

Lowestoft Place Board – Notes

14th December 2021 10:00 - 12:00 | Virtual - MS Teams



Attendees (Board)	Apologies (Board)
Stephen Javes – Chair Amanda Ankin – Suffolk Chamber Anne Rawstron – Department of Work and Pensions Cllr Colin Butler – Lowestoft Town Council Cllr Norman Brooks – East Suffolk Council Cllr Paul Ashdown - Lowestoft Community Forum Danny Steel – Lowestoft Vision Hayley Mace – New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership Paul Ager – Associated British Ports Peter Aldous – MP Phil Aves – Lowestoft Rising Steven Hodger – Scottish Power Renewables Tim Green – CEFAS Tom McGarry – EDF	Cllr Craig Rivett – East Suffolk Council Stuart Rimmer – East Coast College Andrew Brown – Anglian Water (& BiTC) Cllr Richard Smith– Suffolk County Council Keith Moore – Environment Agency James Garland – Park Holidays Emma Butler Smith – Marina Theatre Genevieve Christie – FlipSide
Attendees (Officers/Speakers)	Apologies (Officers)
Andrew Jarvis – East Suffolk Council Darren Newman– East Suffolk Council Gary Bellward – East Suffolk Council Jason Benham – BiTC Benjamin Porter – East Suffolk Council Karen Thomas – Coastal Partnership East Nicole Rickard – East Suffolk Council Paul Wood – East Suffolk Council Philip Ridley – East Suffolk Council Sarah Foote – Lowestoft Town Council	Mark Ash – Suffolk County Council Marie Webster Fitch – East Suffolk Council

	Description	Lead
1	<p>Welcome and introduction of new members</p> <p>Stephen would like to welcome Tim Green to the Place Board following David Carlin’s departure from Cefas. We would like to express our thanks to David for his contribution to the Place Board and to Lowestoft.</p> <p>We would also like to welcome Tom McGarry from EDF to his first Place Board meeting.</p>	Stephen Javes
2	<p>Actions from previous minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regeneration Programme team to arrange additional meeting to link into the December-June deadlines – <i>completed and scheduled for 18th January</i> Stephen Javes, Darren Newman, and Andrew Jarvis to investigate how ESC and the Place Board can develop pride in the town. Kerry Blair to provide a presentation/update at next Place Board regarding changes to street cleaning. 	Stephen Javes
3	<p>Towns Deal Projects</p> <p>Timeframe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7th January 2022 – Final amendments to the business cases 18th January 2022 – Place Board approval of submission document 1st February 2022 – East Suffolk Council Cabinet approval <p>Independent Review, 31st October – 19th December 2021</p> <p>We approached ThinkingPlaces, who advised on the Town Investment Plan, to carry out an appraisal of each of the 5 business cases, ensuring that each business case meets HM</p>	Darren Newman

Government Green Book standards, challenge the process and project outcomes of each business case, and to provide overall support and guidance. They have so far concluded that all business cases are currently meeting requirements, with some suggestions for improvements.

Challenges

The Business case development has highlighted continued cost increases and risks to all projects, and this will impact what we can deliver within the towns deal.

Feedback from HM Government

To date we have received positive feedback from Government. We are aware that Stage 1 towns are asking to make changes to projects which have already submitted business cases. ESC approached Government to establish whether there was any flexibility at this stage to amend some project elements and delay submission of a business case post March 2022. We were advised that any changes, both minor or major, need to focus on what the changes to the project are, rationale, along with confirming agreement by relevant stakeholders including ESC as Accountable body and Lowestoft Place Board.

Cultural Quarter

£14.7m has been allocated to this project which would incorporate the Battery Green car park and retail space, Marina Theatre and public realm. Darren presented each related project with the Board, noting that the current market has helped us to focus on size of delivery, and what we need to deliver as part of the cultural quarter. We have not looked at just clearing the Battery Green site but investigated developing the site and looking into alternative uses for commercial viability. We are in the process of securing additional funding for this project to help realise the projects full potential. Darren proceeded to go through the change justification with the Board.

Peter Aldous enquired about previous discussions surrounding a multiplex cinema and why this isn't being considered as an option. Darren explained that we had explored this option, but there is currently no growth in this market which is also experiencing reduced investment even before the pandemic. A multiplex would also be direct competition to the Theatre. The proposed use for the site allows more flexibility and commercial viability.

Action: Kate to circulate proposed Cultural Quarter drawings with minutes.

Seafront Vision

£1.3m has been allocated to this project which would look at public realm improvements, improvement to assets such as East Point Pavilion and Royal Plain fountains, and compliment other existing seafront schemes such as the Jubilee Chalets. As we have developed the project we have highlighted key areas for investment following the completion of the seafront masterplan. To achieve everything outlined in the masterplan would total over £15m, but many of these actions are long term aspirations and would require other projects to come forward as a phase 1 development which has seen an investment of £5.4million, including ESC's financial commitment, which is expected to provide leverage to greater public and private sector inward investment to enable the delivery of the remaining programme.

Station Quarter

As a gateway to the Town Centre, this project consists of improvements to the public realm, Post Office and the renovation of a former Station Building which has been derelict for 50+ years. It is important to note that we do not feel there are any changes to the public realm we can make in the Station Square area until the impact of the Gull Wing is assessed post completion. Peter noted that the A47 trunk road currently goes through Station Quarter, and will likely be redirected once Gull Wing opens, but the responsibility for the Bascule Bridge would need to be determined.

