



IPSWICH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting	Ipswich Town Deal Vision Board
Date	Friday 8 th March 2023
Time	09:00 hrs
Location	Orwell Room, Grafton House
Present	David Ralph, Chair of Ipswich Vision Board (Chair) Helen Pluck, CEO, Ipswich Borough Council [IBC] (HP) Paul West, Councillor, Suffolk County Council [SCC] (PW) Emily Cashen, DLUHC (EC) Neil McDonald, Leader of IBC (NMCD) Liz Harsent, Councillor and Representative for Tom Hunt (LH) Sharon Earp, Representative for Dr Dan Poulter (SE) Emma Lindsell, Head of Towns Fund & Economic Development, IBC (EL) John Dugmore, Chamber of Commerce (JD) Terry Baxter, Chair of Ipswich Central (TB) James Davey, Director, Ipswich Small Business Association (JDa) Becca Jackaman (BJ) Andrew Cook, Executive Director for Growth, Highways & Infrastructure, SCC (AC) Alan Pease, Principal, Suffolk New College (AP) Helen Langton, Vice Chancellor, University of Suffolk (HL) James Fairclough, Director of Operations and Place, IBC (JF) Debbie McLatch, Assistant Director of Place, IBC (DM) Julia Rusek, IBC (Minutes)

Items:

		Action
1.0	Apologies Dr Dan Poulter, MP for Central Suffolk and North Ipswich (DP) Tom Hunt, MP for Ipswich (TH) Elaine Joseland, Chief of Staff for Dr Dan Poulter MP (EJ) Rosanne Wijnberg, New Anglia LEP (RW) Sophie Alexander-Parker, Ipswich Central (SAP) Tim Greenacre, University of Suffolk (TG) CJ Green, Chair, New Anglia LEP (CJG)	

<p>2.0</p>	<p>Declarations of Interest: AP will be required to complete a declaration of interests form LH noted she is a County Councillor as well as here representing TH</p>	<p>AP</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Matters Arising: TB noted he would like to clarify his position on Norwich Road. His disappointment is that despite assurances being given to this Board that Norwich Road was not included in the Shopping Parades project.</p>	
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Suffolk Devolution: AC provided the Board with a presentation on a level 3 devolution deal for Suffolk – the slides are provided as an appendix to these minutes. TB questioned how many brownfield sites fall under IBC ownership. JF informed the list is very long, and all IBC Brownfield sites are being considered. AC highlighted there isn't enough money to regenerate all sites so prioritisation will be required. Regarding energy efficient homes, this deal would facilitate a 0% loan scheme, assisting with carbon energy efficiency and making homes cheaper to manage. TB questioned whether a similar scheme exists for businesses. AC informed that this is only relevant for residential properties. The governance of SCC will be altered if a deal is agreed. There are currently 75 seats, local County Councillors are voted in, then the majority party forms the administration and elects the leader. A level 3 devolution deal requires that a county leader be directly elected, similarly to the Crime Commissioner, resulting in 75 seats plus 1 leader. The leader would be responsible for choosing a cabinet which is able to deliver on priorities. Elections would take place in May 2025 if the deal is accepted. AC highlighted that devolution is a journey. If accepted, Suffolk will be able to take part in opportunities and enter discussions for further development. For example, Level 4 deals or natural climate/rural nature dialogues. A public consultation process will be necessary to ensure Suffolk residents are aware of all the facts. Meaningful engagement will last 10 weeks, followed by a decision from SCC whether to proceed with the deal. If a Level 3 deal is rejected, it does not automatically warrant a discussion relating to a different opportunity and would be separate. SE questioned whether there is a minimum number of required responses. AC informed that there is no minimal number of responses to warrant a consultation with those who wish to provide input. AC confirmed that engagement public events will occur.</p>	

