



MEETING OF THE NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS TOWN BOARD

Date: Friday, 13 December 2024

Time: 14:30 – 16:30

Location: Newton Sports Club, Crow Lane East, Newton-le-Willows, WA12 9XE.

Invitees

Name	Role	Organisation
------	------	--------------

Board Members

Chris Hickey	Chair	Mercury Hampton
David Baines MP	Member of Parliament, St Helens North	Member of Parliament, St Helens North
Councillor Anthony Burns	Leader of the Council	St Helens Borough Council
Councillor Richard McCauley	Cabinet Member for Inclusive Growth and Regeneration	St Helens Borough Council
Ian Lewis	Investment Manager	Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
Jon Smith	Chief Inspector, St Helens	Merseyside Police

Community & Co-Opted Board Members

Alex Myhill	Community Representative	Riddling Rack
Joanne Edge	Community Representative	Newton Sports Club
Debbie Taylor	Business Representative	Es Paradis Salon & Domestic Abuse WA12 CIC
Paul Romanko	Business Representative	United Utilities Ltd
Fiona Ruddy	Third Sector Representative	Newton Community Centre
John Unsworth	Cultural, Arts, and Heritage including Sports Groups Representative	Sea Cadet Corps
Rev Chris Stafford	Faith Representative	Team Rector at St Peters, Emmanuel Wargrave, and St John's

Local Authority Representatives

Mary Jefferson	Head of Regeneration and Growth	St Helens Borough Council
Mark Bingley	Programme Lead – Earlestown	St Helens Borough Council
Rachel Bebbly	Project Officer	St Helens Borough Council
Matthew Valentine	Project Officer	St Helens Borough Council

Apologies Received

Kath O'Dwyer	Chief Executive	St Helens Borough Council
Amy Louise Parsonage	Portfolio and Partnerships Officer	Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS TOWN BOARD

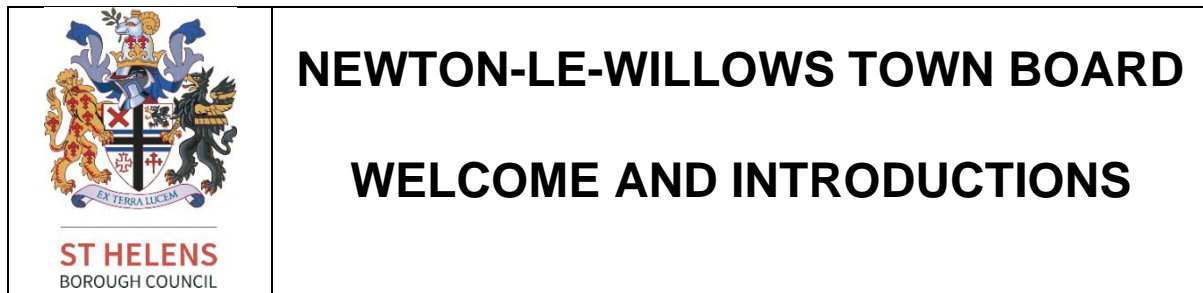
Friday, 13 December 2024

AGENDA

Item	Title	Lead
1.	Welcome and Introductions	CH
2.	Declarations of Interest	CH
3.	Minutes of the previous Town Board meeting held on 28 June 2024	CH
4.	Board Appointment	MB
5.	Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme Update - Presentation	MB
6.	Appointment of Town Board Specialist	MB
7.	Communications Policy	MB
8.	Any Other Business	All
9.	Photographs	All

This page is intentionally blank

ITEM 1



1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose is to welcome Board members and make introductions.

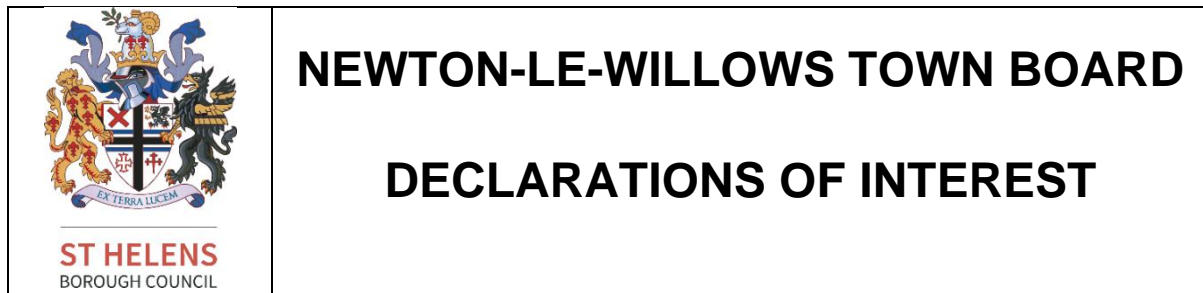
2. Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

1) Note the apologies received.

This page is intentionally blank

ITEM 2



1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose is for Board Members to declare any disclosable pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary interests.

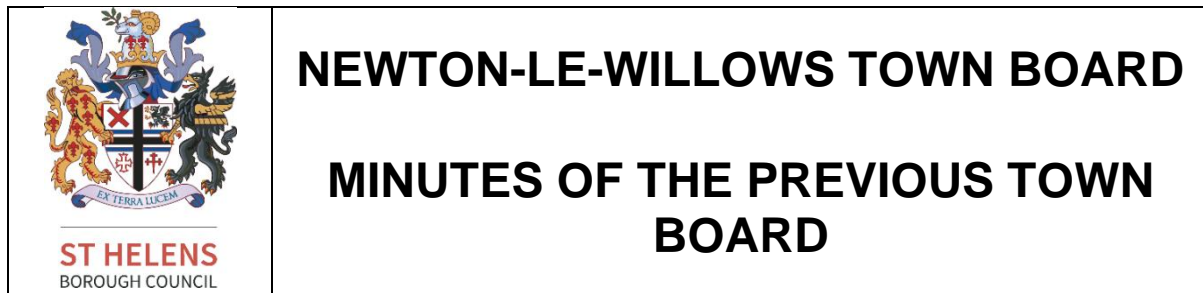
2. Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

- 1) Note the declarations of interest.

This page is intentionally blank

ITEM 3



1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose is to give an overview of the previous Town Board meeting, as agreed by the Town Board verbally.

2. Recommendations for Decision


Board is recommended to:

- 1) Note the previous minutes.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Minutes of Newton-le-Willows Town Board

Appendix 1 – Minutes of Newton-le-Willows Town Board

 <p>ST HELENS BOROUGH COUNCIL</p>	<h1>Minutes of Newton-le-Willows Town Board</h1> <p>13:30 – 15:30, Friday 28 June 2024</p> <p>Centrix House, Crow Lane East, Newton-le-Willows, WA12 9UY</p>
---	--

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Chris Hickey	Chair, Mercury Hampton
Conor McGinn MP	Member of Parliament, St Helens North
Councillor Anthony Burns	Leader of the Council, St Helens Borough Council
Councillor Richard McCauley	Cabinet Member for Inclusive Growth & Regeneration, St Helens Borough Council
Kath O'Dwyer	Chief Executive, St Helens Borough Council
Ian Lewis	Investment Manager, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
Amy Louise Parsonage	Portfolio and Partnerships Officers, Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner

LOCAL AUTHORITY REPRESENTATION

Lisa Harris	Executive Director of Place, St Helens Borough Council
Mary Jefferson	Head of Regeneration & Growth, St Helens Borough Council
Mark Bingley	Earlestown Programme Lead, St Helens Borough Council
Dean McGauley	Project Officer, St Helens Borough Council

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Rachael Buckley - Partnerships Officer, St Helens Borough Council

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chris Hickey (CH) welcomed all attendees and round-table introductions took place.

