

## TOWN DEAL BOARD

**Notes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 11 January 2024  
5.00p.m. via Teams**

### **Board Members in Attendance:**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Representing:</b>
Craig Moule (Chair) Cllr Marjory Bisset Cllr Lynn Denham Michelle Dowse Revd Canon Dr Stephen Edwards Sally Ellison MBE Cllr Mrs Lucy Hodgson Cllr Roger Knight Jan Scrine BEM Lisa Stansbie Robin Walker Gary Woodman	Sanctuary Joint Leader, Worcester City Council Joint Leader, Worcester City Council Heart of Worcestershire College Worcester Cathedral Worcester Community Action Warndon Parish Council St. Peters Parish Council Worcester Civic Society University of Worcester MP for Worcester Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership
Also in Attendance:  David Blake Jamie Fox  David Sutton  Zoey West  Julian Pugh  Govin Aujla Alex Collins	Managing Director, Worcester City Council Future High Street Fund Programme Manager, Worcester City Council Deputy Director – Policy and Strategy, Worcester City Council Deputy Director – Economic Development, Worcester City Council Democratic Services, Worcester City Council Area Lead, Cities & Local Growth Unit Department for Business and Trade

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>Craig Moule welcomed everyone to the meeting. With the consent of the Chair, Professor Lisa Stansbie, Pro Vice Chancellor for Education, Society and Culture, University of Worcester was attending in place of David Green.</p> <p>Ian Smith from the West Midlands Cities and Local Growth Unit was due to retire in April and his role was being picked up by Govin Aujla, who was attending for the first time and was joined by a colleague, Alex Collins.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>Gary Woodman declared an interest in the UKSPF presentation, insofar as it refers to the Careers Hub at the</p>	

	Hive, which the LEP has been involved in delivering.	
3.	<p><b>Apologies</b> Apologies had been received from David Green.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b> The notes of the meeting held on 7 September 2023 had been previously circulated and were noted.</p>	
5.	<p><b>UKSPF - Skills Funding Allocations</b> Presentation from Zoey West. Main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City Council was awarded £2.9m of UKSPF funding in September 2022. Allocations were split into three key areas of delivery: Community and Place; Supporting Local Business; People and Skills. The People and Skills spend was only eligible in the final year (24/25). Zoey summarised achievements to date.</li> <li>• Following a review of proposed delivery allocations for 2024/25, in November the Council’s Place and Economic Development Committee agreed to move £100k of funding from the People and Skills priority to Community and Place. This allocation will focus on community measures to reduce the cost of living.</li> <li>• There will be further Committee reports later this month asking Members to agree options for delivering all Skills and Community Interventions in year three and for the delivery of the Community and Place funding.</li> <li>• There is capacity within the programme to fund all projects at their requested levels, by moving funding within interventions. Currently, the City Council has not received a proposal for a green skills programme, but there remains £51k to procure a partner to deliver.</li> <li>• A further update report will be presented to the Board in June.</li> </ul> <p>In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gary Woodman raised the potential for various skills-related projects to overlap. Zoey advised that this will be a consideration as the programme is developed. David added that ensuring different partners do not compete for the same customers will be a key consideration.</li> <li>• There was a discussion about green skills, including what this covers and how training will be delivered. Gary</li> </ul>	<p>ZW</p> <p>ZW</p>

	<p>explained that this crosses over a number of sectors, the LEP has had some involvement already and may be able to assist with identifying potential partner organisations to help with delivery. Gary will contact Zoey about this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sally Ellison stated that volunteering has the to enhance skills and employability. She asked if this can be worked into the scope of the project. This is something which she can help with.</li> <li>• It was acknowledged that it will be challenging to deliver all the People and Skills projects in the space of one year. Govin Aujla stated that he will investigate whether there is any potential to roll over projects and report back to Council Officers. Craig Moule asked if this point can be included in the update at the next meeting in June.</li> </ul>	<p><b>GW/ZW</b></p> <p><b>ZW/SE</b></p> <p><b>GA/ZW</b></p>
6.	<p><b>Future High Streets Fund - Scala Progress</b> Presentation from Jamie Fox. Jamie updated the Board on progress since the last meeting Main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The outcome of the engagement exercise showed that there is strong support from local stakeholders who want to see the Scala/Corn Exchange renovated as an arts centre which can provide flexible spaces and incorporate community activities.</li> <li>• The designs have been updated and the preferred configuration provides 3 smaller spaces – named The Box, The Stage, The Screen – with the connected Corn Exchange providing food and beverage, full kitchen and an additional performance area. Design illustrations were shared as part of Jamie’s presentation.</li> <li>• Expressions of interest submitted in relation to future operation of facility during the consultation exercise have led to the creation of a “Creative Consortium.” This is a group of stakeholders who identified as interested potential partners. The current operating model has been developed through engagement with the Consortium and a Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed.</li> <li>• The planning application has now gone live and can be viewed on the City Council’s website.</li> <li>• Next steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planning application to be determined in March 2024.</li> <li>- Contractor pre-construction service agreement to start February 2024</li> <li>- Finalise contractor documentation and appointment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

