



Halifax Town Development Board Meeting
Minutes of the meeting held 23 January 2025
Meeting Held by Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Councillor Tim Swift (Chair)
Councillor Geraldine Carter
Councillor Colin Hutchinson
Councillor Kelly Thornham
Claire Bradshaw
Lee Kenny
Jason Gregg

Others in attendance

Natalie Shaw
Kate McNicholas
Janet Whitlow
Helen Kershaw
Rob Shipway
Zakariya Ali

1. Introductions and Apologies

Apologies were received from: Councillor Sarah Courtney, Councillor Joe Thompson, Shelagh O'Neill, Tracy Harvey, Rev. Hilary Barber.

a. Declarations of Quorum

The meeting was declared quorate.

b. Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising from 15 October 2024

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record by the Board.

a. Matters Arising

- Slides from the previous meeting have been shared.
- Together Housing Group will return to a future meeting.
- Information on shuttle service usage has been shared.
- Comms input on A629 has been included in publication, thanks to LK.

- Councillor Carter has archive photos of the Market she could share to support positive communication. She also suggested the benefit of a return royal visit.

Action: Cllr GC to share photographs with JW.

3. Business Improvement District Update (BID)

JG and NS provided an update on the Business Improvement District (BID). JG reflected on progress after a challenging year. NS outlined the BID's three main objectives: promoting a vibrant town centre, enhancing safety and cleanliness, and fostering growth and investment, providing information on progress over the last year and draft plans for the year ahead.

Cllr GC flagged the importance of communicating to the public the fantastic work the BID does. Councillor Kelly Thornham praised the Parade as an exceptional event, reporting that businesses had experienced record sales. Councillor Thornham also highlighted traffic issues during the Christmas period but noted the town's overall positive atmosphere and strong business performance.

Concerns regarding roadworks and their impact on footfall and traffic flow were recognised. NS confirmed that while the lower part of town (near Woolshops) had seen increased footfall, the upper part (including Commercial Street) continued to be impacted. JG presented detailed footfall data, showing a 2.5% annual increase at Woolshops, nearly reaching pre-pandemic levels, while figures for upper-town locations showed declines.

Councillor GC expressed frustration with the traffic disruptions caused by roadworks, particularly near the old swimming baths. She described a lack of cohesion between different areas of the town and cited long delays and visitor dissatisfaction. Lee Kenny noted that traffic flow had improved in recent weeks, apart from temporary disruptions caused by recent crashes and lane closures.

Actions:

- ZA to share slides
- RS to share contact details for Galliford Try, and schedule further update at future meeting.

4. Halifax Vision Progress Update

JW and KM delivered an update on the Halifax Vision project. A consultancy team has been selected, with the contract expected to be finalised soon. JW outlined the project's three phases: data collection and analysis, stakeholder engagement, and the development of a place vision strategy.

The data phase will involve gathering comprehensive information about Halifax, including its heritage, economic growth, and cultural landscape. Stakeholder

engagement is scheduled to begin in May, involving community groups, businesses, and residents, with the final strategy expected by the end of 2025. JW emphasised that the vision aims to identify thematic priorities and actionable projects, such as housing, cultural initiatives, and place-making opportunities, with a focus on securing funding.

Councillor Carter suggested involving the Civic Trust in these discussions to utilise their extensive archive and expertise. She also advocated for a cohesive approach given the role of Halifax as the principal town. Councillor Swift and KM highlighted the importance of addressing interlinked issues, such as heritage preservation, green space development, and transport infrastructure, to create a thriving Halifax. KM emphasised the importance of business engagement.

RS flagged the opportunity to build capacity into the delivery of the vision via an opportunity to lever in external funding. The Board agreed this may be of interest, and suggested links with CFFC.

JW confirmed that the April Board meeting will receive feedback from the data phase, and an outline of the next steps.

A point was made around the importance of being clear about responsibilities for street cleanliness, safety etc. Councillor Swift highlighted the importance of collaboration across teams, including the BID, the Civic Trust, and local businesses, to ensure Halifax continued to grow and thrive

Action: RS to bring back a proposal to the next Board meeting.

5. Art and About Trail Update

JW and HK presented the Art and About Trail update, an initiative funded by the Future High Streets programme to enhance footfall and highlight Halifax's cultural heritage.

Councillor Carter suggested incorporating local historical elements into the George Square installation. HK noted that designs include bollards with cat motifs inspired by Percy Shaw's inventions, reflecting local heritage and assured attendees that appropriate permissions were being sought. Councillor Swift praised the initiative as an exciting way to celebrate Halifax's cultural identity while addressing the need to improve underutilised areas such as George Square.

Action: ZA to share slides.

6. Any Other Business

None.

7. Date of the next meeting

6.00-8.00pm on Tuesday 1st April 2025.