ACTION LOG

Kidsgrove Town Deal Board

APPROVED

25th September 2025, 16:00 – 17:21

Present: Board members: Joanne Bowyer (JB) - DWP**;** James Dennison (JD) – CRT; Lisa Healings (LH) - VAST; Paul Hodgkinson (PH) – Keele Uni; Josephine Locke (JL) - KTCCIC; Martin Murray (MM) – SCC; Tom Nadin (TN) – Chamber of Commerce; Zoe Papiernik-Bloor (ZPB) - 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), Anthony Harold (AH); Hal Higgins (HH); Simon McEneny (SMc), Brian Meredith (BM), SCC - Gail Edwards (GE); **Others**: EMR – Dan Robson (DR); MP office - Emily Jones (EJ).

Apologies - Board: Gill Burnett (GB) - Sports Centre; Simon Martin (SM) - CRT; David Williams (DW) – MP.
Apologies – other: Alex Collins (BEIS/MHCLG); Elaine Burgess (NuLBC), Sarah Wilkes (NuLBC).

	Issue	Action	By	Due Date	Compl
1.	**Welcome & introductions** In the absence of an elected chair, ST (vice-chair) led the meeting. See item 3. Meeting was quorate.				
2.	**Declarations of interest** None received.				
3.	**Election of Chair** No nominations received to date. Vice-chair chaired this meeting. Nominations invited by email prior to next meeting. Recently announced changes in the funding programme (see item 5) give more flexibility to Town Deal Boards, however a chair from a non-public sector organisation is still desirable.	Nominations for chair to be sent to TB (self-nomination is permitted)	ALL	Ongoing	Ongoing
4.	**Action Log** of previous meeting was accepted as a true record.	Post on website	TB	09.10.25	Done
5.	**Changes to Town Deal governance and reporting** Full information about the recent funding simplification for Town Deals was circulated to Board members on 11 Sept 2025. Details can be found on Simplifying the funding landscape for local authorities – GOV.UK	Read new guidance. Any queries – contact NuLBC officers	ALL	DONM	Done

	Key changes: • Funds now brought together as Local Regeneration Fund. • Reducing the Project Adjustment Request process, giving greater powers and flexibility to local authorities, overcoming barriers to progress caused by changing conditions as projects have developed. • Simplified and combined payments at set intervals providing greater certainty for local authorities to plan. • Reduced reporting requirements to central government. • Reduction in number of performance indicators from 150 to 45 and reported at programme level rather than individual projects.				
6a.	**Sub-group reports – Public Realm** Briefing note from sub-group previously circulated to Board. Key points: • £1.8m allocated to this project, covering King's Street precinct improvements, demolition of former Brown's garage, toilets upgrade, active travel/green route. • Planning application submitted July 2025, decision expected Nov 2025. • Progress so far: toilet refurb underway (completion Oct 2025), consultation event planned for 18 Oct 2025. • Brown's garage site will be used as temporary car park during work on main car parks, which will close when work complete and site will be redeveloped (future use not confirmed as yet). Q&A: Is there a procurement strategy the project? Yes – HH has procured three quotes for the work. DECISION: There is a cost for the demolition work (c.£25k). Is the board happy to approve this expenditure? Board members present at the meeting showed approval by raising hands. All for proposal, no abstentions.	Board to note report. Any board members wishing to join subgroup contact TB.	ALL TB	Ongoing	Ongoing
6b.	**Sub-group reports – Highways** Briefing note from sub-group previously circulated to Board. Key points: • £1m allocated to project. Project comprises ○ One-way system on Market St, new lighting, parking arrangements and raised pedestrian crossing.				

	○ Station Rd and Meadows Rd one-way between A50 Liverpool/The Avenue • Informal consultation – 487 letter drops/21 responses. All reviewed, followed up and designs amended as per the report. • Project originally included a ban on the right-hand turn at Heathcote Street. However, following consultation and traffic flow review it is now proposed to drop this element as this may cause a barrier to pedestrians/impact on traffic flow. DECISION: Is the Board happy to note and endorse this change? Board members present at the meeting showed approval by raising hands. All for proposal, no abstentions. DECISION: Does the Board agree for the funding saved from not carrying out work on Heathcote Street to be used for pavement improvements outside the shops on Liverpool Rd and improve the gateway area along The Avenue in front of Library/former post office – see also public realm update. Board members present at the meeting showed approval by raising hands. All for proposal, no abstentions.	Board to note report. Any board members wishing to join subgroup contact TB	ALL TB	Ongoing	Ongoing
6c.	**Sub-group reports – Enterprise Units** Briefing note from sub-group previously circulated to Board. Key points: • £1.5m allocated to project to construct three enterprise units and redesign the Meadows Road car park, creating around 20 spaces including one dedicated bay for each unit. • Each unit will be approximately 41m² and include a working area, accessible toilet, kitchenette, and storeroom. • Planning approval granted on 9 Sept 2025; no mining issues found, coordination with Highways ongoing to align with proposed one-way system. • Car park monitoring is planned using a 2-hour free, pay-by-phone for additional time model; footpath access will be maintained, and fencing behind the gym will be removed to improve site layout. • Tendering begins October 2025, with construction starting January 2026 and completion expected by June 2026; NuLBC will lead marketing of the units. Q&A: EV queried if there were any expressions of interest in the units. SM replied that the Property team was waiting for a confirmed completion date before advertising but that there was a definite interest in this size of unit.	Board to note report. Any board members wishing to join subgroup contact TB	ALL TB	Ongoing	Ongoing