	<p>HL and AP offered to send information to students and staff. AC commented that this would be appropriate.</p> <p>AC explained that there is a 60% Capital/40% Revenue split. He also noted that only a Level 4 deal allows for extra powers, this will be a prospect for the future, however, the County must first obtain a Level 3 deal to proceed.</p> <p>TB asked whether the possibility of an independent Leader exists. If yes, would this individual select their cabinet from the elected seats?</p> <p>AC clarified that the Leader does not need to be a part of the majority party. This also relates to the cabinet, meaning a coalition or minority cabinet is possible. The Leader is responsible for ensuring the SCC continues to function and delivers its duties.</p> <p>AC reassured that the consultation will factually inform the public in a neutral way as to not steer the audience. It will be made clear that there will be a trade-off in constitutional arrangements for additional funding.</p>	<p>HL / AP</p>
<p>5.0</p>	<p>Visioning Updates:</p> <p>It was noted that all working groups are now in place and updates will be given on recent progress.</p> <p><u>Waterfront Attraction</u> – Update by HL:</p> <p>The first meeting occurred recently which discussed creating a significant attraction at the Waterfront, for example, a National Science Museum as it plays to Ipswich’s strengths.</p> <p>Some examples of projects undertaken by other parts of the country include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leicester has a space centre. - Belfast incorporated a Titanic Museum. <p>To articulate what the vision could be, the group will work together to produce a 3-4 page representation which encompasses the rationale, concept, and where the site will be located.</p> <p>This is a large initiative project which will take 5 to 10 years to complete.</p> <p>HL will present the work of the group at the next meeting</p> <p>SE mentioned she was involved in the Leicester project and commended that it’s beneficial from a tourism perspective.</p> <p>HL informed this is exactly the goal, to bring tourism, include education, and play around Ipswich’s strengths.</p> <p>SE commented that common themes tend to bring people together too.</p> <p>PW updated on the Waterfront lighting action from last meeting:</p> <p>The Ipswich investment fund was utilised to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upgrade 10 lighting redundant columns on Albian Wolf on Mill End. - Install 15 new branding columns and lighting between Neptune apartments. 	<p>HL</p>

Both will be delivered by June 2024.

Raising Aspirations and Changing the Narrative – Update by HP:

Last week HP and Nicola Beach, the co-lead of this group, met to begin scoping and headlining an action plan.

A wider meeting with place branding experts will occur in April to gain a better understanding of how to proceed.

Things will be more tangible and reportable in June.

Nothing will commence on this project in April due to the election period.

Chair questioned whether other members of the board are involved in the project group. HP informed that the project has not reached that stage yet.

Ipswich as a Destination – Update by JD:

This working group synergises with the raising aspirations and changing the narrative due to its wide remit.

The spectrums considered are living, business, and tourism.

Numerous strategies for inward investment have been identified, for instance, ITFC have their own strategy and vision.

A meeting will occur on the 12th of April amongst 9 members representing:

- University of Suffolk,
- Communications,
- Town Centre,
- Large and small employers in the Town Centre,
- Dance East,
- The investment Director from ITFC,
- British Telecom,
- Chief Executive of Adnams.

Chair questioned whether the group knows what they will gain from the meeting.

JD has extended the invitation to HP and Chair to attend to understand what the vision and aspiration is.

Separate conversations will occur with between JD, Chair and HP to establish what the group will be doing.

Connected Town – Update by TB:

It was noted that there has been a degree of change in Ipswich Central over the past 3 months and TB would like to ask for support from those at the table currently.

Housing, transport, and services are big areas within their own right and the Connected Town group is small, meaning assistance is required to drive the project forward.

HL questioned if the Connected Town is a group within its own right or whether the other groups should consider incorporating the concept into their working groups.

