

Aylesbury Garden Town Shadow Board Meeting

11am 15 September 2017

PRESENT: N. Blake (AVDC), C. Manders (AGT Project Manager), W. Rysdale (AVDC), P. Brockway (HYAS), B. Chapple (BCC), M. Kemp (BCC), C. Harriss (BCC) C. Faine (SEMLEP), Andrew Smith (BTVLEP), C. Amies (HCA)

APOLOGIES: T. Aldworth (AVDC), R. Bagge (BTVLEP)

1. Welcome & Introductions

At the start of the meeting, attendees introduced themselves and which body they represented.

The meeting agreed that Neil Blake would act as Chairman.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

3. Governance and Terms of Reference of Shadow Board

An advice note on Governance had been distributed to Shadow Board attendees ahead of the meeting which gave an overview on where the AGT Delivery Board sat in relation to the AGT Project. Meeting at least quarterly, the Board would champion the Garden Town principles and seek to ensure that elected Members and corporate management bought in to the vision. It was intended that the Board would facilitate and promote a joined up delivery of the programme which would be achieved through the members of the Board being made up of representatives from the partners that made up the successful Garden Town bid. The Board would set the direction, objectives and priorities of the programme, and would review and update this annually as a minimum or as required. Additionally, it would ensure the Project Team would deliver a master plan and infrastructure delivery plan with a range of bodies consulted including utilities and information providers, employers, and housing providers. HYAS had found in their experience of projects that involved extensive experience of large scale growth and development that a tiered structure was good practice.

The initial membership composition was outlined along with the understanding that there would be an upward liaison corporately and politically when it came to reporting. In terms of deputising, it was noted that for AVDC Cllr Paternoster would stand in for Cllr Blake, and BCC Cllr Harriss for Cllr Chapple. An appropriate deputy would attend in the case of SEMLEP and BTVLEP, preferably a Board Member. If Clare Manders was unable to attend another project team member would deputise. The future of the Board's evolution was also considered with the possibility of including community representation and developer representative(s) once delivery of the roles and responsibilities had been defined. It was expected that the membership would be no more than 10 – 12 people. Attendees

acknowledged the need for flexibility at this early stage of the project regarding roles, terms of reference and governance arrangement to avoid issues in future. It was, however, agreed to remove 'Forum' from Delivery Board's description as it created uncertainty over the Board's power and decision making ability.

The Board noted that Parish engagement should be considered as well as Local Member engagement prior to wider public engagement. A DCLG representative would also be desirable on a standing invitation basis who would be copied in reports distributed to the Board.

It was noted that an AGT Governance report had been taken to AVDC Cabinet on 5th September and that approval had been given to the governance arrangements for the Aylesbury Garden Town project as set out in the Cabinet report. It was noted that, for BCC, the process was likely to be single member sign-off.

The meeting agreed that Terms of Reference should be drafted and circulated and would be approved at the next meeting of the Board.

4. AGT Project Overview

a) VALP Progress and Timetable

The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan was going to Scrutiny Committee on 26 September and Cabinet after that on 10 October before reaching Full Council on 18 October. Public consultations were expected thereafter ahead of VALP's submission to Secretary of State for examination in 2018. The VALP report for Scrutiny was available online on Friday 15 September and in it the AGT status was identified. The plan set out the vision, allocation for housing and employment and also the strategic aims. Attendees heard that once housing numbers were agreed in VALP then the number was protected and not subject to further change.

