

Margate Town Deal Board Minutes

- Date:** 11 August, 2020 at 4.00pm
- Venue:** Virtually, via Google Hangout
- Present:** Graham Razey OBE, Cllr Ruth Duckworth, Madeline Homer, Sir Roger Gale MP, David Smith CBE, Lesley Game, Victoria Pomery OBE, Eddie Kemsley, Sam Causer, Lesley White, Richard Ash, Stephen Darrer, Jesse Tomlinson
- In attendance:** Louise Askew, Rebecca Collings, Sarah Wheale-Smith, Charlotte Crowley
- Apologies:** Adam Bryan (for which Rhiannon Mort was substitute), Cheryl Potts

This meeting was held virtually through video conference due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Welcome

The Board has made substantial progress and this meeting is an opportunity to brief Members on the tasks to be completed before the next meeting on the 18th of September.

Previous minutes: they are online and there was no further comment.

2. Vision

- At the previous meeting the Board had a session with a representative of the Towns Fund Delivery Partners to pull together the Board's ideas for a vision. The notes of this will be shared with the Board following this meeting.
- The consultant followed the Board's three key themes and reflected this in a drafted diagram.
- LA asked the Board to give feedback on this document, the Chair suggested the creation of a structured document to be shared widely and to act as a guide for future decision making.
- The #MyTown campaign, set up by the government and run through facebook, shows a number of community suggestions (and opinions). While the majority of the comments are operational and smaller scale ideas, there are a few interesting points raised by the community and the Board should look at this if they have not already. <https://mytown.communities.gov.uk/town/margate/>
- Looking forward, there are a lot of projects that have been submitted so far through the Council website that will have to be narrowed down by the Board, within a tight

timeframe. The community engagement and evidence base will need to be used to narrow down the number of proposals, potentially to three or four strong funding bids.

- This Board will review each project proposal to determine if they fit the necessary criteria as outlined in the government guidance.

3. Introduction to the Towns Fund Delivery Partner Coordinator

Rebecca Collings, the Town Fund Delivery Partner Coordinator was introduced to the Board:

- The Towns Fund Delivery Partner contract has been brought into the Town Deal programme to provide specialised advice to the Boards and to assist in the creation of strong project proposals. The expertise from this organisation will help to submit the Investment Plan and later build the business case.
- This will include connecting with other similar towns and sharing good practice, aiding in meeting the necessary criteria.
- The Town Fund Delivery Partners sit alongside government in this process and with their experience they will be able to give insight into what makes a strong proposal.
- See <https://townsfund.org.uk/> to compare Margate with other towns, as well as providing access to useful data, resources and guidance.
- Learning from the towns who submitted their proposals in the first cohort, they noted four elements key to a strong bid:
 1. It is vital to capture and present Margate's unique identity, making it stand out to individuals who don't know the town, showing an awareness of Margate's strengths and challenges.
 2. The identity, strengths and challenges then need to be backed by strong data and evidence from business and community stakeholders, emphasising why the funding is needed.
 3. A 'Golden Thread', linking Margate's challenges today; the themes this Board wants to focus on; the vision statement, and how this Board wants to see Margate look in the future is vital. A projected end goal is crucial and every stage before that needs to be working towards it.
 4. Strong stakeholder engagement was key to a strong bid - showing that the Board engaged with businesses and communities will give the proposal greater legitimacy. Rebecca identified that this was already being heavily considered by the Margate Town Deal Board.
- The first round of Town Bids are being assessed and any feedback to them will help feed into the Town Deals bids.
- RG questioned the boundary, and how tightly focused we should be. LA responded that we have been advised to stick closely to the permitted boundary and review it later if necessary. The project proposals should be focused on where the challenges and opportunities are.
- The Chair added that we should target where the evidence and data tells us to. We should not spread ourselves too thinly.
- DS added that KCC are used to seeing lots of proposals and questioned what would be the best way to sift through the different proposal ideas in this instance.

- Rebecca Collings explained they have frameworks which can be shared with the Board.
- RA agreed that if the Board were not focused enough this would make the project less meaningful.
- The Chair acknowledged the need for focus in this process and finding a 'Golden Thread' to link the scheme together may be hard. A focused Board and community engagement are vital, but judgement will be needed on these proposals and they must be assessed fairly and transparently. We should expect the decision to be heavily scrutinised.

4. Town Investment Plan Development - plan for the next two months

Louise Askew presented a report to the Board.

- The procurement process has already started, with a deadline of the 27th August.
- If any of the Board members would like to sit on the panel for reviewing the proposals, there have already been plenty of bids received and this will be a thorough role.
- The Chair proposed that three different members sat on this panel compared to those who previously assisted in deciding who to use to conduct the stakeholder engagement exercise.
- Jesse Tomlinson, Stephen Darrer and Lesley Game nominated themselves for this task.
- Working closely to our allotted timescales, the Board, particularly those from KCC, DWP and QEQM, are encouraged to share data about Margate to assist the stakeholder engagement exercise and solidify the vision.
- This data will assist in sifting through the proposals, as will talking more widely with the private sector, and data from other government departments.
- Board members are encouraged to assist at this busy time.
- The Chair thanked Sam Causer, Eddie Kemsley and Stephen Darrer who went through the bids for the stakeholder engagement exercise. There were a lot of strong contenders (25 bids in total) but the panel felt the organisation chosen was best suited to Margate.