	<p>We are currently working with an operator on the Post Office, which we are unable to share with the Board at present but would see a well-known artist locating to the Post Office and attract a national audience. Conservation repairs are due to start in the new year with funding from Historic England and will see the main entrance repositioned to its original location in the middle of the building.</p> <p>Historic Quarter £3.3m has been allocated to this project which would look at public realm improvements and the redevelopment of the Town Hall. Darren proceeded to go through each project and change justification with the Board, highlighting a funding gap.</p> <p>Port Gateway Due to commercial sensitivity, this update has been withdrawn from the minutes. We kindly ask the Board members not to discuss items discussed with any other groups/external parties they are involved with.</p> <p>Next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments for Place Board • Final amendments to Business cases • Place Board to receive summery documents prior to January meeting • Place Board to approve summery documents <p>Enterprise Zones Peter presented a case to parliament to reallocate some of the Enterprise Zone from Mobbs Way to South Lowestoft Industrial Estate, however this has not been successful to date, but Peter will continue to lobby.</p> <p>Action: Place Board to provide comments as soon as possible regarding amendments prior to January 2022 meeting.</p>	
4	<p>Place Pride There have been a number of discussions with members, businesses and other stakeholders regarding the cleanliness of the public realm, in particular in urban areas such as Lowestoft. This has covered aspects of litter picking, weeding and street cleansing carried out on behalf of East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council by Norse.</p> <p>Responsibility for cleansing, sweeping and weeding falls broadly between District and County, with the County Highways team being responsible for street sweeping and weed control, and ESC taking responsibility for waste collection, litter bins, building cleaning and cleansing of the High Street/ London Road North.</p> <p>A number of factors converged this year, which led to the perception of cleanliness and ‘pride in place’ being impacted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A steady change in the resources allocated by Suffolk Highways to services such as weed spraying. This includes the timing and frequency of treatments. • Poor weather – in particular, high levels of rainfall – just after spraying had happened (which reduced the impact of spraying) • Covid impacts – which put the weed spraying operation back several months <p>All of this created a situation where, in parts of Lowestoft, weed growth ran out of control – in particular in car parks, side roads and residential areas around Harbour Ward. This, in turn, caught litter, highlighted the perception that the town was ‘unkempt and unloved’ and brought attention to an urgent need to review the way that East Suffolk Norse carried out it’s street cleansing operation.</p> <p>ESC have been exploring behaviours such as lack of upkeep by land/building owners, fly tipping, littering etc and additionally there is a piece of work being undertaken by Assets and Environmental Protection. To address upkeep and cleanliness, a meeting between ESC</p>	Andrew Jarvis

	<p>and Mark Ash and his team at SCC will take place January/February 2022 to align approaches.</p> <p>East Suffolk Council has been reviewing the way that services are delivered through East Suffolk Norse. A business case was developed, which explored how the current business operation could be improved, and presented to Cabinet, and subsequently approved, in June 2021. Work has been underway since to establish a LATCO, which will be operational in 2023, and take over the operations currently carried out by Norse by July 2023.</p> <p>In the long term, ESC believes that there will be significant benefits to residents and the business community by the creation of the LATCO. However, we also recognise that we cannot wait until 2023 in order to make positive improvements, and that these need to start now.</p> <p>To that end:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two specialist waste and street cleansing/ street scene posts have been created • A number of Business Improvement Projects have been developed, including a project to reduce recycling contamination, a programme of improvements to street cleansing, and a root and branch review of the service specifications. • ESC have trialled, and will acquire, a fleet of mini-street sweepers, that will be operational by March 2023. • We will be investing in an IT platform that will allow better monitoring of the work that is carried out by Norse teams and working with Norse to drive up performance. <p>Finally, to promote pride of place, we hope that an awards scheme can be developed with local businesses, such as Lowestoft in Bloom, which will ensure that it is not completely council-led.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andy Jarvis will speak to Councillors whose wards will be directly affected/improved by changes to gather support. • Stephen will speak to Stephen Baker to assess possible help from Lord Bassam • Darren will explore award options to encourage the public to take part and will also engage with Lowestoft Vision. 	
6	<p>Future Agenda Items</p> <p>We would be keen to see Place Board members to become further engaged with projects and encourage them to contact Darren to bring items to the Board for discussion. It may also be useful for the organisations represented by the Board members to provide share updates about what their organisations are working on for Lowestoft.</p> <p>Phil Aves asked if the Board could act as the lead representatives for Lowestoft during the Festival of Suffolk, which would promote pride of place. Andy noted that Emma Bloom is the lead officer for ESC, and while we are not directly arranging events, we will be supporting initiatives of the festival. Andy suggested that Emma perhaps present to the Board. Additionally, there is a Festival of the Sea being discussed as part of this which could provide opportunities for Lowestoft.</p> <p>Action: Emma Bloom to be invited to next Board to update on Festival of Suffolk</p>	Stephen Javes
7	<p>AOB</p> <p>City of Culture – Our bid for City of Culture 2025 was sadly unsuccessful but it has been acknowledged that culture is an important part of regeneration and progression. Paul advised a ‘wash up’ meeting has taken place with ministers, and we perhaps didn’t have enough experience, and there were lessons learnt. We will continue to build on this with Great Yarmouth. We will be creating an East Suffolk Cultural Strategy, and the money allocated towards the bid by Cabinet will be reinvested into cultural opportunities for communities which will be supported by a delivery programme.</p>	Stephen Javes

EDF/East Coast College – Following an engagement event with young people with East Coast College, Tom advised that EDF are looking at supporting young people and NEET with support from Inspire Suffolk and Access Community Trust with the Sizewell C development. A Meet the Buyer event will be hosted by the Chamber of Commerce which will encourage suppliers to adopt ‘Lowestoft pledges’ and employ/supply opportunities for young people. Once constructed, Sizewell C will provide 30% of the UK’s electricity, and we hope that these benefits will be acknowledged by Whitehall.

Next meeting: 10am, Tuesday 18th January 2022