

MCA - HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

TUESDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2021 AT 10.00 AM

VIRTUAL MEETING



Present:

Councillor Terry Fox (Co-Chair)	Sheffield City Council
Councillor Amy Brookes	Rotherham MBC
Councillor Tim Cheetham	Barnsley MBC
Councillor Paul Wood	Sheffield CC
Mayor Ros Jones CBE (Reserve)	Doncaster MBC
Michael Faulks	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Damien Allen	Doncaster MBC
Martin Swales	MCA Executive Team

In Attendance:

Colin Blackburn	MCA Executive Team
Carl Howard	MCA Executive Team
Sue Sykes	MCA Executive Team
Becky Guthrie	MCA Executive Team
Matt Bartle	MCA Executive Team
Ryan Shepherd	MCA Executive Team

Apologies:

Gemma Smith (Co-Chair)	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Councillor Glyn Jones	Doncaster MBC

1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Mayor Jones who was attending as substitute for Cllr G Jones.

Apologies were noted as above.

2 Declarations of Interest by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the agenda

Members declared interests in respect of Item 6 regarding schemes in their own council areas.

3 Urgent items / Announcements

None.

4 **Public Questions on Key Decisions**

None.

5 **Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 13th September 2021**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2021 be agreed as a true record.

6 **Programme Approvals**

C Howard presented a paper which requested approval of one scheme, subject to conditions set out in the Assurance Panels Summary, progression of five schemes to develop Full Business Cases and one change request.

With regard to Attercliffe Waterside it was confirmed that the work was to secure land for brownfield housing with houses to be developed up to 2025. Going forward, risks would be managed and it was noted that Sheffield CC were also monitoring the situation.

With regard to Park Hill Phase 4, Cllr Fox queried whether affordable and/or social rented housing and shared ownership could be included in the business case.

C Howard confirmed that a condition could be included that the mixture of housing in the project should be explored to see what was possible to increase the social housing content and also that on overage calculation could be included.

RESOLVED – That the Board approve:

- i) Full approval and award of £0.25m grant for the 'BHF Revenue Project' to South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA).
- ii) Progression of 'Adwick Depot' project to proceed to Full Business Case (FBC) for Brownfield Housing Funding (BHF) to Doncaster Metropolitan Council (DMBC) subject to the conditions set out in the Assurance Summary attached at Appendix A.
- iii) Progression of 'Attercliffe Waterside' project to proceed to FBC for BHF to Sheffield City Council (SCC) subject to the conditions set out in the Assurance Summary attached at Appendix B.
- iv) Progression of 'Park Hill Phase 4' project to SYMCA to proceed to FBC for BHF to SCC subject to the conditions set out in the Assurance Summary attached at Appendix C and discussions around the possibility of increasing the social housing content.
- v) Progression of 'Nightingale School' project to proceed to FBC for BHF to DMBC subject to the conditions set out in the Assurance Summary attached at Appendix D.

- vi) Progression of 'Small Sites' project to proceed to FBC for BHF to DMBC subject to the conditions set out in the Assurance Summary attached at Appendix E.
- vii) Approval of the changes to the Getting Building Fund project 'Barnsley College Digital Sci-Tech Building'.
- viii) Delegated authority be given to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer to enter into legal agreements for the schemes 1-7 covered above.

7

South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan Update

C Blackburn presented a report which updated the Board on progress in preparing the South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan.

Members were reminded that following the 2019 flooding event in South Yorkshire, Mayor Jarvis and Local Authority Leaders submitted a South Yorkshire Business and Infrastructure Resilience Priority Flood Programme to government, which included the proposal to prepare a catchment wide flood plan covering the whole of South Yorkshire.

The aim was for the Catchment Plan to be a 'living' document to facilitate the development of a long-term strategy for flood risk management and climate resilience.

The draft Catchment Plan, attached at Appendix A, outlined the actions to be undertaken to reduce flood risk, mitigate climate change and support climate resilient communities across South Yorkshire.

The Catchment Plan was arranged around four Key Workstreams, which were detailed within the report, and had been developed in partnership between the SYMCA Executive, Environment Agency, the four South Yorkshire Authorities and Yorkshire Water. There had also been engagement with a wide range of stakeholders.

It was noted that the intention was to finalise the Draft Plan during November, taking into account the comments of the Board, members of the South Yorkshire Flood Risk Partnership and wider stakeholders. The final Draft Plan was proposed to be presented to the next meeting of the Board for endorsement with a view to launch the Plan early in the New Year.

In answer to a question from the Chair, H Batt confirmed that all funding was not yet in place to complete projects within the intended timeline.

D Allen welcomed the Plan commenting that it made sense to use the whole catchment area and acknowledged the importance of climate change risks included in the Plan. He informed the Board that, as lead CEO for flooding in Yorkshire & Humber, a Leaders summit was being organised for 10th February 2022; a detailed programme would be going out to Leaders and lead members in the near future.

RESOLVED – That the Board noted the emerging draft South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan.

8 **South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy - Scoping the Delivery Plan**

Members were invited to comment on the draft scope for the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy Delivery Plan.

Members were informed that the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy was approved by the SYMCA on 20th September 2021 and they requested that a Delivery Plan for implementing the Strategy was prepared.

Appendix A set out initial scoping ideas for the actions and interventions to inform the preparation of the Delivery Plan, including proposed priorities that were strategically important and/or needed to be delivered in the short-term. These had been developed together with the Superfast South Yorkshire Programme Board.

