

REDDITCH TOWN DEAL

FUTURE STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT & ENGAGEMENT PLAN

JANUARY 2021

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Introduction

1.0 Project Overview

- 1.1 The Town Deal is a £3.6bn programme seeking to “unleash the economic potential” of 100 places across the country. Redditch has an opportunity to bid for up to £25m through the fund and bidding will take the form of a Town Investment Plan.
- 1.2 Each Town Investment Plan includes proposals for up to £25 million to invest in regeneration, skills and connectivity to secure transformational levels of economic growth. The deadline for submission of the Town Investment Plan is 29 January 2021.

2.0 Project Background and Scope

- 2.1 In September 2019 it was announced by MHCLG that Redditch was among the 101 towns that would be invited to put forward Town Deal proposals to secure up to £25m in central government funding to deliver economic growth and regeneration for the borough. The case for the investment would need to be articulated through an evidence led Town Investment Plan.
- 2.2 A requirement of the Town Deal programme was that the Council set up an overarching Town Deal Board. This was established in January 2020. The Government required that boards comprised a mix of public and private stakeholders and therefore the Redditch Town Deal Board was established in accordance with the guidance detailed in the Town Fund prospectus. It includes local businesses, community representatives, council officers and elected representatives, and other partners committed to improving the town. As per the Government guidance, the Board is chaired by a private sector representative. The Board is the vehicle through which the vision and strategy for the town is defined and the Town Investment Plan is produced. The role of the Town Deal Board is to:
- Develop and agree an evidenced based Town Investment Plan (TIP)
 - Develop a clear programme of interventions
 - Coordinate resources and influence stakeholders
- 2.3 The TIP is required to focus on the three key themes set out by the government in the Town Fund prospectus:
- Urban regeneration, planning and land use
 - Skills and enterprise infrastructure
 - Connectivity – transport and digital
- 2.4 The development of the Town Deal will come forward in two phases with the first phase focused on the submission of the Town Investment Plan containing a set of project proposals which form a business case to apply for funding. The second phase will be the agreement of heads of terms with MHCLG.
- 2.5 The Town Deal is an agreement in principle between government, the Council, and the Town Deal Board. It sets out a vision and strategy for the town and identifies what each party agrees to do to achieve this vision. The underlying interventions to achieve this vision are set in the table below.

