

**Towns Fund Board**  
**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 1pm via Teams**

**Present:**

Chris Cooke - Mayor of Middlesbrough  
Clive Heaphy - Middlesbrough Council Chief Executive  
Adam Suleiman – Cities and Local Growth Unit  
Simon Clarke - Member of Parliament for Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland  
Zoe Lewis – Middlesbrough College  
Chris Smith – Thirteen Group  
Rachel Anderson - Assistant director of Policy NECC  
Mark Fenwick – Arriva  
Marc Anderson – Cleveland Police

**In attendance**

Richard Horniman – Director of Regeneration  
Sam Gilmore - Head of Economic Growth and Infrastructure MBC  
Louise Antill - Towns Fund Programme Manager  
Bill Vince – Arts Council

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Election of a temporary Chairperson</b></p> <p>Clive Heaphy opened the meeting as the last meeting was Chaired by the previous Mayor of Middlesbrough and a new Mayor has been elected. To explicitly comply with the constitution of the board, nominations were sought for a temporary Chair.</p> <p>Mayor Chris Cooke was nominated as temporary Chair and the Board agreed he chair the meeting.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p>Apologies and declarations of interest</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Andy McDonald - Member of Parliament for Middlesbrough Thomas Smith – Community Rep Gary McDonald – TVCA Laura Sillars - Dean of mima School of Art &amp; Design Teesside University</p> <p>Meeting was quorate.</p> <p><b>Declarations of Interest:</b> Chris Smith declared an interested in any decisions relating to Gresham.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Minutes from previous meeting</b></p> <p>Minutes were agreed as a true record.</p>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Programme update and Progress Report</b></p> <p>LA shared a progress monitoring update for the overall programme and provided information on each project:</p>

**Urban Living** - Programme to be realigned to address current need in Middlesbrough and maximise the grant, whilst not overlapping with the plans of the Mayoral Development Corporation

**Middlesbrough Experience - Nature Reserve** – Project complete.

**Ward Initiatives** – Completed Projects: Fairy Dell boardwalk, Bonnygrove Park and Marton West Beck, upgrade of Easterside play park (MUGA), new children's play area at Newham Way, footpath along Cypress Road, Glebe Road Park/ Newport - new play area / upgrade, refresh of 22 existing play parks across the town, planters across district centres and communities across the town, fencing of Albert Park bowls and croquet greens, Thorntree Park lighting, Thorntree and Pallister Parks – refurbishment, upgrades to current garden at Trinity Methodist Church, Whinney Banks to turn it into a community growing garden, upgrades to current garden at Trinity Church North Ormesby to turn it into a community growing garden, upgrades to Bexley Gardens Allotment – Easterside and new community growing garden at Grove Hill Hub - Bishopton Road.

New play park at Marton Manor / Tollesby - Proposal developed, Cllr Grainge conducted residents' consultation and residents were opposed to a new play area in this location - scheme not going ahead.

New play area and community growing garden at Thorntree Shops - Formal outcome of Planning application received on 16th October (following review at Planning Committee on 12th October) which declined / rejected the application for the play area in the location of Millbrook Avenue. Currently awaiting guidance regarding next steps for this scheme.

Pallister Park - refurbishment of MUGA - the budget for this scheme has been included in a bid to the Football Foundation as match funding for investment in wider play park improvements across the town – the bid has been submitted and the Football Foundation have approved the application to the next stage. The team have now proceeded to the 'Narrowing the Focus' stage which involves community engagement and the final confirmation regarding whether or not the funding bid has been successful is expected in approximately July / August 2024.

New community growing garden at Nunthorpe's new Community Centre - no progress made on this scheme to date - this is dependent upon the development of the new Community Centre (where the garden is intended to be located) - this is tied up in the wider Nunthorpe development proposal with developers. The current estimate for completion of the community centre / garden is May 2025.

**Community Hubs - Southlands Centre** - The proposed scheme was dependent upon a successful bid to the Football Foundation to contribute towards the delivery of the additional sporting elements identified to meet Sport England amended condition for Marton Avenue.

A new planning application was developed and approved on 22nd March 2023. At the same time officers engaged with a consultant commissioned to support with the bid to the Football Foundation. Unfortunately, the consultant identified a lack of demand for the proposed new 3g pitch and that any bid to the Football Foundation would likely be unsuccessful.

