

Present: Mary Stuart (University of Lincoln) *in the Chair*, Angela Andrews (City of Lincoln Council), Jacqui Bunce (NHS Lincolnshire), Charlotte Goy (Visit Lincoln), Gary Headland (Lincoln College), Nicole Hilton (Lincolnshire County Council), Valerie Johnson (St Mark's Retail Centre), Marc Jones (Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner), David Lewis (Siemens Energy), Ursula Lidbetter (Lincolnshire Cooperative Society), Karl McCartney (Member of Parliament for Lincoln), Councillor Ric Metcalfe (City of Lincoln Council), Leo Scott Smith (Tended), Liam Scully (Lincoln City Football Club), Edward Strange (Brewin Dolphin) and Nick Worboys (Longhurst Group).

Also in Attendance: James Baty (Lincolnshire County Council), Kate Ellis (City of Lincoln Council), Peter Holmes (Cities and Local Growth Unit at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Standards and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government), Mick Lazarus (Cities and Local Growth Unit at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Standards and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government), Becky Scott (City of Lincoln Council) and Jo Walker (City of Lincoln Council).

48. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Lord Cormack (House of Lords); Councillor Richard Davies (Lincolnshire County Council); Peter Neil (Bishop Grosseteste University); Caroline Killeavy (YMCA Lincolnshire); Group Captain Stephen Kilvington (RAF Waddington); and John Latham (University of Lincoln).

49. Minutes of Previous Meeting - 9 April 2021

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 April 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

50. Terms of Reference, Register of Interests and Voting Process

An advice note presented by Becky Scott (Legal Services Manager, City of Lincoln Council) on interests for members of the Board was presented to the Board which would support a robust decision-making process. Members of the Board, who had not done so, were requested to complete their declaration of interest form as soon as possible. All members of the Board were reminded to declare any future interests as they arose. As advised in the note, where members of the Board had a personal interest, which was likely to become pecuniary, they were advised to withdraw from the meeting. All declarations made would be recorded in the Board's minutes. No queries were raised in relation to the advice note.

A report was presented by Jo Walker (Assistant Director of Growth, City of Lincoln Council), which invited the Board to consider revisions to the Board's terms of reference. These related to the quorum for a meeting; and the decision-making process, including pecuniary interests, details of which were included in the report. It was also highlighted that a list of voting members had been included in the terms of reference. The redrafted clauses would reflect the Board's developing role in the management and delivery of a programme of projects. Mick Lazarus and Pete Holmes, the representatives of the Cities and Local Growth Unit at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Standards and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, indicated their support for the proposed revisions, as well as the previous decision by the Board to commission an independent assessment to support the Board's decision making. This rigorous approach to decision making would be welcomed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

In relation to page 18 of the report, which listed the Board's voting membership, it was noted that that David Lewis was the representative from Siemens Energy and requested the name of the company be amended and that a correction be made to the spelling of Nick Worboy's surname.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the advice note on interests for members of the Lincoln Town Deal Board be noted.
- (2) That the list of voting members, as set out on page 18 of the report, be amended to reflect the change of company name for David Lewis and the accurate spelling of a member's surname.
- (3) That the revised terms of reference of the Lincoln Town Deal Board be approved, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, incorporating amendments to clauses 6.1 [Quorum]; and 8.3 and 8.4 [Decisions].

51. Project Assessment Report

Following the Board's decision on 12 April 2021 to commission an independent assurance on the projects, Jo Walker (Assistant Director of Growth, City of Lincoln Council) presented the independent assessment report to the Board, which had been prepared by Focus Consultants LLP. Focus Consultants LLP had applied a series of criteria to each project on the basis of available information, with an emphasis on deliverability and the benefits to the local community. It was highlighted that 'strategic fit' had not been included in the assessment as all projects remained in scope at this stage in the process. All projects had been assessed based on the latest information provided and Focus Consultants had access to all background information relating to the projects. Factual clarification on any required points had been sought by the consultant from the project leads, as part of their assessment.

The scoring of the projects had been undertaken independently by Focus Consultants, with no input from any organisations involved in the Board, including the City of Lincoln Council. Focus Consultants had concentrated on those projects which were lower ranking and had ranked seven options according to the criteria.

From these options, Focus Consultants had put forward two recommended options in their report, which were presented to the Board for consideration.

It was also reported that the dedicated health and wellbeing centre had been withdrawn from the portfolio of projects, at the request of the project lead. The reasons for the withdrawal of this project were outlined to the Board. Certain aspects activities of the health and wellbeing centre would now be included in the Drill Hall project, which had in turn led to an increase in the capital funding requirement for the Drill Hall project. There had also been a slight reduction in the Hospitality, Events and Tourism institute project. Revised project confirmations had been circulated. The Board then discussed the process of appointment of the consultants to ensure due process was followed appropriately.

