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Ashbourne Reborn Programme Board

Minutes of a Ashbourne Reborn Programme Board meeting held at 1.30 pm on Tuesday, 22nd October, 2024 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Matlock, DE4 3NN.

PRESENT

Councillor David Hughes (DDDC) - In the Chair

Board Members: Councillor Anthony Bates (Ashbourne Town Council), Sue Bridgett (Ashcom), Councillor Steve Bull (DCC), Councillor Peter Dobbs (DDDC), Councillor Stuart Lees (DDDC) and Anne Wright (Ashbourne Town Team)

Present as substitute(s): Councillor Charlotte Cupit (DCC) and John Barker (Ashbourne Methodist Church)

Matt Allanson (Arcadis), Steve Capes (Director of Place and Economy), Giles Dann (Regeneration and Place Manager), Karen Henriksen (Director of Resources), Kevin Parkes (DCC Head of Professional Services - Highways Delivery), Anna Paxton (Communications Officer (Ashbourne Reborn)), Tommy Shaw (Democratic Services Team Leader) and Laura Simpson (Principal Regeneration Officer)

Note:

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APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Steve Flitter (DDDC), Councillor Simon Spencer (DCC), Tony Walker (Ashbourne Methodist Church), John Whitby MP (Derbyshire Dales Constituency) and Paul Wilson (Chief Executive)

43 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

44 - INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

45 - APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was moved by Councillor Anthony Bates, seconded by Councillor Peter Dobbs and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the minutes of the meeting of the Ashbourne Reborn Programme Board held on 20 September 2024 be approved as a correct record.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

46 - Ashbourne Reborn Programme Update

46a - Ashbourne Methodist Church Update

John Barker, Ashbourne Methodist Church, presented Board Members with an update on the progress of the Link Community Hub Project. A letter of intent had been agreed with the preferred contractor, agreeing to proceed towards establishing a formal contract by December 2024 and detailing the instructions for an initial package of preparatory works on the project in advance of the final detail of the full works package being agreed. Board Members were informed that the contractor's programme of works were due to begin on site on the 11th November 2024. It was also noted that other preparatory work was also ongoing through volunteers and smaller, specialist contractors to enable the main construction period to begin in early January. Main contractor completion on site was expected by the 19th December 2025.

Notification had been received from Natural England that the application for a Bat Licence had been successful, this would allow for works to be undertaken to the roof structures at the correct time of the year and within the terms of the licence.

Board Members congratulated the Link Community Hub Team for all their hard work completed to date.

46b - Derbyshire County Council Update

Kevin Parkes, Derbyshire County Council, provided Board Members with a progress update for the Highways and Public Realm Project. It was noted that significant progress had been made since the last meeting of the Programme Board. Matt Allanson (Arcadis) also attended the meeting in order to give an update on the financial position of the project, specifically the progress of negotiations with Galliford Try to keep the project within budgetary constraints.

Board Members were informed of the progress of the rescoping exercise. Revised designs were expected by the end of the week which would allow for work to be undertaken with the contractor to establish the revised costs. It was estimated that these revisions would bring the costs back within budgetary contingencies. This would allow for works to begin on site in January 2025 with completion by the end of the 2025 calendar year.

Matt Allanson informed the Board that following receipt of the most recent target cost information from the contractor, a list of rescoping activities had been proposed to the Project Control Board (PCB) which would be required in order to deliver the project within budget. It had been agreed that the required rescoping activities would be brought back to the PCB for final decisions following the technical review.

In relation to utilities, it was noted that a ground penetration survey had been completed to establish the depth of the utilities in the area of the proposed works. Negotiations had begun with the utility companies with the aim of avoiding any potential delays or diversions to the programme works.

Board Members were also informed of the potential for the temporary closure of St John Street to save in the region of £350,000 as it would allow for the contractor to work in a more efficient manner, with significant time and associated cost savings. It was noted that this would be a closure to traffic only, pedestrian access and delivery access to businesses would be maintained. It was also noted that the closure of St John Street was not proposed to start until after the conclusion of Shrovetide and was planned to be open again for the school summer holiday, which should help to accommodate visitor traffic and support businesses through the important summer season. It was also noted that St John St had been highlighted at this point because of the need to understand the cost saving associated with different management options. However, other temporary partial and full road closures would be required to enable the delivery of the Programme, with further detail of the traffic management approach inc. diversion routes to be confirmed by DCC as soon as possible.

