

Greater Norwich Growth Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday 17 March 2020

Time: 2.00pm

Venue: Cranworth Room, County Hall, Norfolk County Council, NR1 2DH

Present:

Board Members:

Broadland District Council:

Cllr Shaun Vincent

Norwich City Council:

Cllr Alan Waters

South Norfolk Council:

Cllr John Fuller (by video link)

Norfolk County Council:

Cllr Andrew Proctor (Chair)

In attendance:

Mike Augur

Grace Burke

Matt Tracey

Officers:

Trevor Holden
Phil Courtier

Graham Nelson

Trevor Holden
Phil Courtier

Vince Muspratt

Projects Manager, Norfolk County Council

Greater Norwich Project Team Leader

Growth and Infrastructure Group
Manager, Norfolk County Council

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Andrew Proctor informed the meeting that he had sat on the Board of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, when it had awarded funding of £250,000 to the Horsford Community Sports Hub (Minute No 5 - Project Change Request- GP55 Horsford Community Sports Hub).

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2019 were confirmed as a correct record.

3. INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT FUND PROJECT SHOWCASE, GP51 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ACCESS FOR ALL.

The Board was given an update on the project, which aimed to unlock a number of green infrastructure schemes over a five year period within a budget of £150,000.

Green Infrastructure trails across the Greater Norwich area had been audited for both powered wheelchair use and general accessibility and to identify the improvement works necessary to allow such access. The funding was spread across five years with new 'access improvement' projects being identified each year.

The first tranche of works were access improvements to the full length of the Boudicca Way. Match funding from landowners and businesses along the route had then been accessed to address areas where disabled access was difficult. These included: kissing gates, bridge repairs, reinstating rights of way, new fingerposts, resurfacing and drainage work. Feedback and comments received following the work had been positive and complaints had been reduced.

Although there was no data available on the number or type of users prior to the work, monitoring equipment installed since the improvements had been completed had recorded 50,000 users. Use of the footpath would continue to be monitored.

The next main project would be the Wherryman's Way. Works would also be carried out in the Diss and Harleston areas.

4. ANNUAL GROWTH PROGRAMME 2020/21

The report presented the Greater Norwich Annual Growth Programme, which set out the projects that were prioritised for delivery in 2020/21 and were to be funded either wholly or in part by the Infrastructure Investment Fund.

The Annual Growth Programme was assembled from the Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan, the draft of which was agreed by the Board on 25 November 2019. The finalised Investment Plan was then agreed by the three individual Cabinets in February 2020.

It was noted that the library self-access improvements had been completed; but it could not be confirmed if this had led to an increase in user numbers at this stage. The Board would be provided with a response on this issue via email.

The Chairman noted that education infrastructure provision had led to much discussion at the 25 November 2019 meeting and he asked the Board to note the additional £2million to support the development of the Ormiston Victory Academy allocated in the Annual Growth Programme.

RESOLVED

To agree the Greater Norwich Annual Growth Programme 2020/21.

5. PROJECT CHANGE REQUEST- GP55 HORSFORD COMMUNITY SPORTS HUB

The report presented a request for £124,277 in additional funding from the Community Sports Hub in Horsford (also known as the Nest).

The Board was advised that the project would be scaled down from the original proposal, as the roof over the 3G artificial pitch was no longer necessary, as Norwich Airport had removed its objection to floodlighting. Despite this, the project was still delivering significant outcomes. The Community Hub had also been very proactive in securing funding for the project from elsewhere raising £3.5million, as well as £500,000 in funding from Norwich City Football Club.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that the project was viable and progressing well and whilst staff security of employment could not be guaranteed, phase one was already completed and hosted thousands of participants every year. The Hub also did a lot of work with safeguarding the vulnerable and disadvantaged; for example those who might be in danger of getting involved in County Lines.

It was noted that the scheme was underfunded by £289,277 and that the additional £124,277 CIL contribution would be matched funded and would cover most of this sum.

The Board was advised that the Hub would make an important contribution to the sports facilities envisaged for the growth planned for north of the City.

It was **AGREED** that a meeting of the Greater Norwich Growth Board would be held at the Community Sports Hub.

RESOLVED

To agree the project change request, increasing the IIF allocation for GP55 Horsford Community Sports Hub by an additional £124,277.

6. GNGB'S FINANCIAL MODEL- CIL INCOME, INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT FUND AND CITY DEAL

The report provided an overview of the Board's various financial commitments and opportunities and had been drafted at the request of the Cllr Fuller in order to understand the opportunities that the Greater Norwich Growth Board had to access funding for strategically important projects.

As at 31 March 2019, the Greater Norwich authorities had collected over £15.6 million of pooled Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding since 2014, which formed the Infrastructure Investment Fund (IIF).

To March 2019, £6.757 million of the IIF had been committed to projects and £6 million to education in the Greater Norwich area.

It was estimated that by the end of 2025 cumulative CIL receipts would total £65 million.

The Board had signed a City Deal with Government, which allowed it to borrow up to £80million from the Public Works Loan Board. The borrowing was initially allocated to the following projects:

- £40million for Broadland Northway
- £10million for the Long Stratton bypass
- £10million for the central Norwich road scheme
- £20million to establish the Local Infrastructure Fund

To date, only the £40million for the Broadland Northway has been borrowed. It was noted that funding required for the Long Stratton bypass would be subject to negotiation with the developer and the County Council.

RESOLVED

To

- i. Note the finances, which we anticipate, will be available to the Board through CIL collection up to March 2025.
- ii. Note the current draw down schedule for the Public Works Loans Board borrowing as agreed through the City Deal.
- iii. Instruct the Infrastructure Delivery Board to prepare an updated City Deal Borrowing schedule, reconfirming the projects allocated to the remaining £20m of strategic infrastructure investment borrowing.

7. GREATER NORWICH PROJECT TEAM RESOURCE UPDATE

The Board was informed that following the departure of Joe Ballard in late 2019 a review of the structure of Greater Norwich Project Team had been undertaken.

Following the review, Grace Burke had been appointed as Greater Norwich Project Team Leader. The post of Senior Project Officer, who would assist Grace, was being advertised.

The Board congratulated Grace on her appointment.

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED

To exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the grounds contained in the relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

9. LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

The Board was given an update on the existing loans being administered by the Greater Norwich Project Team.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the LIF loan facility is to be closed. No new loans are to be agreed, previous applicants will not be able to reapply and applicants with an agreement in principle will no longer be able to progress to a full loan agreement.
- (ii) Any potential refinancing of existing LIF loans, will be negotiated directly with NCC as the accountable body and will sit outside of the GNGBs decision-making process.
- (iii) Subject to agreement of (i)
Instruct IDB to prepare an updated City Deal Borrowing schedule, proposing a reassignment of the £20m allocated to LIF.

The meeting closed at 2.39pm.