STOCKPORT MDC

FINAL MINUTES

Meeting: **Meeting of the Board of the Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation**

Date: **6 June 2024**

Time: **02.00pm – 03.30pm**

Place: **Stockport MDC Office, 4-6 Grand Central, Stockport, SK1 3TA**

Present:

Board Members
Eamonn Boylan (Chair)
Councillor Mark Hunter (Leader of Stockport Council and Liberal Democrat Group Leader)
Councillor David Meller (Labour Group Leader – Stockport Council) (remotely)
Councillor Anna Charles-Jones (Independent Ratepayers Group Leader – Stockport Council)
Caroline Simpson (Chief Executive - Stockport Council)
Danielle Gillespie (Director – Homes England)
Dr Louise Brooke-Smith, OBE (Private Sector Board Member)
Simon Marshall (Private Sector Board Member)
Debbie Francis (Private Sector Board Member) (remotely)

Observers
Councillor Gary Lawson (Green Party Group Leader – Stockport Council)
Councillor Matt Wynne (Edgeley Community Association Group Leader – Stockport Council)

Officers of the Corporation
Paul Richards (Chief Executive)
Michael Cullen (Chief Finance Officer)
Jessica Greenhalgh (Corporation Solicitor)
Frances Jones (Head of Strategy & Operations)

1. Welcome and Chair's Opening Remarks

1.1 The Chair welcomed those present to the Board meeting of Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC).

1.2 The Board is recommended to agree to exclude the public and press from the meeting, in accordance with Part 1, paragraph 3 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), in order to consider items 9 and 14 on the agenda.

1.3 The Board agreed that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of items 9 and 14 on the agenda in accordance with paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), in that such items would be likely to involve the disclosure of information relating to the business affairs of the MDC.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Simon Nokes (Executive Director of Strategy & Policy - Greater Manchester Combined Authority).

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 Paul Richards declared his directorship of Stockport Hotel Management Company Limited, Stockport Exchange Phase 2 Limited and Stockport Exchange Phase 3 Limited. The companies each have an interest at Stockport Exchange as it lies within the MDC boundary. No further action required.

3.2 Danielle Gillespie declared her position as a board member of ECF (General Partner) Limited (the investor partner and development manager on Stockport 8). No further action required.

3.3 There were no other declarations of interest relevant to items on the agenda.

4. Approval of Minutes of the Meeting Held on 26 March 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2024 were accepted as an accurate record.

5. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

5.1 The Finance Director of the MDC presented a report detailing the requirement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 for the MDC to complete and publish an Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). This noted that legislation required the AGAR to be submitted to the MDC's appointed external auditors by Monday 1 July 2024 along with the necessary backing documents and the commencement date for the exercise of public rights. It was noted that last years' AGAR had not met the requirements for the exercise of public rights due to exceptional circumstances which were disclosed in this year's AGAR.

The Board confirmed that the AGAR was reviewed and approved, and agreed to the following recommendations:

5.1.1 That the Chair and Chief Executive sign section 1 of the AGAR;
5.1.2 That the Chair signs section 2 of the AGAR;
5.1.3 That the period for exercise of public rights of Friday 14 June 2024 to Thursday 25 July 2024 is agreed and approved;

STOCKPORT MDC

5.1.4 That form 16 'Making Provision for the Exercise of Public Rights 2023-24' will be published the day prior to the commencement date of the period for exercise of public rights, which will be Thursday 13 June 2024.

5.2 The Chair and Chief Executive then proceeded to sign the AGAR as follows and in the following order:

5.2.1 Section 1 by the Chair and the Chief Executive;
5.2.2 Section 2 by the Chair.

6. External Governance Review Draft Terms of Reference

6.1 Fran Jones (MDC Head of Strategy and Operations) reported on the Governance Review that the MDC has instructed Manchester City Council (MCC) to undertake at the request of the GMCA's Monitoring Officer. It was noted that this is an appropriate opportunity to review the governance arrangements as the MDC had been in operation for 5 years.

6.2 It was clarified to the Board that the team at MCC conducting the review were responsible for setting up the MDC but had not been involved since its incorporation. The Board queried the scope of the review and whether it would consider the make-up of the Board, noting that it would be opposed to a potential change to the political representation. It was noted that the likelihood of any such change being recommended appears low given MCC's involvement in its incorporation. It was confirmed that the MDC team would report back to the Board at the September meeting.

7. Lord Bob Kerslake Memorial Bursary

7.1 The Chief Executive reported on the Memorial Bursary, noting that it was agreed some time ago with the detail now being worked through to continue Sir Bob Kerslake's legacy by supporting talented, motivated young people from Stockport to pursue their own passions and interests through undergraduate study. The report confirmed that the bursary will consist of a grant of £3,000 per year for the duration of the course of study (up to a maximum of three years) with the 2024/25 bursary being ringfenced for an applicant from Stockport with experience of the care system.

