

Leigh Town Board

10.00 am, 26 April 2024

Present at the meeting

Karen Cox (Chair) - Spinning Gate Shopping Centre Manager
Adele Adjetey - Senior Policy and Partnerships Officer (representing Kate Green, Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester and GMPCC)
Councillor Dane Anderton
Dorothy Bowker - Founder & Trustee - The Bridge
Alex Grundy - Owner - Café Stella
James Grundy MP

Lloyd Jolley – Director - WJ Structures Ltd
Councillor Yvonne Klieve
Danny O’Neil – Super Intendent - GMP
David Proctor – Assistant Director – Planning and Regeneration
Alison Rushton – Vice Principal – Wigan and Leigh College
Steven Tomlinson – Director – Leigh Works

Observers:

Melanie Lamb – Service Manager, Regeneration
Martin Ledson – Team Leader, Regeneration
Jane Green – Service Lead, Finance

1 Apologies for absence:

Derek Beaumont and Dr Gen Wong.

2 Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed Board Members to the first Leigh Town Board meeting and requested that all present introduce themselves.

The Board considered a verbal update of the Chair, which advised that Leigh has been successful in securing funding to enable regeneration of the town. The Board will drive the decision-making process in relation to this funding, in order to create a long-term plan for the funding and the future of the town.

3 Government Requirements of Long-Term Towns Initiative

The Board received a verbal update of the Assistant Director – Planning and Regeneration, David Proctor, which detailed the objectives and parameters of the funding and board, and outlined that in October 2023, Leigh was one of 55 towns to be allocated £20million of funding for investment into the town over the next 10 years.

The Assistant Director informed the Board that:-

- the Board had been established to bring together multiple stakeholders and ensure a cross section of interests throughout the town; and
- the Board would develop a long-term plan, which would consist of a 10-year vision and a 3-year investment plan, aligned to the themes of safety and security, high streets, heritage and regeneration and transport and connectivity.

The Assistant Director advised the Board that Wigan Council, in accordance with the guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), is the accountable body for the Long Term Town funding and therefore has responsibility to ensure funding is spent in accordance with the law. The Council must approve the Board's plan. It was proposed that the Council acts as the Secretariat, providing advice and support on financial matters and in other areas.

4 Administration and Operation of the Board

The Board considered a verbal update of the Service Lead – Regeneration, Melanie Lamb, which detailed an introduction and summary of the Leigh Town Board Terms of Reference.

The Service Lead advised the Board that clear boundaries for confidentiality would be put into place for future meetings, with any confidential documents/reports marked as 'restricted' to highlight this. Any such document would be restricted to Board Members and would be deemed to be confidential.

The Board was requested to agree the proposed boundary (subject to DLUHC approval). The Board agreed that DLUHC would be informed of the support of the Board for the proposed boundary and further justification for the changes provided. Subject to approval from DLUHC, this would be taken as the agreed boundary. It was proposed that the Council to recruit a Project Manager to facilitate the Board and related activity. This would be a three year fixed role, to be funded using capacity funding.

The Board queried whether it would be possible for the Board to be involved in the recruitment process either by either a Board member sitting on the interview panel or agreement of the final appointment by the Board. The Service Lead advised that she would need to liaise with Wigan Council's Human Resources (HR) department to clarify whether this would be possible and would feed back to the Board in relation to this.

Agreed:- The Board agrees:-

- (1) the Terms of Reference (including the Code of Conduct and Declarations of Interest) of the Board, attached at Appendix A (noting this is subject to legal review and finalisation by the Council as accountable body);
- (2) that the quorum of the Board be set at 8 Board Members, including Chair or Deputy Chair, a Councillor and a Board Member who is not from the public sector; and
- (3) all Board Members are requested to provide a photograph and short CV to be uploaded to the Board's webpage on the Wigan Council website.
- (4) That the Council may proceed in recruiting to a three year fixed term role funded by Long Term Plan for Towns revenue funding to facilitate the work of the Board and related activity (note: the ability for Board to be involved in the recruitment process to be confirmed at next meeting)

5 Work Programme

The Board considered a verbal update of the Service Lead – Regeneration which detailed a summary of the Work Programme for the Board, which consisted of two phases; Plan Preparation and Delivery.

Due to the restrictive timelines the Board agreed to meet monthly until August to ensure the 10-year vision and a 3-year investment plan were developed on time.

The Service Lead proposed that commissioning Consultancy support would be necessary to preparing the Vision and Investment Plan on behalf of the Board within the limited timeframes. Due to the urgency, the preferred procurement route would be a direct appointment from a framework, which would comply with procurement rules.

Agreed:- The Board agrees:-

- (1) to the general scope of the works for Consultant support; and
- (2) to delegate the appointment of the Consultant to Wigan Council, as the Board's accountable body.

6 Workshop Style Session: Foundations for the Vision and Action Plan

The Board considered a verbal update of the Service Lead – Regeneration. Board Members were requested to consider priorities and resources for the Board, and to identify their vision for Leigh and the challenges and opportunities faced, under following three themes:-

- safety and security,
- high streets, heritage and regeneration; and
- transport and connectivity.

These would then be collated and fed back to a future meeting of the Board.

7 Wider Engagement

The Board considered a verbal update of the Service Lead – Regeneration, which advised that the Board would take a community led approach, bringing together residents, business and community representatives to devise a shared vision for the future.

The Service Lead proposed that two sub-groups be established in the upcoming 12 weeks, with these being in relation to 'Vision and Investment Plan' and 'Community Engagement'.

During its discussions, the Board highlighted the importance of engaging with community groups and residents to ensure a fair and broad representation of Leigh.

Agreed:- The Board agrees that two sub-groups be established in relation to 'Vision and Investment Plan' and 'Community Engagement'.

8 Shaping Future Meeting Agendas

The Board considered a verbal update of the Service Lead – Regeneration, during which the following dates for upcoming Leigh Town Board meetings were proposed:-

- Friday 24 May 2024
- Friday 21 June 2024
- Friday 19 July 2024

Agreed:- The Board agrees the proposed dates for the future meetings of the Leigh Town Board.

9 Any Other Business

The Board were advised that all Board Members would receive advance notification of any future meetings and be provided with an agenda that outlined the date, time and location of said meetings.

It was requested that an item titled “Reflection on Meeting” be added to future agendas.

Chair

The meeting concluded at 1.10pm