

Grays Town Board

9 September 2021 Notes of Meeting / Key Action Points

Attendance

Board Members

Justin Thomas, New River; Chair
 Jackie Doyle-Price, MP; Vice-Chair
 Cllr Mark Coxshall, Thurrock Council
 Lucy Harris, Creative People and Places Partnership
 Adam Bryan, SELEP
 Angela O'Donoghue – South Essex College
 Teresa O'Keefe, Love Grays Partnership
 Cllr Jane Potheary, Thurrock Council

External Support

Nigel Stewardson, MHCLG

Council Support

Rebecca Ellsmore, Strategic Lead – Regeneration
 Brian Priestley, Regeneration Programme Manager
 Yomi Shodimu – Senior Project Officer

Apologies

None received.

| | Welcome and Apologies | Action |
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| | <p>Justin welcomed everyone.</p> <p>RE noted that Yomi Shodimu has joined the Council Team and would be supporting both Grays and Tilbury Town Funds.</p> | |
| 1. | Project Selection | |
| | <p>JT shared on screen the project allocation document that had been developed by Board members and provide to the Council to confirm the view of the Board on project allocations.</p> <p>JT summarised position as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority from Board is animation of riverside as it has the potential to effect real change in terms of riverside amenity for residents and visitors, • Funding focus is therefore on the jetty, Riverside Activities Centre, Grays Beach and Riverfront and Kilverts Field. • Station gateway is the lowest priority and the Board proposed that all funding be removed from this. • Active Riverfront Connectivity is a medium priority and is proposed to be used as a balancing item to ensure funding can remain within grant award envelope but that no funding is lost. £100k allocated. | |

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| | <p>Discussion followed on the £100k balancing item with Board consensus that it could usefully link the station with the riverfront but it would not appear sensible to develop a stand alone business case for this in isolation.</p> <p>BP noted MHCLG advise that each project should have its own business case.</p> <p>JT queried whether this should be reserved for costs associated with business case development. BP advised that this could be covered within the professional fee allowance built into the project estimates.</p> <p>RE and LH commented that construction price inflation is increasing and projects may need additional contingency to cover this. Whilst the Heads of Terms set maximum amounts for each project this is not an issue limited to projects in Thurrock and MHCLG should be asked whether there is any flexibility in the upper limits.</p> <p>Action: TC to check upper limits with MHCLG noting inflationary pressures.</p> <p>RE noted that outputs needed to be confirmed in the 5 October submission.</p> <p>Board agreed that the recommendation to the Council is that funding should be allocated as per the circulated paper.</p> | TC |
| 2. | Role of the Board | |
| | <p>JT shared ToRs on screen and noted that the objectives related to developing TIP. The ToRs need to be updated to reflect the current status of the project.</p> <p>The Board propose their role is an overseeing capacity, advisory to the Council who have ultimate responsibility to deliver the projects.</p> <p>The ongoing objective is to monitor and promote projects and challenge the Council to deliver successfully and at pace.</p> <p>RE noted the current MHCLG guidance defined the Board's role at certain upcoming decision points but was vague beyond business case sign off. ToRs needed to retain flexibility to reflect any MHCLG requirements forthcoming in the future.</p> <p>Action: TC to update ToRs and share with Board and liaise with MHCLG on whether there is more guidance on future requirements of the Board.</p> | TC |

