

SOWERBY BRIDGE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

25th July 2023, Agenda item 3

**Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 23rd May 2023 at
Tesco's Sowerby Bridge**

Board members in attendance

Councillor Adam Wilkinson
Councillor Dot Foster
Councillor Ashton
Councillor Courtney
Sarah Fanthorpe
Celia Cullen
Phil Hawdon
Gareth Baigent
Lauren Brundell
Sam Irvine
Stephen Priestley

Officers and other attendees

Richard Seaman
Mary Farrar
Janice Dawson
Darren Thomas
Rob Shipway
Bobsie Robinson
Helen Boyle, Groundwork
John Cedworth

1. Welcome

There were no apologies to report.

2. Declarations of interest¹

There were no declarations of interest declared.

3. Election of Chair

The Board voted unanimously that following the resignation of Councillor Smith from the Board, Councillor Wilkinson should be elected Chair for 2023/ 24.

4. Minutes of the meeting held 28th March 2023

The Board agreed the minutes as a true record.

5. Matters arising

The Board noted that as requested at the meeting, Officers had circulated details of the proposed works on Lock Gates, funded by the Ambition for Towns budget.

It was noted that the website for the Town Deal; Board referred to a map of the Board area, but that the link on the webpage did not link to a map. It was also raised that the current terms of reference for Board membership need to be amended to reflect current membership. The Board discussed criteria for membership and agreed that the priority was for representatives from the area with a clear focus on supporting Sowerby Bridge and surrounding area, rather than their location.

Action: Rob Shipway to amend the website.

6. Board membership

The Board noted that there were 3 vacancies remaining on the Board. Rob Shipway reported he was reaching out to local businesses via the Shop Front Grant Scheme and through the local business teams at the Council. The Board were keen to secure engagement of younger people. Janice Dawson suggested contacting Orange Box to seek their support.

Action: Rob Shipway to contact Orange Box to discuss Board support and to continue to generate interest in Board membership.

7. Calderdale Year of Culture

Bobsie Robinson, Cultural Services Manager of Calderdale Council, delivered a presentation to the Board on developing plans for Calderdale Year of Culture. 2024 marks the opportunity for a series of cultural events across the Borough. For towns like Sowerby Bridge, the events team are keen to work in partnership to promote use of event space and saw opportunities to work with local partners.

¹ A "disclosable pecuniary interest" is an interest of a Board Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as spouse, or a person with whom they are living as if they are civil partners).

Whilst there is some funding to kick start works, Bobsie noted there was a lot of work to do to secure Arts Council funding, as well as explore other funding opportunities.

Bobsie reported that the Calderdale 2024 governance would include a Partnership Board and the Sowerby Bridge Board could elect a representative to the Board.

The Board noted that the Calderdale Year of Culture website would be relaunched in the summer.

8. Dixon Scar Woods

Groundwork UK delivered a report to the Board outlining proposals for a masterplan for the development of Dixon Scar Woods. Key aim is to make the area more accessible. The Board noted that site appraisals are now completed, and the Groundwork team were now exploring opportunities to bring targeted investment to support improvements.

The Board welcomed the proposals and asked for regular progress. Briefings. The Board asked that the masterplan be mindful of the need to support general maintenance issues, such as ensuring there are enough bins.

9. Public realm and Highways update

Mary Farrar provided an update on progress of planned Highways and public realm works in Sowerby Bridge. The Board noted there had been delays on commencing works on the market caused by lighting design issues but that this issue is now being resolved. In response to a question, Mary confirmed that proposals for lighting include making provision for Christmas lighting and a tree.

Regarding concerns about the safety of allowing cyclist access to the market, Mary reported that the Highways Department had sought advice from engineering experts to seek to mitigate any potential problems. Mary reported that the funding for the works was time limited and would be lost without proceeding and noted that it will be easier to add or amend plans once completed, allowing us to secure investment. This would also allow any emerging issues of public safety to be engineered out.

The Board noted that the funding on CIP and the Market, as well as proposals for public realm works on Hollins Mill Lane, had been used to attract £2million HAZ funding. The Board welcomed plans to stop parking outside the former Bath shop. Work will be starting on Hollins

Mill Lane in the summer and the Board noted there would be an impact on the A58. Mary noted the suggestion to delay works until the summer holidays to minimise disruption.

Phil Hawdon stressed his opposition to the proposals on behalf of Fire and Water. Officers accepted that communications had not been adequate but that the Highways team had reviewed proposals put forward by Fire and Water but concluded the existing plans provided better value for money and safety. and that these were not considered sufficiently robust.

Action: Rob Shipway to liaise with Phil Hawdon to seek a discussion with Shelagh O'Neil and Adrian Gill.

10. Any other business

The Board noted that the sign above the Olive Branch had been included in the programme for the Shop Front Grant Scheme.