



**Workington Towns Deal Board Meeting  
Friday 24 July 2020  
Draft Minutes**

Attendance

Board Members

Cllr Alan Barry	Cumbria County Council
Chris Bagshaw	Workington Town Council
John Coughlan (chair)	TSP Engineering Ltd
Valerie Hallard	Churches Together in Workington
Mark Jenkinson MP	MP for Workington
Bridget Johns	Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service
Jonny Lowe	Iggesund
Tom Nuttall	Sovereign Centros
Cllr Paul Scott	Allerdale Borough Council
David Taylor	Allerdale Investment Partnership
Anthony Wareing	Workington Heritage Group
Corinne Watson	Cumbria LEP

Officers/Support

Julie Alexander	Allerdale Borough Council
Michael Barry	Cumbria County Council
Ashley Bennett	Mott MacDonald
Sarah Brown	SQW
Luke Delahunty	SQW
Miriam Ferrari	Mott MacDonald
Naomi Hollows	CLGU
Kevin Kerrigan	Allerdale Borough Council
Lizzy Shaw	Cumbria County Council
Julie Ward	Allerdale Borough Council

1. Introductions

**Improving Workington through:**

Urban regeneration, planning and land use; Skills and enterprise infrastructure; and connectivity

The Chair welcomed all Board Members and their supporting officers to the meeting. New Board Member, David Taylor of Allerdale Investment Partnership, introduced himself to the group.

### Apologies

Jack Gordon, Rosie Jenkins, Cllr Mike Johnson, Chris Nattrass.

## 2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Actions

The board agreed the minutes of the last meeting.

Presentation slides for the following items had been previously circulated to board members.

## 3. Potential Projects for £750,000 Funding Award

Kevin Kerrigan outlined the terms of the £750,000 funding award, and the type of projects it will support. A decision must be made by 14 August.

Two key priority projects have been identified - the acquisition and demolition of the Opera House and works to Central Way underpass and land adjacent to Workington Leisure Centre. The latter scheme is a scalable project i.e. the extent of delivery could accord with the amount of funds required for the Opera House project. It was asked the latter project remain confidential at present as negotiations in relation to the acquisition of the Opera House site are ongoing.

The projects will have to be signed off by Allerdale Borough Council's Section 151 Officer as meeting the criteria set out in the intervention framework, providing value for money and being deliverable within the current financial year.

A range of alternative projects were discussed including Ramsay Brow junction improvements, the provision of restaurant facilities in Washington Square, and enhanced signage within the town. Whilst not without merit, these schemes did not necessarily fit with the funding criteria at this time.

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Board members were in agreement with the two priority projects, although a view was expressed by a board member that the opera house site should not be left as a vacant development site following demolition but completed as a landscaped amenity space in the short term.

4. *Update from Skills/Innovation Sub-group*

Mott Macdonald updated the board on the work of the Skills and Innovation subgroup, assisted by SQW. Two workshops have been held since the last meeting, and there is broad agreement on the challenges, trends and opportunities to be addressed, and an emerging consensus on two key themes of intervention - improving digital skills, and the provision of co-working/ incubation space.

SQW provided insight into co-working space using experiences of their sister company, Oxford Innovation, and employing examples from Ashton and Daresbury. Basic design requirements for a successful space were outlined, and the need to understand the target market highlighted.

The board discussed the benefits of bringing such a use into Workington, and the potential for other uses that might follow.

Craig Ivison, Head of Skills & Employment at Cumbria LEP has offered his assistance with this project theme, which has been accepted by Kevin Kerrigan on behalf of the Board.

MM/SQW is seeking Members views on this topic and a number of questions are posed on slide 36. Comments should be passed to Kevin Kerrigan.

5. *Discussion on Leisure/Cultural Projects*

Kevin Kerrigan led discussions on the leisure/cultural projects. An issue to consider is whether there is room for more than one project of this nature in the TIP package and to what extent the community engagement process could be employed to assist decision-making.

The stadium/sports village performed well in the Mytown consultation, and this could be multi-site to include Moorclose and offer wider regeneration benefits.

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Workington Hall and Park has the potential to require significant amounts of funding, although there is the option to fund smaller interventions such as lighting. Some members felt public open space should be considered together as a theme rather than just considering Curwen Park in isolation, making reference to Vulcans Park, Bank Field, and St Michaels. Other projects that had been referenced in the MyTown consultation included the Carnegie Theatre and Ellis Sports Ground. A factor to be considered is the extent to which projects may be able benefit from other sources of funding and this may influence the choice of projects that the Town Deal should focus on.

It was discussed that including a programme of smaller projects should not be discounted at this stage where benefits could potentially be achieved with relatively small amounts of money. It was however recognised that a key aim of the Town Deal is to deliver economic transformation.

Further work will be undertaken in relation to potential projects in this area for inclusion within the TIP.

6. *Project Plan for October submission of TIP*

MM outlined the timescales that must be met in order to meet the submission deadline, and the even earlier deadlines for Council approval; it is imperative to work up the projects and finalise them to ensure a full draft is available at the end of September. Feedback on the skills and enterprise theme are needed as soon as possible.

Community consultation is a key element of the TIP process, and is emphasized in the published guidance; a stakeholder engagement plan must be produced. MM summarised work undertaken to date and the technology that can assist with collecting and analysing opinions; approaches from Brighton & Hove, Blackpool, and Barrow were discussed.

Timescales to progress community engagement is challenging, but there was a consensus in the group that the TIP must engage fully with the community. The Community Engagement Subgroup will liaise with the consultants. CCC offered the assistance of their Community Development Team and

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Workington Town Council suggested employing their communication channels.

The timescales were reiterated, and all comments relating to skills and enterprise should be sent to Kevin Kerrigan.

7. *Future Meetings*

Next Board meeting – Friday 21 August 2020 – 2:30 pm, to be held via MS Teams. Board members will be updated accordingly.

The meeting ended at 4:20 pm

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