	<p>July 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commence construction August 2024</li> <li>- Construction complete November 2025.</li> </ul> <p>Officers responded to questions and comments. Main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In response to a question from Robin Walker about the economic benefit (BCR), Jamie advised that the ratio of 3.5 had been calculated after reallocation of monies from Trinity House and Panama Jacks. A recent review had concluded that the figure remains similar and the economic case for the scheme remains strong. The funding gap has closed significantly.</li> <li>• Some Board members raised the question of sustainability and the extent to which the scheme will be reliant on public sector subsidy. Jamie advised that the scheme will not be fully self-financing in its first year of operation, but Officers are working closely with the Creative Consortium to develop the business case and this will be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee in the Spring. Simon Geraghty asked if the business case could also be presented to the Board.</li> <li>• Jamie explained that key steps will be the grant of planning permission and completion of the RIBA Stage 4 drawings, which will enable detailed costings for the construction works to be completed. This will enable the Council to decide whether to enter a formal contract to deliver the arts centre.</li> <li>• Lucy Hodgson expressed the view that the hiring fees should not be prohibitive to community organisations, and this needs to be addressed in the business case. Officers acknowledged this point.</li> <li>• Sally Ellison asked about accessibility. Jamie advised that there will be lift access to all floors and access from street level. Sally asked about signage for persons who are visually impaired, and Jamie agreed to pick this point up.</li> </ul> <p>In conclusion, David Blake acknowledged all the points made and gave assurance that the Board's comments will be taken into consideration.</p>	<p>DB/JF</p> <p>JF</p> <p>JF</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Town Deal Fund - Community Skills</b></p> <p>Presentation from David Sutton. Main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project will deliver capital improvements at a number of community centres across the City.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The business case was approved in 2022. The presentation summarised the scope of the works at each venue.</li> <li>• Construction work has now reached the detailed pre-works stage (RIBA stage 4). Two significant amendments to the scope of works have been proposed to ensure that the project remains within budget whilst also delivering the intended outcomes. This affects Ronkswood and Horizon, where existing facilities will now be enhanced rather than undertaking new construction work.</li> <li>• RIBA stage 4 drawings and costings are due by mid-January. The Council's Policy and Resources Committee will be recommended to approve final scope and agreement to proceed to procurement at their meeting on 6 February.</li> <li>• A contractor will be appointed in April 2024.</li> </ul> <p>David Sutton responded to questions and comments.</p> <p>Sally Ellison and Michelle Dowse reiterated some points made earlier, namely access to training for volunteers and avoiding a situation whereby providers are competing to provide similar training.</p> <p>Michelle asked about the hire costs David explained that he did not have any more information about this aspect as the focus of the report is on the capital project. The buildings need to be well-used and the pricing needs to reflect this.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b> None.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Dates of Future Meetings</b> The following dates were proposed for 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thursday, 6 June</li> <li>• Thursday, 19 December</li> </ul> <p>Both at 5.00p.m. on Teams. Julian has sent calendar invitations.</p> <p>Craig added that Julian will contact Board Members if an additional meeting is required prior to June for the Scala/Corn Exchange FHSF item.</p>	<p><b>JP/All to note</b></p>

The meeting closed at 6.32p.m.

Key:

<b>JP – Julian Pugh</b>	<b>ZW – Zoey West</b>
<b>GW – Gary Woodman</b>	<b>SE – Sally Ellison</b>
<b>JF – Jamie Fox</b>	<b>DB – David Blake</b>
<b>GA - Govin Aujla</b>	