



## Minutes of St Helens Town Deal Board

14:00 – 16:00, Friday 28 February 2025  
Board Room 10, St Helens Town Hall

### Board Members in Attendance:

Neil Butler – Chair, St Helens Town Deal Board  
Marie Rimmer, MP – Member of Parliament, St Helens South and Whiston  
Kath O'Dwyer – Chief Executive, St Helens Borough Council  
Cath Fogarty – Executive Director, Corporate Services, St Helens Borough Council  
Steve Coffey – Chief Executive, Torus  
Jennifer Greenan – Director, E-Verve Energy Ltd  
Daniel Bimpson – Senior Investment Manager, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority  
John Tabern – Project Director, Cannington Shaw Preservation Trust CIC  
Kate Farnell – Director, Ubique Risk Management Ltd

### Local Authority Representation:

Mary Jefferson - Head of Regeneration and Growth, St Helens Borough Council  
David Saville – Programme Lead – Transport and Infrastructure, St Helens Borough Council  
Stephen Higham - Programme Lead – The Gamble & Town Deal, St Helens Borough Council  
Dean McGauley - Project Officer, St Helens Borough Council  
Jon Ridgeon – Assistant Director – Finance, St Helens Borough Council

### Project Sponsors/ Leads:

Matt Whiteley – Town Centre Living and Regeneration  
Vicky Willett – Digital Infrastructure

### Observers:

Justin Kelly – SINA Medical Glass  
Iain Taylor – Project Manager, IMT Consulting  
Chris Founds– CJ Founds Associates  
Caroline Platt – Cannington Shaw CIC  
Kirk Bell – Director of Operations, SINA Medical Glass

## **1. WELCOME – CHAIR**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting,

### **1a. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from:

#### **Board Members**

Councillor Anthony Burns - Deputy Chair and Leader of the Council, St Helens Borough Council

Councillor Richard McCauley - Cabinet Member for Inclusive Growth and Regeneration

Councillor John Hodgkinson - Member Champion for Local Business, St Helens Borough Council

David Baines, MP – Member of Parliament, St Helens North

Justin Hill - Chief Executive, YMCA St Helens

Richard Katz – Chief Executive, Glass Futures

Rachel Yeates - Engineering Project Controller, MBDA

Gill Smith – Regional Director and Project Management Service Lead, AtkinsRealis

#### **Project Sponsors/ Leads**

Walter Coxon - Glass Futures 2 (SINA Medical Glass)

Sarah Taylor – The World of Glass

#### **Local Authority Representatives**

Lisa Harris – Executive Director, Place Services, St Helens Borough Council

Sean Traynor – Director of Strategic Growth, St Helens Borough Council

Robert Gatensbury - Programme Lead, St Helens Borough Council

Donna Wilby – Finance Business Partner – Regeneration, St Helens Borough Council

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following attendees declared conflicts of interest:

Marie Rimmer MP - Friend of the World of Glass

John Tabern - Cannington Shaw

Kate Farnell – Connected Places

## **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS TOWN DEAL BOARD MEETING, 15 NOVEMBER 2024**

**DECISION:** St Helens Town Deal Board approved the minutes of the previous Town Deal Board Meeting held on 15 November 2024.

## **4. MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION LOG**

Neil Butler (NB) asked Board Members to note the updates provided in the action log. Stephen Higham (SH) talked through the outstanding actions in the action log, updates are as follows:

**Item 7. Healthy Communities Capacity Funding Request** - Further Social Value plans and details for the Skills Academy to be presented to the Town Deal Board. **Update:** Wayne Longshaw (WL) said that when the contractor is formally appointed the Social Value Plan will be ready to share with board. Agreed that item will remain on the action log until the Healthy Communities Social Value Action Plan is shared with Town Deal Board

**Item 10. Project Highlight Reports: Town Centre Living and Regeneration** – MW to share Town Centre Living & Regeneration energy plans/renewable energy plans with the Board as soon as they have been developed and are available. **Update:** Matt Whiteley (MW) provided an update on energy plans/renewable energy plans which included confirmation that all buildings in phase 1a scheme will have roof mounted solar panels as part of the specification. Information will be shared with Town Deal Board when available.

**Item 9. Project Highlight Reports A (i) SINA Medical Glass (Glass Futures Phase 2)** – Consider with SINA a robust timeline and methodology around recruitment providing an update to the next Town Deal Board Meeting. **Update:** Kirk Bell (KB) attended the meeting and presented a robust timeline and methodology around recruitment at St Helens Town Deal Board on 28 February 2025 under Item 6 of the agenda.

