

Shipley Towns Fund Board Meeting Minutes

12th September 2023, 10.00 – 12.00pm, The Cellar Trust (Shipley)

Attendees:

Adam Clerkin (Chair), Angela Blake, Cllr Alex Ross-Shaw (MS Teams), Cllr Allison Coates, Cllr Mike Connors, Diana Bird, Joe Ashton, Joy Hart, Kim Shutler, Michelle Rushworth, Philip Walker, Ravinder Panesar, Satnam Khela, , Simon Woodhurst, Satnam Khela.

Apologies:

Alan Lunt, Angela Hays, Anne-Marie Woolham, Anthony Burnham, Barry Cooper, Dave Partridge, Dom Pix, Helen Horsman, James Skirrow, Lorraine Coates, Michael Long, Philip Davies MP, Ryan Kane, Soo Nevison.

ID	Notes/Actions/ Decisions	Decision	Action Owner	Due Date
1	<p>Project Spotlight</p> <p>SW provided an update on Project A Development Investment Fund Background - SW leads a BMDC team concentrating on three key areas of urban centre regeneration, business growth and the provision of new homes. DIF project designed to match these priorities. Of ten initial projects suggested, the town centre was made the priority. Shipley Town Centre had suffered from retailers moving out of the town centre and closures, supermarket impacts on smaller retailers and declining footfall. The plan offered more footfall, new homes and a new community living in the town centre. A soft test was carried out to assess developer interest, with poor response due to timing, location and size. Subsequently a local developer, who specialises in this kind of development, expressed interest and has carried out due diligence on the scheme. SW still waiting on an outcome but this has been delayed due to IT and staffing issues with the developer.</p> <p>This development will take up the full funding allocation for Project A and would provide much needed new homes having easy access to town centre businesses and near the rail network.</p> <p>A fallback plan exists, consisting of two vacant/derelict sites, one for housing development and one for mixed use. Sites are confidential at this stage for financial reasons.</p> <p>AC – Hard-stop for the project is approaching and so an understanding of 'if, then, else' is urgently required. SW unable to give dates until the decision from the developer is known but will give a hard-stop backwards timeline.</p>			
		SW to provide board with a timeline for the project and available options	SW	31/10/23

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	<p>CMC - previous attempts to build houses in the town centre had failed and questioned whether it could be affordable housing. SW - grant funding on this scale had not been available before and this was an incentive. In addition, the market for urban living had grown and there were fewer sites now available.</p> <p>KS – who ultimately makes the decision on this project, SW – BMDC would decide with the view considered from the Towns Fund Board.</p> <p>AB – Milestone dates also needed for fallback Plan B. DHLUC have approved both alternative sites projects.</p> <p>CMC – Still an opportunity for £7m to be put into other projects? RP –The Project Adjustment Request (PAR) process would require the sign off from the MP, Chair of the Towns Fund Board as well as the S151 Officer at CBMDC. DLUHC would have to approve any variance above 30% (Standard PAR) and anything below would require a Delegated PAR.</p> <p>KS – Project F de-scoped following price increases, opportunity for further investment into Cellar Trust from the potential sale of Shipley Hospital.</p> <p>SK provided an update on Project D Capital Assistance to Business Growth</p> <p>Background SK – There has been a catalogue of recent challenges to business including the financial crisis, austerity, brexit, covid, the war in Ukraine and even the move to electric vehicles, all affecting Shipley businesses. The CABG scheme was designed to help new and existing businesses, create growth and safeguard existing jobs and create new ones. Also to fill long term vacant properties. Grants of £1,500 to £315k are available with a maximum intervention of 30% SK then covered the criteria and eligibility. Since November 2022, 80 applications have been received and £600,000 approved in grants. With the current rate of growth SK predicts all the grant fund will be allocated by mid next year. Promotion of the scheme has been through PR, leaflets and events, targeting eligible businesses only.</p> <p>AC enquired about the recent increase in applications, with SK indicating that businesses needed time to prepare, research, source new machinery and then complete the application process. This explains the time lag. SK confirmed that applications could be turned around in weeks, however, agreed that the application process can be a constraint due to the level of information required.</p>			

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2	<p>Housekeeping – Apologies, Minutes, Actions, Declarations of Interest</p> <p>RP went through the minutes and actions, with all actions completed, apart from the TF messaging/branding which was discussed later in the meeting and missing graphics for Project B from RM.</p>			
3	<p>RP – Discussed the process of releasing funds to projects and the importance of having a signed and sealed Grant Funding Agreement in place together with a decision notice prior to any funds being released. Where sums were requested beyond the initial 5%, prior to a full GFA being signed, a short form grant funding agreement must be in place for the interim payment.</p> <p>RP – Working with the Business Rates team to ensure that any change in business rates for a project during the programme can be assisted through the process.</p> <p>RP – Discussed the DLUHC reporting template which will be updated to the end of September 2023, will be shared internally and sent to DLUHC early November, depending on the timescales they provide.</p> <p>RP went through the project updates supplied in the meeting pack (item 7.2).</p> <p>MR - Project B Public Toilets help from PM resource provided, AB felt it had brought clarity to the project. JA appreciated the input and was pleased with the progress since they were involved. The toilets are the number one issue in the town centre.</p> <p>DB – Project C – Positive stories in the T&A and YP. Project waiting on planning permission. Short form GFA employed for release of additional funds to prevent loss of progress on project. Legal work slowed down the process. KS agreed that the GFA was a challenging process that took longer than anticipated. JH (who shared a legal team with KS) also agreed and felt that the process started on a 'lack of trust' basis. RP – mentioned the Short Form GFA can avoid delays, there is a query with DLUHC regarding clawback arrangements. KS suggested that with shared learning and a sharing of GFAs, may help others.</p> <p>KS –Project F GFA nearly there, confident in progress and asked for the risk rating to be reviewed, RP confirmed it would be, once the GFA was sealed.</p> <p>JH – Project H had issues with funds going into the wrong account. This has since been sorted but required a lot of extra work.</p>			

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	<p>Finance Update (Item 7.5 in the meeting pack) RP – discussed the financial projections and changes to 24/25 with more spend and a reduction in 25/26, as a result. AC commented that it was not good enough to have £5.6m sat in the final year of the Towns Fund for Project A.</p>			
4	<p>PR & Communications</p> <p>RP discussed how the forward plan and regular meetings with the marketing team, has led to an increase in not only the number of articles but also a wider reach from different publications.</p> <p>PW – The branding work is in progress with final visuals due within the next few weeks. Discussion took place regarding the need for leaflets, banners and posters across both the project sites and the town centre. It was agreed that templates will be created for these, once the design and logo is finalised and these will be circulated for the projects to use, in addition to the material generated by the TF team</p> <p>AC – keen for the TF message to be out there.</p>	<p>RP / PW to finalise messaging / branding for TF projects</p> <p>RM / SA to put together graphics that can be shared with the Board / Community</p>	<p>RP / PW</p> <p>RM / SA</p>	
4	<p>AOB</p> <p>DB – Idea for a possible new grants scheme suggested, to fund decarbonisation of buildings for Shipley businesses</p> <p>AC – Offered Carnaud Metal Box as a venue for the next board meeting in December. In person meeting was generally agreed, RP to finalise date and time with a move to quarterly meetings.</p>	<p>AC / RP to finalise date and time of next meeting</p>	<p>AC /RP</p>	<p>ASAP</p>

Date of the next meeting: 14th December 2023 (Time to be confirmed)