

**Note NQ expenditure press statement added to these minutes since originally circulated
CINDERFORD REGENERATION BOARD**

MINUTES

Wednesday 27 February 2019 at 9:30

Minutes of meeting of the Cinderford Regeneration Board held on Wednesday 27 February 2019
Cinderford Town Council Offices, Belle Vue Centre, Cinderford.

PRESENT:

Chairman:	Councillor Graham Morgan – Cinderford Town Council
Vice Chairman:	Councillor Tim Holder – Cinderford Town Council
Board Members:	Garry King – Two Rivers Housing Simon Excell – Gloucestershire County Council Councillor Terry Hale – Gloucestershire County Council Councillor Richard Leppington – Forest of Dean District Council Dave Wildin – Steam Mills Primary School Peter Williams – Forest of Dean District Council Nigel Johnson – Forest High School Tim Davis – Homes England Claire Giles – Homes England
Ex-Officio:	Wendy Jackson – Forest of Dean District Council Richard Morgan - Forest of Dean District Council

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from: Dev Chakraborty, Lewis James, Nigel Gibbons, Lynn Stacey, Ian Mean, Matt Burgess, Catherine Turner, Stuart Tait

2. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Graham Morgan welcomed everyone to the meeting.
Graham welcomed Claire Giles from Homes England – Claire told the Board she was new in post with Homes England and that the Steam Mills Housing site is within her remit.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

GM announced that two Board Members, Neil Ricketts and Matt Burgess, have opted to concentrate solely on their day-to-day activities and would therefore like to resign from the Cinderford Regeneration Board.

The Board were unanimous in offering their thanks to both Neil and Matt – they requested that a formal letter of appreciation is sent to both.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- Simon Excell – Lead Commissioner (GCC), involvement with Gloucestershire Infrastructure Investment Fund and Growth Deal.

- Councillor Richard Leppington – Cabinet Member, Forest of Dean District Council, Landowner within the Northern Quarter and related sites.
- Peter Williams – Head of Paid Service, Forest of Dean District Council, Landowner within the Northern Quarter and related sites.
- Garry King – Two Rivers Housing Chief Executive, involvement with multiple housing projects within Cinderford and the Forest of Dean. Potential interest in Site C, Cinderford Northern Quarter.

5. MINUTES OF MEETING ON 24 OCTOBER 2018 & MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Cllr Terry Hale completed his action to contact Stagecoach in relation to student safety. Stagecoach have committed to ensuring students of the new Cinderford college site are driven in to the car park/grounds. Cllr Hale suggested that the CRB formally write into the current Stagecoach consultation.

The outstanding actions would be covered in the meeting.

6. FODDC LED DEVELOPMENT

Northern Quarter Spine Road Phase 2 – design and access

Councillor Richard Leppington provided the following summary:

FoDDC has commissioned WSP, highway design consultants to provide general arrangement drawings, an ecology review and cost estimates for Phase 2 spine road. This report has been shared with GCC as agreed at the last meeting of this Board.

Northern Quarter Spine Road Phase 2 – One Public Estate

Councillor Richard Leppington provided the following summary:

In November 2018, FoDDC submitted a project outline to the One Gloucestershire Estates Board seeking support to help the next phase of delivery within the CNQ. One Gloucestershire is providing vision, leadership and strategic direction for the use of publicly owned assets in the County and includes the Gloucestershire County & District Councils, Homes England, NHS, Police, Fire & Rescue & Ambulance Service.

The One Gloucestershire Estate Board accepted the “Forest Healthy Living & Placemaking” proposal as the Gloucestershire submission to the Government’s One Public Estate Programme - round 7. This proposal was selected as the preferred bid ahead of submissions from Stroud and Gloucester. This Forest proposal sought £275,000 One Public Estate funding [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This bid included the technical work needed to prepare for Phase 2 highway and access works to unlock 3 development sites within the Cinderford Northern Quarter for further investment (1 housing & 2 employment sites).

However, I have to report that on 15th February, GCC received formal notification that the One Gloucestershire proposal for the Forest had not been successful.

Feedback confirmed a large number of applications, with funding asks totalling over £28 million. There were concerns about the additionality any OPE funding could bring to the Forest project and the potential for project delays.

Although this is another blow for the CNQ programme, the District Council is engaging with Natural England and will use their Discretionary Advice Service to clarify exactly what information will be required to enable a successful planning application to be submitted later this year.

