

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Deal

Update Report

The most recent full meetings of the Town Deal Board took place on 8 September 2022, and 10 November 2022 (with a short meeting also held on 21 October 2022). The next meeting will be held on 12 December 2022. Agendas and minutes can be found on Milton Keynes City Council's website within the CMIS system using the meeting dates or by consulting the Town Deal website at <https://groundbreakingbletchleyandfenny.co.uk/about/meetings>.

The clerk (or her deputy) has attended all board meetings this year to represent the town council's known policies. Board meetings are not open to the public and in recent months have primarily concerned the sign off and submission to Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) business cases for the different projects. At each meeting the board is presented with an overall update on progress with all the 9 projects within the Town Deal Investment Plan via a programme report document and risk assessment. Following review of this specific projects are discussed. A high-level risk assessment is also considered and currently the chief risk to the overall programme is the impact of inflation. The current position is that all business cases have been signed off and submitted save for the Transport Hub and the Innovations Hub and delivery of remaining projects is at different stages.

At the September and November meetings Board members receive updates on the **Redways project**. Planning permission for sections 2 to 4 is expected shortly. Delivery of sections 3 and 4 will be first but there is currently no funding in place to delivery sections 5 to 6.

The **Revolving Development Fund** was reported on in September 2022 and additional information about the background to the acquisition by MKDP of the Brunel Centre was given. It was noted that future decisions on acquisitions would be made by the Town Deal Investment Committee to expedite these and Board members would be communicated with at an appropriate time. The development brief for the former police and fire station site was also introduced. (This has since been considered and supported by the town council.)

At the October 2022 meeting Board members received information about progress with the **Innovations Hub** (to be located on the former police and fire station site). Since then a full feasibility study has been started and a full business case is due to be submitted to DLUHC by end of December 2022 to secure the funding for this project.

Councillors will remember that the Town Deal includes £3.91m for a **Transport Hub/Interchange**. This is a particularly complex project and it has become clear that an interchange with a new eastern entrance to the rail station cannot be realised within the town deal timescales given the lack of certainty over the delivery of the rail station entrance. The Board has agreed to submit a conditional full business case to DLUHC by the end of the 2022.

The **Public Realm Project** was noted at the November 2022 meeting but due to changes in personnel at Milton Keynes Council no update was provided. However the pedestrian environment review system audit has been completed though not published. The findings from this will inform development of a public realm masterplan. Since the board meeting the clerk has met with officers from MKCC to discuss next steps regarding this project and the community engagement which will be required.

The **Tech Park Bletchley Project** is in the delivery stage, the project is expected to go live in Spring/Summer 2023. The **Transformation at Bletchley Park** project is also in delivery with onsite works having begun in July 2022.

Active marketing of vacant sites by MKCC is continuing.

Finally, the **Fibre Connectivity** project has paused, City Fibre is unable to move forward with the project as it has reached its total of subsidised work and the Board is now awaiting further information about the government's Project Gigabit programme which starts in 2023.

Councillors are invited to contact the clerk with any questions on this report or any other aspect of the Town Deal.

D Shephard
Town Clerk
18 November 2022