Minutes of Goole Town Deal Board Meeting

Friday 19 July 2024, 2.00 to 4.30pm at Raise Business Centre

Attending: Link Agency (PJ Phil Jones, Chairman), Goole Civic Society (MHC Margaret Hicks Clarke), ERYC (AH Cllr Anne Handley), Public Health (Laurie Fergusson), Environment Agency (PS Paul Stockhill).

Present: Programme Manager (HH Helen Hoult), Strategic Asset Manager (JT James Timm), Regeneration Project Manager (AHt Andrew Hewitt), Media & Communication (LO Lucy Oates), Cities & Local Growth Unit (AB Amy Ball).

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

   PJ welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Beal Homes (Richard Beal), Siemens (Finbarr Dowling), Hey SMILE Foundation (NM Nick Middleton), Goole Town Council (CBJ Cllr Barbara Jeffreys), Business & Skills (TC Teresa Chalmers), Head of Economic Development (CW Claire Watts), Cities & Local Growth Unit (PC Peter Campey), Local Growth Co-ordinator (LJ Leigh Johnson).

   Croda International remains a vacant seat due to the departure of Martin Chapman. David Davies MP has been invited to replace the MP position for Goole previously held by Andrew Percy.

2. **Declaration of Interests**

   The Chairman reminded Board Members of the need to consider this for every Board meeting and asked for anything to be declared. Paul Stockhill representing the Environment Agency declared an interest in relation to any agenda items engaged in the Planning system, given his organisation is a statutory consultee and as such would only be able to comment where appropriate on agenda items.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 10 May 2024** were proposed by Margaret Hicks Clarke, seconded by Cllr Anne Handley and approved as a true record.

4. **Property Activation Fund Update**

   AHt provide an update to the Board. Between scheme launch on the 5th of July 2023 and the 11th of July 2024 the Goole Town Deal/ PAF team had assisted 75 organisations in the Goole area, with direct requests for information about the PAF or to discuss potential projects. Of these, eight have progressed to full application and thirteen more are in development. Extensive promotion work has taken place to promote the project to property owners within the target area and the Board noted that the current levels of interest are increasing.

   PJ asked about variable intervention rates, AHt explained this is down to what qualifies as eligible costs within an application. MHC emphasised her view that the bigger strategic proposals should be the highest priority going forward. Questions were also asked and discussed about how applicants demonstrate the need for the grant in order for the investment to happen. AHt outlined the due diligence test as part of the decision-making process to test this as well as the fund seeking to build momentum and activate investment that otherwise may not happen during the lifetime of the Town Deal, to build some critical mass and generate more investments.

   AH stated that the application process is challenging for some, however significant support is provided by the programme team to help potential applicants. Specific additional effort has been made to persuade and support small schemes in the pedestrian areas of the town to come forward, although no exceptional arrangements can be put in place for these schemes without contractual change with MHCLG. PS suggested continuing to run with the current criteria and if the situation changes then contingency revisions could be considered. HH also emphasised the expected outputs and outcomes for the PAF project (based on what the funding was authorised to deliver) and that these alongside wider value for money are the guiding principles of decision making and that any future proposed revisions would require approval from the Government Department.

   Action: *The Board agreed to review the forward funding position and discuss the next phase in September.*

5. **PAF Applications for Board consideration**

   The Board were asked to consider an application that would bring a currently derelict property of heritage value back into use and provide community benefit. The application had previously been considered by the PAF Investment panel and been supported however the intervention rate is higher than preferred and the Boards views were sought. Given the absence of some Board Members, those present agreed to defer until it can be considered by the wider Membership.

6. **Board Report**
HH outlined pertinent points across the project portfolio as follows:

Market Hall: Brew York have been announced as the appointed commercial operator for the hall following an open market process. Building work is due to start in October 2024 with the opening scheduled for spring 2025.

Victoria Pleasure Ground: A Football Foundation bid was submitted in April 2024; it has passed through various regional assessment stages with a final announcement expected in September.

Goole Town Council are undertaking much community engagement work with end users in readiness for the redevelopment. Likewise, Goole AFC the resident league club are making the necessary arrangements for temporary use of a catering unit.

Goole Leisure Hub: Complications and delays arose due to unforeseen building defects resulting in an increase of costs. All intrusive surveys and investigation verification works are now completed and work to resolve existing pool significant leaks completed and tested.

Opportunity Goole: The team of Personal Advisers and Promotions Coordinator have increased their work within the community by using more high street locations and ensuring Opportunity Goole has greater visibility on the high street. Several roadshow events have also been held, taking the project into the heart of communities across the town. The flexible skills fund is gaining momentum with the first grants and case studies being produced. Several outcomes have been achieved because of having a single point of contact, improved high street visibility and stronger joined up service provision for new business starts and growth initiatives.

