

Grays Towns Fund Board

Notes of meeting / Key action points

6:30pm to 8pm, 27 February 2020

Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL

Attendance

Board Members:

- Justin Thomas, New River
- Cllr Mark Coxshall, Thurrock Council
- Lucy Harris, Creative People and Places Partnership
- Teresa O'Keeffe, Riverside Community
- Cllr M Kerin, Thurrock Council
- Steve Smith, South Essex College
- Rhiannon Mort, SELEP
- Nigel Stewardson, MHCLG

Council Support:

- Irina Blanks, Senior Project Officer
- Rebecca Ellsmore, Programmes and Projects Manager
- David Moore, Interim Assistant Director Place Delivery
- Andy Millard, Director of Place

Apologies:

- Jackie Doyle-Price MP
- Brian Priestley, Programme Manager
- Kristina Jackson, Thurrock CVS

1.	Welcome and Apologies	Action
JT	JT Welcomed everyone and apologies were noted	
2.	Review meeting notes and actions	
JT	Justin went through meeting notes and actions.	
3	Review the Town's Fund objectives (MHCLG)	
NS	<p>Nigel Stewart is representing MHCLG. Nigel introduced himself and provided his background. Nigel stressed he is passionate about results.</p> <p>Nigel confirmed all the Board needs to know is on page 9 in the prospectus. Page 9 identifies 3 main objectives and they are the most important items in the plan.</p> <p>Nigel advised all projects are all about impact, projects that are interesting and will have the clearest impact for the local economy. Any projects that Board will put forward must have a strong link to the objectives.</p>	

	<p>Nigel noted that full guidance might be available in 2 month. It has not been decided yet if the format for Investment Plan will be provided by MHCLG.</p> <p>Nigel stressed his role is to provide support and take away any questions the Towns Fund Board might raise.</p>	
4.	Review Grays Map and boundary	
JT	<p>The Board discussed improving entry points into Grays and making it more welcoming. The Board agreed it is hard to know where Grays starts and its boundary.</p> <p>Board discussed Hogg Lane and Thameside and their future use. Board mentioned Thameside can become a cultural centre of Grays.</p>	
	Action 1: Send ownership of Grays Queens gate shopping centre and provide a wider map of Grays with Council owned properties	TBC
	David Moore talked about unique opportunity that Grays has by having Future High Street Fund and Towns Funds available at the same time. He said ambition on both grants should be complimentary.	
	Action 2: Add FHSF as an agenda item for future meetings and provide update	TBC
	Action 3: Board would like to have a list of things they want to achieve and a list of target projects	TBC
	<p>Board agreed there is not many towns in the same position as we are, therefore we should take advantage of it and have a look at the bigger picture.</p> <p>Board members had a wide range discussion about boundary. Nigel advised as long as projects are within defined boundary by MHCLG it is acceptable.</p> <p>Board agreed to go through project prioritization first and then use projects identified to map the area and that will give us a boundary.</p>	
5.	Prioritise projects	
JT	<p>Board discussed place making and directing people to important places in Grays, maybe introducing extra cycle lanes and foot paths.</p> <p>Board discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk Ways • Bus Terminals • Transport Links • Thames Clipper (Clipper to Tilbury, Gravesend and London) <p>Board agreed the importance of prioritizing where the money would have greatest impact.</p> <p>Board agreed an important aspect is usage and utilization of River Front. Board agreed that river Front is a big asset but it was noted that impact would have to go beyond beautification.</p> <p>Board also mentioned Beehive building and its potential use as a café and restaurants. It was agreed it needs to be taken into a wider concept together with underpass.</p>	

<p>Board talked in detail about Riverside and what would the project break down to. Board talked about Jetty and Thames clipper as potential projects relating to River Side.</p> <p>Board talked about Jetty and mentioned if it would need any specific engineering and how that would fit with existing businesses and communities. Board discussed how a multifunctional jetty would work in that area. How can other actions and opportunities be created, how the whole area including beach and park could come together. That should enable the regeneration of the whole area.</p>	
<p>Action 4: Prepare a scope of works for jetty and execute commission of the feasibility study. Include design implications, design commission report on Jetty and the whole Grays beach, Park, Jetty/Landing Stage and River Front as a whole.</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>Action 5. Draft Thames Clipper Feasibility</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>Board mentioned working alongside Paramount park and an option to invite Paramount Park to work with the Board and feed into the investment Plan.</p> <p>Board agreed that it is important to look at cost implication of the jetty after 10 years.</p> <p>Board suggested to have a look at other towns how they utilized River Front as an asset.</p> <p>Board looked at Town centre as another priority area and agreed to put on hold Central Grays until next meeting, Justin Advised that we would get a clear picture of what community wants after New River's consultation.</p> <p>Board further concentrated on discussing Cultural Zone. Board agreed that location for a theatre is fit for purpose with great links to entry points to High Street and Hogg Lane. It was then noted that connectivity to North South is missing and Queens Gate parade and area around Job centre plus is isolated.</p> <p>Board discussed relocating library to the town centre to open up the front of the ground floor of the Theatre.</p> <p>Board suggested to look at Colchester public realm work and use it as an example.</p> <p>Board wanted to find out how much would refurbishment of the Thameside cost. Board also noted that Thameside would fall under category of Strengthening Cultural asset.</p>	
<p>Action 6: Provide Thameside Cultural work that has been carried out</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>Board also briefly talked about Shop fronts and that it is not a long term solution as well as identifying where Grays is and giving Grays an identity.</p> <p>Board also discussed wayfinding, improved signage, public toilets and 5G network, but warned it might fall under the remit of FHSF.</p> <p>To summarise, board identified zones of Impact:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. River Front 2. Central Area 3. Cultural Area 4. Overall signage, wayfinding and entrance points. 	

	Board also mentioned that ideas need to be put forward to cover skills and enterprise section of the bid, potentially maritime industry can be looked at. In particular look at water based skills such as outdoor leisure courses.	
6.	Approach to consultation	
RE	<p>Rebecca provided an update on the Consultation Council had last week. Consolation is now live online until 16th of March. Two more consultations are scheduled to take place in a next few weeks. Consultation generated a lot of interest, but the conversion rate is low.</p> <p>Board wondered if local resident association can be consulted</p> <p>New River provided their approach to the consultation happening next week and invited everyone to come and have their say.</p>	
7.	Support Required	
JT	Action 7: Add Budget as an agenda item for the next meetings	TBC
8.	Review Advisory Group	
JT	Board agreed that business representation should be increased. Board agreed for Justin to approach other businesses in the area.	
	Action 8: Circulate the list of business representatives and JT to draft a letter to send to local business representatives identified by the board	TBC /JT
	Action 9: JT to circulate cash flow template	JT
	Action 10: Add Adult Community College to the Advisory Group (Teresa would send us a contact details)	TBC
	Action 11: Provide ideas on how to consult with Advisory Group	TBC
	Action 12: Move a start of future meetings to 17.30	TBC
	Action 13: Yacht Club to be added to the Advisory Group	TBC
9.	Any other Business	
JT	Nigel suggested we push boundary back to centre and maybe talk to other Council's about their approach and progress. We can contact SELEP to get some contact details.	