



# **WE ARE COLCHESTER**

## **BOARD MEETING**

### **26 May 2022**

### **DECISIONS & ACTION POINTS**

## **Present:**

**Simon Blaxill, Kent Blaxill (Chair)**  
**Adam Bryan, SELEP**  
**Ashleigh Seymour-Rutherford, COLBEA**  
**Chris Rhodes, Hiscox**  
**Lucy Johnson, University of Essex**  
**Cllr Tom Cunningham, Essex County Council**  
**Steve Evison, Essex County Council**  
**Alison Jennings, Homes England**

## **Apologies:**

**Pam Donnelly, Colchester Borough Council**  
**Tracy Rudling, Community360**  
**Mark Jarman-Howe, NE Essex Alliance**  
**Shona Johnstone, Homes England**  
**Cllr David King, Colchester Borough Council**  
**Will Quince MP, Conservative Party**

## **Others attending:**

**Lindsay Barker (CBC), Mandy Jones (CBC), Clare Ratcliffe (CBC), Amie Hall (ECC), Rob Willis (ECC), Matthew Sterling (CBC), Simon Thorp (CBC).**

## DECISIONS AND ITEMS NOTED

**1.Apologies & declarations of interest.** Apologies were noted from Pam Donnelly, Tracy Rudling, Mark Jarman-Howe, Shona Johnstone, Alison Jennings, Cllr David King and Will Quince MP. The Chair thanked Cllr Paul Dundas and Ashleigh Seymour-Rutherford for their contributions, welcoming Pam Donnelly and Cllr David King to the Board.

**2. Progress report.** The Board noted a Programme Progress Report which had been circulated in advance. The programme is currently RAG rated Green, and spend is in line with budget. Key risks continue to be cost escalation (particularly the public realm schemes), land ownership and planning (Greenstead). Land ownership issues are expected to be resolved shortly.

**3. Funding.** The Board noted that Summary documents, financial profiles and project adjustments had subject to formal written confirmation been agreed by government and funding expected to be released for 2022/23 week commencing 25 July 2022 (with £910k having already been advanced to the programme). This equates to some £6m budgeted spend in 2022/23 across the 5 umbrella themes within which the 14 projects are nested, with a key focus on projects starting delivery early – Transformed Youth Facilities, Digital Skills Hub, Town Centre & Gateways and 5G.

**4. Service Level Agreements.** The Board noted that 8 of the 14 projects are led by partner organisations Essex County Council, North Essex Heritage and Community360. Service Level Agreements (SLAs) will be finalised before funding is released and delivery commences. The SLAs, reviewed by the Accountable Body's Section 151 Officer and Governance Manager, set out in spirit and practice how projects will be monitored and delivered including reporting, payment arrangements and issue resolution. Outside the scope of these SLAs, Community360 will also be leading Heart of Greenstead project engagement work.

**5. Monitoring and reporting.** The Board noted that Colchester Borough Council as Accountable Body are required to make a monitoring return in June 2022 to DLUHC. This is expected to be a brief return as only 5% advance funding has so far been received. A further more detailed return will be made in December 2022 with input from Project Leads encompassing the indicators set out in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.

**6. Engagement.** The Board noted that a range of activity had recently taken place, including a Heart of Greenstead public consultation with over 1,300 responses from the community including schools and strong interest in joining a community taskforce; Greenstead taskforce information sessions; an update to the One Colchester Board on Transformed Youth Facilities and a presentation to the Rotary Club.

In June, a BEIS site visit is planned; Town Centre project tour by the Deputy Police and Fire Commissioner; BID Town Centre tour; Civic Society follow up meeting; All Member Town Centre and Heart of Greenstead site tours and various council officer site visits.

It was noted that Essex County Council Members should be invited to relevant project visits.

**An in person workshop led by The Nichols Group is also planned following a survey of project leads, which will focus on areas of shared opportunity or concern – cost management, co-funding opportunities and increasing impact through project monitoring.**

**7. Project updates. It is planned that project owner-led updates will be brought to future Board meetings, particularly projects being delivered early, to enable more detailed insight and conversations around progress.**

**8. Future Board remit. The Board noted an update and presentation which reflected on the background, current remit and future opportunities for We Are Colchester to build on successes to date for Town Deal. A positive and supportive conversation took place highlighting the Board's agreement to expand its terms of reference and strengthen its membership in order to continue its strategic role in Town Deal and also be a consultee for emerging opportunities including Levelling Up Fund. Revised terms of reference will be drafted accordingly for agreement.**

## **9. Decisions.**

**The Board agreed it would adopt a revised and expanded remit – Programme Office to draft updated Terms of Reference for agreement.**

**The Board agreed that Officers of the Accountable Body should explore opportunities and then make recommendations to expand Board membership, particularly in Education and Health sectors, potentially also Transport.**

**The Board agreed that it should meet Quarterly during project delivery phase, more frequently should this be required. It also agreed that such meetings should be held virtually for ‘business as usual’ updates and in person where practical (possibly rotating around appropriate project sites) when in person discussion would be helpful to considering emerging opportunities and issues. The Board also noted a recommendation to avoid ‘hybrid’ online / in person meetings where possible.**

### **Future meetings:**

**Thursday 18 August 2022 – 12 noon – MS Teams or In Person to be confirmed**

**Thursday 17 November 2022 – 12 noon**

**Thursday 23 February 2023 – 12 noon**

**Thursday 25 May 2023 – 12 noon**