

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CLACTON TOWN BOARD,
HELD ON THURSDAY, 10TH OCTOBER, 2024 AT 2.00 PM
IN THE TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-ON-SEA, CO15 1SE**

Board present:	Members	George Kieffer (Chairman), Sharon Alexander, Billy Ball, Ian Davidson (item 25 only), Rob Mitchell-Gears, Dr Emily Murray, Cllr Mark Stephenson, Laura Taylor-Green and Cllr Lesley Wagland, Ian Davidson (part only), Greg Myddleton.
In attendance:		Steve Evison, Sam Jones, Lee Heley, Ella Latham, Rachel Rowsell, Jon Rowe, and Keith Simmons

[Note: Specific action shown in bold]

25. WELCOME - CHAIR

The Chairman, Mr. Kieffer, welcomed those in attendance to the Board meeting. Those in attendance introduced themselves; including Mr. Jon Rowe (Secretary of the Clacton Coastal Tourism Group) who was attending on behalf of the Tourism Group along with its Chairman (Billy Ball).

The Board was advised that Mr. Steve Evison would be changing employer in the near future as he was taking up a post with Lewisham London Borough Council. The Chairman, Mr. Davidson and other Board Members expressed their thanks for his efforts in his current role at Essex County Council taking up many issues that were important to the communities of Tendring (and Clacton-on-Sea and Jaywick Sands particularly). The Board expressed their best wishes to him in his new role.

26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members of the Board:

- Ian Davidson for his early departure,
- Nigel Farage MP
- Neil Gallagher
- Cllr Ivan Henderson
- Roger Hirst (substituted by Greg Myddleton)
- Craig Newnes

27. MINUTES FROM THE BOARD'S MEETING ON 19 JULY 2024

The Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 19 July 2024 were submitted to the Board for confirmation.

It was AGREED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 19 July 2024 be received and confirmed as an accurate record of that meeting.

28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BOARD'S CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no declarations made at the meeting in respect of the business to be transacted. The Chairman referenced the role of Billy Ball as Chairman of the Clacton Tourism Group, the 'Update from the Tourism Group' on the agenda and his role in relation to ownership of Clacton Pier.

The Board was also advised that general declaration forms would be circulated in the near future for all Board Members to complete.

29. UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Board was provided with an update on the actions agreed at the previous meeting of the Board as follows:

<p>That the presentation to the Board's meeting on 19 July 2024 and the draft proposals for the three year investment plan and 10 year vision be circulated to Board Members for comment.</p>	<p>The presentation had been circulated, albeit that on the day of the previous meeting MHCLG had withdrawn the 1 August 2024 deadline for the Long Term Plan to be submitted. The Board was advised that if the Long Term Plan for Towns programme did not proceed the work to date would be repacked to recognize the reality at that point. However, the value of the Board being retained was emphasized.</p>
<p>That, a small group of Board Members be tasked with overseeing the development and deployment of shop wrapping and streetlamp banners etc. (including the elements of the branding and themes across those items).</p>	<p>Billy Ball and Rob Mitchell-Gears had been overseeing the designs etc.</p>
<p>That Essex Police be requested to identify crime data relevant for the Clacton-on-Sea Town Centre over time and, potentially, in comparison to other comparable Town Centres.</p>	<p>Essex Police had provided the data and this would support the evidence base going forward in respect of several actions. The reductions in street drinking incidents and anti-social behavior were referenced from that data.</p>

Other actions were already on the agenda and, as such the updates were provided at those points.

There was a discussion at this item around the previously approved consultation activity to support the development of the Long Term Plan. The absence of certainty around the Government's Long Term Plan for Towns approach meant that the consultation had not proceeded as originally envisaged. The Board was also advised that the subset of respondents to the Essex Residents' Survey 2024 from the Clacton-on-Sea area was being obtained to assist with the fine tuning for future consultations through the Board (once the Government's intentions were clear on Long Term Plans for Towns).

The Board was also advised that the previously promised ZenCity consultation findings locally (obtained directly for DLUHC/MHCLG) had not been supplied.

It was AGREED to note the update and that MHCLG be again requested to provide the ZenCity data in respect of the Clacton-on-Sea consultations.

Headline data from the Essex Residents Survey was also to be circulated, once obtained, based on the subset from respondents in the Clacton-on-Sea area.