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| | <p>MC outlined that the administration was keen to see an ongoing role for the Board.</p> <p>JT – noted that a key strength is in the Board’s ability to deliver consistency throughout the delivery phase whereas Council officers/administration may change.</p> | |
| 3. | Working Groups and Membership | |
| | <p>JT shared doc with working group allocations on screen.</p> <p>JT and BP had reflecting on the mechanics of potential working groups moving forward. JT noted that a master planning exercise was required to weave all of the riverfront projects together. This would need Board Member input. Once this exercise is complete Board Members can be allocated to individual projects.</p> <p>MC suggested nominating board members to be project leads with a remit to share feedback with other Board members ensuring everyone is kept up to speed without drawing a significant amount of time.</p> <p>JDP agreed that a masterplan was needed as projects are all interlinked and commented that at the moment big issues are about understanding stakeholders’ views rather than project detail. We need to engage effectively with external stakeholders and JDP is happy to assist where needed.</p> <p>AOD noted that we need to refer back to the ToR which are about oversight and challenge, and recognise that Board Members don’t have unlimited amounts of time.</p> <p>JT suggested there will be 4 major interlinked projects. Board working group leads would be responsible for liaising with advisory group members and other stakeholders and bringing that wider feedback into the project development.</p> <p>AB suggested we are effectively looking for Board Member champions at this stage.</p> <p>MC noted that fundamental issues such as location of jetty etc. should be decided by full board not a working group.</p> <p>Board agreed that champions would be nominated for early master planning and further thought on mechanics of any working groups could be considered at a later date.</p> <p>Action: JT to liaise with Board Members individually on who would like to be champion for each particular topic.</p> | |

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| | <p>The Board discussed the need for a Board assistant to inform and support their role in delivering the TIP, which all Board members agreed would be an important asset. TC to investigate procurement approach and to agree role description with JT. Anticipated value £5,000-10,000.</p> <p>Action: TC and JT to produce role description and procure a Board assistant.</p> | |
| 4. | Next Steps | |
| | <p>BP outlined upcoming timings as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board confirmed preference on projects today, Council's directors to undertake similar exercise. • Project list to be submitted to MHCLG 5th October. To include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Confirmed projects and funding allocations. ○ Response on conditions included in heads of terms (main ones being EA and PLA conditions relating to jetty) • Can then start procuring professional teams. Requirement for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multi-disciplinary team – including master planning, design, QS, engineers etc. ○ Specialist business case team • Professional team commission to include an early review of projects to sense check deliverability in early masterplan stages. • Business case summary to be submitted to MHCLG by 5th August 2022. Summary document requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Independent evaluation of business case. ○ Board sign off. ○ Cabinet approval (aiming for July 2022). <p>BP noted that the timeframe will only allow RIBA 2 design to be reached (concept and master planning with option to prepare planning application).</p> <p>TC are working up a programme to include the above. JT requested that the programme includes a cash flow line, noting that it will be indicative at this stage.</p> <p>Action: TC to distribute programme with cash flow to the Board when complete.</p> <p>LH queried what would happen if there is a disagreement between the Board and TC's Directors on the projects to be taken forward. MC commented that he had raised with Sean Clark this morning and</p> | TC |

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| | <p>asked for early response to ensure any problems would not arise at the last minute.</p> <p>LH suggested a Board Member should be involved in any discussions with PLA and EA on jetty and was happy to assist in early discussions if needed.</p> <p>MC noted he has monthly meetings with the PLA. RE normally attends, RE to ensure handover to successor. PLA have advised that EA Planner will be embedded in PLA with the aim of securing timely responses from EA.</p> <p>MC asked AB if there is a way to negotiate collectively on independent assessment of business cases via SELEP. AB agreed to start a conversation with steer and other towns who to assess interest.</p> <p>JDP asked to be kept informed on conversations with EA and PLA and offered support where she can.</p> | |
| 5. | A.O.B | |
| | <p>RE noted that TC had been asked to present a Town Fund update to the OSE board and would be attending the 15th September meeting.</p> <p>JT advised that KNEX have a conference at SEC on Saturday 11th September. It was noted that the entrance to the tram tunnel is proposed to be on Kilverts Field which would be in conflict with TF proposals in this area. MC will attend the conference and noted concern that the alighting point is at Kilverts Field rather than at the station. MC/JDP/JP have all met with KNEX in the past, the collective view is that the proposal is Interesting but has a long way to go before deliverability can be proven. The Town Fund should therefore not seek to make allowances at this stage.</p> | |

