

Workington Towns Deal Board Meeting
Friday 07 May 2021
Draft Minutes

Attendance

Board Members

Cllr Alan Barry	Cumbria County Council
John Coughlan (Chair)	TSP Engineering Ltd
Jack Gordon	Sovereign Centros
Valerie Hallard	Churches Together in Workington
Bridget Johns	Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service
Cllr Mike Johnson	Allerdale Borough Council
Jonny Lowe	Iggesund
Chris Natrass	Lakes College
David Taylor	Allerdale Investment Partnership
Anthony Wareing	Workington Heritage Group
Corinne Watson	Cumbria LEP

Officers/Support

Julie Alexander	Allerdale Borough Council
Valerie Ayre	Cumbria County Council
Michael Barry	Cumbria County Council
Rosie Jenkins	CLGU
Kevin Kerrigan	Allerdale Borough Council

1. Introductions

The Chair welcomed all Board Members and their supporting officers to the meeting.

Apologies

Mark Jenkinson MP, Cllr Michael Heaslip, Cllr Paul Scott

Catherine Gourlay was unable to connect to the meeting due to technical difficulties.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Actions

The board agreed the revised minutes of the last meeting.

3. Project Prioritisation

KK presented a proposal for project prioritisation that had been developed following discussions with partners. It is proposed that that all 5 projects included in the Heads of Terms be progressed which will require a reduction in the funding allocation to one or more of the projects.

In determining how the funding reduction should be distributed, the projects were examined in terms of scaleability, the level of match funding required and the extent to which the funding allocation could be reduced whilst still achieving significant benefit.

The proposed funding allocation is as follows.

Project	Max Funding	Proposed Reduction	Proposed Funding
Innovation Centre	£8,250,000	£50,000	£8,200,000
Sports Village	£5,400,000	£0	£5,400,000
Townscape/Connectivity	£4,800,000	£800,000	£4,000,000
Port/Oldside	£4,800,000	£300,000	£4,500,000
Digital Accelerator	£1,500,000	£500,000	£1,000,000
	£24,750,000.00	£1,650,000	£23,100,000

The main reduction proposed is to the townscape/connectivity project. In discussions with officers at CCC consideration has been given to how the project could be reduced in extent but with a focus on improvements to key areas being maintained. Public realm improvements are already being achieved through the accelerated funding project and would be a design consideration for the innovation centre project.

The digital accelerator project was considered to be still viable even with a reduction in funding.

A modest reduction in the Port of Workington/Oldside was consideration to be achievable.

No reduction in funding was proposed for the Sports Village, and the reduction in funding for the Innovation centre was also limited. As these projects involved the construction of new buildings these two projects were considered to be less scaleable than the others and also required significant match funding contributions.

CN agreed that as the digital accelerator project enhanced and contributed to existing work streams it would still achieve significant benefits with the reduction in funding. JG also agreed that the funding had been divided in a fair well-considered way, and was a good overall solution.

DT asked whether there was scope to change the mix of schemes if some were making more progress than others. KK advised there was an opportunity to request changes to the programme further on in the process, although guidance made it clear that such changes might not be agreed, or there might not be the same level of funding available. Rosie Jenkins confirmed that there was a project change programme and would be happy to discuss it.

Members agreed the proposed project prioritisation.

4. *Monitoring and Evaluation Requirements*

KK provided an overview of the monitoring and evaluation requirements which apply to both the Future High Streets and Towns Fund programmes. He has attended a MHCLG webinar explaining the process and is happy to share the detailed guidance with Board members should they wish to see this. An annual report has to be produced and there are a number of mandatory indicators. There are also a number of local authority indicators that will need to be met. A draft Monitoring and Evaluation plan will need to be submitted by 24th May, and a template has been provided by MHCLG for this purpose.

MB suggested that the monitoring and evaluation plan would be a good means of keeping the board informed of progress and supporting their oversight function. It was agreed that this was a good idea.

5. *Any Other Business*

The Chair thanked the Board for their work on the scheme. The 5 projects selected and their benefits have been retained throughout the process despite the reduction in funding.

In response to a question from AB it was confirmed that the online 'Team's' meeting format will continue given the benefits to members not based locally.

In response to a question from JL the Chair also agreed that visits to the project sites would be appropriate at some time in the future, although not at this early stage.

6. *Future Meetings*

Next Board meeting – Friday 04 June 2021 – 2:30 pm, to be held remotely.
Board members will be updated accordingly.

The meeting ended at 3:30 pm