

ACTION LOG

Kidsgrove Town Deal Board

APPROVED

29th May 2025, 14.09 – 15.18

Present: Board members: Gill Burnett (GB) - Sports Centre; Rob Leese (RL) - DWP; Josephine Locke (JL) - KTCCIC; Simon Martin (SM) - CRT; Zoe Papiernik-Bloor (Audience Agency); Cllr Simon Tagg (ST) – NuLBC; Rob Timmis (RT) - King’s Academy; Emily Verow (EV) - King’s Academy; Cllr Paul Waring (PW) - Kidsgrove TC.

Support Officers: NuLBC - Trudi Barnard (TB), Elaine Burgess (EB), Hal Higgins (HH), Simon McEneny (SMc), Others: EMR - Bali Sethi (BS); King’s Academy – Mandy Prince; MP’s Office – Emily Jones.

Apologies - Board: James Dennison (JD) – CRT; Lisa Healings (LH) - VAST; Paul Hodgkinson (PH) – Keele Uni; David Williams (DW) – MP;

Apologies – other: Alex Collins (BEIS/MHCLG); SCC - Gail Edwards (GE); Brian Meredith (BM), Sarah Wilkes (SW).

	Issue	Action	By	Due Date	Compl
1.	Welcome & introductions Former Chair, Dan Gray, has now resigned from the KTD Board and was warmly thanked for his contribution. This leaves a vacancy for the chair (see item 3).				
2.	Declarations of interest None received.				
3.	Election of Chair No nominations were received at the meeting. Board members agreed that the vice-chair would chair this meeting. Nominations invited by email prior to the next meeting. Members were reminded that the chair should not represent a public sector organisation.	Nominations for chair to be sent to TB (self-nomination is permitted)	ALL	30 Jun 2025	Ongoing
4.	Action Log of previous meeting was accepted as a true record.	Post on website	TB	12 Jun 2025	Completed
5.	Vice-Chair’s report to the Board (circulated prior to meeting) The vice-chair went through the report with the Board. Q&A:				

	EV asked about the role of the Board if all projects would be substantially complete by Mar 2027. Would there be scope to continue to review projects and would terms of reference be updated? SMc explained that monitoring of outputs would continue and that MHCLG would likely issue guidance on this at a later date.	Report to Board if any information received from MHCLG	TB	Ongoing	Ongoing
6.	Alternative Shared Service Hub Projects – Approval to submit Project Adjustment Request (PAR) (paper circulated ahead of meeting) At the January Board meeting it was agreed that assistance would be sought in preparing the PARs. NuLBC has now appointed Stantec, following a competitive tender process. Once Board has agreed the way forward, the PARs will be prepared (and circulated to Board ahead of submission to MHCLG). MHCLG have confirmed that they will support Board in developing the PARs. Stantec is looking at the economic case for all the projects listed below. The amalgamated Benefit:Cost ratio (BCR) is currently a healthy 2.2 (i.e. each £1 of investment yields £2.20 in benefits). • Community facility at King’s Academy • Access from canal to SSH – CRT has been able to include one of the access paths to the proposed SSH facility within its current KTD funding. • Enterprise units • Public realm options – Highways are continuing to develop proposals. A consultation with potentially affected businesses has been conducted. Architects have been appointed and current work includes locating underground services and liaising with police. • Unadopted service road for Victoria Hall. The Kidsgrove Town Council has passed a resolution to adopt this road if it is resurfaced. Officers have discussed the proposals with MHCLG who are happy for them to be worked up but have requested separate PARs for each element (SSH, business units, public realm). The following decisions have been taken. Board members showed approval by raising hands. <i>NB: Includes absent board member votes.</i> a) The Board approves the Community Hub for delivery with an allocation of not to exceed £1.5m of Town Deal Funding. (10 for, 1 abstention).				