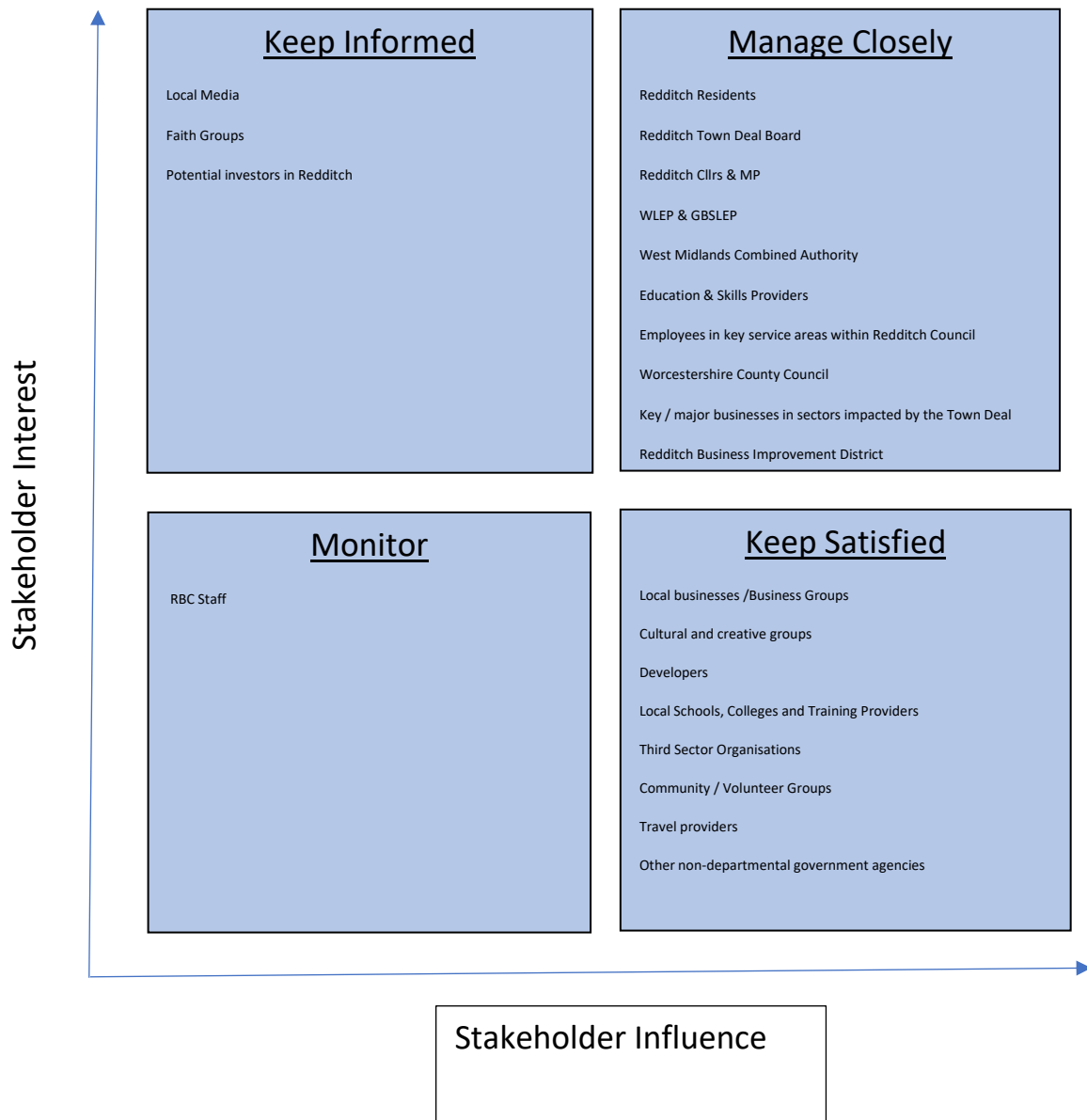
Project	Description
<p>Redditch Transport Interchange and Railway Quarter</p>	<p>This project provides the opportunity to bring about a transformative change in Redditch, to create an integrated multi-modal transport interchange in Redditch Town Centre as part of the Railway Quarter redevelopment. Redditch is on the cross-city line as the final destination running from Lichfield through Birmingham New Street Station. Redditch station will become a ‘gateway’ for the town supporting the overall regeneration of Redditch and the town centre. Towns Fund grant funding is being sought to bring forward a new two-storey station building and improved public realm providing attractive, modern facilities and supporting pedestrian access to the Town Centre.</p> <p>The project will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A new two-storey station building positioned to straddle the line, supporting passengers to access two platforms and both sides of Unicorn Hill. The building will also provide improved amenities for travellers, including digital infrastructure inherent to the construction and design (in line with Network Rails Digital Railway Strategy). ● An interchange to include rail and bus services, parking for the station and services, taxi drop off/pick-up and support cycling and walking access to the quarter. ● Creation of new open space in front of the station, providing improved connectivity between the station and the town centre, and joining up to the other public realm enhancements proposed in the Town Deal bid ● Providing an enhanced, modern and attractive sense of arrival and customer experience for commuters and visitors, with services that support the digital town proposals. ● New car parking adjacent to the station. <p>The project will also support and enable the wider development of the railway quarter. Future work packages are expected to include: a second platform at Redditch to support increased train frequency; a second phase of station building on the east side of the track and connection over the line in support of the second platform; longer 210m platforms to support 9-car trains subject to future rail strategy; a bus interchange including a new terminus adjacent to the railway platforms, supporting movement between transport modes; redevelopment of adjacent land for potential residential, office, retail and leisure uses; and highways interventions to bring the track and platforms under a road bridge (Unicorn Hill) and into a new centre for the station, aligned with bus services and providing pedestrian access into the shopping centre and Town Centre.</p>
<p>Redditch Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre</p>	<p>The project will provide digital innovation support to increase the resilience, productivity and competitiveness of businesses within the manufacturing industry. The projects objectives are to: provide open access and specialist support to local entrepreneurs and companies, particularly in the manufacturing sector, that want to test and develop 5G-enabled services and applications (provision of a 5G test bed); provide access to a range of high-quality business and innovation services and space to nurture, mentor and facilitate businesses development and growth; to provide new businesses, predominantly, but not exclusively, within the manufacturing sector with a range of flexible workshop and office accommodation to enable them to prosper and grow; develop a base of local workforce and young talent equipped with the skills needed in a 21st</p>