30. UPDATE ON THE USE OF THE CAPACITY FUNDING

Sam Jones and Rachel Rowsell provided a presentation to the Board on the utilization of the capacity funding of £250,000 provided already for the development of the Long Term Plan for Clacton-on-Sea. The update set out the approved funding allocation of the capacity funding in 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27. It also set out updated detail in respect of:

- Shop Wrapping and plans for shop front grants and encouraging private sector investment;
- Cleaning and graffiti removal – a town blitz to tackle immediate issues. Put up flags and lamp post banners;
- Community engagement – Create an ongoing dialogue with residents, businesses and visitors; and
- Improved communication and connectivity of regeneration projects.

The issue of the difficulty in securing agreement of owners of empty shops for them to have decorative wrapping placed on the windows was discussed. Agreement had been secured to place wrapping on what were previously the Burton shop, Oxley Funeral Directors and Wilkinsons (all in Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea). A re-tenanting of one of the shops was referenced together with the approach in that case. Other sites in Station Road, Pier Avenue, the High Street, Rosemary Road and Jackson Road were being pursued for agreement. The difficulties contrasted with the position that had been experienced when organising shop wrapping in Harwich/Dovercourt earlier in the year.

The envisaged costings of wrapping all the identified shop fronts was £11,900 (plus artwork). However, for the three shops for which permission had been granted it was £4,400 of that total. The total allocated for shop wrapping in 2024/25 was £25,000.

Shop wrapping timetable:

Owner's permission sought	July – Oct 2024
Contractors – design	July 2024
Installation phase 1 (for those where agreement existed)	Oct – Nov 2024
Installation phase 2 (subject to additional agreements being obtained)	Nov- Dec 2024
Installation phase 3 (subject to additional agreements being obtained)	Jan – Mar 2025
Contract end	March 2025

The position around occupied shops with poor shop window displays was referenced.

The issues in respect of graffiti removal were similar to those being faced in respect of shop wrapping (namely full agreements to undertake the work).

The opportunity for other commercial operators to assist with persuading empty shop owners to engage with the efforts to improve Clacton-on-Sea Town Centre was referenced, likewise referencing the wish for shop owners to engage on social media may also persuade them to do so. Notwithstanding the approaches referenced, there was also mention of the potential for enforcement powers to be used to achieve improvement in shop frontages.

Looking further forward, the opportunity of supporting improved wayfinding and possible use of 'You Are Here' maps with key points displayed to support accessing a range of local attractions was referenced also.

It was AGREED that the three shop frontages where agreement existed to apply wrapping to the windows should proceed, that measures to persuade others to provide their agreement continue (and other actions to assist this been explored). In addition, a briefing in respect of the potential for enforcement powers to be used to achieve improvement in shop frontages was requested.

The Board was advised that Tendring District Council's Corporate Director for Operations and Delivery was happy to update the Board on the intended cleaning objective (for which £21,000 of the capacity funding had been approved).

The presentation also addressed improving communication actions, including:

- Creation of a new partnership web platform to host all transformational change programmes;
- Interactive mapping capability and digital storytelling to engage residents and businesses;
- Increased visibility of public consultations, across a range of partners; and
- Platform to be an independent portal, showing breadth of partnership activity and vision for place.

In respect of the Town Board’s website, procurement had been completed and ‘We Create Digital’ had been appointed to undertake this work. The following timeline was shared with the Board:

Contract Start	21 st October 2024
Mobilisation period	21 st October 2024 – 7 th March 2025
Contract end	Latest end date 14 th March 2025

The procurement was within the approved amount of £30,000 for this element and, as such, additional material for the website could be purchased to improve it yet further.

The opportunity for the Town Board’s website and the Tourism Group’s website to be ‘sister’ sites while containing different material and aimed at different information needs was echoed in the meeting.

In respect of street lamp post banners, the Board was provided with the following time line:

Permission sought	Oct – Dec (10 week application process, plus time for queries)
Design procured and agreed	Nov - Jan
Mobilisation period	Feb - Mar
Contract end	March 2025

Billy Ball and Rob Mitchell-Gears overseeing the designs for the Board as a whole was reported.

It was AGREED that the overall update information be received.