2. LONG-TERM PLAN FOR TOWNS PRESENTATION

Mark Bingley (MB) presented the Long-Term Plan for Towns to the board. This provided Board members with an overview of the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme, including key milestones and next steps for the Board.

MB provided an overview of Newton-le-Willows and the background to the formation of the Board in accordance with the Long-Term Plan for Towns Guidance note. £19.510 million in endowment style funding has been allocated to Newton-le-Willows to invest in local priorities over the 10-year span of the programme.

Cllr. McCauley (CllrM) asked if government have provided the data and map of the red line area that the Long-Term Plan for Towns funding covers. MB informed (CllrM) that this issue would be covered in more detail later in the meeting, advising that this is a priority issue which must be confirmed urgently.

ACTION: MB to share with DLUHC the ONS Built-up Area map based red line boundary for confirmation, with a view to confirming with Board at the next meeting on 2 August 2024.

ACTION: MB to share Newton-le-Willows Town demographics with the Board.

MB discussed the requirements of the Town Board stating that the Board must oversee the development of a 10-year Long-Term Plan and 3-year Investment Plan, which must be agreed by Council and subsequently submitted to DLUHC. The Long-Term Plan and 3-year Investment Plan must be developed in consultation with the local community. To support this activity capacity funding will be released to the Town Board to conduct public consultation.

The Board may also want to bring in other stakeholders to carry out this piece of work. Lisa Harris (LH) stated that consultation would add to that which has already taken place in relation to the regeneration of Earlestown Town Centre during winter 2023 with public exhibitions and feedback sessions across Earlestown, Newton-le-Willows and Wargrave.

MB reminded the Board that Members must complete a declaration of interests to be held by the Council. Board members must advise the secretariat of the Town Board at the earliest opportunity should their interests change. The declaration of interest form has been circulated to Board Members for completion.

ACTION: All board members to complete and return declaration of interest form to MB.

MB presented the three key investment themes:

- Safety and Security
- High Streets Heritage and Regeneration
- Transport and Connectivity

A discussion took place around Parkside and the exceptional opportunities that this will bring to the wider Newton-le-Willows Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme.

Conor McGinn MP (CM) commented that there will be opportunities to attract private investment on the back of developments at Parkside positively impacting the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme.

Councillor Burns (CllrB) talked about the strategic benefits and importance of the transport links in the area and the opportunities that Parkside will bring to Newton-le-Willows and the surrounding areas.

Cllr. McCauley (CllrM) provided a brief overview of the Parkside programme and informed the Board of the phasing of the programme and aim to maximise advanced manufacturing and the associated quality employment opportunities that would bring.

CH commented that many businesses are moving out of larger cities such as Manchester and the geographical position of Newton-le-Willows presents an excellent opportunity for those companies and organisations looking to relocate. KOD commented that this also presents an opportunity for the workforce of Parkside to reinvest their spend in the local economy.

ACTION: MB to add a presentation on the Parkside Programme to a future Newton-le-Willows Town Deal Board meeting.

MB presented the financial implications of the programme to the Board. £19.510m (£14.936m Capital and £4.574m Revenue) will be awarded to the Board to invest in local priorities over 10-year span of the programme. Subject to DLUHC acceptance of the Long-Term Plan and 3-Year Investment Plan, funding for financial years 24/25 and 25/26 will be released at the start of the 25/26 financial year. A table detailing funding profile was also presented to members. MB informed the Board that there may be some degree of flexibility around the profiling once the plan is agreed.

The first tranche of Long-Term Plan for Towns money will be allocated in April 2025. St Helens Borough Council (SHBC) will provide regular financial updates to Board as the programme evolves.

DECISION: The Board noted the contents of the presentation.

4. GOVERNANCE

MB presented the item and provided the Board with the opportunity to review and approve the governance arrangements for the creation and operation of the Newton-le-Willows Town Board.

MB informed Board that the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme requires St Helens Borough Council, as the accountable body for the fund, to establish a Newton-le-Willows Town Board in consultation with the Member of Parliament for St Helens North.

Guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) outlines the governance requirements that will underpin and support the operation of the Town Board as detailed in Appendix C.

The Terms of Reference (Appendix A) and Roles and Responsibilities (Appendix B) provides the framework for adherence to the guidance and ensures the appropriate governance arrangements are in place for the Board to fulfil its obligations.

KOD commented that the Terms of Reference for the Newton-le-Willows Long-Term Plans for Towns Board align with the St Helens Town Deal Board Terms of Reference.

DECISION: The Board agreed the Terms of Reference and Roles and Responsibilities for the Newton-le-Willows Long Term Plans for Towns Board as set out at Appendices A and B, respectively.

5. BOARD RECRUITMENT

MB presented the item which provided the Board with the opportunity to review the composition of the Newton-le-Willows Long-Term Plan for Towns Board and to agree the preferred recruitment route.

MB stated that the DLUHC has prescribed the core composition of the Board. The remaining Board positions are subject to local context at the discretion of the Board. The Board composition contained within the Terms of Reference, and outlined at paragraph 3.3, aligns to the suggested representation contained within the Long-Term Plan for Towns guidance and has been endorsed by St Helens Borough Council as accountable body for the fund.

MB informed the Board that to progress to the next milestone in the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme the Board must now commence the recruitment of the wider Board. A hybrid approach of co-option and advertised vacancies is recommended to ensure the board has the right skills and expertise, and views across important sectors are captured. Whilst also providing opportunity for the wider community to help shape local priorities for the town.

In May 2024, the Council's Cabinet endorsed the Board membership for the Newton-le-Willows Long Term Plan for Towns Board, subject to Board approval. The composition of the Board has been discussed with the Chair and will be developed in alignment with the suggested community representation as detailed in the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme guidance note.

For those positions that are co-opted to the Town Board, it is proposed that the Chair, in consultation with the Member of Parliament for St Helens North, develop a shortlist of candidates for each position. If a shortlisted candidate is interested in a Board position, they will be asked to submit an expression of interest to the Chair and the Member of Parliament. If more expressions of interest are received than Board positions available, candidates will be asked to attend an interview with the Chair and Member of Parliament. The decision of the Chair and Member of Parliament will be final, and the Board will be formally agreed at the next Board meeting in August.

Ian Lewis (IL) asked if the Board could appoint co-opted members for a period of 12

months as the needs of the board may change over time. Board members agreed with this proposal. CM asked for more information on the co-opting proposal. MB advised a hybrid approach of co-option and advertised vacancies is recommended to ensure that the Board is serviced by experienced individuals' representative of their sector whilst also providing opportunity for the wider community to help shape local priorities for the town.