7.2 The Board discussed transparency around future bursary awards; and the Chair agreed to check whether Anne Kerslake would like to be involved in the award process.

8. Final Draft MDC Strategic Business Plan, 2024-29

8.1 Fran Jones (MDC Head of Strategy and Operations) reported on the MDC Strategic Business Plan 2024-29 (SBP). It was noted that the Board had provided feedback on the SBP presented at the last meeting and it was now with Stockport Council and GMCA for approval, after which it could be adopted by the MDC. A piece of work was proposed to identify outcomes and associated metrics to understand the impact of interventions for discussion at a separate workshop with ideas presented at the next board meeting in September.

8.2 The Board discussed the financial impact of public realm improvement and the benefit in looking at the impact between improved public realm; attraction of place; and increased business rates etc. to support the spend and maintenance of public realm.

9. Delivering The Strategic Business Plan Update Report (Confidential)

Minutes contained in confidential appendix.

10. Communications Update

10.1 Fran Jones (MDC Head of Strategy and Operations) presented an update on the communications strategy with apologies for the absence of Andrea Lingley, Assistant Director for Communications and Engagement at Stockport Council. The presentation included an update on PR activity over the last couple of months highlighting the success of the Interchange with its links to the wider MDC messaging.

10.2 The Board discussed planned activity and the 5 years of MDC campaign focus; noting the positivity of the Autumn celebration event; and the work on local comms with welcome to Stockport packs for new residents in the Interchange. It was noted that the event in London had been kicked back but it was being worked on with assurance that the Board would receive an update when available.

11. Meanwhile Use Update

11.1 The Chief Executive of the MDC presented an update on meanwhile use. The presentation looked at the December 23 Task & Finish Group that was convened to review meanwhile use activity to date and the important outcomes that it raised.

11.2 The Board noted with positivity that conversations had taken place with Rich Studios; and Wild in Art and that there was a continuing collaboration with higher educational institutions. The Board noted that the expectation was to be in occupation at some point through Summer, with the potential to incorporate it into the Autumn event.

12. Draft Town Centre Residential Design Guide

12.1 Emma Curle, Assistant Director for Place Making and Planning and Hannah Mitchell, Senior Planning and Policy Officer at Stockport Council presented the draft town centre residential design guide to the Board.

12.2 The presentation set-out the purpose and scope of the guide. It went on to explain that the guide sets out key components of successful town centre living to be applied to all residential developments; with design guidance developed for each of the town centre character areas. It was also noted that an area wide design code was being prepared in accordance with the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act.

12.3 The Board noted that the design guide is subject to a consultation process that runs until 3 July, after which feedback would be collated, required changes made and the guide published. **The Board agreed that members would take the draft design code away, provide feedback and the Board would then collate all comments as a combined MDC response.**

12.4 The Board considered the design guide, noting the excellence of the work and calibre of the team. The Board noted that there was nothing about connectivity flagging the need to be clear on how we are designing characteristics and capacity of streets to accommodate cars; that there was a comment around reference to wheelchair use and asked that it is reworded to say 'encouraged'; and raised the importance of highlighting the maintenance and management of public realm which needs to be identified by developers and investors at the start.

12.5 The Board noted the decision to keep planning powers in Stockport Council and discussed the challenges around capacity faced by local authorities across the planning sector. It was confirmed that work is taking place to address those challenges including utilisation of DHLUC funding.

13. MDC Construction Hub Implementation Plan

13.1 Fran Jones (MDC Head of Strategy and Operations) reported on the MDC Construction Hub Implementation Plan. The report set-out the background to the creation of the One Stockport Construction Hub; provided an update on its implementation through a pathfinder year, detailing four work packages designed as the first phase of Hub activity. The report went on to consider long-term funding options and next steps.

13.2 The Board queried the unsuccessful UKSPF bid for the brokerage service work package and noted that the team had requested more feedback on this.

13.3 The Board discussed FE places in construction and concerns around sufficiency of technical skills, lack of courses and people to teach. The Board considered ways to resolve this, noting a potential link with the Lord Bob Kerslake Memorial Bursary; and how it might link to the MBAC with the potential to dedicate a session on this issue with the appropriate partners from GM.

13.4 It was noted that feedback from contractors is that the workforce for construction jobs are not willing to travel, there is a direct link between more resource locally and unlocking more jobs locally given the current dynamic.

14. Risk Register (Confidential)

Minutes contained in confidential appendix.

15. Any Other Business

An update was provided on the Chair's role, with the current Chair agreeing to stay on into the Autumn.

16. Close of Meeting

The meeting ended at 03.30pm.