31. UPDATE FROM TOURISM GROUP

An open letter (dated 27 August 2024) from the Chairman (Mr Billy Ball) of the Clacton Coastal Tourism Group in respect of the feelings and wishes of the members of that Group was shared with the Board. Likewise, a letter (dated 24

September 2024) from the Tendring District Council's Corporate Director for Place and Economy (Lee Heley) in response to the Tourism Group's letter was also shared. In addition, the Board's Chairman referenced a meeting he had with Billy Ball and Jon Rowe.

The opportunity to show the Tourism Group's members progress on several of the areas of concern was discussed and the ongoing conduit between the Group, the Board and the principal Councils was a positive step towards forward.

Jon Rowe talked passionately about the Tourism Group's intended website and how this would be designed, among other things, to support activity planning for visitors.

The Board THANKED Jon and Billy for their continued contribution to the shared objectives for Clacton-on-Sea and improvements.

32. DEVELOPING THE LONG TERM PLAN FOR CLACTON

Within this item, given the uncertain position in respect of the Government's approach to the Long Term Plan for Towns programme, there was a presentation on the recently confirmed Levelling Up Partnership funding of £20M for Clacton-on-Sea.

A report was to be submitted to the Tendring District Council's Cabinet on 21 October 2024 in respect of the Levelling Up Partnership and an electronic link to that report on the Council's website would be circulated to Board Members.

During the discussion on this item, there was also reference to the level of potential for matched funding that may flow as a consequence of the £20M from organisations such as the Arts Council and Historic England. An upcoming deadline for funding from Sport England was also referenced given that there was some clear overlap with potential scheme/projects to be funded through the Levelling Up Partnership Funding. A reminder was also given about the Safer Streets funding through the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for relevant proposals. Other funding sources, such as Essex County Councillors' Locality Funds were mentioned. All of these could permit the Levelling Up Partnership funding to achieve even more than it could without further match funding.

In relation to schemes, the Board was advised to consider engaging with groups such as 'Make Space for Girls' to ensure that the schemes recognised the needs of girls and young women.

It was AGREED to note the update provided.

33. LINK TO THE NEEB PLAN

Lee Heley advised the Board that the North Essex Economic Board (NEEB) had an ambitious North Essex vision seeking to harness the significant and diverse economic opportunities in that geographical footprint. NEEB's Strategy identified four key strategic priorities:

1. Innovative Businesses and Skilled Residents
2. A Green and High Growth Economy
3. A Dynamic and Connected Region
4. Prosperous and Inclusive Communities

The opportunity for collaboration between the work of the Town Board and NEEB to take forward the strategic priorities and the emerging long term plan for Clacton was something that would be encouraged.

The website address for NEEB would be circulated to Board Members.

It was **AGREED** to note NEEB's strategic vision and the opportunity for collaboration.

34. DELIVERY PLAN AND FORWARD PLAN

The following draft was submitted to the Board, with the caveat that it would be developed further:

	Oct - Dec	Jan - March	Apr- June	July- Sept
Capacity Funding projects	Development & branding Permissions Website commenced Window wrapping commenced	Banners Windows wrapping completed March event.	Visitor surveys Business surveys	
Masterplan	Scope and Tender	Scoping and initial findings Board consultation	Public Consultation post elections	Final Draft -Complete report
Public Realm improvements	Scope and design	Board consultation		Delivery
Shop Front grants	Grants launched.	Delivery	Delivery	Delivery

The Board **NOTED** the draft above, as well as the need for further community consultation.

35. ANY OTHER BUSINESS FOR THE BOARD

The following were referenced within this item:

- (1) Dr Emily Murray had provided a collated set of recommendations for investment opportunities based on research findings. This would be shared with the Board and considered at the next meeting. Dr Murray was thanked for providing this insightful piece of work.
- (2) Sam Jones advised that those wishing to contact her would need to utilise her Essex County Council email address (rather than as previously where she had that email address and a separate one for Tendring District Council).
- (3) The Tendring District Council was exploring a Community Governance Review for Clacton-on-Sea, Holland-on-Sea and Jaywick Sands to consider whether Town Councils were required in the areas.
- (4) A visit by the Commissioners of Historic England was planned to the area and would look at funding possibilities.
- (5) There would be Christmas lunches for those in need at the Community Voluntary Services Tendring's base in Clacton-on-Sea.

The above were NOTED by the Board.

36. NEXT MEETING

The Board was advised that the date and time for the next Board meeting was Thursday, 12 December 2024 commencing at 10:00hrs. The venue was still to be determined.

The meeting was declared closed at 3.47 pm

Chairman