

LONG TERM PLAN FOR TOWNS (LTPT) BOARD

26th MARCH 2024

MINUTES

Present: Paul Gray (Chair); Gerald Jones MP; Alyn Owen; Cllr Geraint Thomas; Cllr Andrew Barry; Zoe Thomas; Paul Lewis; Victoria Parry; Ceri Dinham; Lis Mclean; Stephen Jones SWP; Sharon Richards; Lance Whiteley; Elizabeth Bedford; Karen Courts; Elizabeth Bedford.

Apologies: Ellis Cooper, Alun Evans, Lisa Thomas

ISSUE	ACTION	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
Welcome, Introductions and Apologies			
Apologies as above. PG welcomed everyone to the meeting.			
Presentation LTPT Programme			
ZT presented to the Board on the UK Government LTPT Programme including the guidance and what is expected from the Board. ZT explained she needed to inform UK Government that the Board have partook in their first meeting by the 1 st of April. Also, this core board needs to look at appointing additional representation which could include local Faith Groups, Sports Groups, Health and Private Business, as per the programme guidance. The Board will also need to consider how to attract additional funding and conduct consultation / engagement to help inform the future Long Term Plan. GJ raised the question about consultation time limits. ZT responded that the Town Centre Placemaking Plan is in need of a review due to the many changes in the Town Centre since the adoption of the Plan including the acquisition of the Shopping Centre, the Pandemic and project delivery. In light of this, a detailed consultation will be held in April led by The Urbanists and this will be in line with the Design Commission for Wales Placemaking Charter. The consultation can support	Presentation to be shared.	ZT	ASAP

<p>both the Placemaking Plan review and help inform the future Towns Plan.</p> <p>GJ raised concerns of engaging with the wider public and ensuring input from people across the community. ZT explained the consultation will target local residents, businesses, schools, the College and key stakeholders. There will also be an online presence. ZT will also be working with Corporate Comms to promote the consultation.</p> <p>GT recommended that an Officer from Planning should also sit on the Town Board as an advisor due to constraints in relation to Planning across the Town Centre. This will enable a clear understanding how we can bring buildings and heritage back into use.</p> <p>AB raised concerns about how the Town Centre looks in 2024. Aspects have changed and the Board needs to consider how High Streets look in future. Also, the Board needs to consider the wider area such as the Retail Park, Trago and the successful Leisure Park and how these all fit.</p> <p>SJ expressed concerns about consultation fatigue, as SWP are also speaking to the public at present to gather information. SJ offered help with information sharing. Also, there was a suggestion to consider Probation becoming a Board Member due to issues being experienced in the Town Centre.</p> <p>GT raised that it is critical that the sporting groups such as Merthyr Football Club and Rugby Club are invited to join the Board.</p> <p>LM raised concerns of the possibility of a change of government in future and it was discussed that the principles should hopefully remain the same if there is change of government. Also, successful engagement at Theatr Soar has made Soar the success it is today - engagement is incredibly important to inform plans and also, the use of the Welsh Language needs to be included in this consultation.</p> <p>The Board discussed a need to form a Building Preservation Trust, to draw in expertise on what to do with Heritage Buildings. Merthyr does have a Heritage Trust also.</p>			
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<p>PL felt that setting governance and voting rights needs to be established as the ground rules for the Board.</p> <p>AO explained that the structure in UK government is different to WG.</p> <p>ZT will share a draft Terms of Reference at the next meeting. A Governance Meeting will be held mid-April to discuss Terms of Reference and additional membership.</p>	<p>Arrange Governance Meeting</p>	<p>ZT</p>	<p>ASAP</p>
Boundary Discussion and Future Additional Membership			
<p>The UK Government Boundary for the Towns Programme was shared with the Board. Also, ZT presented a map of the Town Centre Boundary that would be used for the Placemaking Plan.</p> <p>It was identified by the Board that £20m is not a huge amount of money to cover a significant area if the funding is to have a major impact.</p> <p>For Town Centre organisations on the Board that could potentially access funding they would need declare an interest at the relevant meetings if required.</p> <p>The Board agreed that the boundary area for the programme would be the Town Centre Boundary created for the Placemaking Plan but that the overall area could be considered at the discretion of Board. Therefore, the Boundary Area would not be amended but ZT will confirm with UK Government that the focus will be on the Town Centre.</p> <p>Openness and transparency is required from a Board perspective and this is also a requirement of UK Government.</p>	<p>ZT to confirm boundary area with WG.</p>	<p>ZT</p>	<p>ASAP</p>
Future Agenda Items – Placemaking Plan / Consultation and Engagement / Purple Flag			
<p>ZT asked if the Board would like to consider Agenda items for future meetings such as Placemaking Plan updates and Purple Flag application progress. This was agreed by the Board.</p>			

LM expressed that it was really important as this enhances work already done and important to have reports on these items. PL added that he could bring Problem Profile to the Board. These could be brought as proposals.			
Frequency of Meetings			
It was decided by the Board that Monthly Meetings would be held for LTPT.			
AOB			
There was no AOB.			

DATE OF BOARD GOVERNANCE MEETING 15th APRIL

DATE OF NEXT MEETING 26th APRIL