

Workington Towns Deal Board Meeting
Friday 17th June 2022
Draft Minutes

Attendance

Board Members

Cllr Alan Barry	Cumbria County Council
Mike Egerton	Sovereign Centros
Cllr Mike Heaslip	Allerdale Borough Council
Bridget Johns	Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service
Cllr Mike Johnson (Chair)	Allerdale Borough Council
Jo Lappin	Cumbria LEP
Jonny Lowe	Iggesund
Chris Nattrass	Lakes College
Cllr Paul Scott	Allerdale Borough Council

Officers/Support

Gerard Acton	Cumbria County Council
Julie Alexander	Allerdale Borough Council
Michael Barry	Cumbria County Council
Kevin Kerrigan	Allerdale Borough Council
Brittany Mason	BEIS
Lizzy Shaw	Cumbria County Council

1. Introductions

Cllr Mik Johnson chaired the meeting in the absence of John Coughlan who was unable to attend. The Chair welcomed all Board Members and their supporting officers to the meeting. Mike Egerton attended in place of Jack Gordon and will be representing Sovereign Centros at all future meetings.

Apologies

John Coughlan, Jack Gordon, Valerie Hallard and Anthony Wareing

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Actions

The board agreed the minutes of the last meeting.

3. Update on approval of project summaries

Kevin Kerrigan was pleased to report that the projects had passed through the government's review process and initial payments are expected shortly, as outlined in the note that had been circulated. Work on the projects can now proceed. Discussions are ongoing with partners involved in project delivery.

4. Review of Terms of Reference

Kevin Kerrigan outlined the purpose of the revised terms of reference proposed for the board which was circulated prior to the meeting. The Board's original terms of reference had been drawn up for the development of the Town Investment Plan and project business cases. These tasks are now complete as the scheme moves into the delivery phase, and the focus of the board will now turn to monitoring the implementation of the projects. This may involve adjustments and alterations to projects as they proceed, especially given the changing economic operating environment. The group will remain a champion for Workington and will influence the community consultation and engagement programme.

The board agreed the revised terms of reference.

5. Project Update

Communications Plan for Public Realm and Connectivity Project

The draft communications plan for the project was presented to the group by Ged Acton. The intention is to widen engagement beyond existing stakeholders and communicate key messages about the project and its aims. Events are to be held in Workington on the 20th – 20th July (includes a market day) to reach local people and businesses to inform them about the scheme. High level concept plans will be used to find out their thoughts and help identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. Plans can then be finalised before the design is confirmed and a traffic regulation order sought. The construction phase is estimated to commence in February 2024.

The levelling up round 2 bid for Ramsay Brow was discussed given its link to this project. Should this bid be successful coordination will be necessary. It is anticipated that a single steering group would oversee both projects.

Sports Village

Kevin Kerrigan updated the group on the stadium project, circulating a Workington Town/Workington Reds presentation delivered to their stakeholders in April. Initial funding of £50,000 has been agreed with Cumberland Sports Village Ltd (CSV Ltd) for further development of the business case. CSV Ltd has been set up by both clubs as the delivery vehicle for the project.

Indicative plans show a phased scheme, with the redevelopment of the stadium coming first with additional phases being undertaken as funding comes forward. There are avenues for different sources of funding designed to meet environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria.

Kevin had attended a meeting at the Carnegie joined by fans and stakeholders where the plans had received a very positive reception.

Kevin and David Taylor responded to a query from Jo Lappin about how the gap in funding and issues associated with cost inflation might be addressed. The phased nature of the scheme is helpful, and there is also the potential for alternative funding options to become available for example the Shared Prosperity Fund. There is no commitment to a particular design at present, and the final design will need to fit within the available budget and following discussions with potential suppliers and contractors. Although an expression of interest has been submitted to the SPF for £300,000 of capital, this will still need to go through the approval process and is not being relied upon. Funding is still being explored. David Taylor was optimistic about the SPF as it fits in well with the community aspect of the stadium, and the steer from government was that some capital projects would be acceptable, not just revenue schemes. Inflation will affect all construction projects and is unavoidable. Again, the phased approach will help, and hopefully things will improve going forward.

5. Any other business

Discussions are ongoing about the potential of land at the Port of Workington to host a logistics facility when remediation works supported by the Towns Fund have been undertaken.

Bridget John raised concerns that had been expressed by The Carnegie about competition from the Innovation Centre and its offer. The Carnegie have modified their operating model and are promoting their meeting spaces and café to respond to existing challenges.

Mike Johnson confirmed that Allerdale continues to provide a support package for the Carnegie and remains in open dialogue with the Carnegie Executive. Whilst the view was that the Innovation Centre proposals would be complementary to rather than competitive with existing town centre enterprises, the need to be sensitive to these concerns is acknowledged.

6. *Future Meetings*

Next Board meeting – Friday 16 September 2022 – 2:30 pm, to be held using MS Teams. Board members will be updated accordingly.

The meeting ended at 3:10 pm