

Margate Town Deal Board Minutes

Date: 15 September, 2021 at 4:00pm

Venue: Virtually, via Google Hangout

Membership: David Smith CBE (DS), Cllr Reece Pugh (RP), Madeline Homer (MH), Sir Roger Gale MP (RG), Adam Bryan (AB), Lesley Game (LG), Victoria Pomery OBE (VP)/Sarah Martin (SM), Eddie Kemsley (EK), Sam Causer (SC), Richard Ash (RA), Stephen Darrer (SD), Jesse Tomlinson (JT)

In attendance: David Smith CBE (DS), Madeline Homer (MH), Sir Roger Gale MP (RG), Adam Bryan (AB), Victoria Pomery OBE (VP), Eddie Kemsley (EK), Sam Causer (SC), Richard Ash (RA), Louise Askew (LA), Natalie Glover (NG), Charles Hungwe (CH), Chris Paddock (CP), Alex Russell (AR), Rebecca Collings (RC)

Apologies: Sarah Martin (SM) and Councillor Reece Pugh (RP)

1. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

2. **People's Panel update**

EK advised that at the last People's Panel meeting on 21 July, governance was discussed, including the recruitment of the Board Chair. The main view was that ideally a local person be appointed to that role and that it should be a person of integrity. This candidate should be able to listen to local people through the Panel contributions and giving feedback to the Board.

The plan is for the Panel to meet the various projects, starting with the Creative Land Trust on 29 September. EK also highlighted the appreciation from the Panel when Board members have joined their meetings.

DS queried the timeframe in relation to recruiting a new Chair and LA confirmed that the deadline for submitting applications was Monday 13 September. She added that only five applications had been received by the day of this Board meeting. It was agreed that a small group of Board members would review the expressions of interest and conduct virtual interviews on behalf of the Board.

RG suggested that the Board should not appoint a new Chair if none of the five people who have expressed an interest, or go on to interview are suitable. He added that the process could be repeated until a suitable candidate is identified.

EK questioned whether this post could be funded and LA confirmed that there is no grant funding for the post, and guidance from the government and Towns Fund delivery partners suggests that the post should be voluntary.

The following Board members volunteered to be on the selection group and interview panel: MH, RA, RG, DS, and AB. LA will also attend the interviews in order to answer any questions, but not in a decision making role.

3. Governance

LA informed the Board that on 16 September there was going to be a series of meetings with the project teams after which updates would be brought to the next board meeting. LA then introduced RC who made a brief presentation about the government's and Delivery Partners view about governance. RC gave her reassurance that the draft governing documents meet the requirements of MHCLG and are in line with what other towns are producing.

RC explained that she supports 17 other similar Town Boards. Her role at the meeting was to advise the Board on the content of the project and other proposals brought before the Board. This included providing advice on the governance arrangements that are required by the government. Currently everything is in accordance with what would be expected for the next phase of the Board's work. It was worth keeping in mind that there would be some risks particularly regarding the project costs due to inflation and current market conditions. RC added that it is important for the Board to work collaboratively as a group, face and overcome any challenges and oversee the delivery of projects, whilst managing risk.

The Chair questioned what is the role of this Board when it comes to the delivery of phase 2. The words oversee delivery and support, as well as looking at risk needed further clarification.

RC confirmed that the board will continue to steer the projects and ensure that they are progressing in line with guidelines, developed and delivered as required. There is a decision making element for the Board. For example decisions have to be made when it comes to changing projects for reasons of costs. This would have to be done through business cases.

The Chair raised formal points of any project that include the note that the project represents value for money and complies with the equality duty requirements be put before the Town Board before they are signed off by the Board Chair. That means MH, LA and the Project Team would need to formally provide that information to the Board.

LA explained that it is an assurance process for the project as shown in the slides that were presented at the meeting. The Project Team will be working on the business cases and bringing them for consideration by the Board. There will also be an Internal Review group to check that the MHCLG requirements are met. The Chair and the Accountable Body (TDC) will then sign off the business cases at a local level. There will be a step by step guide for the Board of all the project documentation. There will also be recommendations from the Internal Review Group to confirm that all areas of the project specifications and documentation are met. If there were any challenges or risks regarding the projects these will be brought to the Town Deal Board. There will be occasions when there is a need to reallocate funding as a result of the risks, but that will be for the Board to consider within the business cases.

SC felt that from the project process diagram presented at the meeting, it is difficult to relate the timeline to specific project activities, and dates.

LA explained that the Project Team will be engaging with the Consultants and projects sponsors to decide when to submit the business case summary documents. The timeline shown in the process flow chart was a summary relating to the government deadlines, and is a template at this stage to illustrate the assurance process. The timeline will be updated once the submission to central government of the timescales for summary document submissions.

The Chair suggested that Board meetings should therefore be scheduled in that same timeline.