	century digitalised economy; to create an investment destination / eco-system that facilitates adoption of digital technologies, particularly in the manufacturing sector.
Redevelopment of Redditch Library Site	Demolition of the existing library building and the delivery of a new public square and associated commercial development. The proposed new square on the site of the library can provide this space in a location which helps to drive footfall to and from the Kingfisher Centre and improving connectivity to the historic town centre core. The proposed new square would stimulate the conversion of the blank surrounding facades, including part of the Kingfisher Centre and the former Royal Hotel, currently operating as a nightclub. In addition a new café pavilion is proposed to book-end the new square and helps to define the historic street frontage,
--=	Church Green, Evesham Walk and Unicorn Hill together form the heart of Redditch's Town Centre Public Realm. Unfortunately, over the years these cherished streetscapes has become tatty, uninviting, and more worryingly, underused. This proposed major investment will see these three important thoroughfares transformed into a series of modern, attractive and multifunctional public spaces which will together act as Redditch's 'shop window', showcasing everything the town has to offer by supporting vibrant public events, a thriving street dining and trading scene as well as improving access to the wide range of services provided in the Town Centre for all. The investment will include high quality street furniture, waymarking and repurposing of underused space to ensure that this scheme unlocks its maximum economic and social potential. The completed scheme will provide a valuable focus for civic pride in Redditch, acting as an essential catalyst for the wider regeneration of Redditch Town Centre, stimulating private sector investment and helping the town to recover and thrive beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.
Sustainable Projects Programme	<p>This is a package of interventions which build on previous sustainable improvements within the Borough. The use of sustainable development principles to grow Redditch whilst at the same time enhancing economic, social and environmental spheres is of fundamental importance.</p> <p>RBC are looking to deliver carbon reductions and reduction in energy consumption to improve the efficiency of its assets, for instance through further solar pv and battery storage at Abbey Stadium, Arrow Valley Countryside Centre and Greenlands Business Centre.</p> <p>Low Carbon Travel & Transport</p> <p>Installation of EV Charging Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top-up Charging – both 50Kw & 7kW to suit in key locations where residents regularly travel to (car park, leisure facilities etc) • Residential Charging – where residents do not have driveways, in RBC owned car-parks • Workplace Charging – at RBC owned workplaces • Fleet Charging (and Vehicle to Grid) – for electric fleet at RBC Depot <p>E-Bike charging and hire stations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrow Valley Countryside Centre • Abbey Stadium Leisure Centre

3.0 Project Team:

The project will be delivered by NWEDR and Redditch Borough Council in partnership with the Town Deal Board.

4.0 Stakeholder Mapping



5.0 Communications Strategy

This strategy has been drafted to provide an overview of how the future engagement with regards to the Town Deal as a programme will be covered. Focusing on the key themes of the Tip Vision, Digital, Green, Connected and Creative it will complement and build upon

existing communication channels and previous consultation. This strategy will continue to ensure all relevant parties are kept informed of the Town Deal progress throughout the lifecycle of the programme up to 2026 and pinpoint the open channels of engagement available, enabling stakeholders to continue to engage.

