

Margate Town Deal Board Minutes

- Date:** Friday 18 September, 2020
- Venue:** Virtually, via Google Hangout
- Present:** Graham Razey OBE (GR), Cllr Ruth Duckworth (RD), Madeline Homer (MH), David Smith CBE (DS), Cllr Lesley Game (LG), Victoria Pomeroy OBE (VP), Eddie Kemsley (EK), Sam Causer (SC), Richard Ash (RA), Jesse Tomlinson (JT), Rhiannon Mort (RM), Stephen Darrer (SD).
- In attendance:** Louise Askew (LA), Natalie Glover (NG), Iain McNab (IM), James Clapson (JC), Holly Lewis (HL), Amanda Robinson (AR).
- Apologies:** Adam Bryan (for whom Rhiannon Mort was substitute), Sir Roger Gale, Lesley White, Cheryl Potts

1. Welcome

The Chair opened proceedings and welcomed those present.

2. Communications and engagement update

LA provided the Board with an update noting that:

- Sarah Wheale-Smith, from Pleydell Smithyman Limited was unable to attend the Board meeting and provided an update to LA - they had conducted a considerable amount of stakeholder engagement online, through social media and face to face events.
- There were two days left until the 20 Sept deadline for people to get involved.
- 233 people had attended events held digitally and face to face.
- Over 200 applications had been received to sit on the People's Panel.
- Emerging themes from the engagement so far are:
 - Diversifying the economy
 - Support for businesses and empty units
 - Housing
 - Regeneration
 - Creative industries
 - Young people
 - The look and feel of Margate, the seafront and arrival points
 - Specific sites
 - Community cohesion
- There was work to be done to engage more within hard to reach communities.
- Thanks were offered to the Dreamland team for their effort and support in hosting the event.

MH noted that this type of community engagement was a difficult process, however it seemed to have been well conducted.

The Chair added that a huge amount of work had taken place in a short space of time.

RA advised that there had been a lot of comments about cleaning Margate, MH said she would take that information on board.

LG had attended an event at Cliftonville which had been quiet when she was present, those attending would have liked to have seen more Board members at the event.

The Chair clarified that he had decided that only one Board member should be present at each event, as a safety precaution during the covid pandemic. However, the message that the public needed to feel more engaged with the members of the Board was understood.

It was noted that the Board needed to be more public facing than they currently were.

LA had received most of the Board's bios and pictures, although some pictures would need to be resent due to the quality. These will be uploaded online.

3. Budget

LA advised that the budget details had been added to the end of the last meeting's minutes.

- In addition £100 had been spent on a URL and social media activity for the stakeholder engagement promotion. £55,000 has been committed as part of the consultancy services required in developing the Investment Plan. The cost of the business case development work was an estimate because it was dependent on the number of proposals and their complexity.
- It was proposed that there would be further stakeholder engagement costs and this would need to be discussed.
- There may be a need for further funding to develop proposals depending on what proposals are taken forward.

Members of the Board agreed to the proposed budget, and noted that it would need to be flexible as time went on.

MH noted that not all the proposals had the level of detail required to form an investment plan.

RA highlighted that it was important that projects selected to go forward were those with the highest chance of success.

The Chair noted that £75,000 was not a lot of money to develop the business cases. It was also noted that the cost of Thanet District Council (TDC) officer time where supporting the Board should also be accounted for and recognised.

MH advised that TDC officer time was a golden gift as the accountable body to the development of the Town Deal, however the cost could be calculated and recorded.

LA would talk to the Council's finance department to quantify the TDC's contribution.

The Chair added that all the members of the Board were volunteers and had put in a lot of their time. It was important to recognise the time and effort people were putting into the process.

DS highlighted that it was important that the TDC's contribution is identified as support offered with no strings attached.

4. An introduction of the Town Investment Plan Consultants

LA advised that Preston and Newark had put their investment plans online, it was interesting to see what others have done, however there was no feedback available from Cohort 1 submissions or detail on how much money they would get. The Government had advised that they wanted cohort two and three submissions to be more comprehensive as the deadline was further away.

LA offered thanks to SD, LG JT for their time in appointing PRD and 'We Made That' as consultants.

AR from PRD was present on behalf of Chris Paddock, Director for PRD. They have worked a lot in relevant places in the South East (and wider UK), and felt well equipped to take this project on.

HL is an architect and partner at 'We Made That', she had often worked with PRD, and had worked on regeneration projects in town centres and highstreets across the UK.

The Chair advised that a separate meeting would be set up to discuss the Board's priorities, a key element would be to bring the Margate community along on the journey.

