

MINUTES OF THE HARLOW GROWTH BOARD HELD ON

10 December 2021

9.15 - 10.50 am

PRESENT

Committee Members

John Keddie, Chairman of Harlow's Growth Board
Councillor Tony Ball, Essex County Council
Mark Doran, Essex County Council
Robert Halfon, MP
Councillor Michael Hardware, Harlow District Council
Martin John, UK Health Security Agency
Janice Lyon, DWP
Iain McNab, Cities and Local Growth Unit
Julien Sample, as a substitute for Will Allanson, Harlow College
Chris Snow, Harlow Art Trust
Naisha Polaine, Harlow and Gilston Garden Town
Councillor Dan Swords, Harlow District Council
Fiona Bodle – as a substitute for Yvonne Barnett, ARU
Jane Greer – as a substitute for Brian Keane, Harlow Council
Dave Burrows, as a substitute for John McGill, UKIC

Officers

Hannah Criddle	James Gardener
Rachel Bentley	Adam Halford
Andrew Bramidge	Shannon Hay
Julie Houston	Alistair MacDonald
Robert Edge	Alison Fox

1. INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Will Allanson, Michael Beard, Yvonne Barnett, Suzanne Bennett, Brian Keane, Hattie Llewelyn-Davies, John McGill, Guy Nicholson and Councillor Lesley Wagland.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes were agreed.

3. TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

James Gardener introduced the Town Centre Masterplan which is a planning framework providing guidance to developers operating in Harlow Town Centre. It is currently being consulted on and he asked for feedback from partners.

Alistair MacDonald, Director of Allies and Morrison, talked through a presentation explaining the wider content of the town centre including its importance for unifying the Garden Town and the town's growth ambitions, outlined the key principles and strategic aims as well as highlighting the priority projects within the town centre.

The document would be out for consultation from 6 December 2021 to 11 February 2022. The aim is for it to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in March 2022.

Councillor Tony Ball confirmed that Essex County Council supported the ambition and would be submitting a detailed consultation response. Janice Lyon raised a question on public transport in the evenings. Alistair confirmed that the plan would focus on Terminus Street and, in particular, being safer for pedestrians, having cycle parking and being linked to the STC with reliable and rapid transport. Andrew Bramidge confirmed that there would be a longer piece of work with Essex County Council on future transport needs.

4. **HARLOW INNOVATION PARK UPDATE**

James Gardener advised on the tenants who have leases in the new Modus building which is now fully let. For the wider park, a lease had been broadly agreed with an unnamed manufacturing company and early discussions were underway with a pharmaceutical company. The second phase of the Nexus building fit out would commence in January 2022 and should be completed by March 2022. The layout for the café had also been agreed with plans due to be submitted to planning in February 2022. James also advised that new signs had been installed for the wider park.

5. **UPDATE FROM UK HEALTH SECURITY AGENCY**

Martin John advised that the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) came into being on 1 October 2021 (replacing Public Health England), however, the boards around the Harlow site had not been updated yet. Martin also confirmed that the UKHSA continued to have conversations with the Treasury to push forward with the Harlow scheme, but where Harlow fitted within the strategic context of the whole organization was still being resolved. The momentum was being maintained on construction site. The ground works would be starting in the early New Year with works inside the building taking place until Summer 2022. He noted that the site had suffered some crime and vandalism which they are working with the police on. Martin hoped that a further update could be given at the next Growth Board meeting.

6. **THE HARLOW TOWN PLAN**

Councillor Dan Swords advised that the Harlow Town Plan was out for consultation. The plan looked forward to Harlow at 100 and covered

housing, regeneration and transport growth. The plan would be a clear vision document for everyone to work from.

Following consultation, a revised version of the plan would go to Cabinet in March 2022 for approval.

