

Town Deal Board Workshop – 24 July 2020

Present:

Ivan Annibal (Rose Regeneration), James Baty (Lincolnshire County Council), Jacqui Bunce (NHS Lincolnshire), Councillor Richard Davies (Lincolnshire County Council), Kate Ellis (City of Lincoln Council), Nicole Hilton (Lincolnshire County Council), Marc Jones (Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire), Caroline Killeavy (YMCA), Mick Lazarus (Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government), David Lewis (Siemens), Ursula Lidbetter (Lincolnshire Co-operative), Sarah Loftus (Lincoln Business Improvement Group), Karl McCartney (Member of Parliament for Lincoln), Councillor Ric Metcalfe (City of Lincoln Council), Peter Neil (Bishop Grosseteste University), Brendan Rowan (BluSpecs), Liz Prince (University of Lincoln), Leo Scott-Smith (Tended), Andrew Stevenson (University of Lincoln), Tanya Suarez (BluSpecs), Edward Strange (Brewin Dolphin), Jo Walker (City of Lincoln Council) and Gill Wilson (City of Lincoln Council).

1) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Angela Andrews (City of Lincoln Council), Ruth Carver (Lincolnshire County Council), Lord Cormack (House of Lords), Pete Holmes (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Standards), Mark Speed (Siemens), Mary Stuart (University of Lincoln) and representatives from RAF Waddington.

2) Town Deal Board Workshop – Overview

The Town Deal Board Workshop sought to provide clarification of further guidance associated with the submission of a Town Deal proposal and provided members of the Board with an opportunity to agree a vision for the Lincoln Town Deal, together with a portfolio of projects that could be further developed and appraised.

3) Town Fund: Further Guidance

Jo Walker provided those present with an overview of further guidance that had been published in respect of the Towns Fund. Key points were noted as follows:

- of the funding allocation, 90% would equate to capital funding up to £25 million (or over in exceptional circumstances);
- alignment with wider funds would need to be demonstrated, such as co-funding, match funding and private sector investment;
- interventions and intended outputs 'in scope' included:
 - local transport;
 - digital connectivity;
 - urban regeneration;
 - arts, culture and heritage;
 - skills infrastructure;
 - enterprise infrastructure.

- submission of the Lincoln Town Deal application was proposed for October 2020. This would be followed by the government's two stage review and subsequent agreement of heads of terms or an opportunity to resubmit proposals should the required standards not have been met;
- should heads of terms be agreed, up to twelve months would be allocated for project development.

In order to facilitate the submission of an application in October 2020, it was necessary to agree a vision and priorities for the Lincoln Town Deal. A historic masterplan for the city of Lincoln had been used as a basis for a proposed vision was noted as being to achieve sustainable growth and secure a city that was:

- dynamic, resilient, inclusive and carbon neutral;
- an attractive, vibrant centre of connectivity, creativity and innovation;
- renowned for its culture, heritage, learning and special character;
- a city for growth, through sustainable urban extensions and urban regeneration;
- a green and healthy city with a holistic approach to the urban eco-system and with sustainable sources of energy;
- a place of advanced social progress and with a high degree of social cohesion; a city of cultural, generational and ethnic diversity;
- a city with governance systems capable of building shared visions and reconciling competing objectives.

This had been developed based on a principle of sustainable growth through the development of sustainable neighbourhoods supported by a strong city centre with the following component parts:

- cultural quarter;
- civic quarter;
- waterfront;
- university quarter;
- retail quarter;
- Saint Mark's shopping centre;
- transport hub.

Further to the February meeting of the Town Deal Board, emerging priorities and a vision for the Lincoln Town Deal were noted as follows:

- digital as a central theme, with transport interventions and skills as key priorities;
- a world class heritage city with a diverse and dynamic economy; where harnessing the power of digitalisation would drive investment, innovation and productivity raising the quality of life for all and securing Lincoln's future as a successful and sustainable city;

- overarching concept of the Lincoln Living Lab where organisations could collaborate, co-design and test to enable smart growth;
- key delivery areas being:
 - digital connectivity;
 - transport connectivity;
 - skills;
 - urban regeneration.