46c - Progress Overview and Adjustments to Expenditure Profile

Laura Simpson, Ashbourne Reborn Programme Manager (Derbyshire Dales District Council) introduced an update report which provided Board Members with information regarding the activities undertaken to progress the Ashbourne Reborn Programme, highlighted key programme risks and set out relevant next steps.

Board Members were informed that the expenditure profile had been updated based on the information that was available at the present time provided by lead project delivery partners. Based on the rescoping proposed, partners were confident that output and outcome commitments to MHCLG could be delivered within the acceptable threshold (30%).

Due to the delays incurred to enable the necessary rescoping exercises on both projects, there was a project adjustment process to go through to move budget within the programme, reflecting a greater proportion of the construction period now falling within 2025/26 rather than 2024/25. However, Government funded LUF expenditure would still conclude within the 2025/26 financial year. Due to the scale of the movement between financial years, MHCLG approval was required to confirm the change. Agreement was therefore sought from the Board to approach MHCLG regarding the changes required to the expenditure profiles, following consideration by DDDC's Community and Environment Committee on 29/10/24, in its role on behalf of the Accountable Body. A comparison of the agreed and proposed expenditure profiles was included at Appendix 4 to the report.

It was noted that a small amount of funding had been moved into quarter 4 of 25/26 in order to allow for any final invoices to be paid following completion of the works.

Laura informed the Board of ongoing conversations with MHCLG, noting that confirmation of the process for agreeing the required changes would not be received until after the Autumn Statement on 30 October. The quarterly return process had been suspended, with an

updated form expected to be available by the first week in November. It was proposed that the current available forms be completed ready for submission and that, should these not be acceptable following MHCLG's confirmation of any changes to the process, the information be moved to the new forms and submitted.

Alongside the communications with MHCLG, John Whitby MP (Derbyshire Dales Constituency) had confirmed his support for the project and had asked for the latest details to allow him to support related submissions to MHCLG.

Councillor Hughes noted that, in addition to progressing re-scoping revisions to other scheme designs, a deliverable scheme had been identified for Shrovetide Walk. Sue Bridgett highlighted that she felt that the current plans had been downgraded in comparison to the consented scheme. Officers noted that deliverability was key and the scheme had to be adapted to reflect site constraints.

47 - COMMS UPDATE

Anna Paxton, Ashbourne Reborn Comms Officer, presented Board Members with an update on the actions taken to develop communications for the programme. The Board were informed that the Comms group had continued to meet monthly, which included representatives of each of the projects.

Recent comms included the work that had recently begun on Henmore Bridge, and information regarding the benchmarking surveys being carried out relating to user satisfaction for areas of the town centre. The benchmarking exercise was a requirement of the LUF funding and would be repeated 1, 3 and potentially 5 years after the completion of the works to measure the impact of the project.

It was also confirmed that a public meeting would be taking place on 3rd December at QEGs. Upcoming comms would focus on informing residents about the upcoming public meeting and the related drop-in sessions to be held at Ashbourne Library. It was noted with thanks that partners had re-arranged other activities to enable the 3rd December date to go ahead, as the opportunities for the public meeting were limited and the timing very important in advance of the main works.

It was moved by Councillor Peter Dobbs, seconded by Anne Wright and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

1. That progress to date be considered and that the position regarding programme, cost, deliverables and risks be received and noted.
2. That the principles of the ongoing rescoping and value engineering exercises on both projects be noted and endorsed, subject to further refinement by Project Teams and final consideration by Project Boards to bring each project within budget.
3. That the submission of a Project Adjustment Request at the earliest opportunity be approved (as required by MHCLG) based on the proposed expenditure profile in Appendix 4 to the report. That this matter also be referred to Derbyshire Dales District Council's Community and Environment Committee for final consideration prior to submission.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

48 - PROGRAMME PARTNER UPDATES

Anne Wright, Ashbourne Town Team, informed the Board that following a successful tender process a company had been appointed to further explore the feasibility of a Business Improvement District (BID) and to work on a BID development plan for Ashbourne. It was planned for communications to be distributed with the aim of involving the local community, with completion of the feasibility study planned for early 2025.

Meeting Closed: 2.38 pm

Chair