

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Deal – Update Report

The most recent full meetings of the Town Deal Board took place on 12 December 2022, 6 January 2023 and 27 February 2023. 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>.

Either the Clerk or the Support Services Manager has attended the meetings above to represent the town council's known policies.

On 22 February 2023 Town Deal Board members were notified of the acquisition of the former Sainsbury's site by MKDP as the first official purchase of the Revolving Development Fund and the clerk notified town councillors on the same day by email. The purchase followed ongoing discussions with the owners for some time and added a key jigsaw piece to the land assembled in public ownership for regeneration of the area. It also gave MKCC control of a building that had been vacant for some time and was associated with vandalism and ASB. Board members were notified that the immediate plans for the building were to progress its demolition and secure the area comprehensively yet attractively in order to stop the onsite issues.

MKDP and MKCC now control a large area of land in the centre of Bletchley and this will enable a comprehensive Development Brief to be brought forward for the combined Brunel, Sainsburys and associated car park area.

Town Deal Projects Update

Project	Update Summary
PROJECT 1 (£3,050,000) Innovation Hub	The Feasibility Study and Business Case were presented to the Town Deal Board in January 2023 and have since been signed off. The project can progress to the next stage. This involves, securing an operator via a pre-let as a long-term partner for the Council and Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP). The location for the Innovation Hub will be on the former Police and Fire Station site. The time scale for the project will depend on operator interest.
PROJECT 2 (£8,910,000) Revolving Development Fund	Funds have now been allocated to this project by DLUC and an Investment Committee acts on behalf of the board during the commercially sensitive acquisition process. Sainsbury's site is first formal acquisition by the RDF (though other properties owned by MKDP and MKCC).
PROJECT 3 (£3,910,000) Transport Hub/Interchange	The business case for this project was approved by DLUC in February 2023 and detailed design and costings are currently being developed. The timescale for a full design and costings is towards the end of this year.
PROJECT 4 (£2,101,655) Public Realm Improvements	Funding approved by DLUC but will arrive during the financial year 23-24. The project is centred on Queensway and Aylesbury St, and red line public realm intervention plans are being produced. It is anticipated that these will be made available to the Town Council for comment and feedback on how the funding may be split between Queensway and Aylesbury St. This is a collaborative project

	involving Highways, Economic Development and other MKCC departments.
PROJECT 5 (£760,000) Redway Improvements	Work is currently ongoing on Section 3 of the Redway improvements. Tree/vegetation clearance started in January, construction of S3 main works is due to start towards the end of March and continue to June 2023. Preliminary works to Section 4 will commence in June 2023 with the main works starting in August (after the badger has been moved) and run until December 2023. To provide a safe working area, it will be necessary to close part of Footpath No.27 (Bletchley) and Footpath No.28 (Bletchley) for the duration of the works (Jan- Dec). In addition, the concrete access road and the Blue Lagoon Nature Reserve Car Park will be closed for the duration of Section 3 (March – June).
PROJECT 6 (£306,000) Tech Park Bletchley	The Tech Park project is well advanced with the launch scheduled for June 2023 and is currently on track.
PROJECT 7 (£2,240,000) Transformation at Bletchley Park	Bletchley Park Project is well advanced and on schedule, though there have been some issues caused by changes to inflation.
PROJECT 8 (£100,000) Fibre Connectivity	No further update since the last report to council, information is awaited from government about the Project Gigabit programme.
PROJECT 9 (£710,000) Active Marketing of vacant sites	The first Bletchley business networking event was held in January, attended by about 30 local businesses and the town clerk and Cllr Khanom were also present. The next event is scheduled for March and officers from the town council will be sharing information about how local businesses can become engaged with the town council and influence town centre events. By the next Board meeting there should be a programme of engagement in place for the remainder of 2023 and the start of 2024.

Next board meeting is scheduled for 19 June 2023.

Town Deal communications and engagement with the community

During the life of the Town Deal project some concerns have been expressed locally about the limited communications and direct engagement with the community about the Town Deal. Following the acquisition of the Sainsbury's site these concerns came to a head for some residents. These concerns have been raised at board meetings on a regular basis including at the last meeting when questions were asked about community consultation in relation to specific projects. It was confirmed at board level that further consultation with the community would be taking place in forthcoming months.

The Town Council has also received correspondence from a resident following a recent meeting organised by MKCC Councillors Nigel Long and Mohammed Khan and West

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council 28 March 2023

Bletchley Councillor Waqas Ahmad. This meeting concerned the setting up of a 'Sainsburys Area Residents Steering Group' (copy correspondence attached).

D Shephard
Town Clerk
22 March 2023