

**STEVENAGE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
MINUTES**

**Date: Thursday, 15 June 2023**

**Time: 10.00am**

**Place: Virtual (via Zoom)**

**Present:** Adrian Hawkins (Independent Chair)  
Councillor Richard Henry (Stevenage Borough Council)  
Councillor Jeannette Thomas (Stevenage Borough Council)  
Matt Partridge (Stevenage Borough Council)  
Tom Pike (Stevenage Borough Council)  
Dave Wells (Stevenage Borough Council)  
Lucy King (Stevenage Borough Council)  
Gemma Hannant (Stevenage Borough Council)  
Natasha Lee (Stevenage Borough Council)  
County Councillor Richard Roberts (Hertfordshire County Council)  
Forogh Rahmani (Hertfordshire County Council)  
Colin Haigh (Hertfordshire County Council)  
Adam Wood (Hertfordshire LEP)  
Norman Jennings (Hertfordshire LEP)  
Martha Lytton Cobbold (Knebworth House)  
Ed Jordan (WENTA)  
Kasia Averall (Catapult)  
Stephen Ward (Catapult)  
Tamim Choudhury (Cities & Growth Unit, DLUHC)  
John Lewis (Aecom)  
Ian Langley (Viavi Solutions)  
Will Rohleder (Reef Group)  
Sally Bedwell (Morgan Sindall)  
Keith Ellis (Airbus)  
Dave Mudd (Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst)  
Duncan Parsley (GSK)  
Mairi Dillon (Kadans)

**Start / End**      Start Time:    10.00am  
**Time:**            End Time:      12noon

**1      WELCOME AND CHAIR'S OPENING COMMENTS**

Adrian Hawkins, Board Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Board was advised that apologies for absence had been submitted by the following:

Stephen Boulton (Councillor – Herts County Council)  
Sarah Brierley (Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust)  
Sian Carter (Homes England)  
Kevin Cowan (Mace Developments)  
Kit Davies (North Herts College)  
Clare Fletcher (Strategic Director – Stevenage Borough Council)  
Julie Newlan (University of Hertfordshire)  
Annie Piper (Regeneration Stevenage Borough Council)  
David Rowsell (Morgan Sindall)  
Hetty Thornton (Historic England)  
Greg Westover (Legal and General)

### 3 **MINUTES - STEVENAGE DEVELOPMENT BOARD - 30 MARCH 2023**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Stevenage Development Board held on 30 March 2023 be approved as a correct record.

### 4 **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND OPENNESS**

The Board received the latest conflicts of interest list.

### 5 **LIFE SCIENCES UPDATE (AUTOLUS, GSK AND FORUM) - REEF GROUP**

Will Rohleder (Reef Group) gave the Board an update in relation to Life Sciences projects being brought forward by Reef and UBS (Autolus, GSK and Forum). Will advised that Stevenage was key to the Reef and UBS Life Sciences Plan which was moving at speed in the right direction.

Board Members were pleased to hear that Autolus would be fully occupied and manufacturing batches of their cell and gene treatment by mid July. Public realm works would be starting later in the year. It was noted that in relation to the Forum, work on the 1<sup>st</sup> phase would begin later this year and could create up to 1,800 jobs, a mixed life science and commercial space, along with a new Square, in the Forum.

Planning permission had been submitted for GSK's Elevate Quarter including expansion to accommodate a nursery, coffee shop, additional meeting rooms and which would also allow a presence from Hertfordshire University.

The Chair thanked Will for his update.

### 6 **SYCAMORE HOUSE UPDATE - KADANS**

Mairi Dillon, from Kadans gave a presentation on the development and an overview of the work currently happening at Sycamore House.

As background information, the Board were informed that Kadans was a leading

developer running long term investment platforms for the Life Sciences and Health Technology Sector across Europe, with 8 campuses in Europe including Sycamore House in Stevenage.

In relation to Sycamore House, Mairi was pleased to advise the Board that following the redesign of the site into a bright, vibrant space with a large open plan communal area, the building was now nearly full. Mairi also reported that the building had received a recycled space award.

Board Members were pleased to note that tenants were being supported in their transition to Sycamore House. A vibrant community was being created and it was an important part of the re-shaping of Stevenage's future ambition in this sector.

In response to a question, Mairi advised that she would be happy for any Board Member wishing to visit Sycamore House to contact her. Dave Wells, Assistant Director Regeneration at SBC advised that the Council would be keen to stay in touch and support Kadans and the tenants of Sycamore House in any way it could.