**JD,
Chair,
HP**

	<p>TB informed that the Connected Town aspect was originally the overreaching vision for Ipswich, therefore, it should be considered within every workstream and decision.</p> <p>However, this could constitute an interesting discussion. Should the Connected Town be a working group or a vision for the future?</p> <p>Chair explained that this is already an existing group. It requires special planning, and the other working groups are different, for instance, Ipswich as a Destination reaches beyond Ipswich.</p> <p>TB informed that if the group simply discusses without action then it would have no impact. Members who can actively influence. TB would not be satisfied with being involved in a project that does not have a clear outcome.</p> <p>It was agreed that the group needs to identify what must be done and connect with institutions which can assist in achieving the goals. By getting the right people involved, it will be possible to evaluate the feasibility of the next steps.</p> <p>TB suggested inviting senior individuals from SCC and IBC. Chair agreed. JF will become involved on behalf of IBC and PW agreed for AC to take part.</p> <p>TB informed that Sophie Alexander-Parker will be leaving Ipswich Central in the coming weeks, however there is a plan and headhunting has commenced for a new Chief Executive. Once someone has been selected, TB will also be stepping down following 11 years and someone will be filling his position in September.</p> <p>The next renewal date is 2 and a half years away so there is time to deliver and communicate all information.</p> <p>Chair expressed gratitude for Sophie and her commitment to Ipswich Central for many years.</p>	<p>TB / JD / AC</p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p>Chair's Update – Membership and Composition: The LEP will no longer be a part of this group; the LEP legacy functions have moved to SCC.</p> <p>Chair is not proposing a skills audit</p> <p>Chair noted that ITFC is engaged in the Vision workstreams.</p> <p>Chair suggested a business representative be identified from the emerging Suffolk Business Board and noted that there as is currently no health representative a new one will need to be selected.</p> <p>HL highlighted the importance of inviting those who are the best suited for the roles.</p>	<p>AC, HP & Chair</p>
<p>7.0</p>	<p>Towns Fund Update EL: <u>Local Shopping Parades:</u></p> <p>Progress has been made with installations going across the sites, including, benches, street lighting, and instructions have been made for lighting installation and we are awaiting information from SCC.</p>	

Conversations have also taken place with Norwich Road businesses and William Coe to discuss aspirations. The work is not Towns Fund financed.

Paul's Silo:

This is currently shown as red as there is a cost deficit of £2.1m. Some savings have been identified bringing the cost down slightly, and the project is linked to a decision about the future of the Yacht Academy (see below).

Property advisors have undertaken market testing and a report was received last night, highlighting interest from potential operators.

It was confirmed that once match-funding is identified, the project will no longer be red.

Public Realm:

Concept designs are in place and have been costed – designs are affordable if match funding is available.

Consultations with taxi drivers currently underway as reconfiguration of the road will be required. The next one will occur in May due to the pre-election period.

Although conversations with taxi drivers have been controversial, businesses in the area informed that there are many alternatives, for instance, deliveries through back entrances.

Chair requested that at detailed designs be shown to the Board before they are implemented.

An update will be provided in the June meeting or if timings do not work information will be shared via email or Teams.

Greening:

Concept designs in place and costed – they are affordable if match-funding is available.

Two routes are proceeding to the next design stage and two require further work before they can proceed.

Pedestrian Bridge:

SCC and IBC are currently in governance and administrative discussions.

A new solution for a crossing has emerged – refurbishment of an existing swing bridge rather than a new build. A meeting will occur next week to confirm the most appropriate technical solution.

A key risk is managing the route into what will soon be a working port, - by way of mitigation TB highlighted the route is already used by pedestrians

JDa questioned how often the swing bridge would be open/closed - an update will be provided in the next meeting

JF/EL

EL

It was noted that SCC have confirmed that if the refurbishment costs less than the new build approach that any residual from the £6m funding allocation will remain ringfenced to Ipswich projects.

It was noted that the project may not be completed by the March 26 but the Towns Fund investment would be spent by this time.

Chair requested that the design be presented back to this group when available.

Digital Town Centre:

Negotiations with Ipswich Central regarding small changes to the grant agreement are taking place for the All About Ipswich website upgrade.

A site map and content creation are underway with a launch date in May, or June at the latest.

JF informed that this project is discussing with Greener Ipswich to arrange the routes.

Town Centre Regeneration Fund:

3 projects proposals and one concept proposal have been received. A further 10 projects are in the pipeline.

Each project is different with some requesting £10k - £5m. Some are museum projects, culture and galleries, and young people mentoring.

Scheme marketing will continue.

A board of experts will review these applications soon and make recommendations as to which projects should progress. Projects will be discussed with the Board before proceeding.

TB highlighted that the fund was intended for commercial projects.

HP informed that there are many great projects and highlighted that a proper commercial proposition may take longer to develop due to the complexities of design and approvals.

PW questioned whether this money could be moved to Pauls Silo. HP clarified that it could, however, it is too early to move money as it could really make a difference to regenerate the Town Centre.

