

Greater Grimsby Board

Minutes of Virtual Meeting 19th March, 2021 at 1.00 p.m.

Attendance:

- Chair - David Ross (The David Ross Foundation)
- Ruth Carver (Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership)
- Neale Coleman
- Darren Cunningham (Phillips66)
- Julian Free (University of Lincoln)
- Clive Fletcher (Historic England)
- Councillor Philip Jackson (North East Lincolnshire Council)
- Lord Kerslake
- Lord Lamont
- Susan Lea (University of Hull)
- Lia Nici (MP for Greater Grimsby)
- Martin Smithurst (Engie)
- David Talbot (CATCH)
- Martin Vickers (MP for Cleethorpes)
- Julie Walmsley (VCSE)
- Rob Walsh (North East Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group)

Also in Attendance: –

- Peter Campey (Cities and Local Growth Unit)
- Sharon Wroot (North East Lincolnshire Council)
- Paul Windley (North East Lincolnshire Council)
- Damien Jaines-White (North East Lincolnshire Council)
- Clive Tritton (North East Lincolnshire Council)
- Dafydd Williams (ABP)
- Andrew Pettit (The Consortium)
- Tom Shutes (The Consortium)
- Jason Stockwood (The Consortium)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence from this meeting were received from Louise Brennan (Clive Fletcher in attendance), Pat Doody and Kishor Tailor.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from any Board member in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the Greater Grimsby Project Board meeting held on 29th September, 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

4. Consortium Introduction

The Board welcomed Mr Pettit, Mr Shutes and Mr Stockwood to the meeting and received an update on the Consortium's plans, including the Ice House development, the Onside project, Grimsby Town Football Club, and projects looking to address the skills gap and providing support for social entrepreneurs.

5. Future High Street Funding

The Board received a presentation from Mr Jaines White on the outcome of the bid for Future High Street Funding. North East Lincolnshire had received a grant award of £17.28m and the Board was updated on the work undertaken since the announcement of the award and the approach used to review the original scheme. A revised concept scheme with an estimated value of £30m had been submitted to government office on 26th February 2021. Next steps involved moving into the delivery window; confirming the basis of partnership working with Freshney Place; continuing third party land and property discussions; detailed design development; and further political and stakeholder engagement. The grant funding had to be spent by 2024.

The Board welcomed the funding award and the work that had been undertaken. Concerns were raised about the tight timescales but it was noted that government funding could potentially be spent ahead of matched funding.

The Chair sought an assurance that the scheme would provide the best solution for the people of Grimsby. It was noted that feedback remained strong but the Councillor Jackson cautioned that there was a degree of scepticism as a result of plans not being delivered in the past. He added that Elected Members had been robust in their challenge and he was satisfied that this provided the best option.

6. Stronger Towns Fund

The Board received a report providing an update on the current and future position of funding for Greater Grimsby and the opportunities afforded by the recent budget announcements.

The Board welcomed the funding award and the options presented.

The Chair enquired about progress with St James House.

Mr Jaines White confirmed that work on St James Square was nearing completion and that there had been a tentative enquiry from an interested party. If a use for the building could be secured then this could be included within this scheme.

7. Budget Announcements - Levelling Up and Community Renewal Fund

The Board considered a report providing an update on the current and future position of funding for Greater Grimsby and the opportunities afforded by the recent budget announcements.

The Board welcomed the announcement regarding the Humber Freeport and enquired about opportunities for collaboration.

Mr Campey noted that the government was looking at how to share learning on freeports and more would follow on this.

Mr Coleman enquired about the impact of the freeport announcement on the South Humber Inward Investment Programme (SHIIP) and felt that the Community Renewal Fund provided an opportunity to develop a major skills programme.

Mr Tritton provided an assurance about the future of SHIIP and mitigation that was already in place.

The Board discussed the skills agenda.

Mr Talbot reported on work being undertaken in this area as part of the Humber Cluster Plan and noted that a skills report had been commissioned for the green energy hub that formed part of the Town Deal.

Ms Nici reported that she had been working closely with the Department for Education on apprenticeships and also with academies, parents and children locally. Devices and connectivity had been provided but there remained issues over the levels of literacy.

Councillor Jackson noted that his administration had tasked officers with taking action on attainment figures, which were below the national average.

Lord Kerslake suggested that there may be a need to re-visit the skills analysis. This was agreed.

The request for at least two nominations from the Board to support the Council in developing the bids was noted and it was agreed for this to be taken away and dealt with separately.

RESOLVED –

1. That the progress made to date on delivering the Town Deal initiatives and the additional funding opportunities which have emerged through the recent Budget announcement, be noted.
2. That it be noted that the Council (at the behest of the Leader and Cabinet) will lead the development of bids in respect of the Levelling Up Fund and the Community Renewal Fund.
3. That it be noted that the Council will bring back final bids for endorsement once agreed by the Leader / Cabinet and prior to submission.

4. That an update on the development of a skills plan for North East Lincolnshire, together with a re-visit of the recent skills analysis, be provided to this Board.

8. Greater Grimsby Board – Future Role and Task Force Proposal

The Board considered a report on the future role and priorities for the Greater Grimsby Board.

The Chair commented on the Board's important role in relation to providing advice, support and challenge.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Greater Grimsby Board's governance role in respect of the Towns Fund be reaffirmed.
2. That the priorities set out in paragraph 3.8 of the report now submitted be agreed as a focus for the Board going forward.
3. That North East Lincolnshire Council officers be instructed to come back to a future meeting with proposals for how the Board can play an enhanced role in advising on, championing and supporting those priorities, potentially in the form of a Task Force for Greater Grimsby.
4. That North East Lincolnshire Council officers be instructed to come back to a future meeting with the key milestones for each priority and the role of a Task Force in supporting delivery.

9. Greater Grimsby Task Force Prospectus

The Board considered a paper setting out the latest position in terms of each of the proposed priorities for the Greater Grimsby Task Force.

RESOLVED -

1. That the latest position on each of the proposed priorities for the Greater Grimsby Task Force, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report now submitted, be noted.
2. That North East Lincolnshire Council officers be requested to develop these priorities into a Task Force prospectus.

There being no further business, the Chair declare the meeting closed at 2.50 p.m.