

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

Date: Thursday, 11 June 2026
Time: 10.00am

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:

- Adam Wood – Hertfordshire Futures
- Chris Scott - Muse
- Clare Fletcher - Stevenage Borough Council
- Ed Jordan - WENTA
- Greg Westover - Legal & General
- Ian Langley - Viavi Solutions
- Samuel Attack - Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst

3 **MINUTES - 26 MARCH 2026**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Stevenage Development Board held on 26 March 2026 be approved as a correct record.

4 **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND OPENNESS**

The Board received the latest conflicts of interest list.

5 **GENERATION STEVENAGE**

The Board received an update on Generation Stevenage. Members were advised the event had been the largest Generation Stevenage event held to date, with more than 80 organisations supporting on the day. Over 1,800 people across Stevenage and surrounding areas attended the event at Knebworth Barns. Thanks were extended to venue hosts, delivery partners, employers and education providers, including GSK, Airbus, North Hertfordshire College, the University of Hertfordshire, Hertfordshire Opportunities Portal, Hertfordshire Futures and the Careers Hub, for their contributions to the event's success.

The Board noted the event showcased Stevenage's key economic sectors and provided young people with opportunities to explore apprenticeships, work

experience, training pathways, further and higher education routes, and a wide range of career options.

The Board heard attendance at the session for young people, parents and carers had been strong, enabling direct engagement with employers and education providers to support informed career decisions. It was reported that feedback from employers, schools, education providers and young people had been overwhelmingly positive. Further highlighting the value of the collaborative initiative in raising aspirations, providing insight into career opportunities and supporting future workforce development across Stevenage and Hertfordshire.

Members welcomed the success of the event and noted that Generation Stevenage was held annually, with the next event provisionally planned for May 2027, subject to confirmation of dates and coordination with schools and partners.

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

6 REEF ORIGIN

A presentation was given from representatives of Reef Origin regarding the development at the former GSK campus in Stevenage.

The Board noted the scheme was comprised of significant mixed-use life sciences and data centre development, supported by large scale infrastructure works which are already underway. The presentation spoke through the recently secured revised planning consent which incorporates two data centres within the site. The Board were informed to how this supports the growing demand and how it enhances the wider masterplan which transforms the site into an open environment with extensive landscaping, community spaces and facilities designed to encourage wider use by businesses, residents and visitors.

The Board further noted that the development was expected to deliver significant economic benefits for Stevenage and the wider Hertfordshire area. These benefits included thousands of construction and operational jobs, apprenticeships and support for the local life sciences, defence and technology sectors.

The Board discussed the sustainability credentials of the proposed data centres, and welcomed the emphasis on skills development, social value and partnership working with local colleges and training providers. The Chair welcomed the progress made on the scheme and thanked the presenters for an informative update.

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

7 ANNUAL TOWNS FUND REPORT

The Board received an update from the Regeneration Manager on the Local Regeneration Fund reporting submission to MHCLG, covering the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

It was reported the transition from the previous funding arrangements to the Local Regeneration Fund had simplified reporting requirements and enabled a greater focus on programme-level delivery.

The Board noted updates on project progress, funding, challenges and outputs. The Board were advised that the programme was progressing well, with several major regeneration projects moving from planning into delivery. Key achievements included:

- Successful relocation and reopening of the Indoor Market
- Signing of the Station Gateway development agreement
- Progress on the SG1 and Claxton House developments
- Advancement of the Construction Campus project,
- Securing of planning permission for the Sports and Leisure Centre
- Continued progress on public realm and cultural projects.

Members discussed an array of ongoing and active workstreams including initial design work and planning for stakeholder and community engagement for the Station Gateway project.

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

8 **SPORTS AND LEISURE CENTRE**

The Board received an update on the Sports & Leisure Centre project. The Board were advised significant progress had been made since the previous report, including the completion of detailed design. Preparatory works on site had continued to maintain momentum, including the new site entrance and exit now in place and the new substation complete. Subject to contract completion, main construction works were scheduled to commence in early July, with the new facility expected to open in June 2028.

The Board also received an update on the St George's Crossing works and that construction had recommenced in May, with traffic signals installed and utility works substantially completed. The crossing was expected to become fully operational later in June. It was acknowledged that the works had caused some inconvenience to Swimming Centre users; however, the completed crossing would provide a significant improvement in direct access between the town centre, the current and new facility and surrounding residential areas.

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

9 **COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING**

The Regeneration Team provided an update on communications and marketing activity for the new Sports & Leisure Centre, including designs were underway to

install project imagery and locally produced artwork on the hoardings. Preparations were also underway for a ground-breaking event, with invitations to be issued once arrangements had been finalised.

In addition, an update was provided on the Stevenage Heart Trails initiative. The Board was advised that, following the launch of the Stacked Stories sculpture several months earlier, Officers were undertaking a social media campaign across the Council's Facebook and Instagram channels to raise awareness of the project and generate community interest. It was reported that engagement with the campaign had been positive to date, and Members were encouraged to continue sharing content to further extend its reach as installations progressed across the town.

The Board also noted that Officers would be attending a range of community events throughout the summer to promote the Heart Trails project and encourage public participation. Members were informed that the Council would be present at Stevenage Day, one of the town's largest annual community events, which would celebrate the 80th anniversary of Stevenage as a New Town. The event was expected to include live music, a dedicated Stevenage Pride area and over 200 stalls.

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

10 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No items were raised under any other business. The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions and noted the overall positive and productive nature of the discussions.

11 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

- Thursday 10th September – 10.00am-12.00pm – Zoom
- Thursday 26th November – 09.30am-12.00pm – In person, venue TBC

CHAIR