

Grays Town Board

30th June 2022. Notes of Meeting / Key Action Points

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Justin Thomas, New River; Chair
 Jackie Doyle-Price, MP, Vice Chair
 Lucy Harris, Creative People and Places Partnership
 Teresa O'Keeffe, Love Grays Partnership
Board Advisor: Clifford Read

Council

Henry Kennedy-Skipton, Strategic Lead – Regeneration
 Bernice Lim, Capital Projects Manager
 Brian Priestley, Programme Manager
 Yomi Shodimu – Senior Project Officer

DLUHC

Iain McNab
 Margaret Kalaugher

Multi-Disciplinary Design Team

Riccardo Bobisse, AR Urbanism
 Catherine Healy, Tonkin Liu
 Graham Gathergood, Beckett Rankin

Kate Willard (observer)

Apologies

Cllr Mark Coxshall, Thurrock Council
 Adam Bryan, SELEP
 Jayne Sheehan, South Essex College
 Cllr Fish has been invited to join the Board but was unable to attend this meeting

		Action
1.	Welcome	
	<p>JT welcomed everyone to the meeting</p> <p>JT introduced Kate Willard. Kate is the chair of the Thames Estuary Growth Board and has a supportive role to Towns Funds Boards on behalf of the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities. Kate was an observer at the meeting and will be feeding back her observations to the Board.</p>	
2.	Review of minutes	
	<p>Minutes were presented, JT asked whether members had read the minutes and whether there were any comments. There were no comments from Board members. At the next Board meeting as a point of order JT will ask for a proposer and seconder to formally approve that previous set of minutes.</p> <p>JT requested circulation of minutes for this and future meetings within 1 week</p>	TC
3.	Presentation by Design Consultant - AR Urbanism	
	<p>JT introduced the purpose of the meeting to agree project briefs for the next stage of design and the Boards approach to the jetty</p> <p>HKS explained project development and stakeholder meetings that contributed to latest project development and costings circulated</p> <p>RB presented a summary of the design development.</p>	