It was noted that the necessary resources would need to be secured to support the delivery of the Digital Infrastructure Strategy and take forward implementation of the Delivery Plan. It was essential that the Plan set out realistic and deliverable actions and interventions that could be properly resourced to ensure successful delivery of the Strategy.

Mayor Jones stressed the urgent need for more affordable broadband and also the importance of co-ordination with highways and utility companies to avoid digging up newly laid roads.

Cllr Wood queried if planning departments were considering digital infrastructure in new building developments.

C Blackburn confirmed that all Local Plans were addressing the issue in a range of ways. The Superfast South Yorkshire team were already advising local planning authorities, residents and businesses in terms of digital connectivity. Going forward, consistency would be important.

M Faulks supported the initiative but was concerned that it was not ambitious enough and stressed the urgency required.

He commented that it was a cross-board issue and the Board needed to liaise with the other Thematic Boards to ensure co-ordination and consistency.

Cllr Cheetham commented that the urgency of the project had been recognised previously and extra meetings had been arranged to try and accelerate progress but progress appeared to be slow, especially in the area of funding.

With regard to the proposed delivery plan this needed to specify where funding was coming from, and about the planning consultation process, as well as the links with the SEP. He suggested an offline meeting may be useful to discuss the delivery issues.

C Blackburn welcomed the comments from members which will inform the preparation of the draft Delivery Plan Itself. It was agreed to arrange an informal board meeting prior to the next board meeting in December to further discuss on the points raised, including funding and timescales.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i) Support the preparation of the Delivery Plan for consideration at the next board meeting on the 7th December 2021.
- ii) Agree to an additional meeting being arranged to facilitate further discussions on delivery issues.

9 Programme Performance Report

A report was considered which provided the Board with current performance information on Housing and Infrastructure programmes being delivered on behalf of the MCA.

Members were informed that the SYMCA currently had 21 live capital projects which fell within the remit of the Housing and Infrastructure Board. The projects were funded by four funding streams:

- Brownfield Housing Fund (BHF)
- Getting Britain Building Fund (GBF)
- Gainshare Funding
- Legacy Local Growth Fund (LGF)

The report gave an overview of the performance of programmes and the projects within them and highlighted management actions being taken to mitigate risks.

S Sykes informed the Board that latest forecasts were predicting an underspend of £43.35m. Of this, £24.51m related to Gainshare funded activity which could be re-profiled into future years. The remaining £19.2m was funded through conditional grants from government and consent would be required to roll forward the funding to future periods.

The graph at 2.1 of the report highlighted the forecast full year expenditure profiles set against the baseline targets.

The GBF and Brownfield baseline target were set by government and required in-year allocations to be fully defrayed within the financial year.

Concerns had been growing over the pace of some areas of the expenditure.

The issue was systemic across partners, largely reflecting pressures arising from the volume of activity and supply chain issues. Despite those issues good progress was being made to ensure that the full allocation of GBF funding was defrayed and projects delivered by March 2022.

A graph at 2.4 of the report showed the milestone status of the projects.

Members noted that ideally at this stage of the year the weight of projects would be in FBC processes, or in contract negotiation or delivery.

The graphic indicated a healthy pipeline of projects but the weight of projects at early stage development highlighted the increasing likelihood that expenditure targets would be missed.

The pace of delivery was being affected by a number of issues including supply chain pressures which were creating cost inflation and time delays. This was across all partners and areas.

The main concern at the moment was the BHF fund programme where government had set a £20m spend target for 2021/22. The graph at 2.7 of the report highlighted the status of projects within that programme which showed that most of the projects were still in the development stage.

Close engagement with partners had given early warning of these issues and work was ongoing to accelerate schemes through process where possible and mitigate risks.

Proposals had been developed for the deployment of the residual £0.25m of Brownfield housing revenue funding to support the acquisition of skills and capacity to help accelerate activity.

It was understood that pressures within the Brownfield programme were being replicated across MCAs nationally; in that context the MCA were engaging with government seeking flexibilities where they may be available.

Cllr Wood queried whether there was any possibility that the underspend could be reallocated to existing projects.

S Sykes replied that it would be possible for Brownfield housing but the project would have to meet the criteria for that funding.

Cllr Fox expressed concerns around the slippage and asked when it would be decided that a project was not going to be delivered which would give the opportunity for other schemes to be put forward, in other words where and when would projects be re-evaluated.

It was felt that this should be looked at in the near future. The Brownfield project was a 5-year project and the pipeline could be looked at and prioritised. Gainshare projects could also be looked at to see if they could fit into the fund.

Cllr Fox would raise the matter with the other Leaders to gauge their opinions. If there were projects that were causing a blockage it would have to be decided how to address this, which could be through a formal Board meeting.

It was decided that a report should be brought to the next meeting to highlight all the problem areas and the cause of the delays.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

i) Note the report.

ii) Request that a further report be brought to the next meeting of the Board to highlight the current status of schemes, problem areas and the cause of delays.

10 **Forward Plan**

The Board considered its Forward Plan.

RESOLVED – That the Board note the Forward Plan and request the addition of a further report on Programme Performance be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

11 **Any Other Business**

None.

In accordance with Combined Authority's Constitution/Terms of Reference for the Board, Board decisions need to be ratified by the Head of Paid Services (or their nominee) in consultation with the Chair of the Board. Accordingly, the undersigned has consulted with the Chair and hereby ratifies the decisions set out in the above minutes.

Signed

Name

Position

Date