EL informed the next stage is to bring back a report with the first tranche of projects to be brought forward.

Yacht Academy Closure and Reallocation

At the last meeting it was agreed that if the Yacht Academy project board could not establish a viable delivery model by the end of January, then this Board would consider project closure. Unfortunately, the capital funding gap remains and no viable academic model has been identified.

Closing the project and reallocation will require a Project Adjustment Request to the Department of Levelling up, Communities and Housing (DLUHC) and a ministerial level discussion.

EL

The money can only be moved to an existing project no new projects can be created.

EL confirmed that Yacht Academy project group would continue to meet, facilitated by the council, and the development of the project continue, simply outside of the Towns Fund.

JDa was happy to hear that IBC will continue this project.

Chair explained that numerous areas of the country are closing projects.

TB questioned whether the money could be taken away by Central Government.

EC explained that all viable options have been explored. Part of the adjustment report will involve a clarification why the money will be moved, and a financial modelling decision will be undertaken.

Chair stated that a ministerial decision is a risk, however, we are unable to continue with the project.

The group agreed the criteria proposed in the report to make decisions on this and any future reallocations.

These criteria demonstrate Pauls Silo as the best reallocation option. It was agreed that a Project Adjustment Request will be prepared to be shared with this group proposing closure of the Yacht Academy and reallocation of funds to Pauls Silo.

Chair also questioned the £600k of LEP money and EL informed it is subject to discussion.

Closed Projects:

There are three projects which have now been completed:

- Integrated Care Academy – the University has begun all new courses and has 12 months remaining to accomplish all learning outcomes which they are well on the way to achieving
- Net Zero Hub – there is positive over delivery of training outcomes
- The Botanist – rent has been received and job targets have been met.

JDa questioned whether these projects are all on target. EL confirmed they are.

M&E Group Report – Update by JDa:

The biggest concern was Yacht Academy and Pauls Silo; however, recommendations have already been made and accepted in this meeting.

Chair informed that the progress has been positive. There was an investigation conducted into Town Funds and only 20% of projects are being delivered. Ipswich and this Board is doing exceptionally well.

Chair specified that there is a process to understand issues and the Board has the capacity to tackle them. It will be difficult to deliver within the next 2 years, however, it is possible.

£37k has been spent on Yacht Academy and SE expressed concern about public perception. Chair explained that the Board must get reallocation agreed by and be

EL

	<p>clear about aspirations Ipswich. Outward facing communications will take place once the Project Adjustment Request has been agreed.</p>	
8.0	<p>Policy Development Panel (PDP) Update PW Updates:</p> <p>The Ipswich Investment Fund from SCC complements some activities undertaken by the Board, for instance the street lighting along the Waterfront.</p> <p>Numerous projects are currently awaiting approval, amongst them ones which focus on education, health, and wellbeing. They will be announced once ready.</p> <p>More discussions will occur in the coming months and updates will be provided.</p>	PW
9.0	<p>Any Other Business: Chair referred to an action to bring comms experts together.</p> <p>HL to assist through the university's marketing team.</p> <p>Chair questioned whether the Board is doing enough regarding to comms.</p> <p>HP explained that this is dependant on the project as if a meaningful update cannot be produced, it would not be beneficial to publish anything.</p> <p>There has been an increase of cross-posting amongst the institutions related to the Board, celebrating accomplishments and progress. This is beneficial as information posted by each group will reach different audiences.</p> <p>Regarding narrative work, HP and Nicola are working on improved comms. HP suggested that everyone should be working towards this within their respective institutions.</p> <p>Information is being fed back to leadership groups within respective organisations, as confirmed by HP and JD.</p> <p>JDa stated there is a low public perception of what the Town's Deal is.</p> <p>AP suggested this could be tackled by completing projects.</p> <p>TB commented there is currently a political build-up to elections so it would be beneficial to not fuel political comment.</p> <p>LH stated the Shopping Parades have seen some businesses spend their money already. JDa agreed and stated these are small projects which help people and really make a difference to Ipswich.</p>	HL
9.0	<p>Date, Time and Location of future meetings:</p> <p>To note the previously agreed date of:</p> <p>(i) 14th June 2024, 9am, Grafton House</p>	