Amy Louise Parsonage (ALP) suggested that Merseyside Police should have a representative on the Newton-le-Willows Long Term Plan for Towns Board to provide an operational policing voice alongside the PCC (Police Crime Commissioner).

CllrM agreed with this proposal from ALP recommending that this needs to be someone at a senior/ strategic level, such as an Inspector or Superintendent. The Board agreed that it should request for most senior representative to join the Board as the public agency representative.

KOD also informed that Board members should now start to suggest nominees for the various Board positions outlined in the report.

ACTION: All Members of the board to suggest nominees with relevant skills and expertise for the Board positions outlined in the report and CH in consultation with the Member of Parliament for St Helens North to approve the list of nominated people for appointment.

DECISION: Board Members agreed:

- 1. The composition of the Long-Term Plan for Towns Board and recruitment route as presented in the table at paragraph 3.3.**
- 2. Co-opted Members to be elected for a 12-month term.**
- 3. That Merseyside Police be asked to nominate a strategic level representative at Superintendent or Inspector rank.**

6. PROGRAMME RESOURCES

MB highlighted the programme resource requirements of the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme and sought approval from the Board for the creation of a Project Officer to provide secretariat and project management support to the Newton-le-Willows Long Term Plan for Towns Board.

MB informed the Board that the Long-Term Plan for Towns guidance note details that SHBC will be the accountable body for the fund. The Long-Term Plan for Towns funding will be assured in line with the requirements set out in the Levelling Up Funds Local Authority Assurance Framework, using three lines of defence:

The first line of defence is the Council's Chief Finance Officer who will assume financial responsibility for the programme.

The first line of defence is the Council's Chief Finance Officer who will assume financial responsibility for the programme. The second line of defence will be undertaken by the Assurance and Compliance Team within DLUHC. DLUHC will

undertake a range of checks, on a risk and sample basis. SHBC, as the accountable body, will provide resource to engage with and support this process.

MB stated that further to the assurance, monitoring and evaluation requirements of the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme, a secretariat function to the Board is required. It is envisaged that this role will provide an administrative function to the Board ensuring that it operates in accordance with the governance requirements detailed within the Terms of Reference. This may include facilitating Board meetings, preparing agendas, briefings and reports for the Board, publishing minutes of the Board, maintaining the conflict of interest register, managing public enquiries, representing the Board at meetings, and being the main point of contact for the programme with DLUHC. MB asked for Board approval to create the post and commence recruitment thereafter.

By 1 November 2024, the Board must prepare and submit a Long-Term Plan and a 3-year Investment Plan for Newton-le-Willows to the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities. These plans should be based on consultation with the local community to identify local priorities. To help the Board meet this ambitious deadline and to provide the necessary technical expertise in project and business case development for the 3-year Investment Plan, it is proposed to undertake a procurement process to secure specialist support. The quotations received from this process will be presented to the Board for approval at its next meeting.

DECISION: The Board:

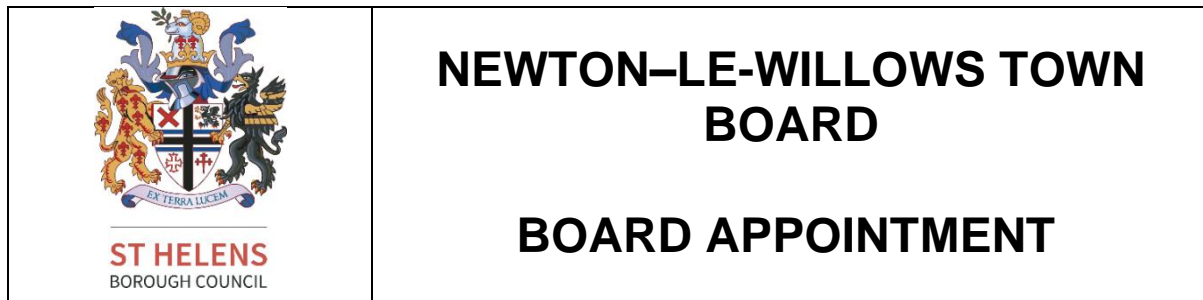
- 1. Noted the programme resource requirements of the Long-Term Plan for Towns Board.**
- 2. Approved the creation of a 3-year fixed term Project Officer post to support the secretariat and programme management requirements of the Board.**
- 3. Approved the commencement of a procurement process to secure additional resources for the Board to support community consultation and the creation of the Long-Term Plan and 3-Year Investment Plan.**

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Date of Next Meeting: 13:30-15:00, Friday 2 August 2024.

Location: Centrix House, Crow Lane East, Newton-le-Willows, WA12 9UY.

This page is intentionally blank



1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the process for the recruitment and appointment of the community and co-opted positions onto the Newton-le-Willows Town Board.

2. Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

- 1) Endorse the appointment of the community and co-opted positions for the Newton-le-Willows Town Board.

3. Background

- 3.1 Guidance issued by the former Department for Levelling-Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) detailed that each beneficiary town must create a Town Board and develop a Long-Term Plan including a 3-year Investment Plan. The guidance also detailed that each town would receive an allocation of £19.5m with £0.500m retained by DLUHC to cover programme management costs and the development of a National High Streets and Towns Task Force, which will provide support to Long-Term Plan beneficiaries.
- 3.2 To support the creation of the Town Board, capacity funding of £0.050m was released by DLUHC in April to support community consultation and creation of a Town Board with a further £0.200m to support capacity building to be issued by the end of March 2025.
- 3.3 In May 2024, the Council's Cabinet endorsed the following Board membership for the Newton-le-Willows Town Board, subject to Board approval. The composition of the Board outlined below had been developed in alignment with the suggested community representation as detailed in the Long-Term Plan for Town Programme guidance note.

Table 1: Board Member Recruitment Route

Board Member	Recruitment route
Chair	Direct appointment
Member of Parliament (St Helens North)	Direct appointment
A senior representative from the Police (expected to be the Police and Crime Commissioner)	Direct appointment
Representative from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority	Direct appointment
Elected Member (Portfolio of the Council Leader)	Direct appointment
Elected Member (Portfolio of Inclusive Growth and Regeneration)	Direct appointment
Chief Executive St Helens Borough Council	Direct appointment
Business representative (up to 4)	Co-opted
Community representative (up to 2)	Advertised position (non-political representation only - political representation reached)
Faith representative	Co-opted
Third Sector representative (including sports clubs)	Co-opted
Cultural Arts and Heritage representative	Co-opted
Public Agency and anchor institution representative, such as local schools, higher or further education institution, relevant government agencies for the area, for example Integrated Care Board.	Co-opted

- 3.4 The inaugural meeting of Town Board took place on 28 June 2024. At this meeting, mandated Board members (outlined above as Direct Appointments), agreed the board composition and recruitment as above. Accordingly, the Council has been working to recruit the Town Board as a priority following the appointment of Chris Hickey as Chair in May 2024.
- 3.5 The Chair, in consultation with the Member of Parliament for St Helens North, met in September to review both community applications and nominations for positions from the Council and Ward Councillors. The outcome of this process identified candidates for the following positions including selecting two candidates from the community applications:
- Four business representatives.
 - Two community representatives.
 - One faith representative.
 - One third sector representative.
 - One cultural arts and heritage inc. sports clubs representative.