**Item 9. Project Highlight Reports A (i) SINA Medical Glass (Glass Futures Phase 2)** – Explore the opportunity of providing a site visit to SINA for TD Board Members. **Update:** Iain Taylor (IT) and Dean McGauley (DM) stated that item is in progress and site visit for Town Deal Board Members will be planned as soon as possible.

**Item 9. Project Highlight Reports A (i) SINA Medical Glass (Glass Futures Phase 2)** – DM and SH to work with the Council's Communications Team and SINA to develop communications. **Update:** Communications plan has been developed and will be shared with Communications Team and will be presented to Town Deal board on 23 May. A new recruit to the Council will help to develop the draft plan completed to date.

**Item 9. Project Highlight Reports - Cannington Shaw** – John Tabern (JT) to provide detailed costings, updated risk register in order to present paper with further information and formal request to release contingency funding for review at February Steering Group and decision at Town Deal Board on 28 February 2025. **Update:** Covered under the main agenda.

**Item 9 Project Highlight Reports – Connected Places** – DM and SH to collate and align communication plans, share with the Council's Communications Team and share information with Liverpool City Region (LCR). **Update:** Communications Plan has been developed and will be shared with Communications Team, LCR and will be presented to Town Deal board on 23 May.

**DECISION: Board Members noted the updates provided.**

## **5. MINUTES OF TOWN DEAL STEERING GROUP HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY**

Board Members acknowledged the minutes of the Town Deal Steering Group held on 7 February. Minutes are provided for information only.

## **6. SINA MEDICAL GLASS – RECRUITMENT PRESENTATION**

Kirk Bell (KB), Director of Operations at SINA Medical Glass gave a presentation on the SINA Medical Glass Project.

Key updates are as follows: a full site assessment is complete, removal of internal stud walls, railway track, sprinkler system and pipework are complete. Over one hundred tonnes of waste

have been removed from the site. The clean room intervention has been contracted plus the welfare areas and roof works are now very nearly complete.

A list of contractors who have undertaken the major works has been provided with a high number from St Helens or the Liverpool City Region. SINA have met with Riverside College and St Helens College, joined 3 local Business Chambers, joined Glass Futures, and have worked with GTS (a local construction company).

Several jobs are about to go live, including a Quality Control Operative, Hot End Machine Setter and a Vial Machine Operator.

NB asked what job numbers can be expected at the end of the year. KB stated that there are expected to be fifteen to twenty employees working on site by the end of the year. The tender has now gone out for vial machines three and four which will result in a further increase in job creation numbers when machines three and four have been ordered.

**ACTION: DM to circulate presentation to St Helens Town Deal Board Members.**

## **7. TOWN DEAL FINANCE REPORT**

Jon Ridgeon (JR) presented the report. JR stated that Section 4 shows overall budget and actual and expected expenditure. Any slippage is highlighted in red and the final column shows grant spent to date. Reasons for significant variances are provided in the end column.

JR gave an update on Section 5 which provides an update on the project highlight reports. The highlight reports produced by Project Managers have been amended to capture additional financial information. This is to ensure that the reporting is consistent throughout, and to capture requirements on each occasion to monitor the financial performance of the projects, and information required for the performance returns to MHCLG. This information has been used to feed into the Finance Report.

JR advised that Section 8 shows Project Expenditure Updates for SINA, Cannington Shaw and Digital Infrastructure. These projects have revised forecasts by expenditure heading against the original business case. This is reported to the Board for transparency of planned expenditure, and for awareness of forthcoming updates and requests from projects to repurpose funds or change scope.

The following tables are included in section 8 of the report:

- Table 3: SINA Revised Grant Expenditure Breakdown
- Table 4: Cannington Shaw Revised Grant Expenditure Breakdown
- Table 5: Digital Infrastructure Revised Expenditure Breakdown

Kate Farnell (KF) asked for it to be noted that she appreciates the work carried out by Donna Wilby (DW) on the report, expenditure and forecast tables and that is very helpful for her as a Board Member.

Commenting on Table 3, Iain Taylor (IT) reiterated that 70% of their order value will be paid on shipment, therefore their next claim will be processed once the vial machinery has been delivered. This will result in a much more positive spend profile for the project.

Justin Kelly (JK) commented that it would be helpful to see forecast accuracy such as what was previously forecast and what was delivered. KF agreed.

