Mason to provide expert advice and support development of the business case. Progress has been slower than anticipated as a result of market conditions however Analysys Mason will shortly begin soft market testing to identify a provider to work with. Other local authorities have followed a similar approach which will involve speaking to 8-9 organisations to determine the level of interest and engage in dialogue to understand what can be delivered. SJ stated that the project has been relivened and is making progress.</p> <p>SS expressed strong support and interest in the project, highlighting that a recent survey of businesses in Manor Royal cited faster broadband speeds as a top priority. SS expressed frustration at the pace of progress and is keen to understand how this will be deployed so businesses can access faster broadband.</p> <p>SJ stated that the purpose of the current process is to accelerate progress and force the hand of providers. SJ to follow up with SS separately.</p> <p>2B Cycle Route – CS reminded the Board that this project aims to deliver a priority arterial and segregated cycle track linking Crawley’s key employment destinations – Gatwick Airport, Manor Royal and Crawley Town Centre. The business case has been delayed as a result of match funding being required to progress the scheme and Crawley Growth Programme funds are currently subject to a mid-term review being undertaken by West Sussex CC and Crawley BC; due to be complete by December. West Sussex CC is also leading a bid to the Department for Transport for funding to deliver a Town Centre-Manor Royal leg of the route; currently awaiting next steps</p> <p>CS confirmed that the business case will be finalized, taking into account the outcome/next steps associated with the above and proposed that the Town Deal Board submit a request to DLUHC to extend the deadline for business case finalization to end of December 2022. The same will apply to the Manor Royal Gigabit project.</p> <p><u>The Town Deal Board agreed to extend the deadline for finalisation of the remaining business cases to 31st December 2022.</u></p>	<p>SJ/SS</p>
<p>4. Towns Fund six monthly monitoring report (Apr – Sept 2022)</p> <p>NT presented a programme update including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An outline of the audit process for Local Authority Assurance Framework • Crawley BC to undertake an internal audit of the Towns Fund programme during Q3 • Six monthly monitoring reports required; next report covers Apr-Sep 22 • Summary of business case development/endorsement • Funding allocation, financial forecasts and next milestones <p><u>The Board endorsed submission of the latest monitoring report to DLUHC by 16 December, based on the information shared today.</u></p>	

<p>5. Towns Fund Terms of Reference update</p> <p>NT referred to the draft, revised terms of reference (ToR) that had been circulated with the meeting agenda. The original ToR were written during the early stages of the pandemic and included reference to the Economic Recovery Task Force which has subsequently morphed into the Town Deal Board.</p> <p>The revised ToR reflect the transition from development of the Town Investment Plan into programme delivery and implementation and includes consideration of the Local Authority Assurance Framework from DLUHC e.g. suggested frequency of meetings every 12 weeks, reference to the Levelling Up Agenda Policy, etc.</p> <p>CM asked Board members to review the draft ToR and send any comments to Nigel Tidy by <u>Friday 18th November</u>.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>6. Next steps</p> <p>CM suggested that the next meeting includes consideration of how the Town Deal Board is working for attendees, whether any changes are required as we move forward and the opportunities for face to face visits.</p> <p>Adam Godfrey (AG) asked if there was any update on the Levelling Up Bid for funding to support further regeneration of the town centre public realm. CS confirmed that the bid was submitted in early August and we are awaiting a response from DLUHC.</p> <p>AG asked if we have a sufficient communications plan in place in order to get these positive messages out to businesses. NT confirmed that a draft Communications Plan had been submitted to the Town Deal Board previously and this is being worked through, pending business case approval from DLUHC.</p> <p>CM thanked everyone for attending. The meeting closed at 11.00am.</p>	
<p>7. Date of the next meeting 14th December 2022</p>	