GRAYS TOWNS FUND

BUSINESS PLAN STAGE

KEY QUESTIONS AND SUMMARY OF BOARD MEMBER RESPONSES

1. **What level of engagement do you think the Board should have in the delivery of the Towns Fund Projects? (Bearing in mind that Thurrock Council will have ultimate responsibility for delivery)**

An overseeing role, acting as monitor, promoter & challenger to the council who have the responsibility to deliver

2. **Do you think the Board needs additional members, if so from what background and why?**

Yes. To be discussed further once the submission to MHCLG is made at the end of September

3. **Would you support the appointment of a Project Manager to the Board? (This would be a limited brief, part time role to support the Board, liaising with the Councils own Project Management team, paid for out of the early release funds)**

Yes

4. **Are you as a Board member willing and able to commit time and input to be part of a working group allocated to one of the Towns Fund Projects? If so which one(s)?**

See summary of responses and Working Group allocation table below.

Once the membership of each working group is agreed and established the chair of the working group will agree with the other group members who might be appropriate to invite onto the working group from the Advisory Board, or any other source.

5. **If we have to drop one project to best allocate our reduced budget which one would you chose to drop?**

Station Gateway

Active Riverside Connectivity

| | Working Group? | Project to drop? |
|----------|---|--|
| Justin | To remain as chair, not affiliated to any working group | |
| Lucy | Any of Station Gateway, Connectivity, Riverfront, Beach Park & Kilverts Field, Activities Centre, Jetty | Keep Jetty, combine Riverfront & Activities Centre |
| Teresa | Station Gateway, Connectivity, Riverfront, Activities | Keep Jetty Drop Station Gateway Against combining riverfront & activities centre |
| Adam | Jetty (being of wider/ regional impact) | Keep Jetty |
| Angela | Station Gateway, Jetty | Keep Jetty, drop station gateway, combine Riverfront & Activities Centre |
| Jane | Beach Park project | Station Gateway, Riverfront Connectivity |
| Mark | Activities Centre | |
| Jackie | Riverside projects, including the Beach, jetty and Park | Station Gateway |
| Kristina | | |

BOARD MEMBERS RESPONSES

ALLOCATION TO WORKING GROUPS

X = Expressed interest

X = Suggested Chair of working group

| | JT | LH | TOK | AB | AOD | JP | MC | JDP | KJ |
|--------------------------------|----|----|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|----|
| Station Gateway | | X | X | | X | | | | |
| Active Riverfront Connectivity | | X | X | | X | | | | |
| Grays Riverfront | | X | X | | | | | X | |
| Beach Park & Kilverts Field | | X | | | | X | | X | |
| Activities centre | | X | X | | | | X | | |
| Jetty | | X | | X | X | | | X | |

Summary of Working Groups:

| | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Riverfront Connectivity: | Chair: Angela | Members: Lucy, Teresa |
| Grays Riverfront: | Chair: Teresa | Members: Lucy, Jackie |
| Beach Park & Kilverts Field: | Chair: Jane | Members: Lucy, Jackie |
| Activities Centre: | Chair: Mark | Members: Lucy, Teresa |
| Jetty: | Chair: Lucy | Members: Adam, Angela, Jackie |

ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

| | | Original Budget Allocation | Revised Budget Allocation | Difference |
|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| Station Gateway | | £2.64mil | £0 | -£2.64mil |
| Active Riverfront Connectivity | | £2.51mil | £100,000 | -£2.41mil |
| Grays Riverfront | | £5.59mil | £5.59mil | £0 |
| Beach Park & Kilverts Field | | £4.57mil | £4.57mil | £0 |
| Activities centre | | £3.04mil | £3.04mil | £0 |
| Jetty | | £6.60mil | £6.60mil | £0 |
| TOTAL | | £24.95 mil | £19.9mil | |