5.1 Communications and engagement objectives

- o To communicate the activity, progress and effects of the Redditch Town Investment Plan, this if successful, will be enabled and funded through the Towns Fund.
- o To engage the various target audiences (detailed below) in the economic and regeneration programme and inspire them to share and engage their friends and family too.

6.0 Audience

6.1 The key audiences for the communications strategy will be:

- o Redditch Borough Council
- o Worcestershire County Council
- o West Midlands Combined Authority
- o Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership
- o Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership
- o Local Councillors
- o Local Community Groups
- o Redditch Partnership
- o Local media
- o Public Transport operators
- o Redditch Residents
- o Redditch Business owners/leaders
- o Town Centre retailers
- o Revitalise Redditch (Business Improvement District)
- o Potential investors in Redditch
- o Potential residents

6.2 Audience Priorities

The priority for each key audience will be to clearly explain what the project will and will not achieve, increase understanding, create a positive perception of the project, and to minimise any negative publicity for the project.

7.0 Consultation and Engagement Undertaken to Date

7.1 Consultation work undertaken by SMG in November 2019 aimed to ensure a cross representation of the population of Redditch and interviews were carried out through online platforms and via telephone for those who are unable to access a computer. Working closely with partner networks an online survey was disseminated to the following groups utilising social media and local press to engage harder to reach groups and younger people;

Redditch Borough Council intranet – to reach all employees

Redditch Partnership - which covers the following;

- Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN)
- Worcestershire County Council
- West Mercia Constabulary
- NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group (RBCCG)
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service
- YMCA Worcestershire
- Worcestershire Health and Care Trust

Redditch BID steering group

Heart Of Worcestershire College

NWEDR social media

Redditch councillors

Redditch Business Leader

Redditch Churches together

RBC Sports Development team

Redditch Community Forum

7.2 Previous Consultation

7.3 **Borough of Redditch Local Plan** - The Borough of Redditch's most recently adopted Local Plan (2017) involved extensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, such as statutory consultees, local interest groups and community organisations, local residents, businesses, and private sector developers and landowners.

This consultation process was undertaken using a broad methodology, involving citizen and stakeholder discussion panels, press releases and provision of promotional material, and public displays, exhibitions and drop-in events. Consultation was developed and undertaken over a number of years of local plan preparation, which ultimately informed proposals in the Local Plan incorporating consultees views on development opportunities in Redditch Town Centre and the District Centres.

Improving the vitality and viability of Redditch Town Centre and District Centres is one of the key themes identified in the Local Plan. 'Policy 31' in the adopted Local Plan identifies five key guiding principles to shape the town up to 2030. These guiding principles are interrelated and will contribute to realising the vision for Redditch Town Centre:

- Realise the potential development opportunities
- Improve and diversify the Town Centre offer
- Improve the physical environment
- Expand on the business and cultural offer of the Town Centre
- Increase residential accommodation

7.4 Customer & Residents Survey 2019

This Council survey was sent to members of the ‘community panel’ in Redditch, as well as the general public. A total of 132 valid surveys were returned from the community panel, resulting in a response rate of 54.1%. A total of 349 valid surveys were received from members of the public. Of the residents that responded to the survey, 83.6% said they visited the town centre at least once per month with 38.9% visiting at least once per week. Critical responses mainly concerned a lack of variety of retail offer in the town centre, especially since the closure of larger named stores in recent years such as Marks & Spencer, BHS and Argos. By contrast the most positive responses concerned the use of the town centre for a number of significant events throughout the year, including hosting of the Tour Series cycling race, the Christmas Lights Switch On, and a number of bandstand events.

7.5 **Four Quarters Plan – 2018/19**

In 2018 the Redditch Regeneration Board, comprising local public and private sector partners, oversaw the creation of a quarters plan for the town centre’s future development, building on its residual strengths and on the collective will to deliver positive change. The focus for town centre regeneration will be centred on four regeneration quarters:

- Station & Residential Quarter
- Education & Enterprise Quarter
- Retail & Leisure Quarter
- Public Sector & Cultural Quarter

A Redditch Town Centre Development Sites report was produced in 2019 by consultants BDP, assisted by Highgate Land and Development and the BE Group. The purpose of the study was to develop a masterplan and implementation proposals for four strategic development sites within the town centre. The preferred masterplan options were reviewed by the Redditch Regeneration Board in May 2019 and the final report reflected feedback from this key set of stakeholders.