The plan identifies further supplementary planning documents that would come forward to support the delivery of AGT. VALP also identifies AGT sites that are at various stages of planning; some with permission and under construction and some going through the planning process to then be allocated in the plan. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan was also included which set out link to roads, education, green infrastructure and community facilities. It was commented that the Oxford to Cambridge expressway project would potentially lead to the development of growth areas along these corridors which, in turn, had the possibility of creating a second Garden Town within Aylesbury Vale.

b) Project Review and Programme

An initial activity for the AGT following designation at the start of the year was an overall review of the project and the production of a related work programme and set of more priority acts and activities. A Gantt type chart showing the programme for the first 15 to 18 months of the project had been circulated to the Board, along with a set of priority

tasks and immediate milestones for the next three to six months. . The work streams identified as a priorities were:

- Governance arrangements
- Stakeholder & community engagement proposals
- Master planning approach & process
- Visioning, evidence base & commissioning work
- Key infrastructure requirements & funding opportunities available for them

Work has been progressed by the Programme Delivery Team against each of the above and further detail and an update on the current position was provided to the Board under subsequent relevant agenda items.

c) Governance and Project Management

The responsibility of the AGT Programme Delivery Team covered a wide ranging nature of delivery areas and projects within the GT project. The Team would focus on every day operational and management needs, and also monitor the delivery and resourcing required for the project. The expectation was that the Team would meet at least monthly to generate and maintain the project's momentum, whilst reporting directly to the Delivery Board. The Team's membership would closely reflect the key partnership organisations in terms of key officers, specialist advisors and technical leads, and were likely to be staff from AVDC, BCC and representatives from BTVLEP and SEMLEP. A standing invitation has also been made to the HCA who attended the recent project team meeting.

d) Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Work had already commenced to review how to engage stakeholders and an engagement and communication framework has been drafted which outlines the following:

- Key purposes and objectives for the engagement and communication strategy
- Principles against which the strategy would be developed
- Potential methods of engagement
- Initial list of stakeholders
- Potential engagement approaches and platforms that could be followed and used
- Action Plan with next steps for engagement which would be linked to the governance approach in addition to the master plan and vision

The Board was in agreement about the importance of engaging with the community effectively and an interactive website was one of the innovative methods that would be used and could enhance the ability to secure extensive and inclusive community feedback to be fed into the AGT masterplan.

e) Master Planning Approach

The masterplan document would detail the form and content of development and would set out the framework within which the development would take place. This would allow a more collaborative, cohesive and forward plan approach rather than the site by site basis and appeals process that was involved in planning applications.

- It was noted that Aylesbury is unique as it is the only recent garden town that had referenced GT status in its Local Plan. The master planning approach will seek to build on the work in the VALP and that set out in the GT expression of interest to DCLG. The proposed approach to the further master planning was explained to the Board. In summary, it is proposed that there are **2 key elements to the master planning approach**:
 1. **Near term** – linked to VALP with production of SPDs to support delivery of planned development at of AGT including overarching SPDs on design, infrastructure and site specific SPDs for some major VALP allocations.
 2. **Longer term** – Strategic Master Plan and Delivery Framework for AGT over period to say 2050

It is envisaged that a single master planning process can be pursued which will seek to produce key components of the above in parallel. The process is intended to be locally led, by AVDC and BCC on a collaborative basis with key stakeholders including the community, landowners and developers.

It was acknowledged that the master plan presents an opportunity to prepare a co-ordinated masterplan which delivers on the Garden Town principles through identifying Aylesbury's key strengths and challenges and looking at how these can be turned into opportunities with the aim of creating sustainable communities by bridging the role new communities play between existing communities, villages and the countryside.. The importance of taking a more integrated approach to delivering critical infrastructure throughout the town and sustaining current housing delivery rates was acknowledged as well as achieving the delivery of a well-planned, sustainable town and thriving town centre.

f) Collaborative Visioning

A key part of the master planning process and the inclusion of community views and aspirations will be the work towards establishing the longer term vision for AGT. Branding was discussed in relation to this and it was understood that the important message to be put across was what Garden Town status would mean to residents and people potentially moving into the area. On the subject of emerging visions, the impact of Oxford to Cambridge expressway and its chosen routing was noted again and that it would need to be reacted to accordingly in future. Moreover, the idea of 'future proofing' the garden town was discussed to ensure that development would not become outdated. Ideas included ducting for high-speed internet and electric vehicle charge points. It was acknowledged that this type infrastructure would need to be addressed and integrated into the AGT.

