

SOWERBY BRIDGE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING

Tuesday 8th February 2022

Via Zoom Meeting

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Smith (Chair), Cllr Foster, Gareth Baigent, Lauren Brundell, Phil Hawdon, Stephen Priestley, Peter Stubbs, with Jon Edwards and Mark Knight (for Item 4 only).

In Attendance: Kate McNicholas, Steven Lee, Richard Seaman, Sarah Richardson, Sarah Dyer, Shebana Sadiq, Sandra Robertshaw (Minutes).

Apologies: Cllr Scullion, Cllr Wilkinson, Sam Irvine, Sarah Fanthorpe Justine Riccomini, Kirsten Fussing.

		ACTION
1.	Welcome Apologies	
	As noted above.	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
	SP confirmed that as Treasurer of Ryburn Valley Greenway Group he had a vested interest in item 4 on the agenda.	
3.	Minutes and Matters Arising	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary & Action Log: Purchase Order for Structural Engineer work should be completed by end of this week. Grace Scott has been invited to the next Board meeting. Hollins Mill Update: SL provided background. Costs have been identified to £1M, which means that we would need to fund £700k from our own budgets. As a result, we have revisited Hollins Mill Lane as potential for spending the HAZ funding. SL confirmed that closure of Hollins Mill Lane is still in place. PS confirmed the closure application was discussed at TRO Governing Body, confirmed this will remain in place as a permanent closure and will look to install a more fitting closure barrier. Cllr Smith raised the point about a local resident who has been impacted by the closure, resident's driveway is being used as a turning point for vehicles. SL confirmed order has been approved so no option around this but can discuss with resident. Cllr Smith to contact Peter Stubbs to discuss physical measure put in place. Foundry Street Update: through the asset transfer. Sarah Courtney is the interim lead, need to know the possibility of letting the space to groups who have previously used it. Needs following up. 	AS ??
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications Update: KMcN making links through to digital engagement support we have through HAZ programme, will be picking up on future of that work and how we make the link to Town Board, will pick up as part of forward planning for financial year. PH confirmed message received, trying to bring in new Chair Elect of Fire & Water into this conversation, will respond to KMcN tomorrow. 	KMcN