7.6 **Station and Residential Quarter**

Public consultation undertaken by the Council in 2019 as part of its ‘State of the Area’ debate led to comments on this quarter concerning such issues as the frequency and choice of rail services from Redditch Station, the (lack of) visual appeal of the station as a gateway to the town centre, and the need for new housing in the town centre including the importance of supportive housing for the elderly. Comments in particular around the rail station and its services were reiterated through the Redditch MyTown campaign as part of the Town Deal process.

Within this quarter, the BDP Town Centre Development Sites report considered two key sites as the most significant opportunity to provide new residential accommodation in the town centre. At the rail station/Edward Street site, in addition to residential development, proposals also include an expanded and improved rail station, improving the ‘front door gateway’ to the town centre and nearby entrance to the Kingfisher shopping centre as well as enhancing public realm and pedestrian connectivity between the rail and bus stations. At the Church Road site, new green streets and a mix of residential typologies is proposed to create a new town centre neighbourhood, along with the retention/redevelopment of existing commercial uses fronting Church Road and Church Green West.

7.7 **Education & Enterprise Quarter**

Discussions with partners are ongoing as to how this area of the town centre could provide development opportunities to create incubator units to support new businesses and improve links between local businesses and the Heart of Worcestershire (HoW) College, located on Peakman Street.

The Council's 'State of the Area' debate also informed this quarter proposal with comments and suggestions from the public covering issues such as the area as a focus for a 5G testbed, supporting units that deliver high quality innovation in research and development, and the potential for providing an education centre for adults with learning disabilities.

7.8 **Retail and Leisure Quarter - Town Centre Business Engagement**

In recent surveys undertaken by the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) as part of its Towns Ecosystem Report series, local businesses reported that Redditch's cleanliness, amount of car parking, and its ease of access were considered to be key strengths, whereas town centre vacancies, the cost of parking, and the increase in begging and homelessness were identified as weaknesses. When asked about priority areas for improvement, bigger stores and more variety were identified as the two highest priorities. In addition to this, more events, improved customer flow, better marketing/promotion and an improved regular market were considered to be important areas for improvement.

7.9 Businesses were also asked what improvements they would like to see to the public realm in the town centre. Top responses were more customer toilets, more customer seating and improved signage. Other responses included more trees/green space, better access to shops, improved safety and security and more of a focus on heritage.

7.11 In addition the following consultation has been carried out.

- Member Consultation undertaken by SMG in November 2020
- Internal presentation to senior management team and 4th tier managers led by NWEDR in Dec 2020
- Internal consultation with relevant service areas – led by NWEDR throughout the programme

8.0 **Methods of engagement & engagement tactics**

8.1 Due to the current restrictions with Covid 19 its anticipated that consultation will continue primarily through digital channels in the short to medium term and the plan will need to evolve as the situation changes. The main methods of engagement have been listed below.

- Dedicated website
- Social Media
- Newsletter (via email)
- Poster sites around the town (including bus shelters and railway station hoardings)
- Poster campaigns in community and public buildings
- Redditch Borough Council website
- Online Marketing campaigns in conjunction with the media

- Partner newsletters and digital channels
- Face to face meetings - via Town Deal Board hosted 'all town' meetings

8.2 Given the range and reach of the target audiences, and feedback from the recent consultation with 700 residents, our strategy would be to use a range of communications channels which all point to the dedicated Redditch Town Deal website which will be rich with content. The website would be highly visual using infographics, video clips and feedback opportunities, contacts for more information, opportunities to attend 'roadshows' presentations and meetings, give feedback and contribute ideas.

