**Dudley Town Board
15th September 2023 - 11am**

**Via MS Teams**

**Board Members Guest Attendees**

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| Neil Thomas (Chair) | Mark Price | James Pearson |
| Marco Longhi MP | Rob Ellis | Bill Kirk |
| Andrew Lovett | Traci Dix-Williams | Balvinder Heran |
| Helen Martin | Pete Bond | Clare Waldron |
| Stuart Everton | James Treasure | Samantha Raggatt |
| Amanda Tomlinson | Jeremy Knight-Adams | Mick Donovan |
| Kat Rose | Ian Chadwell | Phil Thomas |
| Neil Fulton |  | Adam Westwood |
| Derek Grove |  | Cllr Patrick Harley |

 **NOTES**

1. Apologies for Absence – Andrew Lovett, Cllr Patrick Harley, Kat Rose, Pete Bond, Balvinder Heran, Jeremy Knight-Adams, Mark Price, James Treasure, Clare Waldron, Marco Longhi MP, Amanda Tomlinson, Ian Chadwell, James Pearson, Adam Westwood.
2. Declarations of Interest

Derek Grove declared that Dudley Zoo owned some of the land under discussion and Neil Thomas and Mick Donovan declared an interest as the college and university are partners in the delivery of the HID project.
3. Minutes of the Board Meeting

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 9th June 2023 be approved as a correct record.
4. Matters Arising

Any matters arising from the Minutes of the last meeting were provided as updates in the Minutes.
5. Performance Monitoring Return

The Performance Monitoring Return confirming programme progress, project outputs and that project funding was on target had been submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) on 9th June 2023. There were no further updates to be noted at the current time.
6. Towns Fund Project Update

**Land Assembly** – Demolition of the Hippodrome had commenced and was due to complete by the end of November 2023. Negotiations continued with adjacent landowners.

**Design** – The Alliance Design team were progressing design for the scheme in line with the programme.

**Financial** – There were no cost issues to report at this time – the Alliance team were still targeting the delivery of the scheme within the available £25m grant funding.

N Thomas confirmed the demand for the provision of the courses to be offered (nursing degrees, healthcare apprenticeships, psychology, etc) was high and work with the university to provide the courses ahead of the building being fully operational was being progressed. **Action N Thomas and N Fulton** to discuss further outside the meeting whether BCIMO could be utilised for teaching purposes in the interim.

1. Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 3 and Towns Fund Conference Updates

Details of the LUF round 3 were anticipated to be within the month; this was expected to be by allocation rather than competitive bid as had previously been the case. H Martin confirmed that consideration was being given to the resubmission of the Brierley Hill and Dudley Town Centre Bids and support from the MP was being sought. The meeting noted the tight timeframe and resource requirements, together with the need to procure consultants ahead of securing feasibility funding. **Action NT/HM** to review the Dudley LUF Bid outside the meeting.
A more detailed update was to be provided at the next Board meeting.
2. **Towns Fund Conference attended by H Martin and A Lovett on 20th June**
It was reported that as the Dudley bid was very unique (the others having lots of projects with a smaller spend) it had been difficult to make comparisons, although it was noted that some other bids were not as advanced.

N Thomas asked if there were any changes to be made to the Board as a result of feedback from the conference. H Martin said not for this purpose, however once the Town Fund Health Innovation Dudley (HID) had been delivered then the remit of the Board would need to be addressed.
3. Any Other Business

**Update on Portersfield** – Residents and businesses had been invited to share their views on the Portersfield regeneration project (due to close on 20th September). 447 responses had been received to date and the feedback was mainly supportive. Based on soft market testing, a primarily residential scheme was being proposed.

**Eton College** – Following the announcement that Eton is to come to Dudley a query was raised concerning the proposed location. H Martin confirmed that whilst their preferred site had been noted, nothing had yet been agreed.
4. Date and Time of next Meeting – 15th December 2023, 11 am at BCIMO, Very Light Rail National Innovation Centre, Zoological Drive, Dudley, to include a tour of the site.