The Chair thanked Mairi for her presentation and advised that the collaborative work with all companies would allow us to identify important life Science opportunities in the Town and the potential to develop Stevenage as a STEM City.

## 7 **MACE UPDATE**

Chris Le May from MACE gave an update on the regeneration of the Town Centre in particular the SG1 site:

- The S106 agreement had been signed in May 2023;
- Finalisation of the legal conditions could now be finalised;
- Vacant possession had been secured and all buildings demolished;
- Sub-station relocation had been finalised and signed off by UK Power networks;
- Design revisions including building fire and safety revisions had been made;
- During the summer months, remaining pre-commencement planning conditions would be discharged and construction supply chain contracts would be progressed;
- Site A build would commence this calendar year, building on the regeneration momentum alongside the work on the Life Sciences sector.

In response to a question regarding timelines, Chris advised that SG1 was a 4 phase scheme, approximately 2.5 years per scheme.

The Chair thanked Chris for his update.

## 8 **TOWNS FUND UPDATE AND LOOK AHEAD**

Dave Wells – Assistant Director Regeneration SBC gave an update on the Towns Fund.

Dave advised that in relation to spend and delivery in 2022/23, the Council had been

able to utilise some freedoms and flexibilities to achieve the profiled spend of £10.3m. A document had also been produced showcasing all the work carried out as a result of the Fund.

The Board noted that a monitoring return for October 22 –March 23 including narrative on programme progress, project outputs, risk register and spend was submitted on Friday 9 June and had undergone Capital assurance, CFO sign off as well as Development Board Chair sign off.

Dave advised that the Regeneration Team have had positive engagement with Central Government and would be beginning an analysis of spend and delivery for 2023/24 which would be presented to the next meeting of the Development Board.

Strategic Director Tom Pike advised that he would contact the LEP who had expertise in setting out economic data to undertake a high level impact assessment to ensure the strongest possible pitches could be made for funding.

The Chair thanked Dave for his update.

## 9 **REGENERATION PROGRAMME UPDATE**

Gemma Hannant, SBC Regeneration gave an update to the Board on the Regeneration programme including:

- The recent opening of the new Multi Storey Car Park. The car park had doubled the parking capacity including additional EV and disabled spaces as well as 80 additional secure cycle parking spaces;
- Detailed updates on the Stevenage Sports and Leisure Hub and Cycling and Pedestrian Connectivity would be given to a future meeting;
- The vision and proposed uses for the Public Services Hub which needed to ensure that the building was going to be a place that people wanted to go to.

The following answers were given in response to a number of questions/comments:

- The Hub would consist of an estimated 4 floors;
- A list of items relating to connectivity improvements were being considered in conjunction with the County Council including cycleway improvements and improvements to pedestrian access particularly around the challenges of the use and safety of the residents in the hotel at Junction 7 of the A1.
- Officers were currently working on what would be the most achievable improvements within the budget available;

Natasha Lee, SBC regeneration gave a Communications and Marketing update to the Board including a recap on recent activity. She advised on the upcoming communications including:

- Ongoing communications around the car park;
- Media work: working with the LEP on a joint piece;

- Community and local business newsletter;
- Re-purposing video content to reiterate key messages;
- Working on Arts & Culture video;
- Launch of the Museum consultation;
- Session to review Life Sciences messaging and inform more widely;
- Town Tours –beginning with Constructing Excellence; and
- Community engagement programme.

In response to a suggestion, Natasha agreed she would share the information around comms and marketing with Visit Herts to ensure the information was seen Countywide.

## 10 **GENERATION STEVENAGE**

The Board received a verbal update on the successful Generation Stevenage event which had recently been held at Knebworth House with around 1000 young people attending and 70 employers. The Mayor of Stevenage, the Leader of the Council alongside the Chair of the Stevenage Development Board opened the event

The event was held in order to stimulate interest in young people in local business and the employment opportunities that existed in Stevenage. Many young people attended and there were over 65 local business at the event.

## 11 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. In response to a question about the new Swimming Pool it was advised that it would be a 10 lane, 25m pool and would have a moveable floor to ensure optimum useage of the facility.
2. The Board were pleased to note the recent successful lecture at Airbus and the engagement of local schools and colleges with regard to delivering engineering projects in the Town and the potential for space, defence and comms to be a form of cluster in the Town.

## 12 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Thursday 14 September 2023 – 2.00pm – 4.00pm

Thursday 16 November 2023 – 10.00am – 12noon

## **CHAIR**