- Launch the Redditch Town Deal website with bespoke logo
- regular newsletters emailed to registration database
- Schedule speaker platforms at business events (subject to COVID restrictions)
- Join business networks and engage/inform about progress
- Run a promotional road-show at the Kingfisher Shopping Centre (subject to COVID restrictions)
- Issue a 'You said, we did' infographics campaign across all communications channels to mark milestones

9.0 Barriers to engagement

9.1 As detailed above Covid 19 and its impacts on engagement is ever changing so this will continued to be monitored. Previous consultation exercises prior to the Towns Deal have often focused on face to face activity with roadshow style events and drop-in sessions facilitated by officers. It's important to note that whilst we would encourage a return to some form of these events feedback from the public consultation in November 2020 by Social Marketing Gateway showed respondents would prefer a digital approach to future communication.

9.2 For Hard to reach groups and young people we will continue to use partner networks and work closely with Redditch Community Forum, education, and skills providers to deliver updates on progress and encourage engagement. This will be through face to face sessions (subject to Covid 19 restrictions), social media channels – utilising partner pages/websites to spread the message and surveys/telephone interviews where required.

10. When to engage

10.1 The table at appendix a sets out the engagement strategy we will follow to inform the development of the Investment Plan at the next stages. Proposals will be subject to review to take account of the latest covid-restrictions at the time.

11. Regular Progress Meetings

11.1 Stakeholder Management Plan progress and implementation will be monitored via a standing communications item on the Agenda at the regular Towns Board meetings as appropriate.

11.2 Mini Communication Plans should be produced at 'critical' times in the programme to support scheme delivery where necessary.

12. Responding to Any Stakeholder Issues Raised

12.1 NWEDR in conjunction with Redditch Borough will respond to any issues raised by the general public and stakeholders. These will be discussed at relevant project/board progress meetings.

13. Document Review

13.1 The Stakeholder Management & Engagement Plan should be reviewed every three months.

14. Media

14.1 NWEDR/RBC will ensure local media are aware of the project. A media briefing should be considered prior to project implementation, with an accompanying note including supportive statements from stakeholders to announce and provide updates on the project. If necessary, site visits and subsequent briefings will be used to inform key media, highlighting positive achievements and the benefits to residents and businesses.

14.2 Any media statements should be signed off by the Project Manager in conjunction with the Town Board and relevant politicians.

15.0 Evaluate & Next Steps

- Evaluate the impact of engagement by encouraging representatives to feedback on how engagement has been received and which areas need to be improved over time.
- Develop the look and feel of the graphics/visual branding
- Create Evaluation methods and measures of the communications/engagement programme.

Appendix A

Audience	Objective	Type of Engagement	Programme
All stakeholders	To feedback on stakeholder engagement, advise on submission of Town Investment Plan and next steps.	Press Release, digital & social media channels	End Jan 2021
All Stakeholders	Feedback on outcome of the submission and funding received, reiterate next steps	Press Release, digital & social media channels	Spring 2021
Town Deal Board	To monitor progress and continue to set direction of the Redditch Town Investment Plan implementation.	Online Zoom meetings	Monthly
Local Councillors	To continue to update on Town Investment Plan implementation progress	Online Teams meetings in line with council requirements Leader's Briefing to Members	As required
Residents & Visitors to Redditch	Enable members of the public the opportunity to feed back on the Redditch Town Investment Plan, specifically individual Towns Fund projects.	Digital & social media channels Face to face events when restrictions allow Media Posters in public places – libraries, GP surgeries, gyms etc	As required on a project basis
Local Business and Business groups	Ensure engagement with key sectors across the Borough are maintained and to gain insights into any key trend/changes in the market place	Utilise Redditch Business leaders NWEDR newsletter to businesses WRS to reach taxi drivers and businesses through ongoing communications	As per business leaders group meetings / as required
Local community groups	Enable members of the public the opportunity to feed back on the Redditch Town Investment Plan, specifically individual Towns Fund projects.	Digital & social media channels Face to face events when restrictions allow E-newsletters: Use Redditch partnerships to disseminate information through contacts/ channels Council's Engagement and Equalities team to reach Faith groups and translate material as required	As required on a project basis