

City of Preston Town Fund Board

City of Preston Town Fund Board 5 November 2021

Present: Mr J Chesworth in the Chair; Councillors M Brown and Borrow, Mr A Phillips, Mr R Binns, Ms J Wilding, Ms A-M Parkinson, Ms J Anthony, Mr M Flemming, Mr P Green and Ms M Close

Also in attendance: Mr C Hayward, Ms J Dalton, Mr A Dewhurst, Mr D Watson, Mr M Allen and Mr Gomez

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, Ms R Connor and Ms K O'Reilly

CD17 Declaration of Interests

There were none.

CD18 Implementation Update

The Board received an update presentation from Mr M Flemming and Ms B Joyce on the Towns Fund Implementation. It was reported that there were no further update from Government this month, re-profiling sheet for the Harris Quarter Assets and CEIAG projects had been submitted and awaiting outcome and confirmation but no issues anticipated as it was part of the process. Extensive work providing on-going support to projects on business cases continues. The TIG had taken control with three volunteers assisting each project. The Board were informed that the TIG was concluding its appraisal of the 'Harris Your Place' project. The road map for the project was looking positive and the necessary systems were in place. The timeline for the Illuminate and Integrate project was highlighted and the TIG were confident of delivery within the timescales outlined. The business case milestone for the project had been met and signed off. It was reported that the Animate project was also on track.

A draft Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) was presented to the Board attached to the report. It was in a familiar format which was considered best practice. GFA's were required to be in place to protect the Board and fund spending. The document will include Board conditions and schedules of

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outputs which are to be reported to the Board and Government along the way. An update on the Youth Zone project was provided to the Board. It was reported that a revised timetable and milestones had been submitted and significant progress had been made since the previous meeting. It was planned that the project would be appraised in January. Summary of the risks at the current stage were outlined to the Board and it was pointed out that in the main these were being flagged green. Update on the 5% advance grant funding was provided including details of the clawback position.

Mr Binns provided an update on the Communication which included an Engagement Plan. It was suggested that a six months extension be agreed with Freshfields and the Board were recommended to appoint an Ambassador to undertake communication work on behalf of the Board. It was reported that a budget of £15-20k would be required for Freshfields to deliver their work over the next six months.

The Board made the following comments and observations:-

- The GFA's were tried and tested and very helpful in the delivery process.
- Although deadline for the Harris Quarter Assets were tight however the aim was to take details of the project to February Council meeting for agreement.
- The Chair nominated Mr R Binns as the Lead Board member/Ambassador for Communication.

Resolved – That the Board

- (i) Noted the revised timeline for the Animate business case as set out in this report;
- (ii) Agreed that the draft grant funding agreement set out in this report form part of the Council's local assurance process; and
- (iii) Considered and agreed the communications plan set out in the report including appointment of Mr R Binns as the Lead Board Member for Communications; and
- (iv) Agreed the revised Youth Zone Business Case programme milestones.

CD19 Project update - Animate and Illuminate & Integrate

Mr A Dewhurst gave an update presentation on the Animate and the Illuminate and Integrate Project. In respect of Animate project it was reported that a lot of work going on and a Cinema Anchor had been agreed – an announcement was expected soon. It was reported that Hollywood Bowls had also been agreed as an anchor and legal matters were being addressed. The restaurant lettings were looking promising with discussions taking place with a number of national operators. Outline plans of the

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scheme were highlighted to the Board and it was stated detailed work on plans were on-going with a view to submitting a planning application in November. Details of the public realm work and the connectivity between the Bus Station and the project site was highlighted to the Board.

The importance of sustainability and carbon footprint was highlighted. It was stated that this was at the forefront and being considered in detail. There was a balance required as the project had to be affordable and sustainable with carbon reduction measures included. There was also an opportunity within the scheme to work with local artist and discussions were taking place with Uclan to facilitate this.

The programme timetable was outlined to the Board with a completion target of 2024.

The Board made the following comments and observations:-

- Important to give local independent operators the opportunity to take up one of the larger restaurant units. Although this could be difficult in terms of rates and affordability it is something that requires further work.
- The leasehold obligations on the larger units would mean that independent operators would not wish to commit long-term.
- The food hall hub was an opportunity which would be more appealing to a local independent operators.
- Potential opportunity to promote the use of local suppliers in the chain for the operators taking up the larger units. A suggestion was made that a suppliers promotion event be organised.
- Important to promote the Living Wage to the new businesses in the City.
- Efforts to achieve Net Zero needs to be articulated in the process.
- The PR and Communications will be important in getting the Net Zero message across.
- There was a PR job to do also in respect of the local business, Eric Wright Construction, involvement in the project and their ties with Preston's College. There could be a story to be told of a young Prestonian involved in the project.

Resolved – That the update be noted.

CD20 Any Other Business

Levelling Up Funding Bid

The Chair reported that the City Council were awaiting further guidance on the next round of funding and the criteria. The Board was being asked to assist the Council as a consultee. Although Preston did not bid in the first

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round it was reported that only a third of the bids were successful. One of the unsuccessful ones were Blackpool Council and there was an opportunity for the wider network to discuss this with their contacts to learn from Blackpool's experience.

Resolved – The Board agreed to assist the City Council in the Levelling Up Funding Bid.

Towns Fund Delivery Partner

It was reported that the work of the central department involved in the bid process was coming to an end in November. It was suggested that a letter be sent on behalf of the Board thanking the department for their support.

Resolved – That a letter be sent to the department on behalf of the Board thanking them for their support.