- 3.6 For those candidates identified via a nomination, the Chair supported by the Programme Lead (Earlestown), wrote to candidates to advise of their nomination. It was agreed at the meeting of Town Board on 28 June that these candidates would be asked to submit an Expression of Interest for their nominated position that would detail their skill set and suitability for the role. Of the nine candidates identified via nomination, seven submitted an Expression of Interest to join the Town Board. The two nominees who declined were both nominated for Business Representative and the Chair has expressed his desire to fill these vacancies.
- 3.7 The below candidates were identified and invited to an informal 'Welcome Meeting' held for new Board Members in October. This meeting provided the opportunity for Board Members to learn more about the Long-Term Plan initiative, meet the Chair of the Town Board, and the Council's Project Team before being formally appointed.

Table 2: Board Members invited to the 'Welcome Meeting'

Board Members		
Names	Role	Organisation
Alex Myhill	Community Representative	Owner of the Riddling Rack
Joanne Edge	Community Representative	Manager of Newton Sports Club
Debbie Taylor	Business Representative	Owner of Es Paradis Salon and Training Academy & Co-Founder of Domestic Abuse WA12 CIC
Paul Romanko	Business Representative	Senior Project Engineer for United Utilities Water Ltd (UU)
Fiona Ruddy	Third Sector Representative	Chair of Trustees for Newton Community Centre
John Unsworth	Cultural, Arts, and Heritage including Sports Groups Representative	District Officer for Sea Cadet Corps in Merseyside East
Rev Chris Stafford	Faith Representative	Team Rector at St Peters, Emmanuel Wargrave, and St John's

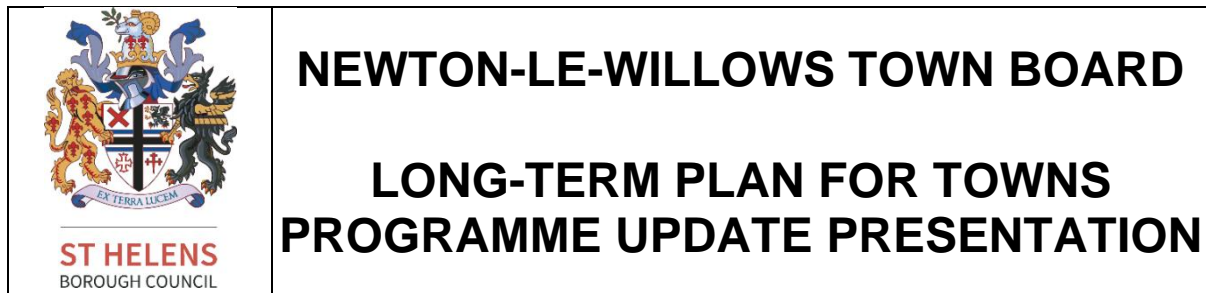
- 3.8 Pen pictures and photographs of the Town Board members (both mandated and community and co-opted positions) will be advertised through St Helens Borough Council Long-Term Plan for Towns website:
<https://sthelens.gov.uk/article/11062/Long-term-plans-for-towns>.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 Appointment of the community and co-opted representatives will ensure the Board is serviced by experienced individuals' representative of their section whilst also providing opportunity for the wider community to help shape local priorities for the town. The recommendation of this report is therefore for Town Board to endorse the appointments outlined at paragraph 3.7.

This page is intentionally blank

ITEM 5



1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this presentation is to provide Board members with an overview of the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme following the updates after the Autumn statement.

2. Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

- 1) Note the contents of the presentation.

This page is intentionally blank



1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose is to advise the board of the procurement process undertaken to commission a Town Board specialist to assist in the execution of the Boards duties in relation to community consultation and development of a Long-Term Plan and 3-Year Investment Plan.

2. Recommendation for Decision

Board is recommended to:

- 1) Endorse the appointment of Hatch Associates Ltd, subject to the Council's formal approvals.

3. Background

- 3.1 The role of the Town Board is to ensure the Long-Term Plan for Newton-le-Willows is developed, defined, and delivered in accordance with community consultation. Town Board obligations include the approval of:
- A Long-Term Plan establishing the 10-year vision principles and priorities.
 - A 3-year Investment Strategy through the prioritisation of projects.
- 3.2 The inaugural meeting of the Newton-le-Willows Town Board took place on 28 June 2024, with the Town Board agreeing the following key items:
- Assurance and Governance arrangements.
 - Composition and recruitment route for Town Board positions.
 - Appointment of a fixed Term (3-year) Project Officer to support the Town Board.
 - Appointment of Town Board Specialists to support the Town Board in community consultation and subsequent development of the Long-Term Plan and 3-Year Investment Plan.
- 3.3 A procurement exercise has been undertaken via the Council's appointed recruitment service (STAR Procurement) for the appointment of a Town Board Specialist to support public consultation and development of the 10-year Long

Term Plan (including 3-year Investment Plan) for the initiative. A Scope of Services for the procurement exercise (found in Appendix 2) details the specification that was developed and aligned with Board obligations as outlined in the Long-Term Plan guidance.

- 3.4 This procurement exercise was undertaken through the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) Lot 9 framework, which has a pool of pre-qualified bidders giving an accelerated route to procurement.
- 3.5 Concluding at the end of October following a 4-week tender period, six bids were received. All bids were assessed by the Programme Lead (Earlestown) along with two Project Officers. Moderation of the scores was then undertaken on 22 November by specialist procurement advisors from STAR Procurement.
- 3.6 The six bids were each assessed on both qualitative and quantitative measures with four categories assessed:
 - Experience
 - Project Methodology
 - Contract Management
 - Social Value
- 3.7 The above categories accounted for 50% of the final score. An additional 10% is allocated according to the cost value of Social Value opportunities associated with the award of the bid and 40% from the total cost of services. Social Value provides a broader value to St Helens by ensuring we gain benefits for our residents and businesses as a result of this commission.
- 3.8 The recommendation to Town Board is to appoint Hatch Associates Ltd, who achieved the highest score out of the six bidders. A scoring table can be found at section 4.2 of this report.
- 3.9 In light of a reformed prospectus following the Autumn Budget the specification will be reviewed, and if this details any additional requirements - these will be delivered via contract modification to ensure alignment with the scope.

4. Financial Section – This section is exempt from publication under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act Section 3.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Appointment of a Town Board Specialist will assist the board in the development of the Long-Term ten-year plan and the three-year Investment Strategy, required for submission to MHCLG. The appointed specialist will bring the necessary expertise and resource in community consultation, development of business plans and investment strategies, and act as a 'critical friend' to the Town Board.

5.2 It is the recommendation of St Helens Borough Council, as the accountable body for the Long-Term Plan for Towns, that the Town Board endorse the appointment of Hatch Associated Ltd as detailed in section 4. The Council will then seek internal approvals as the accountable body for the appointment.