Post Meeting Note

In a change to the initial decision the Government has now offered £100K of Sustainable Grant towards the Cinderford project. FoDDC accepted this offer and as this is recoverable grant is proposing to repay the grant at the end of the 3 year grant period.

7. LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Richard Morgan read the update on behalf of the LEP:

GFirst Lep are starting work on the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and this means:

Stakeholder Engagement

Evidence Gathering

Arriving at a point where they will work with all the key stakeholders to formalise what the LIS will look like

Cheltenham Cyber Park is a big project with 3 workstreams

One of these is the Highways Element which is in good shape thanks to GCC – they have forecast a phase 1 start for this year

They are focussed on the Future High Street Fund. LEP's Retail & High Street Business Group met in January in a bid to identify & support emerging bids coming forward from towns within the County. LEP also hosted an information event on 26th Feb where Laura Hurley from MHCLG provided a detailed presentation on the application process and offered Q&A to help improve local understanding of how this scheme and the other supporting activity will work together.

Inward Investment Programme – LEP has secured £500k ERDF funding to run a £1m programme over 2 years. Match funding has been provided from LEP (£200k), GCC/Tewkesbury/Glos City/Cheltenham (£186k). The aim is to support and grown foreign owned direct investment in the County. Two programme officers have been appointed – Ali Chafekar & Chris Lau who will be having an exploratory meeting with FoD officers on 1st March to understand the business needs and scope for new investment within the Forest.

The Links Lydney Cycleway Improvement Scheme has been signed off and will commence on site shortly.

And they are working closely with Severn and Wye Smokery on PEW / Lydney Docks

8. CINDERFORD AAP PROJECT UPDATES

a) Northern Quarter Phase 1 Spine Road – Road Adoption and Lighting

Simon Excell reported that the road is not yet adopted. There are now plans which show the adoptable area. WJ will check ownerships and circulate plans to all parties.

There has been an issue with the lighting levels around the bridge structure where the levels are too bright for the "dark corridor" for Lesser Horseshoe Bats. GCC is reviewing how refinements can be made to address brightness levels.

b) Homes England Site Marketing and Disposal

TD reported that there are still bats at Northern United but they are migrating to the new roosts. The technical pack to aid marketing of the site is being prepared and Homes England are discussing some leads with FoDDC. There is an approval process underway which TD expects to be complete by end of March. The marketing could start soon after.

WJ asked TD of any news re: Five Acres Sale to FoDDC but TD commented that the request for approval is with MHCLG and Homes England would report back when the outcome is known. TD said Homes England do understand the frustration of all stakeholders.

c) Steam Mills Village West Housing Site

Claire Giles told the Board that the site would soon be ready to go to market. The Mill Building will be disposed of as part of any sale. Works to stabilise the Mill building are ongoing.

GK commented that this was welcome news and asked whether there would be any finding available to a new site owner in order to develop the Mill Building as a Heritage Building. CG confirmed that this would be at the new site owner's discretion whether they applied for grant funding.

DW asked about potential impacts on Steam Mills School. CG confirmed that a site owner would be expected to consult with the local community and take their plans through the statutory process.

WJ offered FoDDC support with site marketing. TH supported this suggestion and CG acknowledged the offer.

d) Gloucestershire College Completion / Formal Opening Ceremony

No update was available CRB will write to the college informing them of the local election Purdah period which commences on 19th March.

e) Ecological Monitoring Work

WJ told the Board that FoDDC is leading on the monitoring work which requires the ecological mitigation for college and first phase of the spine road over a 20 year period. To date the monitoring reports for bats and newts are positive. 10 new ponds have been created and 2 new artificial roosts have Lesser Horseshoe Bats in residence. We have just commissioned another round of monitoring following confirmation of funding for a 3 year period. FoDDC will continue to make all reports available online.

Both GM and TH agreed that the ecological mitigation has been a success and we should celebrate it.

9. CRB GOVERNANCE

Communications

FoDDC received a press enquiry relating to Northern Quarter expenditure. WJ circulated FoDDC-spend amounts. TH suggested we point out the additional funding taken up by the judicial review. DW commented that there is an opportunity to tell others about the challenges in development. GK pointed out the potential for future development that the project has brought as well as the obvious successes to date.