Dutch River Flood and Greenway: The project is being delivered in three parts. The EA will manage the flood defence scheme, in tandem ERYC will deliver the highway aspects of the Greenway and the bank top will be a collaboration of both the EA, ERYC and the Canal and Rivers Trust along with wider community input on the animation inputs.

The EA have concluded safety audits and environmental limitations and surveys on site (including birds, voles, badgers and bats and other protected species) and developed the detailed design including engagement with Network Rail regarding the rail bridge over the river.

6.1 Goole Howden Hopper: The service has been well received locally with a steady increase in user number during the first two months of operation. Concern has been raised with the Board and ERYC regarding the safety aspects of the Hopper bus at Howden Station due to the lack of a dedicated stop for boarding and disembarking as well as the risks associated with turning the Hopper bus at a road junction. The operator is collecting data on the number of Howden Station users to assess the level of patronage at this location. In terms of options to address this concern and the cost benefit analysis, given the service is a pilot initiative to test and build demand, ERYC and the operator are considering the following:

- Create a dedicated bus stop either within the station car park or on the highway:
  A stop within the car park requires the co-operation of Northern Rail, this has been explored previously and thus far not been forthcoming, but dialogue will continue.
  A stop on the highway requires funding but does not resolve the issue of turning the bus.

- Reduce the speed limit on the approach to and across the level crossing at Howden: This could be considered to benefit all vehicle and passenger movements, but a form of enforcement would also need to be applied. Whilst this might reduce speed in the location it would not offer a solution to a dedicated boarding place or vehicle turning route.

- Reduce the bus waiting time at Howden Station: In reducing the bus waiting time at Howden Station to 3 minutes, this removes the lengthy wait for the bus between some journeys at the station. However, this still does not address the issue of a dedicated boarding point or that the bus still needs to turn around. A draft revision to the timetable was produced for the Boards consideration.

The Board considered these options as well as a suggestion that the bus ceased serving Howden Station which defeats the objectives of having introduced the service. The preferred option would be for a stop and turning facility within the station car park and ERYC will continue dialogue with the station operator. In the meantime, the risks will continue to be managed on an ongoing basis and Howden Station user numbers monitored. If any additional proposals emerge in the meantime, these will also be considered, and the situation will be reviewed again in September.

AHt reported that during the last month, there had been a fault with one of the bus door mechanisms resulting in it being off the road. Sweyne Coaches (the operator) provided one of their own vehicles to honour the service provision.

7. Communication Activity and Forward Planner

LO presented a report regarding media coverage in relation to Goole Town Deal activity. GTD projects have received extensive and positive coverage in the last period: Goole Town Deal Facebook posts reached 18,342 people. More than 6,000 people engaged with GTD posts by commenting, sharing, liking or clicking on links. 1175 people follow the page with 883 people choosing to like the page, this is a notable increase in followers. GTD LinkedIn followers are steadily increasing at 282 with 8,991 post impressions. Although X/Twitter continues to dramatically decline in relevance, GTD has 252 followers.

8. Shop Window Decals and Hoardings: HH gave a visual presentation of how empty shop windows could look with Town Deal decals replicating the summary details like the Town Deal website for each project but with more details on the updated milestones. The decals can be produced as a set standard size or be manufactured to specific window sizes. The benefit of decals is they can be re-used and relocated as required. Permission would be required from suggested property owners. The Board indicated which shop windows would be the preference.

Site Hoardings are currently being produced for the Goole Hub and will include the relevant and required Town Deal reference. As other sites prepare for construction work, hoardings will be erected providing information on what is being delivered. MHC asked for QR codes to be included and emphasised the relevance of information at Goole rail station. AH asked for an overall Town Deal promotion poster for the side wall of the current Bon Marche property as this faces the rail station for all passing rail passengers to see.

Action: *HH to follow up and action accordingly*

9. Any Other Business

9.1 LEP transition: AHt advised the Board of the establishment of a new Business Board and a Skills Board, outlining opportunities for Board member recruitment to these forums that meet bi-monthly and asked TD Board Members that may be interested, to speak to him about more details.

9.2 Goole Bicentenary strategic group: HH advised that an initial meeting had taken place with stakeholders in support of facilitating a strategic funding bid to both the Heritage Lottery and the Arts Council for Goole 2026. This forum could serve as an umbrella supporting the local Goole 2026 working group and the aspirations of those involved. MHC had been unable to attend but hopes the process will be streamlined and bring additional value.

9.3 PS asked about MP representation given the departure of Andrew Percy. HH advised that Cllr Anne Handley as Leader of ERYC has approached David Davies MP with an invitation to join the Board.

10. Dates of future meetings: Friday 27th of September, Friday 22nd of November.