Appendices

Appendix 2: Scope of Services for procurement

Appendix 2 – Scope of Services for procurement



Scope of Services

Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme Consultancy Support

Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Definitions
- 1.2 Project Background and Development to Date

2.0 COMMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1 Purpose
- 2.2 Scope of Works/Deliverables
- 2.3 Risk Management
- 2.4 Pricing
- 2.5 Financial Considerations and Payment Profile
- 2.6 Timescales
- 2.7 Stakeholder Liaison
- 2.8 Register of Commitments
- 2.9 Quality Assurance
- 2.10 Project Management, Programme and Staff
- 2.11 Clients Programme
- 2.12 Submission and Review of Deliverables
- 2.13 Key People
- 2.14 Project Directory

3.0 MEETING REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 *Clients* Progress Meetings
- 3.2 Financial Review Meetings
- 3.3 Other Meetings

1. Introduction

1.1 Definitions

References to *SHBC* shall mean St Helens Borough Council.

References to the *Client* shall mean SHBC.

References to *Consultant* shall mean the appointed provider by SHBC.

References to *Sub-Consultant* shall mean any agent employed to support the *Consultant* in execution of the requirement.

1.2 Project Background and Development to Date

Commission Overview – St Helens Borough Council, on behalf of the Newton-le-Willows Town Board, is looking to appoint a suitably experienced and resourced consultant to support development of a Long-Term Plan and 3-year Investment Strategy for the town.

Project Background – In September 2024, Government announced their ‘*Long-Term Plan for Towns*’ programme, a core part of the Government’s levelling-up programme, which identified 55 towns across the country that will benefit from up to £20m ‘*endowment style*’ funding for investment in local priorities over a 10-year period.

As part of the Spring Statement (6 March 2024), the Chancellor confirmed an additional £400m to extend the programme to a further 20 towns across the United Kingdom, Newton-le-Willows was identified as a beneficiary.

Guidance issued by the Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities (now Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - MHCLG) detailed that each beneficiary town must create a Town Board and develop a 10-year Long-Term Plan to enable drawdown of £19.510m worth of funding for the area.

To support the creation of the Town Board, community consultation, and development of the Long-Term Plan, capacity funding has been provided by government. The Town Board must develop a 10-year Long-Term Plan and 3-Year Investment Plan aligned to local priorities in accordance with the below.

10-Year Long-Term Plan - The strategic vision for the town; where, why, and how funds will be targeted over the 10-year period taking account of the town’s challenges and opportunities.

3-year investment Plan - A more detailed plan outlining the interventions the Board wishes to pursue within each investment theme across the first three-year period of the programme, how funding will be indicatively allocated to specific intervention areas, when interventions will be delivered, the proposed

route to market (where appropriate) and the management arrangements for the funding.

Whilst the Town Board can choose their own local priorities, three priority intervention areas are noted as being considered as having a strong business case for investment, value for money and benefit-to-cost ratio:

- Safety and Security.
- High Streets, Heritage, and Regeneration and
- Transport and Connectivity.

Project Development to Date – In May 2024, SHBC appointed Chris Hickey of Mercury Hampton as Chair of the Newton-le-Willows Town Board. Chris has over 17 years' experience of providing business services to clients across the Science, Technology and Engineering sector. Chris formed his business six years ago and immediately chose to locate in his hometown Newton-le-Willows, as he was determined to employ local people. Chris is a pioneer in innovation and is passionate about creating a culture that will help people succeed. Chris values teamwork, hard work and humility. Born and raised in Newton-le-Willows he attended Cowley Sixth form and St Helens College before serving in the armed forces. Chris is passionate about Newton-le-Willows and is determined to bring economic empowerment to the people of the area.

The inaugural meeting of the Newton-le-Willows Town Board took place on 28 June 2024. The Town Board agreed the following key items:

- Assurance and Governance arrangements
- Composition and recruitment route for Town Board positions
- Appointment of a 3-year Project Officer to support the Town Board
- Appointment of consultants to support the Town Board in community consultation and subsequent development of the Long-Term Plan and 3-Year Investment Plan.

On 17 July 2024, Minister Alex Norris MP (Parliamentary Under-Secretary Housing and Local Communities) wrote to the Chief Executive of SHBC regarding the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme. The Minister's letter acknowledged the challenging timescales imposed by the previous government and recognised the impact the General Election had on the Council's ability to progress with the LTPfT programme. The Minister outlined that the new government would be undertaking a milestone review of the LTPfT programme and that he had suspended deadlines for Assurance and Governance proposals (gateway 1) and submission of Long-Term Plan (gateway 2). The letter did not suggest that the programme was at risk and SHBC continues to develop the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme. SHBC await the outcome of the review.

During August, a public advertisement was published for up to two Community representatives to join the Town Board. The advert was published via the St Helens Borough Council website and received eleven Expressions of Interest signifying the appetite amongst the public to support this exciting programme.

In September, the Chair and Member of Parliament for St Helens North conducted a shortlisting exercise and have since written to targeted candidates for various stakeholder representative positions on the Town Board. Furthermore, two candidates have been selected for the advertised positions of Community representative and will be appointed to the Board shortly. Composition of the Town Board is provided below with formal appointment taking place at the Town Board meeting of October.

Table 5: Board Member Recruitment Route

Board Member	Recruitment route
Chair	Direct appointment
Member of Parliament (St Helens North)	Direct appointment
A senior representative from the Police (expected to be the Police and Crime Commissioner)	Direct appointment
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority	Direct appointment
Elected Member (Portfolio of the Council Leader)	Direct appointment
Elected Member (Portfolio of Inclusive Growth and Regeneration)	Direct appointment
Chief Executive St Helens Borough Council	Direct appointment
Business representative (up to 4)	Co-opted
Community representative (up to 2)	Advertised position (non-political representation only - political representation reached)
Faith representative	Co-opted
3 rd Sector representative (including sports clubs)	Co-opted
Cultural Arts and Heritage representative	Co-opted
Merseyside Police Representative (Super-Intendant or Chief Inspector for St Helens)	Direct appointment

2. Commission requirements

2.1 Purpose

SHBC and the Newton-le-Willows Town Board seek an experienced consultant to support the Board in the development of a Long-Term Plan and 3-Year Investment Plan for Newton-le-Willows, in accordance with the relevant Long-Term Plan for Towns guidance.

The appointed consultant will support the development of place-led analysis by reviewing strategic place context, establishing local needs, and understanding

place driven opportunities that will inform the development of a Long-Term Plan and 3-Year Investment Strategy. The consultant will provide specialist economic development support to the Town Board and undertake a 'critical friend' approach to ensure the Board develops a well-considered and impactful pipeline of projects that will respond to local needs.

2.2 Scope of Works/ Deliverables

Overview of the Scope

Town Board Support

- Support the Town board in identification of Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats – against fund themes.
- Facilitate a Town Board workshop to establish LTPfT 10-year vision principles and priorities.
- Consider regeneration and spatial strategies already in place for the town and a summary of relevance. Baseline existing 'Project' review/readiness and alignment with LTPfT themes.
- Review existing key consultation findings to date identify core themes.
- Context review - consider and identify the existing challenges and opportunities through the following analytics:
 - Wider Context: consider the national and regional trends, challenges and opportunities that could influence Newton-le-Willows residents.
 - Newton-le-Willows Context: We will complete (across gaps as identified) the review of local challenges and opportunities in respect of community, regeneration, connectivity, skills, demographics, and environmental as well as setting out the key existing constraints and opportunities; This will include mapping of the community provision/condition - mapped to understand geographical implications.
- Context analysis
 - Inform and engage the Town Board of local context.
 - Provide the starting point for wider consultation discussions around project opportunities.
 - Inform the Vision and objectives in the 10 Year Plan document.
 - Inform the sifting and prioritisation of the projects in the 3-year Investment Plan.

