

# City of Preston Town Fund Board

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## City of Preston Town Fund Board 5 March 2021

**Present:** Mr J Chesworth in the Chair; Councillors M Brown and Moss, Mr A Phillips, Ms R Connor, Mr P Green, Mr R Binns, Ms M Close, Ms L Smith, Ms K O'Connor and Ms A-M Parkinson

**Also in attendance:**

Mr J Crellin	– Assistant Director (Head of City Growth & Regeneration) City Development
Ms B Joyce	– City Development
Mr Z Bapu	– Senior Member Services Officer

**Apologies:** Sir M Hendrick, MP

### CD24 Minutes

The minutes of the Board meeting held 27 November 2020 were noted as an accurate record.

### CD25 Towns Fund- Implementation Update

An update report on the Towns Fund Board was submitted to the Board. It was pointed out that the report had been written prior to the announcement of the funding and the Heads of Terms letter was received. The letter acknowledged Preston's place in the region and the importance of sustainable growth. The terms letter highlighted the projects not supported by the funding allocated which was £4m less than the £23.76m bid for. There was comments about the Investment Plan within the Heads of Terms letter which drew attention to areas that required strengthening. The Plan will need to show capacity to deliver, Stakeholder involvement to date and going forward. The Council were working on the capacity issue and a Technical Working Group was to be formed to work with the Investment Panel to bring the Plan to life. £85k had been provided to support the next phase of the work. Future reporting to the Board will be in pieces on different elements of the delivery.

It was reported that there was an opportunity to link other projects through the delivery work. Work planned with LCC Economic Recovery Fund to look at the City Centre and Friargate recovery. It was proposed that a half day 'away day' be arranged to focus direction.

The Board Members made the following comments and observations:-

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- Good progress being made on the TCF and it was important to align the various initiatives already in place.
- Towns Fund initiatives completion date of March 2026 means there will be pressure to deliver.
- The wider scope of the CIP was very important particularly the skills element following the pandemic and the impact on health and wellbeing.
- There was frustration expressed that this was capital focus funding only. Delivery to making people's lives better was important which required elements of revenue funding to have an impact.
- The CIP was a 15 year Plan and the Towns Fund Board was a significant part of it. The City Council would continue to work with Partners to attract more funding. There will be additional focus on impact on Health.
- Many people have lost out due to the pandemic and there were concerns raised in respect of the recovery and how the city as a whole will deal with the aftermath. Although the Towns Fund is City Centre focussed there was an opportunity link other schemes such as the Youth Zone.
- The half day 'get together' will help focus ideas and consider initiatives beyond the Towns Fund.
- The Harris Re-Imagining Project was subject to a 'Live' bid for £4.1m matched Heritage Fund and a confirmation was required from the Board that there is £4.1m ring-fenced for this from the Towns Fund.

### Communications Update

Simon Turner and Andrew Taylor provided an update on communications. It was reported that there had been pressure to get announcement ready when the team came on board in November. However the funding announcement was delayed which allowed more preparation work to take place. The additional time allowed for further work on the CIP discovery and to distill and articulate the information contained within the document. The CIP is full of opportunities, Q and A was key to help with the narrative. It was important to get the right structure in place. Messaging to the communities via the website. The communication needed to be channelled and had to be same from everyone.

When the funding was announced there had been a piece on the North West News which was very good for the Towns Board. The report included a voice from the ground in the form of a local butcher. Now there was time to re-inforce the message through follow up interviews, CIP highlights and key communications had been set up. Also important to build narrative on individual projects.

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It was important to avoid PR patchwork, all involved need to be putting out same messaging. To do this a PR Plan will be developed.

Board Members made the following comments and observations:-

- Key to reference levelling up opportunity, including current context and ambition.
- Communication highlights should be circulated to all Board Members.
- Health is missing and this needs to be incorporated going forward.

Jane Dalton highlighted the work already going on including Stakeholder Investment Plan. The key objective of this stage of the process includes managing expectations and channelling ideas. It was important to listen to people on the ground and align with stakeholder objectives through integration of projects. Key points in the Engagement Plan were highlighted and the importance of keeping the energy and momentum going. It was acknowledged that there was a lot to do.

Further comments made by the Board Members as follows:

- Communication will be the glue to stick the success of the Project Plan together.
- Opportunity for the young and those from disadvantaged background needed to be included in the communication.
- Language used was important, the public need to understand what's in it for them. It would be useful to engage youth element.
- Important to understand the dynamics of different communities as perceived representatives do not fully represent target groups as there are Groups within groups particularly in the BAME communities.

**Resolved – That**

- i) The Board agreed to ring-fence £4.1m of the Towns Fund for the Re-imagining the Harris Project; and
- ii) That the report and the updates be noted.

### **CD26 Harris Quarter Pops Up - Implementation Update**

Andrew Dewhurst presented an update on the Event Tent (MET), Bench sculpture, Phone boxes, Public Art mural, Hoardings and Public Realm. The project timeline was highlighted to the Board. It was suggested that there was an opportunity to portray the impact of the pandemic via the art projects, the challenge faced could be expressed through art. Also it was proposed

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that the Community Wealth Building element of the city could be included in the Hoardings.

The Chair thanked all for the work undertaken on these projects.

**Resolved** – That the update be noted.

### **CD27 Any Other Business**

It was reported that Lis Smith was to step down from the Board, the Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked Lis for her invaluable input. As a result there were two vacancies on the Board one to be filled by Jane Anthony and Lis's replacement to be sort from Cardinal Newman College. It was agreed that the diversity of the Board needed to be looked at and it was an item for the 'Away Half Day' to look at the makeup of the Board Membership.

Mel Close reported that the Disability Equality were celebrating 25 years in August and a number of publicity events were planned.