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	<p><u>Jetty</u></p> <p>CH and TC presented alternative design approaches and updated costings for the jetty. The costs were considerably higher than the TIP cost estimates. The Board raised the issue of budget and that cost had increased in a way which would now use up most of the TiP budget if implemented. TC and the consultant team advised that it had undertaken analysis to see if savings could be made for example by relocating the jetty or reducing its length; these factors would not have made a substantial cost saving to free up the TiP budget to allow implementation of the other projects. An explanation of costs was provided.</p> <p>When the bid was submitted there was little time (given bid programme) to undertake significant work on costs on what is a complex discipline. The Board had agreed to select a cost at the lower end of the cost spectrum to help facilitate other projects in the TiP which at the time did not seem an unreasonable approach. It has since transpired that the minimum specification for a jetty would not be adequate for the intended function, so that the jetty cannot be delivered at such low cost now, and since the time of the bid some other significant cost adjustments have been made.</p> <p>As well as recognising that the actual build cost is higher and the higher end of the cost spectrum is more appropriate, allowances have also had to be increased for additional fees, additional costs such as licenses, increased contingencies and inflation. All of these combined has created a significant overall cost increase. Build cost inflation in particular has been accelerating and added significant sums to the cost to which fees and contingencies have to be applied. Contingencies have been increased to reflect the specialist nature and high risks associated with this sector.</p> <p>While the cost increase was disappointing, it was acknowledged that the technical team had explored all avenues to reduce cost and that instead, a bid to another source of funding in the future would allow the vision of the Board to be met, while undertaking some jetty preparatory works as part of this programme.</p> <p>JT proposed that the Board consider all the other projects and then return to consideration of the jetty.</p> <p>At the end of the meeting The Board agreed that the Towns Fund would not include the jetty to enable other projects to be delivered and to achieve maximum impact</p> <p>The Board agreed that the jetty continues to be a crucial part of the vision set out in The TIP and that they would expect alternative options to be investigated.</p> <p>TC advised that the jetty had a good business case BCR, the TIP was part of a phased plan for the town, delivery is also reflected in Council strategy. Other options would be investigated. This had been discussed with DHLUC who were supportive of this approach</p> <p><u>Grays Riverfront Park & Beach</u></p>	<p>TC</p>
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	<p>CH presented a revised masterplan following the walkaround and meetings with the Board Champions and stakeholders.</p> <p>Changes include reduced mounding, ramping and a shorter boardwalk.</p> <p>The scheme included potential realignment of the flood defence wall to offset the proposed mounds, pathways and staircasing on the river side of the flood defence wall which could constitute encroachment into the flood zone area. Due to the potential high cost of repositioning part of the flood defence wall the Board agreed that the preferred option was not to move the wall. The Board agreed that the Design Team's starting point with the EA is the river wall will not be moved and to identify alternative approaches to issues raised, including alternative means of mitigating potential encroachment such as breaking out and removing some of the existing concrete structures so that the mounds, paths and staircases could still be built as proposed.</p> <p>The approach currently includes a consideration for increasing the height of the flood wall, which might be requested by the EA. GG explained that the current mandatory requirement for this is 2040 and 2070 please expand on this as there are different requirements for year 2040 and year 20270 and that designs for current schemes would need to show they could support later increases in wall height.</p> <p>It was noted that the EA have a role in managing flood and as a statutory consultee in the planning process. Allowances can be made in the design for future raising of the wall, EA has confirmed this in writing, but the Board agreed that increasing the height of the flood defence wall would not be a part of the Towns Fund proposal</p> <p>The Board requested that TC and the consultant team clarify the approach of the EA and if necessary, provide a briefing note to enable JDP to represent the Boards objectives in discussion with the EA.</p> <p><u>Grays Beach Riverside Park & Kilverts Field: including enhanced Lightship Café</u></p> <p>CH presented the four options for the Cafe</p> <p>The Board agreed that the preferred option is Option 1: New Build set into the bank with access at lower level to the beach park and at upper level to the riverside. The Board requested that the design team investigate</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Riverfront path directly connecting to a roof terrace. 2. A variety of options for the first floor, including a smaller structure connected to and serviced by the ground floor, and with a covered, sheltered seating area, not necessarily enclosed in the building 3. Provision of a large flexible events space adjacent. 4. Retention of the lightship café while a new café was built <p><u>Riverside Activity Centre</u></p>	
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	<p>CH explained the outcome from the desk top study requested by the Board's Project Champion.</p> <p>The Board agreed that option 3 was their preferred option, which locates the boat storage area to the eastern side of the site</p> <p>The Board requested that the following be investigated further in the next design stage;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approach to car parking provision • landscaping treatment between the proposed new building and the riverfront • Re-use of existing roads and hardstanding as far as possible <p><u>Grays Jetty Enabling work</u></p> <p>CH described proposals for a Wharf Garden and recontouring to accommodate a future jetty scheme.</p> <p>The Board agreed the approach described provided it would not be viewed as a beautification project. IMN advised that what is being proposed is a permanent change which serves the purposes of the TIP.</p> <p>The Board also asked the design team to ensure the proposals were deliverable in terms of 3rd party ownership and that they did not worsen potential encroachment into the flood zone area</p>	
4.	Board discussion on projects presented	
	<p>The Board agreed</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. that the Towns Fund would not be used for the jetty to enable other projects to be delivered 2. that the jetty and southern connectivity projects continue to be crucial parts of the vision set out in The TIP and alternative delivery options should be investigated. 3. To progress the following projects, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Grays Riverfront Park & Beach b) Grays Beach Riverside Park & Kilverts Field: including enhanced Lightship Café c) Riverside Activities Centre d) Grays Jetty Enabling Work (subject to value engineering across all projects and budget availability) e) Improvements to connectivity, wayfinding, lighting and signage between river and station (subject to value engineering across all projects and budget availability) 4. Submission of Project Change Request to reflect the decisions of the Board's meeting <p>The Board was pleased with the the significant progress that had been made from the last Board meeting and welcomed the revised design ideas. The Board thanked the Design Team for the clarity of the presentation and proposals.</p>	All Board Members

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	<p>JT requested that Board Members send any further comments on the designs presented to TC by 8th July.</p> <p>The Board agreed to delegate finalisation of the brief for the next stage of design to the Boards Projects Champions and requested a meeting be arranged with Project Champions to finalise the briefs for the next design stage</p> <p>The Board noted that total estimated costs exceed the available grant and requested that TC and the consultant team seek to reduce costs to enable all projects agreed by the Board to be delivered.</p>	TC
5.	Programme Update	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board project champions agree brief for next stage of design and costing TC to set up next meeting with Board Champions as soon as possible Submission of project change request. IMN has indicated that an extension of time for submission of summary business cases is likely to be accepted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary business cases submitted no later than 5th October 2022 Council Cabinet 14th September 2022 	
6	AOB	
	JDP expressed her gratitude to JT for his work in progressing the projects.	
	Meeting Dates	
	<p>Future Board meeting dates have been circulated. Board members are requested to advise TC if they are unable to attend any of the circulated dates.</p> <p>Include dates for Board members again here</p> <p>Next board meeting date has been scheduled for 28th July 2022, 6-8pm</p>	