- Provide a 'Local Context' document which can form an appendix to the Investment Plan and form the initial chapter of the 10-year vision which will present the 'strategic case for change'.

Define the LTPfT Vision, outcomes and objectives:

- Establish a common understanding of vision that will:
- Support the Town Board in the establishment of a 10-year vision for Newton-le-Willows informed by engagement findings and context studies.
 - Draw on a thorough understanding of Newton-le-Willows historical and cultural identity to ensure the vision is unique, exciting and inspires action.
- Identify outcomes and objectives that align with the priorities of the local community, thinking inclusive of short, medium, and long term.

Engagement support/ strategy

- Engagement with the Council, Town Board and the community will be at the heart of the Long-Term Plan. This will be achieved through several different workstreams:
 - Town Board engagement
 - Stakeholder engagement in accordance with Town Board Stakeholder membership – this may include focus groups with specific stakeholder groups.
- Public focused events designed closely with the Town Board/Council and will be interactive/fun with community members involvement.

Project Development and Prioritisation

- Define prioritisation with client group/towns board to linked to themes and client objectives. Appraise against an agreed criterion, to include cost, impact, alignment to investment themes and readiness to meet programme.
- Selected projects to be developed in sufficient detail to establish a cost plan suitable for Investment plan purposes.

Long-Term Plan and 3-Year Investment Plan Development

- Produce an outward facing (and accessible) Long-Term Plan document which details the Board's vision, Governance and Assurance, desired outcomes and objectives, needs and wants of the local community, and

a shortlist of projects and interventions based around the three investment themes.

- Produce a delivery programme for the 3-Year Investment Plan which identifies key dependencies and milestones.
- The 3-year Investment Plan will include a cash-flow to demonstrate where funds for project interventions will be drawn down including necessary cost consultancy where required.

Other relevant information

- Earlestown Masterplan Development Framework
- Long-Term Plan for Towns Guidance Note

2.3 Risk Management

The *Consultant* shall assist the *Client* to maintain a risk register to be held by the Project Manager and shall attend regular risk workshops.

2.4 Financial Considerations and Payment Profile

Payments will be made monthly in arrears. Proposals should set out a proposed payment plan linked to project milestones and key deliverables. Monthly payment in arrears will be conditional on performance, against the programme milestones submitted as part of the tender response.

2.5 Timescales

We would expect that the commission to be completed by the end of December 2024. Proposals should set out an ambitious and deliverable programme for completion of the work, making allowance for periods of public holidays.

2.6 Stakeholder Liaison

The consultant will work with the *Client* to identify all stakeholder interfaces and will be responsible for supporting the *Client* in all stakeholder liaisons necessary to allow the *Consultant* to perform all services required under the Contract. This may include, but is not limited to, liaising with:

- Town Board
- ECF Programme Team
- SHBC Highways, Transportation, Planning, Regeneration Officers
- Council Members
- Landowners and developers
- Local businesses
- Merseytravel, Network Rail and Northern Rail
- Relevant statutory undertakers and owners of other third-party infrastructure

- Active travel and other highway user groups
- Consultants from co-dependent projects

The *Consultant* shall consider the stakeholders' requirements and how these can contribute to the overall strategy proposed.

The *Consultant* shall keep records of all parties contacted including date, contact details and summary of matters discussed.

2.7 Register of Commitments

Throughout the production of the commission a register shall be produced and maintained by the *Consultant* of any scheme specific commitments that have been made and with whom they have been agreed.

Scheme specific commitments must be coordinated with and approved by the *Client* before being made.

2.8 Quality Assurance

The *Consultant*, and any *Sub-Consultants* engaged throughout the commission, shall operate a quality management system in compliance with BS EN ISO 9001.

Further, the *Consultant* and any *Sub-Consultants* engaged as part of the commission shall be able to demonstrate that they can undertake the required work in a safe and responsible manner, adhering to relevant legislation and best practice protocols. Quality plans and audits shall be produced to meet the requirements of the works.

2.9 Project Management, Programme and Staff

The *Client* will appoint a Project Manager under whose direction the works will be carried out and through whom all references to the *Client* shall be made.

The *Consultant* shall assist the Project Manager to further develop and maintain a risk register for the project and shall attend regular risk workshops.

Within two weeks of the Contract Award Date the *Consultant* shall supply a programme detailing the required consultancy services and activities to produce and submit deliverables.

The *Consultant* shall be responsible for identifying suitable response / review times from any stakeholders and incorporating these within their programme as required.

2.10 Clients Programme

The following table contains the *Clients* key milestone dates which the *Consultants* programme should adhere to:

Table 6: Clients Key Milestones

Key Milestone	Planned Date
Contract Award	October 2024
Initiation meeting SHBC	October 2024
Meeting with Town Board	October 2024
Public consultation	October/November 2024
Project prioritisation - Town Board	November 2024
Development of Long-Term Plan and 3-Year Investment Plan	December 2024
Submission of Long-Term Plan and 3-Year Investment Plan to MHCLG	January 2025

2.11 Submission and Review of Deliverables

A programme for submissions shall be agreed with the *Client*. The *Consultant* shall issue any submissions to the *Client* for formal review at least two weeks prior to the due date. Informal review by the *Client* at an earlier stage is actively encouraged.

All reports shall be submitted in draft and final format for consideration by SHBC and the Town Board.

The time periods allocated assume a reasonable quality of submission. If a submission is not accepted upon review by the *Client*, the *Consultant* will be required to re-submit. The *Client's* review period shall begin again upon re-submission.

Any formal approval required by other interested parties, approving bodies or stakeholders, must be obtained by the *Consultant* prior to the *Client's* review period commencing. The *Consultant* is responsible for identifying and managing the suite of acceptance required from any other interested parties or approving bodies. Including any interim review by *the Client* to ensure that what is sent to an external party is appropriate.

The *Consultant* shall maintain a schedule of deliverables indicating the planned and actual dates of issue and the status of all versions. The schedule should include any review period required and be agreed by the *Consultant* with stakeholders.

The *Consultant* shall issue the updated schedule of deliverables to the Project Manager every two weeks.

For the avoidance of doubt, the completeness of a deliverable will be demonstrated by submission of the deliverable to the Project Manager. This will include all work generated by the *Consultant* including models, surveys, file notes, meeting

minutes, reports etc. If no deliverable has been submitted, or the submission is not complete, no progression can be claimed under the Activity Schedule.

Submissions will be reviewed using a certification process to be provided by SHBC with the following criteria:

- Accepted;
- Accepted with comments; or
- Not accepted.

All reports shall be submitted to and in a format to be agreed with the Project Manager. The front cover of all reports and any separate appendices shall contain the Client's name, the Project Name, Report Title, Reference Number and Revision and the Date of Issue.

All use of company logos on the report front cover or in the report header/footer to be agreed with the Project Manager. SHBC shall be recognised in branding used on project deliverables.

