

Margate Town Deal Board Minutes

- Date:** 23 March 2022
- Venue:** Virtually, via Google Hangout
- Present:** Brian Horton, David Smith CBE, Cllr Reece Pugh, Madeline Homer, Sir Roger Gale MP, Adam Bryan, Lesley Game, Eddie Kemsley, Sam Causer, Richard Ash, Stephen Darrer.
- In attendance:** Louise Askew, Natalie Glover, Chris Paddock (PRD Ltd), Sarah Wheale-Smith (PRD Ltd), Jennie Double (Dreamland), Aidan Web (Spider), Clive Morris (Dreamland)
- Apologies:** Jessie Tomlinson, Clarrie Wallis
- Declaration of Interest:** None

1. Welcome

Chair Brian Horton welcomed members of the Board.

2. Actions from Previous Meeting

LA confirmed that the inward investment prospectus that was discussed at the last meeting would be revisited once the Summary Documents had been submitted and feedback has been received from government.

The Winter Gardens Summary Document has been signed off by BH as MTD Chair and MH on behalf of the Accountable Body.

Cllr DCB spoke to James Wraight at KCC about the possibility of 20mph in Cliftonville after the last board meeting. The drafting of a letter from BH to Cllr LG as KCC Chair regarding the possibility of a 20mph zone in Cliftonville is still outstanding and the Project Team will pick this up after the business case submission deadline.

3. People's Panel Update

EK explained that the meeting on 22 March was the first in person Panel meeting, and it was well attended. SC, BH and SD were present from the Board.

The Winter Gardens, Theatre Royal and Destination Dreamland projects were covered and future community engagement was discussed. The projects got some great feedback and comments which will feed into the finalising of the business cases. The future of the Panel was discussed, and it was explained that there will now be a pause on engagement activity to look at the use of the Panel, and wider community engagement during the next phase of the Town Deal (delivery).

LA suggested the Project Team draft an email of thanks to the People's Panel from EK and BH which was agreed as an action.

4. Chair Update

BH recognised the high frequency of Board meetings at present and reassured the Board that it is an exceptional period in relation to the work in the run up to the Business Case Summary Document submission deadline in mid April. He gave thanks to the Board for their time.

5. General Update

LA went through the highlights from the Programme Update Report and explained that business cases continue to be developed, working with PRD Ltd who are working to a 1 April deadline for drafts to be completed. She added that the recruitment drive for Trustees for the Margate Creative Land Trust is being well received with lots of interest. Board members were encouraged to share the opportunity among their networks. LA added that as soon as Strategic Case sections or full Business Cases become ready they have been shared for comment, with no comments received from the Board to date. This process will continue with more business cases being shared with the Board for review w/c 28 March.

LA explained that the Towns Fund Delivery Partners are now able to provide support for towns until July 2022. She confirmed a meeting had been held with Rebecca Collings to understand what support is available which includes relevant training courses for key members of the Project Team and content on the Towns Fund website. LA agreed to share with the Board any relevant information.

As per the earlier update, the Winter Gardens Summary Document has been submitted and LA explained that we now await feedback from government.

6. Community Engagement

SWS provided a recap on the Phase 2 engagement activities including the recent exhibition which was a huge success with almost 400 people attending, and excellent feedback. There will now be a natural pause in engagement, it is great that the community has been engaged during the development of the business cases.

A summary was provided of the feedback received for each of the four Margate Town Deal interventions, and it was highlighted that the community felt they needed more information around the Active Movement and Connections intervention.

SWS explained that in future engagement it will be important to; keep reminding people what the Town Deal set out to do in the Town Investment Plan, have a 'you said, we did' page on the website and that the Board needs to explore options for collaboration.

SWS explained that she has put together an Engagement and Communication Plan for businesses and highlighted that it has been difficult to engage businesses to date. The Board needs to have a more robust strategy for engaging businesses moving forward. A Business Engagement and Communication Plan will be shared with the Board for review and consideration which includes recommendations and suggestions for future engagement. SWS also suggested looking at how businesses can get actively involved with the Board and projects. The community is keen that procurement opportunities are offered to local businesses and the People's Panel wanted continued community engagement to be a priority of the Board.

