

MCA - HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

TUESDAY, 15 MARCH 2022 AT 1.00 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING



Present:

Councillor Terry Fox (Co-Chair)
Gemma Smith (Co-Chair)
Councillor Amy Brookes
Councillor Glyn Jones
Michael Faulks
Damian Allen
Martin Swales

Sheffield City Council
Private Sector LEP Board Member
Rotherham MBC
Doncaster MBC
Private Sector LEP Board Member
Doncaster MBC
SYMCA Executive Team

In Attendance:

Colin Blackburn	Assistant Director - Housing, Infrastructure and Planning	SYMCA Executive Team
Ryan Shepherd	Senior Programme Manager - Development & Planning	SYMCA Executive Team
Sue Sykes	Assistant Director - Programme and Performance Unit	SYMCA Executive Team
Charli Taylor	Head of Controls	SYMCA Executive Team

Apologies:

Councillor Tim Cheetham	Barnsley MBC
Councillor Paul Wood	Sheffield City Council

10 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

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

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

12 Urgent items / Announcements

None.

13 Public Questions on Key Decisions

None.

Minutes of Previous Meeting - 1 March 2022

C Blackburn provided an update on the actions arising from the Board meeting held on 1 March 2022, and were noted as follows:

- A paper would be presented at the next meeting detailing the successes of previously implemented flood prevention initiatives.
- A discussion would take place at the next meeting around the Levelling-Up Agenda and consideration around a holistic view with regards to local services and infrastructure required to support new housing schemes.

Councillor Fox asked that a paper be produced and presented at the next meeting around the Levelling-Up Agenda and the Board's role. **ACTION: C Blackburn.**

Post meeting addition - In response to the action under item 6 regarding checks on the country of origin of schemes' finances, M Swales can confirm that although our Assurance Framework (which complies with the HMT Treasury Green Book) does not include requesting details on the country of origin of schemes' finances, we do ask for confirmation that the full funding is available to deliver schemes, but this is limited to the bank or other sources of financing such as a local authority or institutional investment company. However, the MCA Assurance Team is considering this request as it may be that we are able to request this information as part of the due diligence on the Financial Case, whilst reserving the right to both do further due diligence and also seek clawback on our funding should new / different information come to light at a later time.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2022 be agreed as a true record.

Programme Approvals

S Sykes presented a paper which requested that the Board recommend one Brownfield Housing Fund (BHF) project to the MCA Board for full approval.

The paper also requested the Board to release grant to assist with the continued development of two projects whose Strategic Business Cases (SBC) had been approved during 2021.

Full details of all the projects, key risks identified and any specific conditions which were recommended to be met prior to contracting/grant drawdown were included within the papers and the Board considered each project separately.

The Board welcomed and supported the projects presented at today's meeting.

RESOLVED – That the Board approve:

- i) Progression of "Attercliffe Waterside" project to the MCA for full approval of £4.08m Brownfield Housing Funding to Sheffield City Council (SCC)

subject to the conditions set out in the Assurance Summary attached at Appendix A.

- ii) Approval of £0.06m Gainshare Funding for development costs of the “Doncaster Natural Flood Management” project from Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC).
- iii) Approval of £0.06m Gainshare Funding for development costs of the “Doncaster Surface Water Mitigation” project from Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC).
- iv) 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 covered at numbers two and three above.

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South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy Delivery Plan

C Blackburn introduced a paper which requested the Board to consider and approve the final draft South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy Delivery Plan.

The Board was reminded that the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy had been approved by the MCA Board on 20 September 2021, where it was requested that the Housing and Infrastructure Board prepare a Delivery Plan for implementation of the Strategy and oversee delivery.

The draft Delivery Plan had been presented at the December 2021 meeting of the Board, where Members had made several comments and suggestions. In particular, concerns had been raised around securing resources to support the South Yorkshire Digital Team.

Taking account of feedback from Members of the Board, a final draft Delivery Plan was presented at Appendix A for the Board’s consideration and approval.

The Board noted that identified actions and interventions were estimated to cost £1.88m over the next 5 years, with around £1.1m of this required to deliver the short-term (next 2 years) priority interventions.