	Other than the above notes, the minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Foster, seconded by Stephen Priestley.	
4.	Ryburn Valley Greenway Trail	
	<p>Mark Knight and Jon Kedwards welcomed to the meeting. MK/JK provided a brief overview of the history of the RVG Trail and the case for investment. The following points were raised after the presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage Railways England – have they shown any interest in part of the route? JK advised Highways England Heritage Railway Estate, they don't own the bridges, they do own the tunnel, landowners own the bridges. MK confirmed the bridge is currently leased to Rosehill Polymers for storage. Most of the track is owned by Yorkshire Water and Calderdale Council. SL, as far as aware the only heritage railway asset being considered for disposal at the moment is Queensbury Tunnel, which is on the border but mainly in Bradford. LB asked if the issue regarding the section of land around Kebroyd has been overcome yet? MK responded, 5-6 different landowners and in order for it to truly come to fruition on the whole stretch, it would need a Creation Order (similar to CPO for building). CMBC would have to take the lead on this. Tom Jones, Transport Officer, felt not as big a monetary issue and stated the likely cost of £50k 18mths ago. SP confirmed that as Treasurer of Greenway Group, both have made a great case for this. Noted that at the start of the pandemic when movement was restricted, when the track bed was dry there were hundreds of people utilising the track for daily exercise SL confirmed that the Sustrans Report being discussed is due to be completed imminently, will chase up after this meeting and try to accelerate the matter. Cllr Smith has made a request to Tom Jones about it, confirmed there will be a meeting to look into the report. SL also confirmed big push on cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, LTN 120, looks to separate cyclists on highway in stronger terms than current guidance. One of the things we are looking at is how routes such as this can assist cycling and pedestrian measures to get connectivity away from the highway, bit more of a leisure route and becomes more of a network. Five-year funding package, City Regional Sustainable Transport Scheme bid, have increased the amount available for improvement of routes such as this so can deliver more moving forward. Cllr Foster agreed will take back to Labour Group to discuss how to provide more political support. Agreed SL will discuss next steps with Legal Services and Council's Solicitor, including process for Creation Order. Informed the Board that the latter will need advertising, objections invited, and progress made following feedback Agreed that the Board would write a collective letter to the Portfolio Holder. 	<p>SL</p> <p>DF</p> <p>SL</p> <p>AS</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MK confirmed that Active Calderdale have not been approached about the project, it was felt that the legal process needs to be finalised. Acknowledged that there is additional funding, such as Heritage Lottery Fund. Noted that WYCA have obtained funding for alternative transport routes. Query whether the project could be taken to Place Scrutiny, but noted that in terms of scrutiny, there is nothing to scrutinise at this time as we are pulling together the survey and processing Creation Order. Letter of support to portfolio holder and then to the director, this is the way forward. Suggestion that Tom Jones could be invited to a future meeting for an update. 	SS
5.	Governance	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terms of Reference: read and make comments on this and role profiles, item to be deferred to next meeting. Small meeting in March to look at ToRs. Any comments re documents circulated to send to Sarah Ri, who will incorporate to revised version ahead of any meetings held in March. Agenda item for April meeting. 	<p>ALL</p> <p>SS</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment: Chair confirmed that Justine Riccomini has resigned, she was thanked for all her help and support to the Board. 	
6.	HAZ Programme Update/CIP Update	
	<p>KMcN provided a verbal update on the latest position:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning ahead for next financial programme and final year of HAZ programme. Significant areas of progress: contract signed for Fire and Water buildings just before Christmas and work is now underway on that site with approval from Historic England to provide an increase in funding to allow it to be wind and watertight to make it more of a viable proposition. Signed contract on Old Town Hall (Bank) just after Christmas, work commencing on that site, tight window of delivery so looking for capital works on that until end of March, quite challenging but will start to make good progress. In terms of the cultural and community programme, Grace Scott (Community Arts Officer), we are working to extend her contract to 2022-2023. Looking at key areas of work around this. Board input for community and cultural programmes needed. Item at next meeting. Work around appraisals for conservation area and work to produce a shopfront design guide which will inform work from 2023 and 2024 and where we have further resources through HAZ programme for high street property improvements. Recruiting to Project Officer role, helpful link to engage with others. Working with owner of 30 Water Street who is looking to do some external improvements as part of High Street Properties Programme, in order to bring the building back in to use longer term as a multi-media heritage focused space, not confirmed yet but working to achieve it in current year but not contracted yet. Final scheme working is the Public Realm work, two potential proposals: Hollins Mill Lane or Owd Causey. SL looked at Wharf Street/Town Hall Street Scheme overall, number of difficulties trying to take this forward, including the costs (estimated would be in region £1M), noted a lot of properties have cellars which creates particular difficulties. Discussed with Historic England. Will revisit Hollins Mill Lane but not in the form it was originally in but to bring synergies with Fire and Water and Old Town Building. 	SS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oher area looking at top of Old Causey, not the marina and conservation area but the area where the Turks Head pub is, looking at whether or not we can restore to former glory. Difficulties at Old Causey is a fairly narrow road but need to do something that would completely renew the surface in the form of sets, still looking at feasibility, could do something top end of junction. Looking at purchase of stone flagging, granite kerbs and stone sets, just waiting for prices to come back and from this we can look at how best to place those materials with Board's assistance but certainly with a bit more engineering knowledge than in the past. What we can do to ensure we keep the money is to progress with vesting, this involves us purchasing materials, obtain a Certificate of Ownership and the supplier stores the materials until we need them. Historic England confirmed this is a viable proposition, so we can complete the works beyond the end of March. CllrF commented that although appreciate constraints of finances, is scope to improve the current appearance of pavements? SL confirmed this is being investigated within the CIP programme, it will be a footway improvement. PH asked that a conversation is held with Fire and Water, it is essential that they have an input into proposals for the area. SL confirmed would expect that to take place. Cllr Smith asked about the plans seen initially, general improvement of centre of Sowerby Bridge is this included in the CIP? <p>Peter Stubbs provided a verbal update of the CIP as follows:</p>	SL