MH suggested a conversation with the People's Panel to look at changing public behaviour around littering, try and tackle public behaviour to help deliver sustainable projects. SWS agreed that this would not need to be exclusive to the funded projects, it would be good to engage and address on a broader level.

MH confirmed that the Council are looking to work closely with Kent County Council about parking strategy in the town centres. SWS suggested it would be helpful to ensure messages about how other work such as this is linked with/supports the delivery of the Town Deal.

EK explained that it was made clear at the Panel meeting that there is no resource to continue engagement at the current level, and clear that the current engagement hasn't penetrated the community as much as it was wanted to. She urged the Board to consider how the Board can continue and improve community engagement throughout delivery.

MH added that the Board needed to be creative to find a solution, and gave mention to the Shared Prosperity Fund which may provide opportunities in future, however the details of this are unknown.

LA explained that there had been some comments linked to the Scaling Margate's Creative Production and Skills as 'not another art gallery', and in response the Project Team will put a definition on what was meant by 'creative industry' on the website.

Consideration needs to be given to gentrification, how to ensure the participation and engagement across the community so everyone feels there are opportunities that they can be part of.

More information explaining the Active Movement and Connections intervention will need to be published online, and there will be public consultation around the various highway projects.

Details of how businesses can be part of the procurement process will need to be online.

RA suggested that recycling should be included in the public realm projects to which MH agreed that recycling is a challenge, however, the Council is conscious of this requirement and the MTD will need to address environmental impact. SC noted that in Europe shops provide a return service, rather than recycling.

BH acknowledged that SWS's appointment now comes to an end, and recognised the challenges with the impact of the pandemic, however noted how impressed the Board were with the engagement undertaken. LA added that SWS has made an excellent member of the broader MTDB team, bringing capacity and skills that were needed and added thanks from a Programme Management perspective, particularly as the Margate Town Deal was praised by government for the level of engagement. SWS commended the board for investing in engagement activity which has been more than ticking a box exercise.

7. Business Case: Destination Dreamland

JD highlighted that the Town Investment Plan identified that it wanted to develop high impact and surprising activities through Dreamland. Phase 1 focuses on the sea front to convert what is currently a derelict building, and the ground floor is to provide a new culture centre and a cafe. The intention is to join up the seafront from the train station to Dreamland, 365 days a year in line with the MTD Vision.

JD added that in order to attract private investment, there needs to be core infrastructure, and an expensive refurb for modern day use. The idea is to offer a consumer space on the first floor which is as flexible as possible to future proof it. Public perception is that Dreamland is closed out of season, by reimagining and opening up the shop front on the seafront will create an economic opportunity for Margate all year round.

JD informed that there is a significant amount of asbestos in the building to be removed. JD provided some concepts for the use of the Sunshine Cafe and confirmed that the Bali Hai space, populated by People Dem Collective will provide a large multi purpose space that could be a visitor attraction in its own right.

AW, the Project Manager from Spider, detailed their track record/past experience and provided an overview of the approach that Spider would be taking.

A review of the estimated costs has been undertaken. The original budget was £8m, and it is felt that the core spaces of the project can be afforded within that budget.

The strategy will be to target the street activation and space at the front of the building, then move into the rest of the building as the budget allows.

AW confirmed they are on track to complete the business case for submission in April. The plan is to then start the design of the project in July 2022 when funding becomes available, prioritising the space for People Dem Collective.

It was confirmed that the procurement procedure will align with the Council CSO/Procurement rules.

RG stated that this is potentially a very exciting project, but raised points around the £8m needed for phase 1 of the project, and asked how much were the People Dem Collective contributing? What will the frontage be like? Where is the further investment expected to come from for the rest of the building to be reimaged?

