

## Leigh Town Board

10.00 am, 18 October 2024

### Present at the meeting

Karen Cox (Chair), Spinning Gate Shopping Centre Manager  
Adele Adjeley, Senior Policy and Partnerships Officer  
Councillor Yvonne Klieve, Lead Member for District Centres & Night Time Economy  
Dorothy Bowker, Founder and Trustee – The Bridge  
Danny O’Neil – Greater Manchester Police  
David Proctor, Assistant Director – Planning and Regeneration  
Alison Rushton, Vice Principal – Wigan & Leigh College  
Steven Tomlinson, Director – Nemiah and Leigh Means Business  
Lloyd Jolley, Director – WJ Structures Ltd  
Alex Grundy - Owner - Café Stella

### Apologies:

Councillor Dane Anderton, Portfolio Holder for Police, Crime and Civil Contingencies  
Jo Platt, MP for Leigh

### In Attendance:

Paul Blinkhorn Constituency Support Officer  
Melanie Lamb, Service Manager – Regeneration  
Martin Ledson, Team Leader – Regeneration Strategy and Transformation  
Stuart Hurst, Project Manager - Regeneration

## 1. Welcome - attendance and apologies

The Chair opened the meeting, welcoming all Board members

Apologies were received from Councillor Dane Anderton and Jo Platt, MP for Leigh.  
(Paul Blinkhorn attending in Jo Platt’s absence)

Introductions were provided.

## 2. Minutes and actions from last meeting

The Chair confirmed that there were no outstanding actions from the previous meeting.

## 3. Long Term Plan for Towns Programme update

### Vision and Investment Plan

The Service Manager – Regeneration gave an overview of the Vision and Investment Plan. There is an opportunity to reflect on the current draft and to identify where there are gaps that could be firmed up. There is also an opportunity for Genecon to be involved moving forward, prior to submission.

The Service Manager – Regeneration informed the Board that the Vision and Investment Plan may need change if the government provide new guidance and a template.

### *Leigh Town Board (18.10.24)*

The Team Leader – Regeneration Strategy and Transformation gave an overview of key points for discussion in the Vision, including the Vision Statement, Theory of Change, outcomes and objectives.

Board members were invited to provide initial thoughts: The Director – Nemiah and Leigh Means Business suggested that education should be considered. In response, Vice Principal – Wigan & Leigh College suggested that specific reference to education indicators should be included e.g. NEETS. The Constituency Support Officer suggested that there should be a reference to the proposal for Family Hubs in central Leigh.

The Team Leader – Regeneration Strategy and Transformation proposed that an Executive Summary of the Vision and Investment Plan would be advantageous to communicate more widely, due to the large size of the documents.

The Director – Nemiah and Leigh Means Business highlighted that a particular threat is having no plans to expand the rail network and building on investment. The work that Leigh Works are doing was also highlighted.

The Service Manager – Regeneration updated the Board on the capital / revenue split of the funding. Overall, capital is currently 75% and Revenue 25% . In year 1 the split is roughly 50% capital & 50% revenue but switches to 80% capital and 20% revenue in year 2. This is challenging because there is a desire to support more revenue based projects (e.g. community safety, engagement, capacity building) and it will be more difficult to get large capital schemes up and running within the timeframe.

The Director – Nemiah and Leigh Means Business reiterated the importance of marketing. There is an opportunity to build on the Visit Leigh website and the Leigh Feast which would offer value for money. The Chair agreed that marketing of the programme is of high importance.

#### **Financial update**

The Service Manager – Regeneration advised the Board that there have been no substantive changes to the budget since the last Board meeting. It was noted that the consultants are still in contract and there is still some funding available from the consultants' fees to finalise the plan.

#### **4. Briefing of Leigh Levelling-Up Programme**

##### **Market Refurbishment**

The Board considered a verbal update and presentation, provided by Service Manager – Regeneration about the proposed refurbishment to Leigh Market. Proposed works include a new roof, ventilation, flooring, windows, lighting, seating and more dominant entrances to make the Market more pleasant for traders and visitors. Consultation is currently underway with trader representatives. There will be ongoing consultation on the refurbishment and potential relocation options as the scheme progresses. The appointed design team Day Architects have carried out the relevant surveys.

### *Leigh Town Board (18.10.24)*

A discussion took place surrounding the process of engagement with the market traders. The Constituency Support Officer advised the board that numerous concerns had been raised to the MP regarding the possible relocation of Leigh Market during the period of works. Wigan Council responded to advise that the project plan was still underway and as noted above engagement has commenced via market trader representative and it is recognised that the market traders are key stakeholders to be consulted to ensure the success of the scheme and ensure the future sustainability of the market with the town.

## **5. Communications & Engagement**

### **Role and Remit of the Board**

The Chair invited board members to consider the current Board representation to consider and propose membership where current sector gaps exist (NHS, Faith, Sports). The Chair advised that we need to maximise and utilise this time before Government announce next steps for Long Term Plan for Towns.

Action:- All Board members to consider and feedback thoughts to the Chair.

### **Update on Recent Activity**

The Chair gave a verbal report to the Board on the importance of marketing and brand awareness for the Board, and the need to develop a Communication Strategy. There needs to be effective communication with businesses and residents of Leigh, to clarify the role of the board and negate confusion over involvement in other funding schemes currently in place (St Helens Road project & Levelling Up project).

The Chair updated the Board regarding engagement with community and voluntary sector and her commitment to meet with as many of these organisations as possible.

Action:- The Chair will update the Board at the next meeting.

## **6. Reflections on the meeting**

The Chair invited Board Members to feedback any reflections that they had on the meeting including meeting location & frequency of meetings. There was no feedback from Board members.

## **7. Any other business**

The Chair thanked all Board members for their continued support and for the work they are doing for the town. The Chair encouraged all Board members to continue to promote their positive news stories to help change negative perceptions of the town

The meeting concluded at 11:40am