A technological strategy had been developed to support growth in Lincoln, consisting of the following:

- the strategy followed an early vision responding to evidence base and consultation findings and a priority focus on digital and technology and had been developed to support a transformational growth strategy;
- it would drive Lincoln's transition to a city that embraced the opportunities presented by the digital economy through a balanced portfolio of pilot actions that could be deployed, evaluated for impact and scaled to underpin renewal and sustainable growth, built around the framework of a Living Lab;
- project proposals that had been submitted by partners in March and incorporated into a technological framework.

It was noted that no projects had been excluded at this stage and that there would be an opportunity to review project proposals to fit with the Town Fund, spatial strategy and wider growth objectives.

Taking into account the above, the proposed vision for the Lincoln Town Deal was put forward as follows:

“A world class heritage city, which has embraced the opportunities presented by the digital economy to drive investment, innovation and productivity, creating opportunities for all, attracting new talent and securing Lincoln's future as a dynamic, sustainable and inclusive place.”

Alongside the proposed vision were the following proposed outcomes:

- **Digital Connectivity:** building on Lincoln's strength as a centre for learning and research, the city will promote and enable a tech-friendly environment, supporting the growth of the digital sector and the use of digital technology;
- **Transport Connectivity:** the delivery of a Sustainable Transport Strategy will enable efficient movement and improved connectivity through investment in infrastructure, improved accessibility and the use of smart technologies;
- **Skills:** investment in training will be tailored to raise the skills levels of SMEs and citizens, building in resilience in the transition to the new digital economy and enabling them to benefit from the opportunities it can bring;
- **Urban Regeneration, Arts, Heritage and Culture and Enterprise Infrastructure:** Lincoln will realise its potential as a dynamic and contemporary Cathedral city

through effective digital promotion and investment in key cultural, leisure and heritage assets. The regeneration of strategic sites will further strengthen the urban core through the development of high quality, sustainable workspace and city living, ensuring the long-term resilience and vibrancy of the city centre.

A summary of strategic projects and how they had been aligned to each outcome was presented to those present which would be the focus of separate discussion sessions later at this workshop.

A questionnaire had been submitted to members of the Town Deal Board prior to the commencement of this workshop session which provided an opportunity to review the proposed vision and objectives and outline how relevant, complete and feasible they were. An overview of the thirteen responses to this questionnaire was presented which indicated high levels of agreement across the Board.

It was RESOLVED that the vision and outcomes be agreed, subject to any further refinement that may be necessary as the development of specific projects developed.

4) Breakout Group Sessions

Each member of the Board had been assigned to one of four breakout group sessions to consider the projects that had been assigned to each respective Town Deal outcome. Projects were considered on an impact versus effort basis, using a scale of 1 to 5 to rank each particular project. This was then used to focus discussions using a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) against each of the projects. A summary of the feedback provided after each session was noted as follows, with full details of the workshop included in a separate document which would be circulated to all members of the Board:

Digital Connectivity

The LSIP scale-up and Boolean Hub was considered high on impact but relatively low on effort as there was a very high desire for this 'grow-on' space in Lincoln, with businesses having to move outside of the city if they wanted to scale up. A lot of planning was already in place to support this particular project so it was perhaps just a capital project that required investment.

The Govtech Accelerator project required medium effort but realised quite high impact as it would help digitalise organisations such as the City Council and familiarise it with a lot of the opportunities that may be available and help to bring in different start-ups and technological companies from outside of the city and county and help them stay in the city. This project was considered to be relatively low cost.

The Lincoln Living Lab was considered high in terms of impact and effort, with the vision for this particular project being that it had an overarching umbrella which influenced or fed into the delivery of other projects in not only the digital connectivity

outcome but other Town Deal outcomes. It could be key in creating businesses, helping to drive skills jobs and innovation.

