

Towns Fund Board
Friday 18th March 2022 at 11am via Teams

Present:

Tony Parkinson, Middlesbrough Council Chief Executive
Andy McDonald, Member of Parliament for Middlesbrough
Cllr Mieka Smiles, Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Culture and Communities MBC
Laura Sillars, Dean of mima School of Art & Design Teesside University
Rachel Anderson - Assistant director of Policy NECC
Nicholas Baumfield - Arts Council
Zoe Lewis, Principal and Chief Executive Middlesbrough College
Adam Suleiman – Cities and Local Growth Unit
Chris Smith – Thirteen Group
James Cain – For Simon Clarke

In attendance

Richard Horniman, Director of Regeneration MBC
Sam Gilmore, Head of Economic Growth and Infrastructure MBC
Louise Antill, Towns Fund Programme Manager

1.	<p>Apologies and declarations of interest</p> <p>Apologies: Andy Preston - Mayor of Middlesbrough Ben Houchen – Tees Valley Mayor Simon Clarke, MP for South Middlesbrough and East Cleveland Rachel Stockdale - Chief Inspector Cleveland Police Thomas Smith – Public Engagement Specialist Ian Wardle – Chief Executive Thirteen Group Gary Hutchinson - Arriva</p> <p>Declarations of Interest: N/A</p>
2.	<p>Minutes from previous meeting</p> <p>No matters arising other than Housing Quality Standard see agenda item 4.</p> <p>Minutes were agreed as a true record</p>
3.	<p>Programme update and Progress Report</p> <p>SG shared a progress monitoring update for the overall programme and provided information on each project:</p> <p>Urban Living and Place Making – project not due to start until 22/23, however there is a strong pipeline of housing sites aligned to Brownfield Land Fund.</p>

Middlesbrough Experience – Nature Reserve is on site with groundworks nearing completion, the next phase will be planting and continued work with community volunteers to develop the long-term sustainability of the site.

The Ward Initiatives project now has Council Executive approval and individual projects will commence in early 22/23 with the majority of schemes being completed by summer 22.

Community Hubs – There has been delays on both sites due to issues with Sport England at the Southlands site and location at Nunthorpe, however these are concluding and work will commence within the next 12 months.

Knowledge Economy – Work has almost concluded and payment has been made to the college. Further work is needed to establish a town centre site, however following the Council's purchase of the Cleveland Shopping Centre more options are now available.

Enterprise Infrastructure – Historic Buildings, work largely complete on the Captain Cook pub, which is now a blank canvas to allow multiple uses. The old Town Hall is awaiting a bid to Heritage Lottery Fund. Long term uses for the building could be business incubation or a cultural facility, however it will need a sustainable use as will provide the focal point for all development in the area.

Centre Square Development – work has commenced and practical completion is expected by December 22.

Boho Campus Infrastructure - business case now submitted to DLUHC, work will take place at the end of the programme to stitch the various sites together.

Boho 8 – Project complete and fully occupied by digital companies.

SG confirmed that all Annex C documents have now been submitted to DLUHC achieving the timescale for submission within a year of securing funding.

Middlesbrough has also been chosen as a pathfinder for the 'Single Conversation' initiative. Which will involve working with the government to establish the need of an area and be reactive to those needs rather than trying to fit requirements to a specific fund.

The board welcomed this approach and would be happy to contribute.

Under the Knowledge Economy AMc raised serious concerns of not being informed about the potential Eton College proposal within Middlehaven. He requested information on Council involvement and progress to date with the submission to the Department for Education.

TP confirmed that nothing had been brought to the board as there was no decision to be made by the Council or the Board at the present time. Eton College have currently expressed an interest in a plot of commercially available land however they had not submitted anything to the Department for Education. TP is scheduled to meet with college representatives next week and will provide an update to the Board following this.

A great deal of work needs to take place including the demand for places, numbers wanting to do A levels, current provision, predicted population numbers etc.

	<p>ZL stated it was a complicated issue that need a significant amount of work. She also gave the view that the college would increase footfall and accelerate the regeneration of the Middlehaven area, currently the Tees Valley has enough places to cater for student demand, however a further facility would provide more choice for young people.</p>
4.	<p>Housing Quality Standard Framework</p> <p>Following a request from the Board a Housing Quality Framework was developed.</p> <p>RH ran through the New Homes Criteria, which lays out a set of essential and desirable criteria that can be applied depending on the type of development the programme is dealing with.</p> <p>It was agreed that some of the criteria was subjective, however it provides control through the planning system and the adoption of national standards, including satisfying organisations such as Historic England. The Town Deal Board can make the decision to reject a development if it doesn't meet the overall vision. There is balance between the aspirations and affordability that the criteria should help to achieve.</p> <p>There was consensus that given the ongoing fuel crisis Net Zero should be moved from desirable to essential criteria. In addition floor space should be moved to essential, however building conversions may need to be considered separately. To maintain feasibility, any cases which have merit, but do not meet the essential criteria, will be brought for board determination.</p>
5.	<p>Town Centre Safety</p> <p>ZL wanted to highlight issues within the Town Centre noted by herself, students and staff regarding the rising levels of anti-social behaviour and general feel of the Town Centre that is at direct odds with the investment the FHSF and Towns Fund is trying to achieve, and asked if the Town Deal Board should be doing something to address it?</p> <p>TP was in agreement and thought the Board was the best vehicle to take initiatives forward in line with the Council's existing Town Centre Strategy.</p> <p>SG added that this area of work also aligns with the Town Centre Taskforce that is supporting Middlesbrough to improve perceptions of the town.</p> <p>TP agreed to lead on the work and to have a special Board meeting to discuss the issue and develop a forward plan.</p>
7.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>None</p>
8.	<p>Date and time of next meeting</p> <p>TBC</p>