

Sowerby Bridge Development Board Minutes

Location: (Cricket Club, Sowerby Bridge)

Time: 6pm – 8pm

Date: 28/03/23

Board Members:

Richard Seaman
Councillor Sarah Courtney
Lauren Brundell
Phill Hawdon
Celia Cullen
Sarah Fanthorpe
Janice Dawson

Others In Attendance:

Rob Shipway
Zakariya Ali
Darren Thomas

Apologies

Councillor Adam Wilkinson
Councillor Dot Foster
Mary Farrar

1. Welcome and Apologies

- Caroline Sewell sent apologies
- Councillor Audrey Smith has submitted her resignation from the Board

2. Declarations of Interest

- No declarations of interest

3. Minutes of the last meeting

- The minutes of the meeting held January 2023 were approved as a true record.

4. Matters Arising

- No Matters Arising

5. Board membership

- It was noted that the Board would like to recruit two to three new Board members, providing an opportunity to reach out to private, voluntary, and young people's representatives.
- Janice Dawson suggested local groups working with young people could provide a conduit to secure potential new board members. **ACTION – Rob to contact Janice**

- Other opportunities for young people via the Active Calderdale programme, Cricket club and other sports and youth associations in the town.
- Workshop suggested for young people in summer to discuss their views on Sowerby Bridge and how they see the future of the town. Possible link to ongoing community work through Heritage Action Zone. **Action – Phil Hawdon and Rob to discuss**
- TOR review in June look at board membership, new chair, decision making in next meeting.
- Group agreed to confirm Lauren Brundell as a new Board member. Lauren has worked for CMBC Neighbourhoods and is a resident, and the Board is keen to maintain her involvement at a strategic level.

6. Masterplan and Forward Plan

- Rob had previously circulated a copy of the Sowerby Bridge Masterplan.
- Much of the plan involved work on improving the Highway and built environment and some progress has been made. The Built environment has seen the restoration of the Town Hall and extensive remedial works for fire and Water. The £200,000 shop front grant scheme was also due to be delivered 2023/24. Work had also begun on the Market.
- The Board noted that the focus of works on highways and public safety had not been achieved as the CIP improvements had not commenced.
- The Board also were concerned that the masterplan did not provide sufficient focus on health and wellbeing. The Active Calderdale programme could be harnessed to support these objectives. **Action - Rob was asked to contact Richard Croker for an update on Active Calderdale at the next Board.**
- Noted that in 2023/24, Public realm works on Hollins Mill Lane is moving forward subject to consultation.
- The Board expressed concern that the proposals for market place and the High Street did not take account of disability access. The Board felt that whilst the Council Officers have extensive experience of disability access and work to regulated requirements, a site visit should be held at the next meeting to discuss the plans and facilitate a better-informed discussion with the Board. **Action -Rob to speak to Highways to see if this can be arranged. Action -RS to collect formal questions from board to work with Highways and Richard.**
- Noted the lack of an overall picture of what is happening in the town. This is difficult as the way funding is now provided to councils, they are often piecemeal and in small pockets, but it was agreed that Officers should look to 'join the dots' and begin to bring together different investments.

7. Sowerby Bridge Shop Frontage Scheme

- Noted that the Shop Frontage Grant Scheme was funded by Historic England. £200,000 investment in the High Street.
- The programme was open to all property owners on Wharf Street between the Railway Bridge and Tuel Lane. Officers from the Council had visited every property to raise awareness of the opportunity and to generate interest.
- As envisaged there has been a lot of interest in the scheme, with 18 applications. This means the programme will be significantly oversubscribed.

- To help sift applications, officers worked with Historic England to identify projects which would have the biggest impact and value for money. The list was presented to the Bard for consideration.
- The Board provided input to the process, asking that consideration be given to working with properties with the former Industrial Society sign which was of historical interest.
- Noted that architects were currently providing drawings and costings. **Action Rob would present at the next meeting.**
- Whilst this programme is constrained by funding available, unsuccessful projects will be held in a reserve list should funding be made available.
- Noted that communications will be essential when a final decision on successful and unsuccessful bids is reached. **Board asked that an approach that offered chance for local contractors to do works be developed.**

8. ITEM 4. Any other Business

- Board asked for a more open approach to the Board. Perhaps use the process of new Board membership to raise awareness of the Board, its role, and how decisions are made.
- Suggested we hold an event for the voluntary and community sector, to discuss what they do, and how the Board might be able to help – **Action Rob to look at opportunity for this, again working with HAZ programme.**
- Calderdale year of culture 2024 would like to come along to board meetings. **Action – Zak to invite Kayleigh to the May meeting.**
- Board asked that the website be updated and maintained properly, with a deadline of the next meeting to bring up to speed. **Action Rob to review and circulate minutes and put on website.**

ITEM 5. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 23rd of May 2023