The Open Data project was considered very low on impact but very high on effort and involved sharing Council data with other companies and agencies to see if this could be utilised. There were lots of issues around GDPR and how easy it would be to access and use data and establishing how valuable that would actually be. Further, as a revenue project, this would be more difficult to fit with the Town Deal criteria.

The Knowledge Venture project was considered to have a medium impact with relatively high effort. Whilst it was thought that the sharing of digital skills with SMEs would have a reasonable amount of impact it was considered that there were a lot of traditional businesses within the city and as a result it may be quite challenging to convince them to adopt these new technologies. In addition, the issue of revenue funding could be problematic in terms of the fit with the Town Deal criteria as part of the revised guidance.

The Digital Narratives project was considered reasonably medium to low on impact and effort. This was not much of an infrastructure project and was more about the wider marketing of the city and driving people to want to live and work in the city. Although it was agreed that this would be a valuable thing to do, it was difficult to justify how this could fit into the Town Deal.

Transport Connectivity

The Sincil Bank Green Corridor project was considered high in impact and low in effort, which would see more interaction with the High Street and included a range of benefits such as making the area more accessible, encouraging more walking and cycling, creating environmental synergies and linkages to the Lincoln City Football Club Stadium and Community Redevelopment project. This was one of the most deprived areas of the city, so the project had obvious benefits in that respect and it would also link into the City Centre Masterplan and Lincolnshire Transport Plan.

The Wigford Way and St Mary's Street project was considered equally high in impact and low in effort, improving place setting, air quality, travel modes, improved access, low carbon, modal shift, footfall, public realm, walking, cycling and connectivity to the Brayford and High Street. This project, as with the Sincil Bank Green Corridor project, would link into the City Centre Masterplan and Lincolnshire Transport Plan.

The Intelligent Data project was considered low in impact and relatively high in effort, with a significant emphasis within the project on gathering data. This data may be of use in future years, but in order to be most effective it would require investment at the outset with very little initial impact on the ground in terms of transport and subsequent investment to gain further impact to realise improvements.

The A15 Broadgate Corridor project consisted of a much bigger investment and there would be a fair amount of impact, but with very high effort. The timeframe for delivery was the critical consideration, with the Monks Road regeneration and access into the city being key components, together with the impact on access to Siemens and the College's proposals under urban regeneration. The improvement of the east/west connectivity of the city was also an important benefit of the project, but it was emphasised that delivery would require high levels of effort compared to the other projects within the transport connectivity outcome.

A wider questions was considered around the specific amount sought to be invested in each outcome in terms of for example, how much should be invested in transport and how much should be invested in digital. In addition, whether there were any linkages or leverages between projects.

A very recent expression of interest had been received in relation to Lincoln Railway Station and the existing pedestrian bridge. It was noted that this project would be considered in due course.

There was potentially an opportunity to consider opportunities in relation to investment in e-scooters, which had now been legalised in the UK, with companies seeking areas to undertake trials. It was accepted that this may not fit into the Town Deal as there were no infrastructure considerations, however, it would be worth exploring further whether as part of the Town Deal or via other avenues.

Skills

The Hospitality Events and Tourism Institute project was considered as high impact with low effort which supported an industry which suffered quite severely as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, with opportunities to support the workforce and do something innovative with them.

The Health and Wellbeing Centre project, being developed by Lincoln College, was considered relatively low on effort but high in terms of impact. It would be located in Monks Road and would provide mental health support as well as provide support to the local community which, given that this particular area was a deprived area of the city, was considered to be very important. The issue of whether this project would fit with the Town Deal criteria was raised. It was noted that this would need to be considered in working up the proposal.

The Lincoln City Football Club Stadium and Community Redevelopment project was considered scored medium to high in terms of impact and medium for effort. It was agreed that this was important in respect of its role and link with development of the Sincil Bank community and the increase growth and a focus on education using a digital platform. It was felt, however, that the outcomes of the project could have been made clearer in respect of its benefits and fit with the Town Deal criteria.

The Construction and Skills project was considered medium for effort and medium to low for impact. This consisted of building a facility for teaching construction skills, which was already taking place within Lincoln College. It was therefore unclear as to the level of additional work that would be created as a result of including this project as part of the Town Deal.