In response to a question from Karl McCartney (MP for Lincoln), it was confirmed that Focus Consultants had been provided with the assessment parameters by the City of Lincoln Council, but Focus had applied their own methodology to the scoring and had scored the projects and developed options entirely independently from any organisation represented on the Board.

Following a question from Edward Strange (Brewin Dolphin), it was confirmed that Focus Consultants had been appointed following a full procurement process, managed by the City of Lincoln Council, in accordance with its own procurement rules.

RESOLVED that Focus Consultant's Independent Project Assessment Report be received.

52. Levelling Up Fund

Kate Ellis (Strategic Director of Major Developments, City of Lincoln Council), reported that following the discussion at the Board's last meeting, all the projects in the Town Deal programme had been reviewed to see which could meet the criteria for the Levelling Up Fund. Since the last meeting of the Board, further guidance had been issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to the effect that levelling up schemes would need to meet a size criterion and comprise up to three connected projects. Further to this, it was highlighted that several projects would not meet the funding envelope. Match funding of 10% was also required.

Discussions were continuing with partners on which projects could be progressed as part of the Levelling Up Fund. There was potential to consider Wigford Way and Sincil Bank. There were also discussions with East Midlands Trains in relation to phase two of the transport hub. Broadgate was also being considered as part of a town centre regeneration project. Work on any scheme was required to begin in the current financial year, and be supported locally. Work was continuing on developing levelling up schemes.

It was confirmed that the Town Deal Board was not directly involved in decisions on the Levelling up Fund, but it was important for the Board to be aware of progress with this fund.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

53. Project Selection

The Board was asked to consider the two final options for the configuration of the programme, which were introduced by Jo Walker (Assistant Director of Growth, City of Lincoln Council). Option 1 would exclude three projects (The Hive, Sincil Bank and Store of Stories), with further savings of circa £495,000 required to meet the programme's funding envelope. Option 2 would exclude Wigford Way (estimated cost £5 million), with the feasibility and design of this project continuing, which would therefore ensure it was primed for future funding opportunities. Jo Walker, the Assistant Director of Growth at the City of Lincoln Council, as the professional representative of the accountable body, recommended Option 2, as this offered the most flexible approach.

The representatives from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government confirmed that if certain projects were not viable or deliverable, they could be removed from the programme and others added in their place via a proposal to the Government. However, a final decision on this would be required by March 2022.

Marc Jones, the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner, requested more information on the rationale why the seven options set out in the consultants' report had been reduced to the two options being put forward to Board for decision, and recorded his support for Option 4. In response, the Board was advised that whilst it was for the consultants to set out their rationale for recommending the two options, it appeared the consultants had chosen the two options which had excluded the lowest ranking projects.

Nicole Hilton (Lincolnshire County Council) asked for information on the likelihood of the Wigford Way project being included in the Levelling Up programme and indicated that if it were not included in the Town Deal programme, it could be challenging to obtain future funding for this project. In response, it was stated that there was no guarantee of future funding for the Wigford Way project, however the feasibility work would stand it in good stead when submitting any applications for funding.

In response to a question from Edward Strange (Brewin Dolphin), it was confirmed that under Option 2, the surplus would be used to fund the feasibility and design of the Wigford Way project.

Karl McCartney, the MP for Lincoln, indicated that Option 2 would in effect be removing Wigford Way from the programme, which was one of the original projects submitted. Whereas if other options were on the table, such as Option 4, the Wigford Way project would be delivered as submitted.

Councillor Ric Metcalfe, the Leader of the City of Lincoln Council, favoured Option 2 and referred to the uncertainty of the deliverability of Wigford Way, and to the uncertainty of match funding from the highway authority for this project.

Leo Scott Smith (Tended) expressed his support and thanks to Focus Consultants for their independent report. Nick Worboys (Longhurst Group) echoed Leo's statement and expressed her support for Option 2 in the report.

Becky Scott (Legal Services Manager, City of Lincoln Council) confirmed that all voting members could vote on the recommendations in the report.

At this stage in the meeting, Marc Jones, the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner, wished it recorded that as he disagreed with ruling out the other five options and as someone who supported Option 4, he would abstain from the vote on Options 1 and 2.

Members of the Board were asked to vote on Option 1 and Option 2 in turn and by majority vote, Option 2 was carried. The Chair advised she had not taken part in the vote on the options to ensure the neutrality of the Chair.

RESOLVED

(1) That Option 2 be progressed to the next stage.

(2) That the City of Lincoln Council would continue to work in partnership with all stakeholders to try to secure further funding beyond the programme for the delivery of the Wigford Way project beyond the feasibility stage, including through Levelling Up if it be considered appropriate for this fund.

54. Date of Next Meeting

It was suggested that the date of the next meeting be moved to Friday, 11 June 2021, as this would allow sufficient time to do the submission to the Government.

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Lincoln Town Deal Board be arranged for Friday, 11 June 2021 at 10.00 am.