	b) The Board approves the delivery of Path A and the allocation of not to exceed £31,000 of Town Deal Funding. (11 for). c) The Board note the value for money challenge associated with Path C and do not pursue delivery of this element. (10 for, 1 abstention). d) The Board approve the Enterprise units at Meadows Road for delivery with an allocation of not to exceed £1.5m of Town Deal Funding. (10 for, 1 abstention) e) That Board approve the canal tow path estimated saving of £169,000 be held as contingency pending the development of further cost estimates for project delivery, subject to completion by end Sept 2025. (10 for, 1 abstention). f) That the Council submit the requisite Project Adjustment Forms (PARs) to MHCLG for their assessment and approval. PARs to be circulated to Board or comment ahead of submission to MHCLG. (11 for). In respect of the project elements that are approved for delivery it is recommended that: g) As Kidsgrove Town Council has resolved to adopt the access road at Victoria Hall then a small allocation from the existing public realm element of the Shared Service Hub project be used to upgrade the state of this road. (10 for, 1 abstention). <i>As the meeting was not quorate, absent board members were invited to comment on the proposals. Numbers above include their responses.</i>	Absent board members to indicate their approval or otherwise of the decisions	ALL	3 Jun 2025	Completed
7.	Kidsgrove Station – Future Options (EMR Presentation circulated ahead of meeting) BS went the through the presentation, reminding the Board that ground investigation (GI) was required to understand the level of remediation required and that all options, bar one (building on previously remediated land), exceeded the TD funding allocation. Subsequent to the optioneering report, MHCLG revised their previous advice on undertaking GI and now said that GI without confirmed funding for remediation would not be considered a good use of public money. Q&A: PW queried if the funding would be lost if the station did not go ahead. EB responded that, although the Heads of Terms states money should be returned, MHCLG has confirmed that money can be reallocated to extensions of existing projects. Board will be asked to consider contingency projects, if necessary, at a subsequent meeting.	Absent board members to indicate their approval or otherwise of the decisions.	ALL	3 Jun 2025	Completed

ZPB asked what were the limitations for the refurb option? BS replied that anything requiring building regulations would trigger GI. EV queried if there was a danger the funding was being used on a precarious station or to carry out EMR/NR responsibilities for the station? Would enough be done to keep the station alive for the people of Kidsgrove? GB also asked if NR would consider closing the station if it was not upgraded. BS reiterated that there were no plans to close the station and confirmed that EMR/NR would only do essential maintenance, TD funding would not be used to cover statutory obligations. EB added that Stantec would be considering deadweight in their BCR calculations. Decisions required. NB: Includes absent board member votes. • Recommendation 1: Reject all options involving Ground Investigation. (11 for). ○ Suspend all the enabling workstreams explaining to all stakeholders involved the reasons for doing so. ○ The risk of continuing with each of these is both reputational damage (we are not being very transparent with the supply chain) and abortive works (we are incurring a lot of resource cost for the project focusing on these items). • Recommendation 2: Reject option to build a new station on previously remediated land (10 for, 1 abstention). ○ A number of risks were outlined in the presentation, including the probable need to demolish the existing station, which would likely require GI and remediation. • Recommendation 3: Approve option to refurbish the existing station within the constraints of no GI or remediation required, subject to MHCLG then reviewing and approving this to proceed. (11 for). ○ EMR consultants MAKE are working with NR to ensure there will be no need for GI with this option. ○ The Benefit-Cost ratio (BCR) must be 1.2 or greater. ○ Proposal expected mid-June. Stantec will then need to calculate BCR. A heavily caveated report from make will be available in July which will go to NR for review, with a full report to Board in Sept/Oct 2025. As the meeting was not quorate, absent board members were invited to comment on the proposals. Numbers above include their responses.	KTD Board meeting to be arranged for July 2025.	TB	10 Jun 2025	Completed
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	The interim report from EMR, including Stantec's BCR calculations will be discussed at a KTD Board meeting in July 2025. MHCLG have requested that Board looks at alternative projects in the case of underspend on the station project. A call for project ideas went out to Board members on 24 May 2025. A number of suggestions were received which need to be worked up ahead of presentation to Board at the earliest opportunity. This will include economic assessment by Stantec. DECISION: That Board approves NuLBC officers working up contingency projects for review by Board. (11 for)	NuLBC Officers to work up contingency projects.	TB/EB	Jul 2025	Ongoing
8.	AOB Decision on reducing quoracy: Current membership was discussed. This included contacting a board member with a poor attendance record if they wished to continue on the Board. Suggestions for additional Board members were also invited to be submitted for consideration at future meetings. The KTD board has had good attendance over the years but having lost a few members recently, reducing quoracy for the meetings from the current 10 to 7 was discussed to accommodate the recent reduction in numbers. Newcastle Town Deal has recently undertaken a similar exercise. (11 for) <i>NB: Includes absent board member votes.</i>	Contact member re continuing on Board. Submit potential future members. Absent board members to indicate approval or otherwise of decision.	TB ALL TB/ST	3 Jun 2025 Ongoing 3 Jun 2025	Completed Ongoing Completed
9.	Date of next meeting Date/venue to be arranged for July 2025.	Confirm date/venue	TB	TBC	Completed

Abbreviations:

BCR – Benefit Cost Ratio
 CRT – Canal & River Trust
 EMR – East Midlands Rail
 GI – Ground investigation
 KTCIC – Kidsgrove Town Centre CIC
 KTD – Kidsgrove Town Deal

MHCLG – Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Govt
 NuLBC – Newcastle Borough Council
 NR – Network Rail
 PAR – Project Adjustment Request
 SCC – Staffordshire County Council
 SSH – Shared Service Hub