DS added that the reason for employing the consultants was to ensure that the most was made out of the opportunity.

Both VP and MH highlighted the need to consider how the world had changed in the last six months, proposals needed to be assessed against the world as it is now and with a mind to future proofing.

5. Town Investment Plan submission

The Chair noted that some Board members had said they felt that the October submission deadline was too challenging, therefore he wished to have a discussion to see what needed to happen before submission could take place.

MH said that her view was that she now felt that a January deadline would be more sensible.

LG noted the need to take the time needed to get the submission right.

EK advised that the community would prefer more of a say in what was going on, so the process should not be rushed.

IM advised that a number of other Boards were looking to move from an October to January submission. It was better not to rush the submission and have it rejected. While January could be the deadline, there was no need to wait for the deadline to submit, and the Government would prefer not to receive everyone's submissions just before the deadline date.

The Board agreed to a January submission deadline with the aim to submit it's chosen proposals in December.

Following a discussion about spending quickly on projects LA advised that following a successful submission of the Investment Plan it was likely that it would be around a year before funding is received.

A discussion was had about the funding allocated to TDC in the recent government announcements for capital projects.

LA advised the Board that the council had been approached by the Government to apply for a grant to fund capital projects, with a tight timescale for turnaround of projects. It was noted that the Board has not been consulted on the project due to the timescales required for delivery.

IM said that all the proposals received from Local Authorities in the South East had been agreed and funding would be issued to TDC by the end of September, official Ministerial letters had not yet been sent out.

MH noted that although the funding was allocated to Town Deal areas, this project was separate from the development of the Town Deal Investment Plan. The Government's aim was to quickly allocate money to help town centres.

The Chair and SC both indicated that it would have been useful to have been advised of this before now, and they highlighted the need to provide clarity and transparency about the project.

LA advised that the Council had not received official confirmation that the bid had been successful, and £750,000 had been allocated. The proposal was for repairs to be made to 53-57 High Street - the former Marks and Spencer site. It would enable the site to be

brought back into use. The Council were not in the position to publicly announce the project until the funds had been received.

6. Project proposals sift

The Chair advised that there had been a total of 94 proposals submitted, although some were duplicated. In the end the Chair and DS assessed 86 separate proposals. While sifting the proposals it was noted that:

- They varied significantly in credibility, content quantity and quality.
- Some smaller proposals of a similar nature, that on their own would be too small, could potentially be combined.
- 47 of the proposals were ruled out at this stage, 39 were possible, of which 16-20 seemed credible.
- A number of the rejected proposals were rejected because they related to revenue projects.
- The intention had been to keep as many of the proposals in the process as possible.
- Feedback would be offered to everyone who submitted a proposal on the basis that they were sifted against the government criteria for the overall scheme.

The Chair suggested that the Board could invite presentations of the proposals to a small group of Board Members in order to give further understanding and answer some questions. One of the key questions could be, 'How do you see your project transforming the area?'

LA highlighted that PRD and We Made That would be looking at all of the projects that got through the first sift to identify opportunities for delivery against the evidence base being gathered, and alongside the information gathered through the stakeholder engagement activity.

LA added that proposals were themed around;

- Specific sites including The Lido, Arlington, The Theatre Royal.
- Some seemed to request business grants, these were offered information about business support.
- The requirement for space - both for enterprise and community.
- Projects along the Cliftonville coastline
- Similar outdoor sport/leisure proposals
- A number of projects in the Westgate-on-Sea area that could potentially involve the Town Council outside of this process.

The Chair requested that a summary table be produced and circulated to the members of the Board.

The Chair noted that the next steps would be challenging as IM had said that he thought an average of seven proposals went forward in the cohort one submissions. A very clear process would be needed for reviewing the proposals in terms of delivery against the criteria.

SC noted that he could use his architectural background to identify where projects could be combined.

The Chair highlighted that some members of the Board may have an vested interest in some of the proposals. It was important that these individuals were kept away from the selection process. He would take advice to establish if it would be appropriate to share the selection matrix with members of the Board.

LA advised that her next steps would be to get PRD and We Made That up and running then she would circulate a summary of the proposals to the Board.

The Chair asked Board members to contact him if they had any questions regarding the filtering that had taken place.

Actions	Responsibility
To publish the Board members' bios and pics online. Picture quality to be checked	NG
TDC's Finance department to quantify the Council's contribution.	NG
Identify whether a separate meeting needs to be arranged for the Board to discuss it's priorities with PRD and We Made That.	LA
Produce and circulate a summary of the proposals to the Board Members	LA