

Dudley Town Board

Board meeting no.4 – Friday 7th March 2025

**Black Country & Marches Institute of Technology
Zoological Drive, Dudley, DY1 4AL**

Attendees

Neil Thomas - Dudley College of Technology (Chair)

Rachel Corns - Dudley College of Technology

Councillor Shaukat Ali

Caroline Owen for Sonia Kumar MP

Anthony Tagg – Chief Superintendent, Local Policing Area Commander

Paul Crofts - Dudley Canal And Tunnel Trust

Angela Edwards - High Oak Youth and Community Centre

Diane Shaw - Dudley Town Centre Partnership

Adam Bradley - The Priory Community Centre

Amanda Tomlinson - Black Country Housing

Apologies:

Gemma Edwards - Black Country Chamber

Andy Gray - Dudley CVS

Hayley Andrews - West Midlands Historic Building Trust

Mark Price – Provision House

Simon Down - West Midlands Police and Crime Commission

Jacque Carman - Halesowen College

Cat Eccles MP

Councillor Paul Bradley

Observers:

Helen Martin – Dudley Council (DMBC)

Emma Atkins – Dudley Council (DMBC)

Zoe Gmaj – Dudley Council (DMBC)

Presenters:

Tom Fleming - Tom Flemming Creative Consultancy

Lee Marable – We Made That

Eleanor Langdale – We Made That

Agenda item	Key Information	Actions	Timescale
1. Welcome	Neil Thomas welcomed everyone and invited introductions from those present.		
2. Notes and actions from the last meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EA to email those with declarations and biogs missing directly for return Completed with thanks to those who have returned them. Small number still outstanding which must be completed and returned to continue Board membership • Lorna to share social media content which can be shared and promoted by the Board. Completed directly after the last meeting • Eton/Star academies project to be a future agenda item. Noted on forward plan at the bottom of the agenda. Currently no update on the Eton proposal to share. • Dudley Market and Interchange were noted as projects there was interest in taking a deeper dive into on future agendas. Noted on forward plan at the bottom of the agenda. Propose inviting TfWM to present on Interchange at the next meeting. 	Those with Declarations of Interest and biogs outstanding to complete and return immediately	As soon as possible
3. Cultural Infrastructure – We Made That and Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy	<p>Eleanor, Lee and Tom presented on the work which has been commissioned by WMCA and which applies to Dudley. Noted that the work is to complete by end of May so the Board would welcome another presentation on the findings or a copy of the report as this will be useful to contribute to the development of the Regeneration Plan.</p> <p>CO raised on behalf of Sonia Kumar MP that Meadow Road Youth Centre is closing</p>	All Board members to send details of places and people relevant to the Cultural Infrastructure project to Emma Atkins who will pass them on to Eleanor and Lee.	

<p>4. Long Term Plan for Towns Update and Capacity Funding</p>	<p>Emma presented the paper circulated, together with an update following Government’s publication of initial guidance for the programme, now rebranded as Plan for Neighbourhoods (PfN) on 4th March 2025, noting what is known, what is yet to follow and similarities/differences between the old programme and the new guidance.</p> <p>Noting the 22nd April deadline for governance and boundary confirmation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members were asked if they were happy for the previously proposed boundary changes to be resubmitted submit to the guidance staying the same in relation to what was permissible. Board agreed subject to the boundary map being recirculated and board members not in attendance having an opportunity to comment • Board members were also asked if they were happy to continue acting as the Board, noting there are some recognised gaps and likely changes in the new detailed guidance. Board agreed subject to revised guidance and board members not in attendance having an opportunity to comment <p>Board asked for a mapping exercise to be undertaken to understand existing research, projects and funding against the 8 new themes to be captured. Agreed this could be funded through the capacity funding.</p> <p>Board reaffirmed its commitment to grassroots engagement and exploring opportunities to fund of quick wins to gain momentum and confidence in the community.</p>	<p>Emma Atkins to recirculate the boundary proposals and ask the Board for approval to resubmit. Also to confirm all Board members are happy to continue in their roles on the Board.</p> <p>DMBC to arrange for mapping exercise against 8 PfN themes to be completed</p>	
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	<p>Board agreed to commence PR activity to raise the profile of the funding. This to include an opportunity for groups to hold some initial conversations with their members with some financial and upskilling support. Also an offer of Board members to attend to talk about the programme if it would be helpful. Agreed this to be funded through the capacity funding</p> <p>Board agreed that investment to support Board development, decision making and prioritisation to be made utilising capacity funding. This to include succession planning, board culture and cohesiveness, merits of charitable status, responsibilities held and how to manage.</p> <p>Board membership – process as it currently stands is set out in the ToR. Board members to think about possible future representatives to be discussed and progressed when detailed guidance is published. The Chair noted that while stepping back from the College he would be eligible to continue on the Board under the new guidance so is happy to continue as Chair for now and to explore interest in the role with any interested parties.</p>	<p>DMBC to explore how PR activity, group engagement/conversation events board leadership to be delivered.</p>	
<p>5. Board Membership Update</p>	<p>Covered under the previous item</p>	<p>.</p>	
<p>6. Dudley Town Centre project highlight report</p>	<p>EA presented the paper by exception noting that the next Towns Fund monitoring form would need to be presented to the next meeting.</p> <p>Board agreed Metro and Interchange as items for the next agenda.</p>	<p>Emma Atkins to arrange for TfWM to present on Metro and Interchange at the next Board meeting.</p>	

7. AOB	Board discussed future meetings and agreed to put 18 months' worth of meeting dates in the diary to enable members to be able to attend, noting that additional meetings may be required as needed. Meetings to be quarterly.	Emma Atkins to liaise for 18 months' worth of quarterly meetings to be put in diaries.	
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