Funding to support the implementation of the Delivery Plan’s actions, including supporting the existing Digital Team, has been included within the MCA 2022/23 Business Plan and budget.

R Shepherd provided the Board with an overview of the overarching key priority actions / interventions set out in the Delivery Plan, which were underpinned by five key goals.

The Board were informed that work on several actions was currently underway. Actions were also contained in the Delivery Plan where it had been identified that there would need to be future spends. Indicative cost levels had been identified wherever possible against each action; however, further work would be required in some areas to identify and refine costs.

In relation to the Project Gigabit programme, the Board was informed that an initial pre-procurement stage to undertake an Open Market Review (OMR), was launched in South Yorkshire on 4 February 2022.

The OMR is used to consult the digital infrastructure telecom providers to understand their existing and future build plans, which provides the data to define the Intervention Area where Project Gigabit funding could be targeted. This was a critically important and a necessary initial stage in developing the Project Gigabit programme in South Yorkshire.

Procurement of a provider (led by Department of Communities, Media and Sport and supported by the Digital Team) was due to begin in November 2022, with programme roll-out expected from late 2023.

The Board noted that Yorkshire Water, with a consortium of partners, had bid for Government funding to pilot an innovative Fibre in Water scheme, delivering advanced broadband and mobile services via drinking water mains.

If successful, the scheme would improve digital connectivity at The Seam (Barnsley's digital campus), Dodworth Business Park and poorly served communities in Penistone.

The Board noted that the actions contained within the Delivery Plan would be updated on an ongoing basis with further progress updates provided at future Board meetings.

The Board requested that bi-monthly progress update reports be scheduled into the Board's Forward Plan of work. **ACTION: R Shepherd.**

M Faulks commented that there was now an urgency to implement all the actions contained in the Delivery Plan. He referred to the South Yorkshire Economic Summit held on 9 March 2022, where discussions had taken place around innovation and the Innovation Board's support for SMEs becoming a foundation for what the SYMCA is trying to achieve: without the appropriate digital infrastructure in the region, it would be very difficult to support businesses.

Councillor Fox added that, the extent of digital inclusion in the region needed to be addressed urgently. The covid pandemic has shown the importance of digital connectivity to addressing digital inclusion.

D Allen requested that the Board receives regular progress updates in relation to the work being undertaken to address digital inclusion.

Councillor Jones said that the capacity for people to work from home due to digital poverty also needed to be addressed. In addition, he said that it would be difficult for the region to achieve its carbon neutral targets if the region did not have the correct digital connectivity.

M Swales acknowledged the Board's comments and confirmed that addressing digital inclusion was a priority of the SYMCA.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i) Noted and approved the Delivery Plan to take forward implementation of the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy.
- ii) Requested that bi-monthly progress update reports on the implementation of South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy Delivery Plan be scheduled into the Board's Forward Plan of work.

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Forward Plan

The Board considered its Forward Plan.

Councillor Jones highlighted that a number of programmes contained on the Forward Plan had slipped. (For example, Modern Methods of Construction Ecosystem and an update on the Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Programme Delivery).

C Blackburn acknowledged Councillor Jones' comment.

In relation to the Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Programme Delivery, C Blackburn reported that a preferred supplier had now been identified following a procurement exercise for the supply and installation of the Electric Vehicle Chargepoints. The SYMCA were currently in the final stages of working with local authority partners and SYPTE to finalise a contract with the preferred supplier.

It was anticipated that delivery on the first phase of the programme would commence towards the end of March 2022/early April for the installation of approximately 280 Electric Vehicle Chargepoints across South Yorkshire.

Discussions were currently taking place with local authority partners to seek to secure further funding to support a Phase 2 of the programme.

D Allen asked if a draft schedule of future Board meeting dates could be shared with Board Members.

C Blackburn replied that a future schedule of Board meeting dates would be circulated when the new Mayor had been elected and had given their approval to the cycle of all future SYMCA meetings.

RESOLVED – That the Board noted the Forward Plan.

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Any Other Business

C Blackburn reported that a meeting of the SYMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be held on 23 March 2022.

The Committee had requested that updates be provided at their meeting on 23 March 2022 with regards to the progress being made to develop the South Yorkshire Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Programme and progress in delivering the SYMCA's Brownfield Housing Programme.

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