SC added that there was a need to schedule into that timeline, deadlines for submission of business cases.

MH acknowledged that the timeline will be updated to make it a bit clearer, and the Project Team will take that away as an action. The Chair noted that the Board would appreciate a clearer and more detailed timeline.

AB suggested that there was a need to think about finding a place for independent evaluation of business cases in this process, which was supported by the Chair. LA advised that the Project Team is already in the process of considering options for independent evaluation of the business cases.

RA raised concerns as to whether the Accountable Body has a conflict of interest and added that Board Members have been asked to engage in their networks to talk about the work of the Town Board, however there were potential constraints brought about by the mention of NDAs in the Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference.

The Chair highlighted that there was a sentence in the draft governing documents that talked about confidentiality.

RC responded to say that sometimes there is commercially sensitive and confidential information that needs to be protected from wider circulation. The Board minutes that are being published, were a demonstration of the level of transparency about the activities of the Town Board. It is correct that Board members would be good ambassadors of the Board activities.

SC suggested that tracked changes would be helpful in reviewing amended governance documents such as the Code of Conduct and requested the communications strategy be circulated. He also raised a question relating to the mention of all correspondence to be channelled through the MTD inbox and how that can work with the Board being asked to share information.

HM clarified that it was not the intention that all correspondence must be sent through the MTD email address and confirmed that the language in the Governing documents would be revised to be a little clearer.

It was agreed that members who have comments to make regarding the governance documents could put them in writing and send them to the project team, who will provide explanations and/or make the necessary amendments and re circulate. DS requested that all Board Members either submitted their comments or approval of the governing documents ahead of the next Board meeting.

4. Creative Land Trust (CLT) project update

AR gave a presentation in relation to the Creative Land Trust project and explained how Work Wild is an asset based registered company that works across the private-public sectors. AR and CP have the experience, having been on Boards of a similar nature, have the the experience of how these projects work and have a wide network to draw upon. Their role was to give advice to the Board on how best to develop the Creative Land Trust for Margate as an investment vehicle.

CP explained that the Creative Land Trust (CLT) is a way of taking back properties and creating space for organisations to work through their ideas without the burden of having to manage those properties. It was also noted that whilst the creative sector is growing, and has potential in it's broad term, to contribute significantly to the local economy and growth, it is a vulnerable sector and therefore does need support and intervention to grow to become resilient. There was a need to look at the legal structure of the proposed vehicle, whether it was going to be a charity or a private company; a look at the operating model and how much it would cost. There was a need to look at the property portfolio. A significant amount of interaction has taken place with local organisations that include Dreamland, Margate School, Resort and others, to understand how best this vehicle could respond to these organisations and local communities' needs.

It was explained that the CLT should be independent from the Council and MTD Board, viable, and that it can sustain itself. There would be a focus on the creative industry and social aspect as well. The core principle is that subsidy would be welcome but there has to be an element of payback by this vehicle. CLT needs to be able to bring in new property occupiers into Margate. These new institutional tenants could be big companies or small sole traders. CLT would need to secure additional funding; grant funding or joint venture funding.

AR explained that there are emerging objectives for the CLT, which could be used to define the Memorandum of Understanding. These include the following:

- Inclusion;
- Affordable, secure places;
- Life opportunities for the underserved audience.

It is hoped that this will stimulate the regeneration and interest in the area.

CP explained that there was a need to develop a property portfolio that would enable the organisation to let out properties to creative and regeneration partners. It was therefore important to understand the market. The market could be divided into four segments which are:

- Scaling Pioneers;
- Social Impact;
- Specialised INnovators;
- Value Drivers.

CP confirmed that the deadline to submit the CLT Business Case Summary document to the Government is 15 October 2021 and LA added that the role of the Board will be to review the Business Case and ensure it is clear, deliverable, represents value for money and meets the objectives set out in the Town Investment Plan. It was agreed that a further meeting was needed to consider the Business Case further ahead of submission to government.

DS questioned how the CLT would attract further investment and CP explained that whilst it can look at external grant funding, additional private sector investment would be needed.

RA queried what legal structure is being considered and what the current status is with landlords and properties, AR explained that with regards to legal status; this was being looked into however, it will have a charitable aspect to it which will help with future funding opportunities and that there will be discussions with the Charity Commission if the view is that it should be a charity. CP added that seven landlords have been contacted so far for exploratory discussions at this stage.

DS concluded that the business case will be brought back to the Board at a further meeting with information and options for the Board to consider.

5. CLOSE

Actions	Responsibility
Shortlisting and interviews for Chair role	Sub Group
Provide comments or agreement of Governance documents	Board
Update and recirculate Governance Documents - with particular clarity around Board sharing information in the Code of Conduct	LA / Project Team
Schedule a further Board meeting to approve submission of CLT Summary Document on 15 October 2021	LA / Project Team