

**STEVENAGE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (FORMERLY STEVENAGE TOWN FUND
BOARD)
MINUTES**

Date: Monday, 29 September 2025

Time: 9.51am

Place: Zoom

Present:

Start / End	Start Time:	10.00am
Time:	End Time:	11.15am

1 WELCOME AND CHAIR'S OPENING COMMENTS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted by the following:

- Claire Fletcher – Stevenage Borough Council
- Kathryn Carr – Stevenage Borough Council
- Martha Lytton Cobbold – Knebworth House
- Claire Dicks – MBDA
- Greg Westover – Legal & General
- Karen Burness – Airbus
- Ian Langley – Viavi Solutions

3 MINUTES - 10 JUNE 2025

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Stevenage Development Board held on 10 June 2025 be approved as a correct record.

4 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND OPENNESS

It was noted that Board Members were required to update their details for the Stevenage Even Better website, including registration of interest forms, photographs, and blog contributions as a requirement of Towns Fund. Any updates should be sent to Lisa.jerome@stevenage.gov.uk or natasha.lee@stevenage.gov.uk

5 CYCLING AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

Updates were delivered by the Stevenage Regeneration Team regarding the

improvements of underpasses across the town, making them brighter, safer, and more welcoming. The improvements included community art projects and school competitions and had been well received by the public.

In addition, a new sculpture had been installed outside the bus interchange. The sculpture incorporated stories and mementos shared by residents about their experiences of Stevenage.

The Arts and Heritage Trail was highlighted to the Board as another key initiative. The Trail would provide designated walking and cycling routes that showcased public art and local heritage sites. Installation of wayfinding and signage was due to begin shortly. A website is being developed to navigate users around the routes while sharing information about the town's history, artworks, and artists.

The creation of the Arts and Heritage Trail was seen as an opportunity to showcase Stevenage's heritage, with emphasis on ensuring that historic importance of sites, including Six Hills, was recognised and celebrated.

Alongside this, work was underway with Hertfordshire County Council to improve signage across the wider cycle network. The consultation process was set to gather public feedback on how people navigated the network and how improvements could encourage greater use.

It was agreed that the cycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Stevenage was widely recognised as a community asset and point of pride, both locally and more widely across Hertfordshire.

The Board Members also discussed the opportunities that the upcoming Local Government Reorganisation might bring in terms of more joined-up planning and stronger connections with neighbouring towns.

It was **RESOLVED** that the updates be noted.

6 **SPORTS AND LEISURE CENTRE**

The current position relating to the Sports and Leisure Centre project was presented to the Board by Dave Wells, Assistant Director – Regeneration, SBC.

It was advised that the planning application had been approved by the Planning and Development Committee on 9th September 2025.

The major site construction works were scheduled to begin in March 2026, with the new facility projected to open in December 2027. Final landscaping, car parking, and demolition of the old swimming pool were expected to be completed by May 2028.

Members were advised that the facility had been designed to include a 10-lane swimming pool. A café space overlooking the park was intended to encourage casual engagement and create a welcoming environment. Additional features included a wet play area for children, a sports hall and flexible specialist spaces for

fitness classes.

The £45 million project was praised by Board Members as a significant achievement by the Project Team, reflecting the tangible progress and anticipated benefits for the local community.

The Chair thanked Dave for his update.

7 SITEC

The Board was advised that the SITEC project had progressed significantly over the past few months. The first phase located at North Herts College had been successful and now plans for the college engineering campus to be re-sited on the former indoor market site were developing.

The next major phase for SITEC involved a proposal for a new town centre site. A feasibility study was being undertaken on the proposed site.

It was noted that concept work had been completed, and further development of the funding strategy was underway

The Board noted the update.

8 STATION GATEWAY

The Station Gateway project was presented to the board by Gemma Hannant, Regeneration Manager, SBC. It was noted that the development would provide high quality housing and workspace, enhanced cultural and heritage offerings, and improved transport infrastructure.

The Board was advised that an early programme of community and business consultation was currently in development to guide future engagement. Legal drafting for the project was in its final stages, with an update scheduled for Stevenage Borough Council's Cabinet on 8th October 2025.

The Board noted the update.

9 DIVERSIFICATION OF RETAIL

Lucy King, Regeneration Programme Manager, SBC reminded Board Members that the Diversification of Retail project aimed to support Stevenage Town Centre in adapting to changing retail habits alongside the creation of vibrant leisure, restaurant, and amenity spaces.

Progress included the relocation of the indoor market to Boston House, Park Place, with construction and fit-out works underway. Bespoke, locally manufactured market stalls had been designed to create a bright, energy-efficient, and welcoming space for shoppers and traders.

The Board Members were pleased to note that a tenant had been secured for the

refurbished 21 Town Square unit, establishing a multi-functional café and community space.

Improvements were also being made to the southwest corner of Westgate Shopping Centre, including a new entrance to enhance connectivity.

The Chair thanked Lucy for her update.

10 **COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING**

Lucy King, Regeneration, SBC advised that recent Communications and marketing efforts had focused on engaging the community and promoting town projects. The Team would also be providing communication updates on the newly granted Sport and Leisure Centre planning permission alongside the wider arts and culture programme.

The Investment Prospectus was highlighted as a forward-looking document outlining opportunities for Stevenage until 2040. The Prospectus was designed to attract future investment from Government and the private sector, with digital distribution planned to maximise sustainability and accessibility. The Prospectus would be available and distributed to potential investors, developers, clients, and other business-focused audiences.

Officers confirmed that all related documents would be uploaded to the Stevenage Even Better website and promoted via LinkedIn.

The Chair thanked Lucy for her update.

11 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The discussion at the meeting also reflected on Stevenage's successful track record in attracting funding, including £19 million from the Local Growth Fund, £37.5 million from the Towns Fund, and additional private sector investments.

The Council gave assurance that it remained committed to regeneration and housing delivery despite ongoing political uncertainty arising from the proposed local government reorganisation.

An update was then provided on the community hub proposals, which remained under development and Officers advised that designs were being considered.

12 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Thursday 20th November – 10.00am – Cromwell Hotel

CHAIR