2.12 Key People

The *Consultant* shall provide a CV of the key people delivering the project. These key people must have demonstrable appropriate experience and shall not be substituted throughout the project except where expressly agreed with the *Client*.

The *Consultant* shall confirm availability of the key people listed above throughout the Commission.

2.13 Project Directory

The *Consultant* shall prepare a Project Directory containing the names, addresses and all contact numbers including e-mail addresses and mobile telephone numbers of all key people and other personnel as agreed with the *Client*. This list shall be subdivided by organisation and discipline and contain a brief reference to the person's responsibility regarding the works.

The Project Directory shall also include all stakeholders in the works and other people as deemed appropriate and agreed with the *Client*.

The Project Directory shall be issued to the Project Manager for wider circulation and the *Consultant* shall update it at least every three months or as necessary to ensure that the Project Directory is up to date and all current personnel are listed.

The *Consultant* shall fully review the Project Directory on start and completion of the commission and at any other time as required by the *Client*.

3. Meeting Requirements

3.1 The *Client's* Progress Meetings

The *Client* shall convene progress meetings at monthly intervals unless otherwise advised. Progress meetings shall be chaired by the *Client* and shall allow, as required, for the attendance of other relevant parties as appropriate. The location of the meeting will be agreed and potentially rotate between venues of the participating organisations.

The *Consultant* shall take minutes and issue draft copies for comment to all participants, not more than two working days after the progress meeting. Agreed minutes shall be distributed after receipt of all comments.

The first monthly meeting shall be held within 14 days following the Contract Award Date. The meetings will be held at a location to be agreed with the *Client*. The *Consultant* shall make themselves available for attendance at these meetings.

The agenda for the meetings shall be agreed by the Project Manager and prepared by the *Client* at least four clear days prior to the meeting.

The *Consultant* shall assist the *Client* in preparation for the progress meeting. At least two working days in advance of the meeting, the *Consultant* shall submit to the *Client* a monthly progress report which includes the following information:

- Progress report for period covered by meeting.
- Programme for next reporting period.
- Actual start dates of activities commenced since the previous update and reasons for any changes from the accepted Project Programme.
- Actual completion dates of activities completed since the previous update and reasons for any changes from the accepted Project Programme.
- The anticipated time for completion, in working days, for activities in hand.
- Any change requested by the *Client* to the programmed completion date and the reasons for any change.
- Proposals for recovering from any slippage to the accepted Project Programme.
- Payment Schedule - agreement of Compensation Events.
- Schedule of Early warnings.
- Updated Contract Risk and Opportunities register.
- Quality Matters.
- Completion status of each work breakdown structure in Activity Schedule and commentary on mitigation measures if required.

- Information Required Schedule
- Register of Commitments

The *Consultant* shall complete and issue a monthly financial report in a suitable format to enable direct comparison with the various elements of their tender submission.

Within five working days before each progress meeting the *Consultant* shall update and issue their work programme. It shall be issued two working days prior to the progress meeting. Appropriate data will be provided by the Project Manager in respect of activities for which they are responsible.

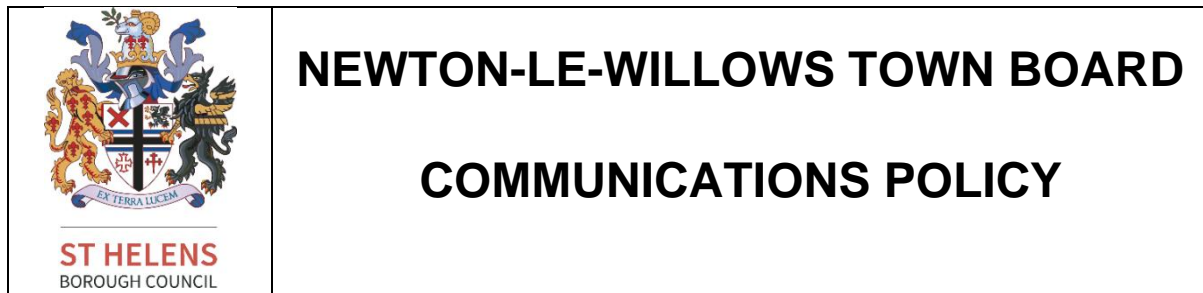
3.2 Financial Review (FR) Meetings

The Project Manager will hold regular Financial Review meetings, at which the *Consultant's* attendance will be required. The frequency of these should be assumed to be monthly, in line with payment applications.

3.3 Other Meetings with the Project Manager

The *Consultant* shall attend additional meetings as required with the Project Manager to discuss any matter relating to the works. The *Consultant* shall take the minutes of these meetings and distribute them within two working days of the date of the meeting for approval.

This page is intentionally blank



1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To advise the Town Board of the communications policy, as requested by Board members and seek the approval from the Board on the adoption of the policy to protect the integrity of Town Board.

2. Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

- 1) Endorse the Communications Policy contained at Appendix 3.

3. Background

- 3.1 An informal 'Welcome Meeting' was held for new Board Members in October, this meeting provided the opportunity for Board Members to learn more about the Long-Term Plan initiative, meet the Chair of the Town Board and the Council's Project Team, before being formally appointed.
- 3.2 At the request of Town Board members, a Communications Policy has been developed to advise members on protocols when approached for direct enquiries for information either through direct contact (i.e. email or social media) or through media enquiry. A draft version of this policy is contained in Appendix 3.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 The communication policy will ensure the integrity and consistency of communications of Town Board. The recommendation of this report is therefore for Town Board to endorse the Communications Policy in Appendix 3.

Appendices

Appendix 3: Newton-le-Willows Town Board Communications Policy



NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS TOWN BOARD COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

1. Background

In September 2024, Government announced their '*Long-Term Plan for Towns*' programme, a core part of the Government's levelling-up programme, which identified 55 towns across the country that will benefit from up to £20m '*endowment style*' funding for investment in local priorities over a 10-year period. As part of the Spring Statement (6 March 2024), the Chancellor confirmed an additional £400m to extend the programme to a further 20 towns across the United Kingdom with Newton-le-Willows identified as a beneficiary.

Guidance issued by the former Department for Levelling-Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) detailed that each beneficiary town must create a Town Board and develop a Long-Term Plan including a 3-year Investment Plan. The guidance also detailed that each town would receive an allocation of £19.5m with £0.500m retained by DLUHC to cover programme management costs and the development of a National High Streets and Towns Task Force, which will provide support to Long-Term Plan beneficiaries.

2. Role of the Town Board

While the local authority remains the accountable body for funding and executing plans, Town Boards are responsible for developing the Long-Term Plan, working closely with local people.

The role of the Town Board is to ensure the Long-Term Plan is both defined and delivered. It will meet on a quarterly basis, or in accordance with key decisions, and members will bring together a broad range of specialisms to deliver the Long-Term Plan and subsequent Investment Plans.

As stated within the Terms of Reference, during the course of your role on the Board, members may be provided with information which is confidential and /or contains personal or commercially sensitive information. This information may be provided by a Board member, Council officer, or a third party. It may include information whose disclosure could prejudice the commercial interests of any person, property rights, know-how of any person or personnel and sensitive personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Every member of the Board is advised:

- To treat all confidential/ exempt information as confidential and safeguard it accordingly.
- Not disclose any confidential / exempt information to any other person without the prior written consent of the Chairperson, except to such persons and to such extent as may be necessary to achieve the Board's objectives.