JD explained that there is interest from investors and that they are having credible conversations with operators for the cinema and bingo hall, but they need to see if the building is ready for them. They will not invest in core infrastructure. There is a significant active interest, and planning permission for the nearby hotel, however the active frontage is needed to leverage in the commitment from investors.

People Dem Collective have their own fundraising strategy, initially they have identified £200k match funding.

SC asked what the long term use is for the ground floor, as opposed to the short term which has been explained, with People Dem Collective having a meanwhile space.

EK explained that Dreamland have been working with People Dem Collective since their conception and that there is potential for them to occupy the space for longer, although at the moment they are keen to build their own space. She added that Dreamland is in talks with the Council about potentially providing a tourist information centre as a first point of contact for people arriving by train. It was confirmed that future proofing the space is detailed in the business case.

BH gave thanks to EK, JD and the team for their work on the business case, and the presentation.

8. Business Case development update

CP provided an update on all other business cases; Coastal Wellbeing, Active Movement and Connections and the Theatre Royal which are nearly completed and to be shared with the Board in the coming week or two for review.

It was confirmed that within each of the Coastal Wellbeing projects there was match funding / additional investment and that the Skatepark are looking at ways to attract further funding.

For GRASS the Town Deal gives certainty of investment, which enables them to lever in more money which is a big part of their business plan.

Walpole Bay is more difficult to attract match funding as its new and untested, a cafe features within the proposal as a revenue generator for the bay, but will not be sufficient to cover the costs, which is the rationale behind some form of beach huts or accommodation to sit alongside the cafe. This will be outlined in the business case.

The Active Movement and Connections business case is near completion, awaiting final costs for the agreed short list of projects.

The Theatre Royal Strategic case has been written and shared with SC, it will be shared with the wider Board alongside the Theatre Royal stakeholder group who will be invited to comment. CP confirmed that conversations are taking place with London Tavern about 19 Hawley Square to bring additional investment and help provide commercial viability. These discussions are ongoing.

CP closed by confirming that the Project Team is on track to complete all business cases by 1 April (internal deadline), ahead of submission to government.

RG noted that it appears that the investments are trying to create an arts and cafe culture and works quite well. He added that there is a desire to see something well funded and well realised that does not become a revenue burden on the local authority, and there needs to be commercial investment in the projects.

CP explained that the team have made the projects more commercially orientated in response to the Boards previous comments.

SC suggested the Project Team look at wider economic models, such as the investment into tourism in the area which would be good to include in the business plan.

CP confirmed that the business case does cover the wider economic impact of the projects although sometimes it can be hard to quantify.

LA added that new government guidance relating to health and wellbeing brings a whole set of new guidance that has been considered through the development of the business cases.

In relation to the skatepark project, the business cases will recognise that both indoor and outdoor skateparks can work simultaneously, and if the area becomes known for skateboarding facilities if the area gets known for skating could benefit both it can help grow the market share for everyone.

LA explained that the Board will reconvene on 7 April to talk through the business cases which will be shared in advance for review. The business case documents will be accompanied by the review criteria to enable board members to check that they are inline with the objectives set out in the Town Investment Plan. The Board will be expected to consider any risks not picked up in the business cases.

Meeting closed at 16:00

Actions	Responsibility	
Board Members to make videos with Thanet District Council's Communications team to raise the public profile of the Board.	LA/ Board	Ongoing
Board Members to advise NG if they have skills to help bring projects forward.	Board	Ongoing
Inward Investment Prospectus - request opinions and information needed from the Board (top 10)	LA	After submission of business case Summary Documents
Share business case content and Strategic Cases with the Board as they become available	LA/NG	March / April
Send an email of thanks to the People's Panel on behalf of EK and BH	NG	March
Share the Business Engagement and Communication Plan with the Board	NG	March
Update the Margate Town Deal website in relation to the broader creative sector	NG	March
Draft letter from BH to Cllr LG (as Chair) regarding 20mph zone	NG	April - after submission of business case Summary Documents