



MEETING OF THE NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD

Date:	Friday, 21 March 2025
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 Richard McCauley	Cabinet Member for Inclusive Growth and Regeneration	St Helens Borough Council
Kath O'Dwyer	Chief Executive	St Helens Borough Council
Jon Julian Smith	Chief Inspector, St Helens	Merseyside Police
Ian Lewis	Investment Manager	Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
Amie Louise Parsonage	Portfolio and Partnerships Officer	Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner
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 Water Ltd
Fiona Ruddy	Third Sector Representative	Newton Community Centre
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
Observers		
Mark Palethorpe	Executive Director of Peoples Services (Chief Executive Designate)	St Helens Borough Council
Apologies Received		
Matthew Valentine	Project Officer	St Helens Borough Council
Councillor Anthony Burns	Leader of the Council	St Helens Borough Council
John Unsworth	Cultural, Arts, and Heritage including Sports Groups Representative	Sea Cadet Corps



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD

Friday 21 March 2025

AGENDA

Item	Title	Lead
1.	Welcome and Introductions	CH
2.	Declarations of Interest	CH
3.	Minutes of the previous Town Board meeting held on 7 February 2025	CH
4.	Long-Term Plan for Towns / Neighbourhood Plan Programme Update – Presentation	MB
5.	Engagement Strategy	MB
6.	Any Other Business	All

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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.

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1. Purpose of the Report

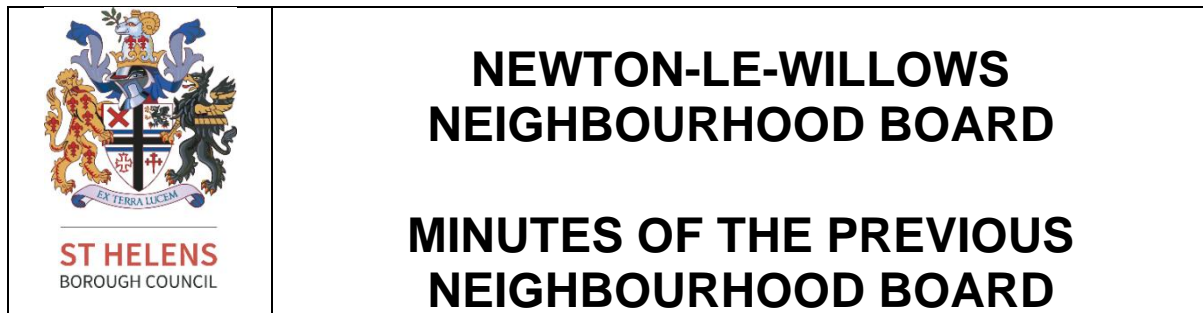
- 1.1 The purpose is for Board Members to declare any disclosable pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary interests.

2. Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

- 1) Note the declarations of interest.

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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose is to give an overview of the previous Board meeting, as agreed by the 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>Friday 7 February 2025 14:30 – 16:30</p> <p>Newton Community Centre, Park Road South, Newton-le-Willows, WA12 8EX</p>
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Name	Initials	Role	Organisation
Board Members			
Chris Hickey	CH	Chair	Mercury Hampton
Councillor Anthony Burns	AB	Leader of the Council	St Helens Borough Council
Kath O'Dwyer	KO'D	Chief Executive	St Helens Borough Council
Ian Lewis	IL	Investment Manager	Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
Jon Julian Smith	JJS	Chief Inspector, St Helens	Merseyside Police
Community & Co-Opted Board Members			
Alex Myhill	AM	Community Representative	Riddling Rack
Debbie Taylor	DT	Business Representative	Es Paradis Salon & Domestic Abuse WA12 CIC
Paul Romanko	PR	Business Representative	United Utilities Water Ltd
Fiona Ruddy	FR	Third Sector Representative	Newton Community Centre
John Unsworth	JU	Cultural, Arts, and Heritage including Sports Groups Representative	Sea Cadet Corps
Local Authority Representatives			
Mark Bingley	MB	Programme Lead – Earlestown	St Helens Borough Council
Rachel Bebbly	RB	Project Officer	St Helens Borough Council
Matthew Valentine	MV	Project Officer	St Helens Borough Council
Apologies Received			
David Baines MP	DB	Member of Parliament, St Helens North	Member of Parliament, St Helens North
Councillor Richard McCauley	RM	Cabinet Member for Inclusive Growth and Regeneration	St Helens Borough Council
Mary Jefferson	MJ	Head of Regeneration and Growth	St Helens Borough Council
Amie Louise Parsonage	ALP	Portfolio and Partnerships Officer	Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner
Reverend Chris Stafford	CS	Faith Representative	Team Rector at St Peters, Emmanuel Wargrave, and St Johns
Joanne Edge	JE	Community Representative	Newton Sports Club

External Attendees			
David Watson	DW	Agenda Item Speaker	Associate Director at Hatch Urban Solutions
Danny Crump	DC	Agenda Item Speaker	Director of Urbanism at Layer.Studio
Sarah Brooks	SB	Agenda Item Speaker	Project Landscape Urbanist at Layer.Studio
Joanne Harrop	JH	Agenda Item Speaker	Director at PLACED
Amy Melia	AMe	Agenda Item Speaker	Project Manager at PLACED

Item	Title	Lead
1.	Welcome and Introductions	CH
2.	Declarations of Interest	CH
3.	Minutes of the previous Town Board meeting held on 13 December 2024	CH
4.	Draft Engagement Strategy	MB/ External Speakers
5.	Any Other Business	All

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chris Hickey (CH) acknowledged apologies received from David Baines MP, Councillor Richard McCauley, Mary Jefferson, Amie Louise Parsonage, Reverend Chris Stafford, and Joanne Edge.