The group discussed the fact that there were only four projects included as part of the skills outcome and whether that in itself was cause for concern. It was agreed, however, that with the Town Fund being more focussed on capital initiatives, projects under the skills category from a Town Deal perspective tended to be more focussed on the facilities for delivery of teaching the skills, rather than skills delivery itself.

It was also agreed that the sector focus of the projects was perhaps not completely reflective of the broader Local Enterprise Partnership priority sectors, with some skills related projects perhaps featuring as part of the digital connectivity outcome.

Urban Regeneration

Projects that could make a significant impact but required a relative amount of effort were noted as:

- Tentercroft Street – a housing scheme with a live work project and commercial space associated with it;
- the Hive redevelopment of the former Police Station on West Parade and the creation of a live work concept for 100 people in starter homes for post Covid-19 key workers;
- Barbican Production and Maker Hub – a scheme at the very early stages of development.

A cluster of projects had also been assessed as requiring less effort but also gaining relatively high levels of impact, noted as:

- Lincoln Central Market and its key link to the Cornhill and broad regeneration impacts;
- Lincoln Creates and potential connectivity to the Maker Hub with an art and sculpture focus;
- Lincoln Drill Hall development and Lincoln College investment, helping make this more sustainable in keeping with the health and wellbeing agenda and linkages to learning and skills;
- Light Up Lincoln – a capital project based on experience in other settings in Europe.

It was agreed that there may be joint pieces of work from an art and culture perspective in relation to a number of these projects under the urban development outcome, so it was considered whether a sub-group should be established to consider these.

The group did not have sufficient time to consider some of the revenue based projects and initiatives, however, those listed above were considered to have the greatest potential impact, with lots of connectivity emerging between projects.

5) Conclusion of Breakout Group Sessions

It was reported that the workshop had been extremely useful in terms of identifying those projects that were likely to have the greatest impact as part of the Town Investment Plan. The next stage would be to undertake an assessment in more detail of these projects, particularly whether they were in scope, in liaison with an allocated Town Fund Co-ordinator from the Government who could provide further advice in that respect.

In terms of working up these projects, a template and the publication of further guidance would assist the facilitation of this and partners would be invited to complete the information required to ensure that those projects that were within scope were at a level where they could be assessed independently in terms of their merits, alignment with the Town Fund and benefit cost ratio.

It was acknowledged that the funding allocation was considerably higher at this stage for transport projects than it was for others such as skills, which reflected the capital and infrastructure element of the respective projects. During discussion it was noted that delivery, from the Government's perspective, was key and that projects needed to be properly worked up prioritised against the Government's criteria and what it expected would be delivered. It was therefore essential that assessment regarding whether or not projects were in scope, as set out above, was undertaken in order that the Board could be sure that those projects identified as priorities were deliverable and would provide outcomes in keep with what the Government expected. It was noted that this work would commence immediately.

A further piece of work in respect of skills would be undertaken to join up some of those gaps that had been identified as part of the workshop, seeking to pull partners together and build a more coherent package of projects.

6) Accelerated Project Proposals

It was reported that an additional £1 million on top of the Town Fund was availability to facilitate the delivery of accelerated projects by the end of March 2021.

Details of a possible project for this funding were set out in the report circulated to members of the Board prior to the workshop.

Cornhill West had been allocated as a key strategic site from the perspective of the Public Realm Strategy, Transport Strategy and the market and city square regeneration scheme. In terms of outputs, the project would deliver a quality square with materials and design aligned to the already delivered Cornhill East regeneration

and would improve the setting of a listed building, the Corn Exchange which was situated within the Heritage Action Zone. The proposal would also provide a flexible event space and offer improved seating in the area, enabling a change of emphasis allowing it to be redesigned with the Central Market Scheme proposal. This project could achieve the required expenditure within the timescale set out by Government for an accelerated project and could be delivered with this funding.

It was RESOLVED that the Cornhill West project be approved as an accelerated project for the city of Lincoln.