

**Brighouse Town Deal Board Meeting**

**Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

**Meeting Room 1, Brighouse Library, HD6 2AF**

**6.00pm – 8.00pm**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Attendance**

Councillor Howard Blagbrough (Chair)  
Councillor Sarah Courtney  
Councillor Geraldine Carter  
David Whitehead (Co-Chair)  
Lesley Adams  
Colin Gordon  
Ann Moffit  
Richard Michell  
Malcolm Silkstone

**Others in attendance**

Adrian Gill  
Janet Whitlow  
Daisy Wilde  
Stephen Naylor  
Kimberley Wadsworth  
Emma Martin  
Zakariya Ali

**1. Welcome and apologies**

Apologies were received from Louise Reed, Rob Shipway, Paul McRae.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Meeting was declared quorate by the Chair.

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as true record.

**a. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

**4. Projects Update (Janet Whitlow)**

Kimberly Wadsworth presented the A641 improvement scheme to the Board. There was discussion about whether the final plans for the public realm improvements would need to return to the Board for final approval. Councillor Carter raised a concern regarding the lack of sound signals at crossings, which Kimberly Wadsworth has noted for consideration in the signal designs. It was suggested that a tactile turning dial could be added under the signal box to indicate when it is safe to cross.

Traffic counts have been conducted at the subway, and more data is being collected to facilitate further discussions with the highways team. If a subway cannot be implemented, it will be filled in and replaced with a crossing. RM noted that a crossing could pose challenges for wheelchair users who may find a subway more accessible, as it allows them to take their time. Mill Lane will undergo surveys to better understand traffic flow, as the presence of four or five parking bays combined with two-way traffic has caused issues. The Chair requested that these parking bays be relocated to an alternative area.

**Action: KW to investigate the car parking spaces and gather further information.**

A bridge is planned to be constructed to improve access to Brighthouse Centre. Councillor Carter enquired whether the cycle routes would be independent from other traffic; AG confirmed that there would be a kerb separating the cycle lane, ensuring adequate space from cars. Cllr Carter noted that when a car passes a cyclist, it should maintain a car width's distance, which AG clarified applies only to shared roads and not to the separated lanes in this project.

There was also discussion about Bradford Road, which has not been moved or altered due to a lack of alternative options. Leaflets will be distributed to residents affected by the upcoming works, and landowners impacted by the scheme will be part of the negotiation process. The Chair pointed out that both landlords and other property owners might experience impacts. RM asked if the compulsory purchase orders had been approved; KW responded that they had not, as the focus remains on voluntary negotiations. RM also mentioned that one business owner had received a notice regarding a compulsory purchase order.

Further queries can be directed to the project email at [A641.Project@calderdale.co.uk](mailto:A641.Project@calderdale.co.uk)

**Action: JW to distribute the final plans to the Board.**

RM requested a review of the vehicle weight chart, expressing concerns that the vehicles may exceed the weight limit. JW clarified that the limit applies to general traffic and will share the weight limits for vehicles with RM. All vehicles are tracked, and efforts are underway to restrict traffic in certain zones. AG noted that tracking and safe monitoring are key issues, with the road structure able to support the heaviest vehicles. Curbing details will be assessed to address any potential issues with safety and turning.

**Action: JW to share the vehicle weight limits.**

## **5. Markets Update**

The Design Stage 4 tender preparation will begin this month, though there are concerns from a contractor's perspective that some identified contractors may choose not to bid. Options under consideration include using a framework or opting for an open tender. The project will be open for tender in the market for approximately 4-6 weeks. Paul has been in discussions with Board members and market owners about this process.

Events are continuing to be held at the market, which, despite being relocated, has seen positive feedback from both customers and market owners, with a noticeable increase in both groups. GC expressed gratitude to the Major Projects team for their efforts with the market project.

Foundation work, which involves digging, is expected to be completed by July. Banners and advertisements are now in progress, ensuring visibility for traffic passing by. The Chair remarked that this is the first significant development in Brighouse for some time, while the Co-Chair noted that reusing old stone from the market site is a commendable recycling effort. Councillor Carter added that it is positive the market has been demolished, and inquired if Brighouse market, like the Sowerby Bridge market, would generate its own electricity. EM clarified that the Brighouse market will not pursue this, as it was not cost-effective and presented challenges related to the weight on the foundations. EM also confirmed that while the original tiles were not retained, they were photographed in high resolution for future reference, and the blue sign will be reused at the new market.

