



Bridgwater Town Deal Board

24th January 2024

11am – 12.30pm

Canal Room

Bridgwater House /Teams

1) Introduction and Apologies

Attendees:

- Paul Moore,
- Cllr Mick Lerry,
- Cllr Ros Wyke,
- Ruth Lambert,
- Gavin Roberts,
- Stuart Martin,
- Paul Edwards,
- Owen Martin (Taylor Woodrow)
- Beccy Armory

Supporting the board:

- Peter Paddon,
- Nathaniel Lucas,
- Jaycee Ellis,
- Jackie Gill,

Apologies:

- Justin Seargent,
- Nick Tait,
- Paul Edwards,
- Claire Faun,

Previous Minutes agreed as correct.

Peter Paddon interim Head of Regeneration Somerset Council and Owen Martin from Taylor Woodrow were introduced to the Board.

2) Progress and Updates

- Bridgwater Docks
 - The Docks Consultation event was held in December. The public feedback is currently being collated and will be available by the end of January.
 - The Docks project has appointed WSP to give reports on elements of the project. The report should be available for the next meeting.
 - Quotes are being obtained from specialists regarding the silt work.
 - Cllr RW asked who was leading on the Docks Project, and what is included in



the agreement, as the Board need to understand the deliverables.

- SM Replied that Nick Tait, Louise Darch, Mark Lidster and himself, were the internal team leading on the Docks project.
- Town Hall Theatre
 - The planning application is progressing forward with the Planning Officer and the report for decision will be issued in due course.
 - Cllr ML reported that there is a change to the timeframe for the Town Hall Theatre due to delays with the Planning application, as the Theatre is needed for Carnival Concerts and Carnival.
 - The Town Hall is now looking at delivery in 2025.
 - SM Commented that as The Conservation Officer was happy with the planning application so it should progress smoothly.
- Arts Centre
 - The planning application has been reallocated and moving forward.
- GR volunteered to look at the finances of all the projects to enable the Board to understand what was being spent on each project.
- Cllr RW asked what the £2million for the Tidal Barrier Project would be used for and who internally is leading on this project.
 - JE replied that Nick Tait is the Somerset Council contact for this project and has been looking at the agreement with the solicitor and the Environment agency to reach an agreed agreement between all parties.
 - The funding has been allocated for £1m within 2023/2024 and £1m within 2024/2025.
 - Cllr RW stated that we need to be clear on the deliverables that are in the agreements and agree them as a Board.

3) Celebration Mile Public Engagement

- Taylor Woodrow will begin to work on the Comms Strategy, outlining the key stakeholders, and will work out the best way to communicate the messaging.
 - NL asked about local labor agreements.
 - OM stated that there will be local labor, apprenticeships, and T levels, he has been in contact with B&T College and the Job Centre in Bridgwater, if anyone has any other contacts please share with Owen.
 - NL suggested contacting David Blackwell regarding comms.
 - PM asked about the lead in time for the Eastover consultation Event.
 - SM Replied that it was hoped that the comms would start in Mid-February, as the work is due to start at the end of March.
 - SM reassured the Board that the issue regarding the TRO was 99% resolved.

4) Animating the Town Centre Update

- BA presented the Board with photos of previous Animating Bridgwater events.
- It is reported that there will be 15 events this year which include:
 - Bridgwater Food and Drink Festival
 - Pop Up Shop
 - Theatre Company performance
 - Fire and Light Festival in September
- The contract for Destination Bridgwater brand & Website Development is about to be awarded which has been supported with Bridgwater Town Council match funding and is set to be delivered in July 2024.
- The Town Council have made plans for future staffing and are looking to take on



the cultural marketing officer in the new tax year.

- Quotes are in for delivery of the agreed commission events. Bridgwater Town Council has agreed to be the funding vehicle for the applications, there are plans in place for delivery whether funding is received or not.
- Animating Bridgwater in 2023 held 8 events attracting 12,000 visitors spending an average of £3.32 per head.
- There will be 15 events this year 2024/2025 which should reach 19,000 visitors which will generate £600,000 in day visitor spend.
- Footfall is worked through with delivery partners and footfall monitors, it was discovered there are only 3 monitors with none on Cornhill or Northgate, the Town Council has been asked to invest in more footfall monitors.

5) Step Up Options Paper

- The key points are: -
 - A new location needs to be identified for Bridgwater Step Up.
 - Alternative revenue funding (or in-kind match funding) needs to be identified.
 - It was agreed that Options 5 & 6 were discounted.
- GR preferred Options 1 and 3.
 - Potential to speak to Estate Agents to see what properties may be coming on to the market.
 - Potential to look at more funding streams to make up the loss of revenue.
 - Could also look for partnership working to make up for loss of match funding.
- Cllr RW likes Option 4.
- SM clarified that there was little detail in Option 2 but would be an opportunity to liven up the space within the town centre.
- Cllr ML proposed Option 3, being the Bridgwater Town Hall, giving a good presence on the High Street.
 - Ties into the wider investment that the Town Hall are making into the premises.
 - It is an important project for young people to get access to resources to be entrepreneurial.
 - SM added that the Town Hall are only 36m² short of meeting the agreed output of floorspace with Government and there is potential for the shortfall to be found within the space available.
 - Cllr ML was concerned about Option 1 and what would be available on the market.
 - PE would second Cllr ML thoughts.
- GR would like to see revigorated business case figures based upon the new proposal.
- RL suggested a conversation with Barclays Eagle Lab.
- **Action:** NL to look at other funding options and explore the use of the Town Hall for Step Up.

6) Bridgwater Carnival Project Update

- The Design stage is moving forward.
- The project team are reviewing the drainage of the site and seeking to have discussions with the Local Lead Flood Authority.
- The project team are looking at undertaking a value engineering exercise as the current QS report is showing the scheme is running over budget.
 - JE is confident that the scheme will be deliverable and in budget by March 2026.



- Cllr ML asked how much was the overspend.
- JE confirmed that the project is currently sitting at 25% overbudget, but after reviewing the initial QS report, the team have been able to identify options for savings.
- PE confirmed that the overspend relates to the site. Carnival are aware of this and are working on it.
- JE and NL have identified an internal resource who will be able to support Carnival in funding bid writing.

PM thanked everyone for their time in attending the meeting.

Date of Next Meeting: 27th March, starting at 11am, in person at Bridgwater House.

Actions:

Date	Action	Completed
24/11/2024	Board meetings Bi- Monthly interim reports to be sent out.	Complete
24/11/2023	Skills audit of Board Members	
24/11/2023	Complete Partnership Agreement – JE	
24/01/2024	Share Environment Agency Agreement with the Board – NL	
24/01/2024	Share Finance details of the projects with the Board – NL	
24/01/2024	NL to look at other funding options and explore the use of the Town Hall for Step Up	