**ACTION:** DW to document previous forecasts and delivery in future highlight reports.

**DECISION: Town Deal Board:**

- 1) **Noted the financial position for actual expenditure to date against the Town Deal grant funding and variance based on the previously forecasted expenditure to the 31 December 2024.**
- 2) **Noted the amendments within the Project Highlight Reports to improve the financial reporting from Projects.**
- 3) **Noted the forecast for remaining expenditure until 31 March 2026 and the tracking charts.**
- 4) **Noted the update in respect of Performance Returns to MHCLG.**
- 5) **Noted and approve the revised expenditure breakdowns for SINA, Cannington Shaw, and Digital Infrastructure.**

#### **8. ST HELENS TOWN DEAL CONTINGENCY / RISK BUDGET RELEASE PROCESS**

SH stated that the Town Deal Programme does not currently have a process in place for releasing Town Deal contingency / risk budgets. Drawing upon previous experiences and working with colleagues, a procedure has been drafted and set out in the board papers under item 8. Details of contingency budgets across the programme are summarised in Appendix 1 to the report. The St Helens Town Deal Contingency Budget Release Request Form is attached at Appendix 2.

SH described the proposed process that Project Leads and representatives from the Council are recommended to follow in order to release risk and / or contingency budgets from the Town Deal programme, thereby demonstrating appropriate governance.

NB said that the process allows requests to be presented to Town Deal Steering Group and then to St Helens Town Deal Board.

**DECISION: St Helens Town Deal Board approved:**

- 1) **The proposed St Helens Town Deal Contingency / Risk Budget Release Process detailed in the report.**
- 2) **The St Helens Town Deal Contingency Budget Release Request Form attached at Appendix 2.**

#### **9. CANNINGTON SHAW – CONTINGENCY FUNDING REQUEST**

JT provided his project progress update as part of the item. JT informed the Board that the

scaffolding has been removed from around the structure and cone repair works are now complete. Undergrowth continues to be removed from the site and the original floor is now almost all exposed. There is now a stable cone, stable walls, and a stable floor area. Blasting of all iron work and recoating is now taking place. Once this has been completed then phase 1 will be complete and be left with a usable managed ruin.

Meetings have taken place with various interested parties as the project team continue to look at revenue opportunities through the holding of events at the site, such as artisan markets and music events. JT stated that it is important to get power and water on to the site to progress with his plans, which is why the Town Deal Board have been asked to considering releasing £130,000 from his allocated contingency funding.

JT explained that the contingency request form and associated documents, should the request be approved, show that United Utilities (UU) will be bringing a water connection in under James Roby Way, and Scottish Power (SPEN) will also need to follow a similar course of action. SPEN hope to do some early-stage investigation to explore the possibility of utilising existing ducting, which will require a three-day permit to carry out the works. Stakeholders are working with the Council's Highways team to arrange this. A quote of £4,612.80 for clearing, trees and shrubs before bird nesting season has also been provided to the Town Deal Board.

JT added that he has also been liaising with Chris Founds (CF) to look at options for digital connectivity works to be carried out at the same time as water and power works. JT said that the works will not include invasive works on James Roby Way. Water connectivity works are planned to be carried out by using directional drilling to limit any disturbance to traffic on James Roby Way.

KF asked about the quality of the existing ducting and whether it has been established that it is damaged/ has any other quality issues.

JT talked through the quote from SPEN, civils works, and trench works. The locations of the power and water connectivity works were discussed and JT stated that the connections for water and power will be brought up to the boundary fence. Once UU have installed the water pipe to the perimeter fence then a standpipe will need to be fitted on site.

KF asked about risks associated with the works and asked if the conservation risk has been considered as there is a listed structure and a Scheduled Ancient Monument located within fifty metres of the works. This may need its own permissions with the relevant authority as the work will be within the curtilage of the statue

JT said that there are some minor works that will need to be carried out such as work to the supply of a GRP cabinet for metering provision, a concrete base and trenchworks on site relating to the water and energy connectivity

JK asked if any work has been carried out to determine what revenue may be. JT said that he has discussed putting on music events and is currently looking at how this can be done. Plans for events are currently being looked in to and what financial returns may be expected from this after phase one of the project.

JK asked how the savings referenced in the paper have been achieved. JT said that the classroom in the original business case was for a Heritage Skills Academy. £60,000 was initially

allocated for a purpose-built classroom for students. It is now apparent that this is no longer required as the cabins previously used by contractors can be used for this purpose instead.

David Saville (DS) raised a point around ecological surveys, as trees are being cleared there may be a requirement for ecological surveys to be carried out.