5. Stakeholder Engagement Update and Introduction to the appointed consultants

Sarah Wheale-Smith, from Pleydell Smithyman Limited joined the meeting. She has worked on a number of town centre projects with challenges similar to Margate. Their pitch to the selection panel described previous engagement methods and their strategy for Margate. She raised the following points:

- SWS wanted to reinforce the guidance from the government, stressing that community input was vital to give the project a sense of ownership and making it unique to Margate
- There are lots of interesting ideas on the portal. Fundamentally, SWS will aim to engage with the right people, with a focus on the three themes, using appropriate methods and questions.
- The community voice and constructive feedback will influence the Investment Plan, but community engagement beyond this step, throughout the entire process is key. There is a role for the community to play at every stage.

- Margate's identity: should be reflected in the vision, objectives, and the projects. Thinking in terms of 5 years or 10 years time: there will be a consensus from the community about how Margate should look like, past problems that need to be 'fixed' to what our priorities are. We need to work collaboratively.
- LA will send out SWS's contact information to the Board members, who are welcome to share information on behalf of community groups. Information will be supplied to the local press, community organisations and business stakeholders too, to understand the reality of Margate's regeneration needs.
- RG praised the positivity from SWS and noted that while lots of people will say 'things aren't what they used to be', this process will need to include a clear message focusing on the future, not the past, as this is an opportunity to go forward.
- SWS agreed, adding that this Board has a wealth of local experience to add to this process.
- GR agreed with the need to engage with the community throughout, as understanding their priorities will help the process and the proposed changes might not be what they expected.
- SWS stated the importance of a good mix and representation of community views, not just coming from those who speak the loudest.
- LA explained the plan for stakeholder engagement, including involving Margate Councillors, is starting to take place and has the opportunity to be fluid. Sharing information with Sarah and the team will provide structure.

6. Call for projects update

Louise Askew presented this item:

- Around half of the project proposals received so far do not have a substantial amount of information that links to the guidance for proposals.
- It must be stressed that all those proposing ideas must follow the appropriate format to be considered equally. The deadline for submissions is Friday 14th of August at Midday.
- This won't be the last time we engage with those submitting ideas and the ideas don't need to be fully formed, we just want to know about them and will ask for more information from legitimate proposals.
- The criteria does not permit bidding for grant funding for individual businesses at this stage.
- As of this meeting, no members of the public had asked LA for an extension past the deadline.
- GR suggested that new ideas will not be brought to the Board after Friday, unless it has already been brought to a Board member's attention.
- LA mentioned that there could be a lot of projects that won't meet the governments criteria and address the challenges shown by the evidence. This may require a focus on identifying a project that has not yet been put forward.
- The Board is aware the timescales will be tight, but the Chair stressed the need for the Board to be pragmatic and set limitations, with the priority being developing three or four meaningful regeneration project proposals.

- SC questioned if any of the proposals will be under the TDC's umbrella of regeneration schemes, would TDC be pitching through the same process as members of the public - LA confirmed that they would be.
- When questioned whether this would be a conflict of interest regarding TDC's role in this Board, adequate reassurance on this matter was given by the Chair. This Board is not trying to fulfil the role of TDC or KCC, but is trying to bring the authorities and communities together. Transparency in this process is critical to what we do, and we must emphasise that the Board is led by all Members. Creating project proposals that fit the government guidance to eventually be narrowed down to a single Investment Plan is the priority.
- SWS added that moving quickly will benefit the process, as it means the community gets to see the Board's progress as it happens and the process won't seem to drag as much.

Actions	Responsibility
Louise Askew to share the notes from the Vision session with the Board	Louise Askew
Board Members are to give feedback on the vision notes, including thoughts on design, wording, and content (if anything is missing)	ALL
Louise Askew to share the framework/criteria for sifting through the project proposals with the Board	Louise Askew
All Members of the Board are encouraged to make contact with Sarah Wheale-Smith and share any useful information on behalf of community or business stakeholders that may assist in creating Margate's unique identity.	ALL

The budget for the capacity funding was not discussed at the Board, the below provides an update for the Board.

- The total revenue funding that Thanet District Council has been provided for the delivery of the Margate Town Deal Board, development of the Town Investment Plan and the development of government standard business cases for the projects being put forward is £162,019.
- Funding allocated and agreed so far:
 - Stakeholder Engagement = £10,000-£15,000
 - Town Investment Plan Development = £40,000
- It is suggested that £60,000-£75,000 could be required to deliver the Business Case development of the successful projects. This will require specialist consultants to develop the business cases, who will have experience of working to government standard business cases. This may also require some specific project management of this process.