3. Personal use of social media channels

If you are comfortable posting about your role on the Town Board in a personal capacity, you can help to spread the word and inform residents about the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme. We are all ambassadors for the Long-Term Plan and can champion its work through social media, and we recognise that some Board Members may have an extensive, broad, and positive social media following with target audiences.

It is advised that if you do post about the Long-Term Plan that this should state that they are views of your own and not of the Town Board. It should also not preclude any planned formal announcements or any confidential or sensitive information.

Posts or retweets/shares on your personal accounts can highlight your involvement but should make reference to and champion the relevant Long-Term Plan council website at <https://sthelens.gov.uk/article/11062/Long-term-plans-for-towns> for the most up-to-date information accessible to the public.

This means you must not copy the text and images from council posts and use that as your own message, as this makes it unclear as to who the message is coming from and takes the emphasis away from the council as the accountable body.

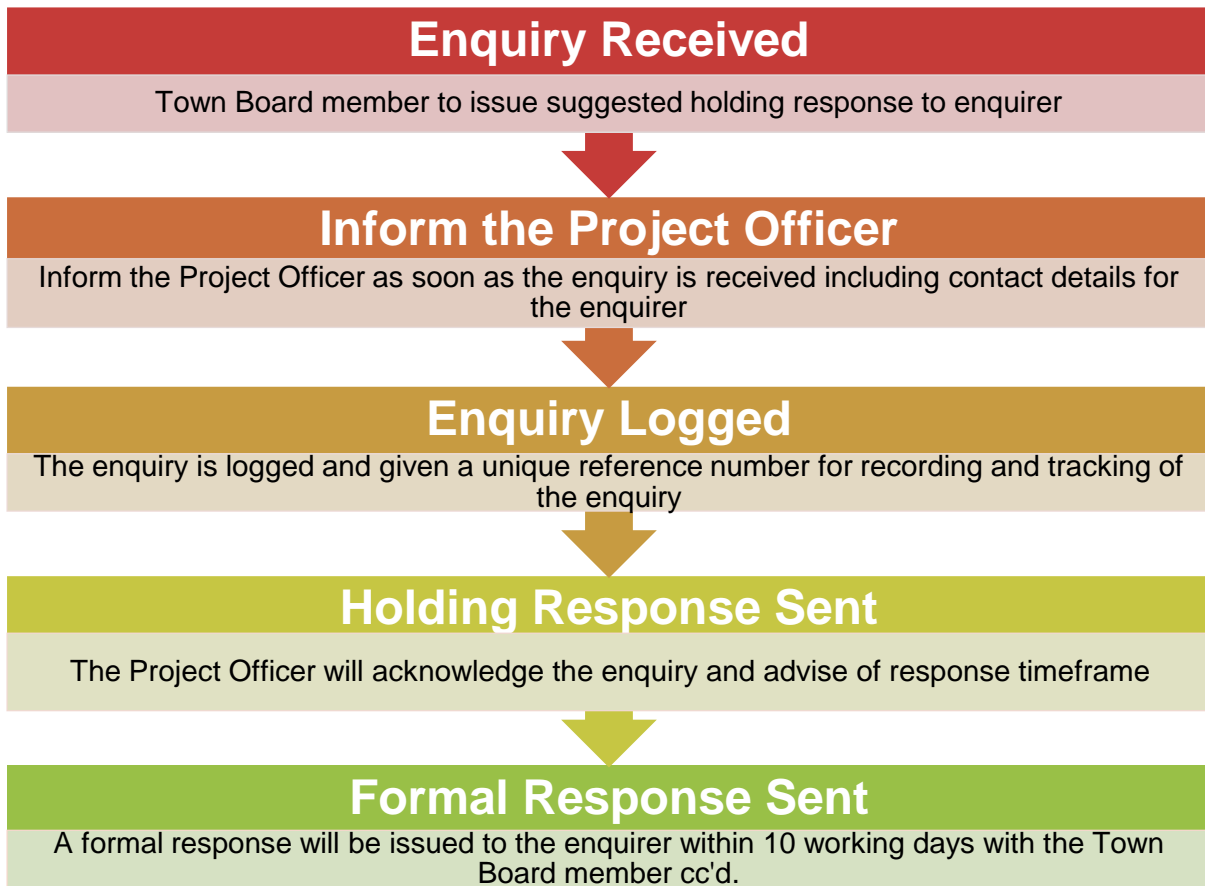
4. Enquiries for information

In the first instance for general information about the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme for Newton-le-Willows, you can direct enquiries to the council's dedicated website at: <https://sthelens.gov.uk/article/11062/Long-term-plans-for-towns>. This will be updated regularly to reflect the most up-to-date information accessible to the public.

If Town Board members are approached directly for information they should not personally respond and should inform the Project Officer so this can be effectively logged, monitored, and responded to accordingly.

If you receive any media enquiries, please direct the contact to the council's Media Team by asking them to email mediateam@sthelens.gov.uk and copy in the Project Officer too. The media enquiry will then be dealt with as according to the council's Media Policy.

The flowchart below details the process that should be followed by Town Board members if they receive an enquiry for information.



Suggested Response

- a) When a Town Board member receives an enquiry, the member should in the first instance issue the suggested holding response to the enquirer, so they are aware their enquiry has been acknowledged. If the request for information has been obtained through direct message on social media platforms, then the Town Board member must obtain the enquirers contact email. Please see the draft holding response:

“Dear [insert as appropriate].

I acknowledge your enquiry regarding the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme for Newton-le-Willows. I have passed on your enquiry to the Project Team to ensure it is sufficiently addressed.

In the first instance, please review our frequently asked questions (FAQs) via our website at: <https://sthelens.gov.uk/article/11062/Long-term-plans-for-towns>

Please could you confirm/ provide a relevant email address to contact you on. Once the Project Team receives this enquiry, they will be in touch shortly with a holding response.

*Kind regards,
[name]"*

- b) The Town Board member should promptly inform the Project Officer of the enquiry and supply the enquiry information alongside the contact details for the enquirer so it can be logged.
- c) Once the enquiry is logged, it will be given a unique reference number by the Project Team for recording and tracking of the enquiry.
- d) The Project Officer will then acknowledge the enquiry directly to the enquirer and advise of a response timeframe and provide their unique reference number within the email title. Please see the draft holding response:

"Dear [insert as appropriate].

I acknowledge your enquiry [reference number ...] regarding the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme for Newton-le-Willows. I will communicate with the Project Team to ensure your enquiry is sufficiently addressed.

In the first instance, please review our frequently asked questions (FAQs) via our website at: <https://sthelens.gov.uk/article/11062/Long-term-plans-for-towns>

Please allow for up to ten working days for a response by officers, if for any reason a full response to your enquiry is delayed, the team will keep you informed.

*Kind regards,
[name]"*

- e) A formal response will then be issued from the Project Officer to the enquirer within 10 working days of acknowledgment and the Town Board member who received the enquiry will be cc'ed in.

This page is intentionally blank