KF asked about confidence in the overall budget. KF also offered to support JT on reviewing and updating the risk allocation in the risk register and advised that if anyone on the Town Deal Board has expertise then this should be offered to be drawn on to support the request. Cath Fogarty (CF) noted that the request is over and above the original scope and as there is probably some uncertainty of the revised budget, the Board will need to be clear about what the funding is being used for and whether an update is required once the final details have been confirmed. SH added that once all questions around the additional expenditure has been confirmed and that risks have been mitigated, we can look to expand the project scope providing we remain within budget.

KF said that it would be reassuring to confirm that there is definitely a usable ducting crossing. KF also asked for civils works costs to be included in the quotations provided.

SH asked could we go back to the point about the additional on-site works such as the GRP cabinet and other ancillary items. SH asked for these costs to be incorporated to the current request. JT said that they are not yet costed but he hopes that CLAN can do some of the work whilst they are on site.

**Town Deal Board approved:**

- 1. Funding for (three days of) investigative works to be undertaken by SPEN specific to investigating the existing ducting below the carriageway (A specific value within the SPEN quote is not readily available so Cannington Shaw Project Manager to liaise with SPEN accordingly - quote to be shared once secured).**
- 2. Funding of vegetation works on site as quoted in Appendix 6 of the report (£4,612.80).**

**DECISION: Town Deal Board Approved in principle:**

- 3. The remaining contingency funding request on the condition that all outstanding quotes are collated and accepted by St Helens Borough Council as comprehensive evidence to match the request value.**

**10. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES HEALTH INNOVATION HUB – UPDATED BUSINESS CONNECT BUSINESS CASE**

SH provided an update on the Business Connect Business Case. SH stated that there are two elements to the wider project, Business Connect and Skills Academy. The two lead agencies of St. Helens Chamber and St. Helens College were no longer able to carry out the project and therefore the Business Connect Business Case needed to be reconsidered. This is a follow-on approval from the Skills Academy Business Case presentation that the Board received at the last meeting.

The revised Business Case has explored alternative locations for Business Connect and the outcome was that the Business Connect Service will be housed in the Gamble Building. The location is one hundred yards away from the Skills Academy, which will be advantageous for both projects. Work is now being carried out with AtkinsRealis, the lead consultant on the wider Gamble project, to locate Business Connect on one of the top two floors of the Gamble Building in an area of 150sqm. RIBA 3 Design works are due to commence on the Gamble Building and this will include looking at designing adequate, multi-functional space for Business Connect.

Amion have carried out a value for money assessment as part of the business case revision. Based on this preliminary analysis, the proposed option achieves an initial BCR of 1.3:1 and an adjusted BCR of 1.5, representing 'medium' value for money based on thresholds for public sector intervention outlined within the MHCLG Appraisal Guide.

SH added that funding to support sector engagement, collaboration and business plan development for the facility can be delivered through the existing contract with the Growth Company, with other funding streams to be explored in the future in collaboration with the Council's Head of Economy.

**DECISION: Town Deal Board approved the Healthy Communities - Health Innovation Hub Business Connect Revised Business Case attached at Appendix 9.**

## **11. PROJECT HIGHLIGHT REPORTS**

### **A (i) SINA Medical Glass (Glass Futures Phase 2)**

A project progress update was provided in the SINA Recruitment Presentation under item 6 of the agenda.

### **A (ii) Cannington Shaw #7 Bottle Shop**

A project progress update was provided in the Contingency Funding Request under item 9 of the agenda.

### **B: Town Centre Living & Regeneration**

Matt Whiteley (MW) provided a progress update for the Town Centre Living & Regeneration Project. MW stated that an enabling works contract is now in place. Works on the substation are progressing well and on programme. Internal strip out and asbestos removal will begin in April 2025 with the main demolition works to commence afterwards. A value engineering exercise is underway, with plans to bring the project back in line with the budget available. Submitted planning application is on hold but this delay to planning does not affect the overall programme. Overall social value generated to date is £282,911. Connected Places and Town Centre Living Regeneration Social Value amounts will be divided to make sure there is no double reporting on figures.

### **C: Heritage World - The World of Glass**

SH provided an update in Sarah Taylor's (ST) absence. SH said that the project has now completed, and outputs and outcomes will continue to be monitored, including visitor numbers.



NB said that an update on visitor numbers at The World of Glass will be provided to Town Deal Board at the next meeting.

