

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

Date: Thursday, 10 September 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
Claire Dicks – MBDA
Cllr Richard Henry – Stevenage Borough Council
Chris Scott – Muse
Eoin Conroy – Mace Developments
Ian Langley - Viavi Solutions
Karen Burness-Hattersley – Airbus
Keith Ellis – Airbus
Marko Salopek – Muse
Samuel Atack – Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst

3 MINUTES - 11 JUNE 2026

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Stevenage Development Board held on 11 June 2026 be approved as a correct record.

4 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND OPENNESS

The Board received the latest conflicts of interest list.

5 GSK ANNOUNCEMENT: STRATEGIC RESPONSE AND NEXT STEPS

The Board was advised that the Council and Hertfordshire Futures were developing a coordinated response following GSK's announcement of their relocation from Stevenage to Cambridge.

A task force would be established with key partners to assess the economic and employment impacts, support affected employees and the local supply chain, and consider opportunities for the future use of the GSK site. The Council would also continue discussions with GSK regarding its local legacy, including skills and

apprenticeship opportunities.

It was reported that GSK had confirmed that the relocation would not take place until 2029. The Council was working with GSK and partners, including North Hertfordshire College and Wenta, to understand the impact on employees and the wider supply chain and to develop appropriate support, including retraining and alternative employment opportunities.

Board Members welcomed the partnership response and highlighted the importance of supporting all affected workers, including locally based employees, while recognising the potential for the relocation to create opportunities for further investment and economic growth. The Board noted the strength of Stevenage's existing life sciences and technology sectors and the importance of attracting a more diverse range of businesses to promote the town as a location for future investment.

The Board was advised that an implementation plan was expected to be developed between January and June 2027, informed by further evidence and engagement with GSK, Government, businesses and other partners. The plan would seek to support affected employees and the supply chain and help shape the future of the GSK site for the benefit of Stevenage's economy.

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

6 **SITEC**

The Board received an update on the completion of the new North Hertfordshire College campus in the town centre. It was noted that the former indoor market site had been successfully transformed and provided capacity for over 400 students, which was expected to generate significant footfall within the town centre. The College expressed its support for the project and highlighted its growing provision, including 80 apprenticeships and evening courses.

An update was also provided on the proposed SITEC Phase 2B project, which would focus on advanced manufacturing and engineering skills and explore the development of a new town centre facility. Work was underway with North Hertfordshire College and partners to develop the proposal and funding strategy, with a report expected to be considered by Cabinet in November 2026.

The College advised that engineering and advanced manufacturing were key areas for future growth, with plans to expand apprenticeship, full-time and adult courses. The College had also been invited to join the national Advanced Manufacturing Technical Excellence College network, which could provide additional expertise and potential capital funding to support the proposed facility.

Board Members welcomed the developments and highlighted the opportunities to expand skills provision for residents of all ages, including potential future provision for learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The importance of the new campus contributing to town centre footfall and ensuring that the facility was accessible and clearly signposted for students travelling from outside Stevenage was also noted.

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

7 **ARTS AND HERITAGE TRAIL**

The Board was advised that over 150 signs had been installed as part of the Arts and Heritage trail, which represented over 40% of the total trail. A review of the trail's digital offer was underway, alongside the development of an activity worksheet to encourage young people and families to explore the trail.

The first of four new commissioned sculptures, 'The Sleeping Legionary' by artist Louis Smith, had also been unveiled at Fairlands Valley Park, celebrating Stevenage's Roman heritage and providing a new feature along the trail.

Discussions took place, and board members were pleased to see how the development of the trails were going.

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

8 **SPORTS AND LEISURE CENTRE**

The Board was advised that the main works were underway and progressing well. It was noted that a groundbreaking event had been held on 4 September 2026, marking a significant delivery milestone.

New graphics had also been installed on the site hoarding, including project information and QR codes providing further information for the public and stakeholders.

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

9 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Discussions took place regarding the recent Government announcement to pause Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) proposals. It was noted that no timetable had been set for their reimplementation and that local elections were expected to proceed on the existing boundaries in May 2027.

It was further noted that the Stevenage Development Board would continue and would be unaffected by the announcement.

Thanks were given from the Board to the Chair regarding all his work for the Development Board.

10 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

- Thursday 26th November – 09.30am-12.00pm – In person, at the Holiday Inn,

St George's Way, Stevenage

CHAIR