	<p>In the absence of access to Football Foundation funding and the increased costs identified through the tender process a new approach was proposed. The new approach would look to revert to the original Marton Avenue planning condition, and to deliver the new Community Facility to the west of the site, removing the requirement for Football Foundation funding. Before this new approach could be formally presented to Executive for approval, a new potential partner approached the Council seeking to utilise the site to relocate their base to the Southlands site.</p> <p>The proposal from the partner will look to deliver all elements within the amended condition for Marton Avenue and reopen the potential for attracting additional funding from the Football Foundation. Sport England have advised in principle they would be in support of this approach, and it would meet requirements needed to discharge the Marton Avenue. Initial concept designs have been developed and a cost of delivery has been estimated. These have been shared with the potential partner. Once the strategic direction is formally confirmed and partners confirmed commitment to the scheme, a change control will be submitted.</p> <p><b>Nunthorpe Community Centre</b> - Location is now confirmed to be on the site of Nunthorpe Grange, adjacent to the new Medical Centre. Design Services are currently developing the concept designs allowing officers to seek expressions of interests for a management organisation. Designs expected to be complete by end of October.</p> <p><b>Building a Knowledge Economy</b> - The first college project funded by the Towns Fund completed in April 2022 and has allowed 1682 new enrolments.</p> <p>The TTE Build project commenced the construction phase in March 2023 and is progressing in accordance with the planned schedule, the impact of this project will be seen in student enrolments and subsequent achievements from the 2024/25 academic year onwards.</p> <p><b>ZL</b> – explained that the Amber RAG rating for the TTE scheme was due to the project still requiring confirmation of IGF funding. SG to contact TVCA for an update.</p> <p><b>Enterprise Infrastructure</b> - Centre Square 6 is now complete, with AXA insurance renting the majority of the building and employing 525 staff. Interest has been showed in the remaining space but not let to date.</p> <p><b>Historic Buildings</b> - A tenant has been selected to take a long lease on the building.</p> <p>The Heritage Lottery Fund have confirmed that Middlesbrough's Stage 1 application has been successful. The Authority will receive £229,737 grant from the NHLF to develop the Stage 2 bid, utilising £25,526 of Town's Fund money. The Stage 2 bid is scheduled to be submitted in May 2024, and will be subject to a competitive process, with a determination anticipated later that summer.</p>
5.	<p><b>Project Adjustment Request – Urban Living</b></p> <p>SG – Presented a paper to request changes to the structure of the Urban Living Programme. The need to make amendments is due to several reasons including the rising level of inflation and issues such as Nutrient Neutrality which have created pressure on the Urban Living project in terms of timescales for delivery and the demand for town centre living. It is therefore necessary to reshape the programme to align more effectively with local need. At</p>

	<p>the time of application, the impacts of covid had not been realised, nor had the cost-of-living crisis or the impact of the mini budget on the housing market. The proposed changes have been designed to ensure the outputs are still achieved and current housing needs are addressed.</p> <p>The proposal has been screened by colleagues in DLUHC and is permissible. The funding contribution to Newham Hall will allow the achievement of outputs within the timescales of the Towns Fund programme whilst allowing flexibility to support social housing issues in the short term, thus improving life chances.</p> <p>CC- would like to focus efforts to the west of Princes Road, with the aim of tackling a street at a time.</p> <p>CH – asked if revenue implications had been considered.</p> <p>SG – confirmed that revenue implications had been considered and detailed information would be provided at the Business Case stage.</p> <p>The Board agreed the content of the PAR and that it could be submitted to DLUHC.</p>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Town Deal Board Terms of Reference Renewal</b></p> <p>SG-presented a paper detailing the role of the Town Deal Board to ensuring relevance in the long term. Going forward the Board will still require a representative of the private sector; will provide a monitoring and evaluation role and will advise the policy framework for Middlesbrough’s economic growth. Ideally, the group will advise the strategic plan for the area as a co-designed local strategy framework which will pre-emptively inform bids to major national, and sub-regionally devolved, funding programmes.</p> <p>The Board will have a more limited membership to make it more streamlined to carry out this strategic role.</p> <p>CS – endorsed the proposal, as it is important for the Board to understand what has been achieved and what lessons can be learned going forward.</p> <p>SC – agreed that it is important to satisfy ourselves on the success of the Board, understand how we benchmark Towns Fund activity and the impact it has had.</p> <p>AS – informed the Board that DLUHC had some work to do with regard assessing the success of all Town Deal areas and that TVCA hold data on a local and regional level that could be used in assessing the work of Middlesbrough’s Board.</p> <p>The Board agreed the proposed renewal.</p>
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>Membership and Constitution Renewal</b></p> <p>SG – informed the Board that there will be no fundamental change to the Board’s constitution and quarterly meetings would resume in the new year.</p>

<b>8.</b>	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>An underspend has occurred on the Ward Initiatives scheme due to some projects costing less than estimated and another not going ahead due to planning issues. It is therefore suggested that the remaining funding be utilised by Newham Grange Farm and the events team. As per the original executive report any delegated decisions on the scheme can be agreed by the Director of Regeneration and the Director of Environment and Commercial Services.</p> <p>MA – going forward any issues with planning and anti-social behaviour can be directed to Cleveland Police’s Architect Liaison Officer.</p> <p>SC – asked if prior to the next meeting, that the Board have a tour of the sites of completed projects. SG – to arrange.</p>
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting</b></p> <p>February 24 date to be confirmed.</p>