**Action: ST to provide updated visitor numbers for Town Deal Board on 23 May.**

#### **D (i) Youth Hub**

SH said that RIBA 3 design works have now been commissioned for the Gamble and this should take around 12 weeks. Approval and commencement of RIBA 4 will take place immediately after RIBA 3. A full project meeting will take place on 3 March which will inform the direction of travel for the Youth Hub. The project team are currently working with entertainment companies to come up with an offer as initial feedback from young people has shown a strong demand for new technology such as virtual reality and gaming in the Youth Hub. The project team have engaged with Youth Partnership Board and the Youth Council. Consultation with young people will be a key activity going forward.

#### **D (ii) Health Innovation Hub**

Wayne Longshaw (WL) provided an update on the Health Innovation Hub. WL stated that the project is progressing well. The contract for the preferred supplier of the Skills Academy refurbishment has nearly completed. A paper was recently submitted to SHBC Strategic Property Group, proposing transferring the ownership of 4-6 Hardshaw Street to the NHS Trust. The Skills Academy remains on track to open up in the summer, contractors are expected on site at the end of March.

#### **E: Connected Places**

David Saville (DS) provided an update on both the Temporary Bus Hub and the Permanent Bus Station.

Temporary Bus Hub: DS said that construction works by HA Civils began in October 2024 along Chalon Way West. Despite recent adverse weather conditions, the project remains on schedule, with an opening planned for April 2025. All bus shelters have been installed by Clear Channel, Merseytravel's bus shelter contractor.

Permanent Bus Station - The Council has acquired all necessary properties using General Vesting Declaration powers. A programme of asbestos surveys, utility disconnections and soft stripping is currently in progress.

DS said that the project team re-engaged local accessibility groups and regional equality panels to secure feedback on designs for the new SHMMI during the Developed Design (RIBA 3) and Technical Design (RIBA 4) stages. These groups include the Local St Helens Accessibility Group, LCRCA Youth Parliament, LCRCA Women Equality Panel, LCRCA Race Equality Panel, LCRCA Disability Panel and LCRCA LGBTQIA+ Panel.

RIBA Stage 4 designs for the Permanent Bus Station, including the Gamble Square public realm area, are in progress.

DS stated that the pre planning and consultation with the general public has gone really well. An online exhibition on the consultation website, along with extensive promotion via local media, PR, and a geo-targeted digital media campaign on Meta (Facebook and Instagram), was

launched to raise awareness and gather public feedback. Feedback was collected through a questionnaire available at in-person events and online. The drop-in events had 129 attendees, and the digital campaign reached 128,000 users, generating 1,798 clicks to the consultation website.

## **F: Digital Infrastructure**

Vicky Willet (VW) presented the report. VW stated that the tender evaluation has now concluded. The project team are currently compiling contracts with legal teams and Elevate (supplier). Elevate will be delivering the scheme in the town centre. Soft mobilisation has commenced on site. Communications and website FAQ's have also been put in place.

VW said that the Business Case has been reviewed and outputs and outcomes were revised and have since been approved by Town Deal Board and MHCLG. The project team are now developing a Smart Borough Board to ensure leverage of the outcomes and benefits of the scheme and the social value element which is important.

JK asked about the revised outputs of the project and why there has been such a significant reduction in the project outputs.

VW responded that this is largely as a result of the outputs and outcomes in the original business case which focused on a wider area than just the Town Centre. The project estimates have been reduced in relation to the amount of connectivity to properties and the long-term forecast has been reduced. VW added that the changes have been reviewed and approved by Town Deal Board and MHCLG. VW stated that the supplier also brings additional social value.

Chris Founds (CF) reiterated the points made by VW. In addition to this the original calculations were based on connectivity availability not actual connectivity. With the new outputs and outcomes this has been adjusted from availability of connection to actual connections, therefore resulting in a reduction of overall numbers.

### **DECISION: St Helens Town Deal Board:**

- i. **Noted and discussed the highlight reports appended to this report;**
- ii. **Noted and discussed the overall progress of the Town Deal programme; and**
- iii. **Identified any issues or concerns with the Project Sponsors and mitigation actions as appropriate.**

## **12. Any Other Business**

NB requested that Project Managers and SRO's work with the Town Deal Programme Team to organise future site visits.

**Action: SH/DM to organise site visits for Town Deal Projects.**

NB acknowledged the major contributions to the borough made by Chief Executive of St Helens Council, Kath O'Dwyer and thanked her for her time as a member of the Town Deal Board.

KF invited Town Deal Board Members to take part in a Learn to Return Programme. Further

information will be circulated to Town Deal Board Members.

**ACTION: KF to circulate invitation letter to all board members.**

**13 - Date of Next Meeting**

The next St Helens Town Deal Board will take place on 23 May 2025.