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are two areas of intervention for the CIP, first is around wharf street and market site and extending up Tuel Lane and canal, second one is around Station Road West Street and Sowerby New Road area. Redevelopment of market site, from Sowerby Bridge Master Plan and provision of a DDA compliant ramp, also doubles as cycle ramp, from canal toe path area through market site onto Wharf Street where it will connect up from a crossing on existing site. • The carriageway through from the B&M Bargains through to Tuel Lane is being narrowed down considerably and footway on southern side of Wharf Street is being widened. Removing all parking off main road apart from disabled spaces which will remain close to Tuel Lane junction. • Bus layby outside the current market site and removing the bus stop outside Regents Parade site and as far as the market side is concerned all that will be resurfaced in Yorkshire stone, and appropriate materials going onto market site. • Behind bus stop will be levelled out instead of rising up from back of footway, will be levelled and pushed to a large footway area further back. • Three levels of risers to provide platform for pop up markets and event space. • Top part of market area, Master Plan to have a walkway, but this will be pushed to North side of access road to market area and car park which will lead up to Tuel Lane. • Will retain a smaller car park, but most of it will turn over to Public Realm. • Discussed how best to light the area so will be looking at sunken lights and make it more inviting especially at night. • Whole programme for A58 Corridor Programme due to be completed by May 2023, however there could be some delays. First package late spring, final designs have delayed the project, also liaising with energy providers who need to divert services as part of the work (utilities). Contractor is on board from local framework. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CllrF pointed out that the bus stop outside EPS at the moment, appreciate the need to make DDA compliant route across to the other side, but the 579 and 577 buses doesn't go down. PS confirmed existing Tesco bus stop will remain, interim arrangements. Scheme was based on discussion with First (Bus Company) regarding trying to take buses closer to the station. Proposals for CIP, there is a proposed bus stop at Station Road, problem with this is that bus operators haven't agreed to this yet. First Bus Company are struggling due to the significant reduction in passengers as a result of the Covid pandemic. Diversions would require them to rejig their timetable, WYCA's view is that First won't do that. Need to discuss face to face with First. Tried looking at retaining bus stop. • CllrS asked if an EIA had been completed in respect of pedestrians? PS confirmed footway on south side of Wharf Street has been extended to double its current width, also providing signalised crossing, further along providing additional zebra crossing, down at West Street, looking to provide crossing around there. Also widening the footway up West Street heading out to Ripponden and putting in a TRO to stop parking on the road. • CllrS queried the Junction at Lidl/Tuel Lane, is this something that could be considered outside the CIP at a later time? PS confirmed that Church Lane, carriageway will be raised up to footway level, hump crossing so better to cross. • Cllr Foster: left turn out of Water Street onto West Street, have you checked whether any large vehicles can actually make this turn, is there going to be an extended "Keep Clear" on to ensure they can turn safely. PS confirmed that consultants have tracked the turn, there will be a slight adjustment to the footway opposite, so yes. Also had to set the stock line back to avoid any contact with traffic coming down from Ripponden. • Noted that Wharf Street will be one way out, will there be bollards or protection at that corner?? Query around the safety on Tesco crossing, it's quite a difficult crossing, especially to see pedestrians crossing between traffic queuing at the junction, there 	