This is the press statement that was issued in response to the media enquiry:

“Forest of Dean District Council has worked in close partnership with Homes England and Gloucestershire County Council on the regeneration of the Cinderford Northern Quarter sites since 2005.

“Our combined efforts in the first stage of the project have resulted in an exemplary new further education campus to serve young people in the area. The investment to date has not only enabled Gloucestershire College to relocate to its new facilities but has also laid the foundation for the other elements of this exciting scheme, including much needed new homes and business space. We continue to work with both councils to deliver the best outcomes for the Northern Quarter.”

Future High Streets Fund

WJ told the Board that FoDDC have been working with the Town Councils in preparation for an EOI/bid to the Future High Streets Fund. Only one of the District’s towns can apply so following Newent and Coleford’s decision not to participate, a scoring matrix will help to determine whether Cinderford or Lydney’s proposals go forward.

Cllr Leppington commented that both were strong proposals. EOIs for the £675M fund would be submitted by the 22nd March. Wendy referenced the supporting role played by GCC and Glos LEP. WJ explained that the fund is aimed at the repurposing and improvement of town centres to include bringing residential dwellings back into the town centre, improving infrastructure, increasing footfall and cosmetic enhancements. The projects outlined in the EOI would need to show that it was well-supported locally and that if successful the funding could be put to use swiftly.

Risk Register

Wendy provided an update on the Risk Register and it was agreed that Risks SO1 remains the biggest risk. RL told the Board that the District Council’s appetite for commercial investment is greater than it has ever been.

Cinderford Regeneration Environment Forum (CREF)

Tim Holder presented an update on the ERDF Wild Towns Project, provided by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust:

- We are still finalising pre-contract conditions with the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through our assessors at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The clarifications are all ones we are comfortable with. Any delays in the final Grant Funding Agreement being signed are likely to be due to their procurement

team taking time to check the details of framework contracts that form part of the project match funding.

- In the meantime we have started the project at risk and are employing three great interviewees for the roles of Fisheries Officer (based with our project partners Severn Rivers Trust), Project Officer and Claims and Control Officer (both based at GWT).
- We are currently pulling together contracts to be advertised to deliver the majority of the work, and will liaise with all of you over the course of the next few months to ensure that delivery over the next 3 years is in partnership with you as stakeholders, and funding agreements between us (where they exist) work smoothly.
- We will also be in contact to book in official meetings with you, either as part of the principal advisory group (Delivery Partners, project team and other key contacts) or as one of the regional advisory groups (Cotswolds, Stroud area and FoD). These official meetings will not replace regular meetings in all of the towns and with key landowners, stakeholders and partners where between us we think we need to meet.
- When the Grant Funding Agreement is signed we will begin publicising the project (the comms silence around Wild Towns at the moment is a conscious decision on our part not to publicise until the final GFA is signed) and will be in touch in order to ensure our communications are complementary. We will send on the final project plan and application at this stage, which will hopefully be soon.

10. AOB

GK suggested that we proactively communicate the new Health investment coming to Cinderford. WJ commented that CRB will invite Kevin Adams from the NHS to the July meeting when the specific site should be known.

11. 2019 MEETING DATES

3rd April 2019 meeting cancelled.

3rd July 2019

16th October 2019

Meeting close 11.15pm

ACTION TRACKER – CINDERFORD REGENERATION BOARD
WEDNESDAY 27th February 2019

AGENDA ITEM	NO.	ACTION	COMPLETE
3. Chairman's Announcements	1	RM to send a letter of thanks to departing Board Members	✓
5. MINUTES OF MEETING ON 24 OCTOBER & MATTERS ARISING	2	RM to formally write into the current Stagecoach consultation	✓
8. Cinderford AAP Project Updates	3	a) Northern Quarter Phase 1 Spine Road Adoption and Lighting - WJ will check ownerships and circulate plans to all parties	✓
	4	b) Northern United site - TD to send marketing pack to WJ	
	5	c) Steam Mills Village West Housing Site - CG to send marketing pack to WJ	
	6	d) GlosCol official opening - CRB will write to the college informing them of the Purdah period.	
9. CRB Governance:	7	Communications: RM to circulate Northern Quarter Expenditure press statement	✓
	8	<i>(note: added to these minutes)</i> Risk Register : RM to update Risk Register	✓
10. AOB	9	WJ to invite Glos Hospitals Trust to the next CRB Meeting	✓