JW emphasised the importance of getting the project moving by securing a contractor and progressing with project delivery.

#### **6. Parklets Update (Emma Martin)**

The parklet at Field Lane has been removed from the site as it could not be accommodated in time and is now stored in a temporary area, with preparations planned for early November.

The Methodist Church withdrew from the project at short notice, leading to Cromwell Bottom being chosen as the alternative site, with Rastrick Cricket Club also expressing interest. MS noted that while the parklet would have been a valuable asset, the maintenance costs were high, and it was ultimately too large for the intended space. DW inquired if, after exhausting the list of options, they would be open to considering new suggestions. The Chair confirmed that the bid had narrowed down to two choices: Rastrick Cricket Club and the football club, and the Chair ultimately put the vote forward in favour of the cricket club. While Wellholme Club was also a potential site, they did not submit an application.

The Chair highlighted that the parklets were larger than anticipated, which will require repeating the process to identify a suitable location.

#### **7. Communications Update (Stephen Naylor)**

Public realm updates going out has been a while also looking at what work is happening in the town centre. Working alongside the Major Projects Team.

#### **8. Car Parking Strategy (Adrian Gill)**

Adrian Gill presented the car parking strategy to the Board. Councillor Carter inquired if public transport schedules were considered in the plan. AG noted that the overarching principles might need adjustments once specific parking area plans are finalised, encompassing both on-street and off-street parking.

RM raised a concern that some parking areas, located uphill, were more appropriate for churchgoers than town centre visitors, which AG acknowledged as being informed by prior research. The parking plans will be treated as live documents, meaning they will be ongoing and actively updated. RM also asked about data sources for the surveys, specifically if they were based on ticket machine data or empty space counts. AG clarified that a combination of manual counts and machine data was used, although factors like blue badge and permit holders prevent the data from being fully accurate.

Councillor Carter highlighted that parking is limited on the far side of the dual carriageway and questioned the adequacy of spaces in Brighouse, particularly in areas such as Cliff End and Church Lane, where spaces are full. This shortage forces people to shop at larger shopping centres instead of local stores. Cllr Courtney added that encouraging those who are able to park further away could free up closer spaces for individuals with mobility issues.

The Co-Chair asked if all parking spaces had been reviewed and if potential areas for new spaces had been identified, noting that people prefer parking closer to shops and restaurants. RM queried whether parked cars on restricted lines were included in the head count of parking spaces, which AG said they would follow up on. Lesley commented that basing conclusions on only two days of data collection is insufficient, as more comprehensive data is needed across different days to capture an accurate picture, reflecting local concerns over parking shortages.

Next steps include further manual counts and data collection, although there are limits to these methods. AG will share the data in a more accessible format, conduct additional surveys, and return to the Board with updates. Questionnaires will also be distributed to gather public opinion on parking. The Chair asked if footfall data had been considered, given the growing number of people walking into Brighouse. AG confirmed that a survey focused on footfall will be commissioned to address this.

## **9. Thank to Jason Carlton and his efforts on the Board**

The Chair and the Board thanked Jason Carlton for all the efforts and the Chair and Co-chair will be writing a letter.

## **10. Any other business**

A Board member raised concerns about the increase in car parking charges from 20p for half an hour to £1, and from 40p for an hour to £2, questioning how this price rise could be justified. AG explained that parking services based the adjustment on borough-wide surveys, noting that operational costs have risen and prices had not been updated for some time. Councillor Courtney added that this proposal would go to Cabinet for further discussion.

Lesley expressed concerns that, unlike Hebden Bridge, which attracts tourists, Brighouse has a regular local customer base, and residents are unlikely to pay £1 for

just half an hour, potentially affecting local businesses as people may avoid paid parking. Councillor Courtney clarified that cheaper options exist if people are willing to walk a bit further, though Councillor Carter countered that nearby cheaper parking options are scarce, often far away, and frequently full. She highlighted that increased charges could deter people from visiting, similar to recent trends in Halifax, noting that Commercial Street had only eight people parked at midday.

Comments from the discussion will be taken back for further consideration. RM proposed adding this topic as an item for the next meeting. Additionally, an invitation has been extended to MP Josh Fenton Glynn for the upcoming session.

**a. Next Steps**

Next steps will be an agenda item at the next meeting.