7. **UPDATE ON THE TOWNS FUND PROJECTS**

Jane Greer confirmed that Harlow had been awarded £23.7million Towns Funding for its six projects (bus station and building, Broad Walk, Staple Tye, Cambridge Road junction and the Institute of Technology at Harlow College. All projects are to be delivered by March 2026 with draft business cases currently being developed. Jane also advised that the Government had asked for regular highlight reports to provide updates on the projects. The latest highlight report would also be circulated to the Growth Board.

8. **HARLOW'S LEVELLING UP FUND BID OUTCOMES**

Iain McNab advised that Harlow was unsuccessful in its Round 1 Levelling Up bid. Harlow Council officers would be provided with more detailed feedback on why the bid was unsuccessful next week. Iain confirmed that the bid was fairly strong and made the shortlist, however, there were too many town centre bids. Iain also advised that there were two or three areas which could be improved on which may help the bid to be successful in round two.

9. **COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUNDED HARLOW BIDS**

The Government has recently announced that five Harlow Community Renewal Funded projects had been successful and would receive £1.7 million of funding. The announcement was delayed and now all projects have to be delivered by June 2022. The projects included;

- a) Retrofit Academy and ECC – Supporting net zero in existing homes including training of local residents in retrofit skills.
- b) Harlow College – Information, advice and guidance support to local residents, funding for training courses and support with digital devices
- c) ECC Adult Community Learning – Information, advice and guidance for local unemployed residents linking to key sectors such as health and care
- d) Maybe Solution Limited – Digital skills for high street businesses
- e) Harlow Procurement Portal

These will be pilot projects and will deliver learning on what works ready for the UK Shared Prosperity Funding that is due to be announced next year.

10. **HARLOW COUNCIL COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUNDED
PROCUREMENT PORTAL AND SUPPORT TO DEVELOP THE
ANCHOR NETWORK PROJECT**

Julie Houston confirmed that funding had been awarded for a local procurement pilot programme, helping Harlow to win Business. The funding would also help to develop the longer term Harlow Anchor Network project which is sponsored by the Growth Board and builds on the work undertaken with CLES earlier in the year. There are two strands to the project supporting the local supply chain from both ends. Haven Gateway will work with Harlow based SMES to encourage them to join the new Harlow Procurement Portal (launched on 26 January 2022) and receive training to support their capability to bid for local tenders. CLES will support the development of the Harlow Anchor Network to encourage and support greater local procurement activity where appropriate. The Terms of Reference for the Harlow Anchor Network had been previously circulated to the Growth Board. The Harlow Anchor Network would share lessons with the wider Essex Anchor Network.

Rachel Bentley from CLES advised that there would be two key themes for the programme; procurement and skills. CLES would be running a series of workshops between January to May 2022 with the aim of creating a jointly owned Action Plan by May 2022. The first workshop will take place in January focusing on procurement. Rachel asked Growth Board members to consider who would be the right people from their organisations to attend the procurement workshop in January. .

11. **HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN UPDATE**

Naisha Polaine advised that the Garden Town team supported the joint delivery and ambitions of the partnership. An update report had been circulated to Board members prior to the meeting. A governance review of the Garden Town partnership was underway aiming to work towards a formalize structure of potentially a joint committee of all five Local Authorities. In terms of the current project, the River Stort Crossing application should be going to East Herts Council's and Harlow Council's Development Management Committees in January. Looking forward, preparations were being made for the Governments bid for capacity funding..

12. **PAH UPDATE**

John Keddie declared an interest as a Non-Executive Director of the PAH Board and provided an update on the behalf of Hattie Llewelyn-Davies. John confirmed that the result of the CQC inspection was "requires improvement". The biggest challenge is that the demand in the A&E department is at 3x capacity with 400 to 500 people and 60 ambulances per day. In terms of the Covid-19 position, John advised that there were, at the time of the meeting, 15 in-patients with Covid-19 (5 on ventilators).

PAH expected the winter to be tough. With regard to the new hospital programme, there was no real update at this stage.

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

Date of next meeting – 10am on 11th March 2022