	JL pointed out there was some community negativity around the units. However, PW replied that much of this was due to a perceived loss in parking, which would not be the case. DECISION: Is the Board happy to note the contents of this report? Board members present at the meeting showed approval by raising hands. All for proposal, no abstentions.				
6d.	**Sub-group reports – Community Hub** Briefing note from sub-group previously circulated to Board. Key points: • The projects aims to consolidate public and community services at The King's CofE Academy to improve access to essential services, lifelong learning, and community engagement. The Trust will be responsible body and anchor tenant. • £1.5 million allocated to project. The Hub will comprise flexible facilities including a Community Bistro and training kitchen, digital lab, meeting rooms, and spaces for youth, family, and educational services. • The project is supported by a broad partnership including Three Spires Trust, local authorities, health and youth services, and is designed to serve as a "one stop shop" for residents. • The Community Hub proposal was approved by KTD Board in July. Design plans completed, delivery partner engagement underway, and a preferred site location identified near Fifth Avenue, which benefits from strong pedestrian, rail, and road links, enhancing connectivity to Kidsgrove Station and the canal towpath. • Funding agreement due by end of September 2025; construction scheduled to begin in spring 2026 and complete by autumn/winter 2026. • If additional funding becomes available, there is scope to expand the project to include improved connectivity, expansion of the hub to create additional spaces and redevelopment of adjacent land to create additional sporting facilities. DECISION: Is the Board happy to note the contents of this report? Board members present at the meeting showed approval by raising hands. All for proposal (EV abstained).	Board to note report. Any board members wishing to join subgroup contact TB	ALL TB	Ongoing	Ongoing

6e.	**Footpaths update** Board approved allocation of £200k to footpaths at January meeting to improve connectivity to the proposed Community Hub. Since then: • The path connecting the canal towpath to The Avenue has been completed using cost savings within the canal Enhancement project. • The path from the canal to Third Avenue passes across private land, however, it is a public right of way so SCC can use permitted rights to make improvements. This is expected to cost less than £20k. This leaves a significant underspend of funding already approved for footpath improvements. NuLBC is proposing that this is reallocated to the connectivity enhancements proposed in the Community Hub report. DECISION: The remainder of the Footpath funding is reallocated to enhancing connectivity of the Community Hub. Board members present at the meeting showed approval by raising hands. All for proposal, (King's Academy abstained from vote).	Board to note information. Any queries contact TB	ALL TB	Ongoing	Done

6f.	**Sub-group report – Kidsgrove Station**
	EMR presentation circulated ahead of meeting, which DR went through in detail. Key points:
	• In July, Board approved EMR to proceed with the Outline Design of the full
	• station refurbishment option, subject to mitigation of the following risks:
	  ○ MHCLG approval of the PAR for the revised scope.
	  ○ NR approval of outline designs on the basis of mining risks.
	• Risk mitigation:
	  ○ MHCLG announced that scope change no longer requires submission of a PAR. Approval delegated to NuLBC as accountable body.
	  ○ Positive meetings with NR Mining and Asset engineers. Validation that all of the proposed design elements in the revised scope appear feasible without ground investigation/remediation.
	• Indicative programme: Detailed design by May 2026, Tender period to Oct 2026, Construction contact award Nov 2026, 9-month contract, completion Aug 2027.
	
	Q&A:
	EV queried if the change in governance for EMR would be an issue and what was likely cost fluctuation. DR explained that the government's shift to public
		Board to note report. Any board members wishing to join subgroup contact TB	ALL
			TB
				Ongoing	Ongoing

	railway operation enables the DfT take control of EMR by October 2026. The main risk is the potential 'governance vacuum' that may occur during the transition process. However, transition risks are mitigated through phased planning, deferred construction contracts, and lessons learned from sister company transitions. Also, the cost plan includes a £400k risk cushion. DECISION: Board approval to award the contract for the Outline and Detailed Design of the full station refurbishment option. Board members present at the meeting showed approval by raising hands. All for proposal, no abstentions.				
7.	**Contingency projects** • 13 projects have so far been suggested by board members, should there be any underspend from the on current projects (although it unlikely any amount can be confirmed until next financial year). • These will be included in the consultation on 18th Oct to gauge public support. • PH suggested including deliverability and likely impact as part of list when circulated to board. • PW requested an additional project to be added to the list – an upgrade to Birchenwood football pitches.	Prepare for consultation. Respond with comments and any additional projects.	TB ALL	06/10/25 13/10/25	Items inc. at events Suggestions added
8.	**AOB** None				
9.	**Date of next meeting** Online via teams. Date to be arranged.	Confirm date/venue	TB	TBC	Done

Abbreviations:
DfT – Department for Transport
EMR – East Midlands Rail
KTCCIC – 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