	<p>have been 3-4 accidents there in last 12 months. Is there anyway we can make the crossing safer? PS confirmed discussed earlier today, we need to look at this again we might have to consider a signalised crossing in its place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KMcN asked in terms of usefulness for Board Meetings moving forward, would it be useful to have some way of bringing in an update on progress, ie key milestones, by providing a written report. Would be easier to do a separate two-sided progress report. 	
7.	Place Development Update	
	<p>LB welcomed to the meeting and provided a summary of findings from discussions with local businesses in Sowerby Bridge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial situation is precarious, business owners are doing what they can to support themselves and to continue trading. • Opportunities to promote the town outside the region. • There have been some new businesses that have opened in last 18mths, and some that have changed ownership during this time. 	
	<p>Comments and ideas from local business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to streetscape. • Hollins Mill Lane, perception that some businesses are closed and that HML is closed from Town Street. Suggested signage and information needs to be put out at start of Hollins Mill Lane. Improvements needed from Station to town centre, a more direct route via steps and ginnel (noted some vandalism near bridge). • Stickers on pavements for social distancing put those back in place but directional ones, some signs not facing the right direction. • Local Events had a direct positive impact on businesses (Totally Local Christmas Market, Rush Bearing, Winter Lights). • Customer confidence: older generation not confident visiting pubs and shops, still wearing masks. Have visited other businesses, lockdown has been good for some business made think about their priorities, diversified which has been better for their business. Would benefit from social media or digital marketing training, to give confidence to share posts. Pedestrianisation of Stanley Street from Engine Social Dining down to Hoggs Head, possibly a follow on from Old Causey Project. Lighting on canal needed to make it feel safer • Concerns around antisocial behaviour near Bull on Bridge/Sweet Delights, some feel it would be beneficial to have a Youth Club to make night-time economy more attractive. • Sowerby Bridge to be promoted outside local area as a great place to eat and drink, would benefit from a BID like Halifax and Brighouse. • Welcome Back Fund has been spent, very little remaining, what is left has already been earmarked for various projects across the borough, also some funding passed to Safer Greener Cleaner Team. • CllrS asked if the distribution of money, has this been even? KMcN confirmed made sure there were opportunities available across the borough. Actively looking for other funding opportunities to support schemes. BID and Parrish Councils were better set for the Welcome Back Fund, plus tight timescales for the spend 	
8.	Working Groups Update	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Square: still waiting for structural engineers order form council, no progress, if engineer gets appointed will involve geotechnical surveying will involve tendering. RSe confirmed nothing complex or expensive, order for £500 needs to be raised so this work is imminent. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Markets: potential to retain outdoor café facility in the area of the market with a view to consideration being around the potential to retain some public toilets. Stephen Hoyle Asset Manager, will produce high level ball park costings which will enable future discussion and decisions. Consensus at the meeting that the figure is likely to be higher than imagined for such a small unit. Consider whether there is potential to look at a more pop-up type of solution that would allow the markets viability to be tested, either incorporate within the car parking space towards back of canal or potential to include within the design for the public realm that will replace the market. No certainty around solutions for existing provider. Constructive discussion, will meet with sub group once figures are available. GB, didn't think about relocating the current café, didn't consider this? KMcN discussed current rent café is paying which is quite low compared to elsewhere. • Environment – Floods: not discussed • Heritage: not discussed 	
9.	Budget Update	
	<p>KMcN in relation specifically to ambitions for Towns Funding, which was allocated historically to Town Boards. Looking at the resources available at the beginning of 21/22, there was £63,997 available with commitments made in the current financial year £500 for Geotech Survey and other earlier commitments, the remaining funds now amount to £57,837. Only other costs were in relation to the Lot 84 Wainwright Tower and the old Causey. Could do a year end paper for end of current financial year for April meeting.</p>	SS/KM
10.	Any Other Business	
	<p>Meeting in March to discuss ToR, recruitment and current gaps in the Board. And short biographies of Board members could be added to Sowerby Bridge web page.</p>	
11.	Dates of Future Board Meetings	
	<p>6.00-8.00pm on the following dates:</p> <p>12th April 2022 14th June 9th August 11th October 13th December</p>	