

TOWN DEAL

9 DECEMBER 2021

Present:

Carole Dixon (Co-chair)	Hastings Community Network
Graham Peters (Co-chair)	Team East Sussex
Cllr Kim Forward	Hastings Borough Council
Dan Shelley	East Sussex College Group
Helen Kay	Hastings Opportunity Area
James Harris	East Sussex County Council
Jane Hartnell	Hastings Borough Council
Jess Steele	Heritage Action Zone
John Bownas	Hastings Business Improvement District
Liz Coleman	Hastings and Rother Interfaith Forum
Lourdes Madigasekera-Elliott	Public Health East Sussex
Richard Moore	The Source Park
Sally-Ann Hart	MP for Hastings and Rye
Sean Dennis	Hastings Area Chamber of Commerce
Sonia Blizzard	Sea Change Sussex

Others in attendance:

Jo Simmons	South East Local Enterprise Partnership
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HBC Programme Team present:

Chantal Lass
Hannah Brookshaw
Ian Sycamore
Ruth Kynoch
Stephen Dodson
Allison San Diego

69. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

Candice Miller, Clive Galbraith, Darrell Gale, Pranesh Datta, Steve Manwaring, Stuart Mitchell and Victoria Conheady

70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no additional declarations of interest to those already registered.

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71. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (3RD NOVEMBER) AND MATTERS ARISING

Accepted as an accurate record.

Matters arising:

- Item 66a, Community Renewal Fund – a letter to the Secretary of State was drafted, however this was not sent due to the announcement on successful bids being made that same evening
- Item 66b, accessibility issues – it was confirmed that accessibility will be raised with all project leads as they progress their projects. In respect of The Courtyard, a lift always formed part of the development plans and was included in the planning permission. Further funding has been secured via the Town Deal and works to install this will start shortly

72. PROGRAMME PROGRESS UPDATE

In addition to the information provided in the report, Hannah Brookshaw updated:

- The Grant Funding Agreement offer letter has been received. In addition to this, the 5% advance funding for capital spend has been received and a number of projects have requested to use this to support their business case development
- Project kick off meetings have been scheduled with Freedom Works and Churchfields project leads, now that their business cases have been approved
- The first project leads meeting was held on 23rd November and the next meeting will be scheduled to take place towards the end of January

Decisions of the Town Deal Investment Panel – statement to the board

Ian Sycamore explained that the Investment Panel met on 9th November and assessed and approved the business case for Priory Meadow Phase 1a.

The project will transform 20,000 square feet of vacant retail space to an office and commercial leisure facility and will deliver 79 full time equivalent jobs as detailed in the table on page 6 of the agenda pack.

It was clarified that this project is part of the wider vision of Priory Meadow Shopping Centre and there are other town centre core projects which are still in development, including a phase 1b project. Phase 1a is a fast-track project and is part of a strategic approach to the Priory Meadow development and New River REIT (as owners of Priory Meadow) is focusing on encouraging footfall and increasing spend in the town centre as much as possible.

It was further clarified that the project would not be viable without the Town Deal funding as there is no other capital or debt facility available to the project sponsor and

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that the project viability question forms part of the business case assessments which are checked via the independent technical evaluation.

The meeting ratified the decision of the Investment Panel.

- **Communications update**

Hannah updated:

- The communications plan has been drafted for January to April and includes:
 - Updates and news on accelerated projects
 - Updates on business case approved projects (such as how construction is progressing at Churchfields, Freedom Works and others as the business cases are approved)
 - Complementary other initiatives updates and information, such as the Welcome Back Funding
 - Liaison with project leads on upcoming developments, coherence with the Town Investment Plan stakeholder engagement plan, including offline initiatives
- Schools programme – is moving positively but slowly due to pressures schools are currently under due to COVID-19
- Recruitment of Town Deal Communications and Engagement Officer – has been completed via internal recruitment and handover will take place over the next couple of weeks. This role will liaise with project leads to support them carry out the relevant stakeholder engagement appropriate to their project over the lifetime of the programme.

The Hastings Town Deal blog remains the central point of information and can be found: <https://www.hastingstowndea.co.uk/>

73. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Jane Hartnell thanked colleagues for their contributions as this is their last Town Deal Board meeting: Dan Shelley and Hannah Brookshaw, who are both taking on new roles elsewhere. She personally thanked Hannah for all of the work she has done to date on the Town Deal.

Jess Steele asked whether it would be possible to see the approved business cases. The programme team will consider what is feasible due to the confidentially sensitive information contained in these. However, summaries to support board members to champion projects and the wider programme seemed a sensible approach. **Action: programme team to progress.**

74. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

End of February – to be confirmed