5. Budget and Staffing / Capacity Update

Staffing for the AGT was currently being worked on with the intention of recruiting a Communications Officer and an Admin Support Officer. These roles had been drafted with the intention of internal advertising imminently. A post relating to Transport Support would also be considered in due course.

An update on the budget was provided to attendees in a table which included funds received and spend to date (including commitments to financial year 2017/18 and 2018/19). Funds had been earmarked for master planning, marketing and branding. The Board agreed that funding for branding and marketing needed to be increased to support establishing and communicating the vision of the GT. Various methods of sourcing additional funding were considered including from AVDC and BCC as well as from developers as it was noted that the Kingsbrook development was already marketing the AGT status as part of its sales process.

6. AGT Programme and Key Milestones

The existing programme chart (previously discussed) was noted as requiring updating and that the intention is that it will be updated regularly by the Programme Delivery Team as it is a live document. In updating the programme, the Programme Delivery team has identified further key priorities and areas of focus for the next three months. In summary:

September

- Programme updated
- Recruitment to AGT Programme Team
- VALP AVDC internal reporting
- Community Engagement approach agreed
- Master planning approach agreed
- HIF bids submitted

October

- VALP AVDC approvals
- Workshops on AGT and Visioning
- Master planning scoping work
- AGT Website commissioned
- Infrastructure and delivery 'asks' of Govt

November

- VALP consultations
- Commissioning MP work
- Launch AGT website
- Visioning workshops

Delivery Board meeting

7. Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Two documents have been drafted:

- 'Overview and review of existing material and approaches to Stakeholder and Community Engagement'; and

- 'Draft Stakeholder and Community Engagement Strategy'.

A workshop between the partners is A workshop with key officers from the Programme delivery team and other AVDC and BCC officers is to be held shortly to test and refine the documents and to create an action plan for the implementation of the engagement activities which takes into account other consultation such as that related to the emerging VALP.

Following this a stakeholder and developer forum is planned which would outline the benefits of AGT status and the plans for the master plan and delivery work.. A community forum was also planned to include Local Interest Groups, Youth, Art, Sport, and Conservation groups with the intention of obtaining their 'buy in' to the GT. Meetings were also scheduled with utility and service providers.

The meeting agreed that a summary note of the Stakeholder and Engagement work be produced by CM/PB and circulated alongside all existing documents to allow members of the Board to comment.

8. Sign off Garden Town Logo

The proposed AGT logo was distributed to Attendees ahead of the meeting. The inclusion of Waterside Theatre was met well by the Board; however it was felt that it needed movement added to it. It was proposed that a person would be put on to the bike and a bird in flight would be included. An updated logo would be distributed accordingly.

The meeting agreed that the logo would be amended as discussed and following these changes was adopted as the final Garden Town logo.

9. Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Bids – Marginal Viability and Forward Funding

HIF Bids offers capital grant funding to local authorities for the provision of infrastructure to support the delivery of housing. The fund was divided into two parts: Marginal Viability Fund and Forward Fund. The criteria for bidding included local support, funding spent by 2020/21 and funding for physical infrastructure. Two HIF Bids are being prepared for AGT related to both funds. Letters from SEMLEP & BTVLEP would be included to support AGT's bid. The infrastructure would potentially include outer link roads, bus station improvements and cycling/walking routes but this was subject to VFM and BCR analysis. The deadline for bids on both funds was 28 September, with Forward Funding bids going through a two stage process.

10. AOB

There was none.

11. Key Dates and Milestones coming up

Aside from the dates and events in the AGT programme and the HIF bids, a DCLG/HCA event was taking place in Bicester on 10 October. More information would be distributed on this but it was felt that Board Member representation along with Officers would be useful.