CH welcomed Members to the meeting and introductions were given around the table.

2. Declarations of Interest

CH stated no declarations were received at the time of preparing this briefing but invited Town Board Members to make any declarations of interest relating to the Agenda Items.

No declarations were declared.

3. Minutes of the previous Town Board meeting held on 13 December 2024

CH noted the minutes from the previous Town Board meeting on Friday 13 December 2024 are agreed and are published on the Council website. CH then provided an overview of key decisions and endorsements from the Board, including:

- Full board endorsement for community and co-opted positions
- Full board endorsement for Town Board Specialists
- Full board endorsement for the Communication Policy

4. Draft Engagement Strategy

Mark Bingley (MB) provided a verbal update on the background of the report and process to setting up an Engagement Sub-Group who have shaped the Draft Engagement Strategy.

At the previous Town Board meeting of Friday 13 December 2024, agreement to the Communications Policy and appointment of Hatch Associates (and their consultant teams) was ratified by Board Members. MB reminded Board that an additional recommendation from Ian Lewis (IL) was sought for the Draft Engagement Strategy to be brought to Board before adoption, this was endorsed by Board Members.

MB stated that following a meeting with Hatch Associates, the Chair endorsed the approach to form an Engagement Sub-Group to steer the Engagement Strategy. All Town Board Members had the opportunity to lodge an expression of interest, with four applications received and shortlisted. All four applications were reviewed by the Chair, Programme Lead and Project Officer and assessed against their skillset and experience. All four applications were approved by the Chair with group membership being: Amie Louise Parsonage, Alex Myhill, Joanne Edge, and Fiona Ruddy.

MB explained that in addition to Board appointees, the Council's Head of Communications, Engagement and Reputation Management, Jayne Taylor, will also sit on the Engagement Sub-Group for specialist expertise and advice.

Presentation by Hatch Associates, PLACED and Layer.Studio

MB then invited Town Board Specialists, Hatch Associates, PLACED and Layer.Studio to give a presentation on the Draft Engagement Strategy.

Amy Melia (AMe) presented a review of the Engagement Strategy Workshop held on 15 January 2025 at Newton Sports Club with the Engagement Sub-Group. AMe noted the following key points which were covered in the Workshop:

- Expectations and aspirations for engagement
- Target audiences
- Scope of delivery
- Timescales of bringing the consultation forward

AMe explained that there was a consensus of expectation that engagement should have a broad reach, utilising a range of engagement methods with clear and accessible language. AMe informed Board that the funding opportunity should be clearly explained with a need for impact and legacy alongside well evidenced outputs. There should be a clear differentiation between the Long-Term Plan for Towns and other funding initiatives such as Levelling Up Fund.

AMe commented that a broad reach is required to engage diverse local groups that are community anchors within Newton-le-Willows. AMe stated groups targeted should be inclusive and ensure that lesser heard groups are reached throughout the consultation process inclusive, for example, of young people, SEND groups, minority groups, heritage groups. AMe reminded Board that PLACED are to lead on public engagement within the programme, with Hatch Associates and Layer.Studio to lead on Town Board and Stakeholder consultation.

AMe noted the challenges regarding scope and timescales, as guidance is awaited from central government as part of the updated technical pack. AMe also explained there

were potential timescale impacts due to the pre-election period and engagement fatigue from previous programmes.

AMe explained that both challenges and opportunities were discussed, with opportunities being presented around high footfall and diverse public events and markets, and utilising active local community groups which could be used for consultations. Additionally, utilising the Town Board's wide reaching links into the community and commitment to success to drive forward the programme.

AMe highlighted that additional scope has been included following the Workshop to deliver:

- 1 x school workshop
- 5 x drop-in events (groups to be identified)
- Self-led engagement materials including summary board(s) to be placed within the community locations, comments boxes and/or QR codes to be used to provide feedback.
- Social media asset production with links to online engagement to further drive participation.
- Interim engagement report to give a steer towards visioning and project ideas.
- In-person flyer distribution and walkaround to hand-deliver flyers to raise awareness of the programme.

David Watson (DW) added that the Board should consider the best use of the drop-in events to reach the broad target audience.

AMe further added a suggestion that a project engagement charter could be produced. This would provide transparency of the consultation process for the community and would include sharing engagement reports, alongside committing to public updates.

MB reminded Board that the Engagement Strategy is in draft currently and that refinement by the Engagement Sub-Group is still possible. The requirement for additional events was raised at the previous Town Board, when the mandate was given to ensure consultation and engagement was robust and wide reaching.

MB noted that due to the recent loss of an elected member, there is a potential by-election at a later date, and therefore Purdah will apply. Purdah refers to the pre-election period and during this time, communications and consultations are generally restricted.

MB also stated lessons will need to be learned from previous consultation exercises to ensure that a manageable list of impactful projects can be brought before Board for consideration.

Joanne Harrop (JH) noted that flexibility is possible across the consultation process, reactive to lessons and findings as the consultation progresses. DW added timescales are important to accelerate where possible. Should any Engagement Sub-Group follow-ups be required it would need to be scheduled soon to meet timelines. MB noted this but re-emphasised to Board the need to wait for government guidance towards the amended programme, as it will be key in shaping the scope of the programme.

KO'D commented that it is essential to ensure engagement with a broad range of young people. As some young people do not attend schools within Newton-le-Willows, there

would be a need to introduce consultation through groups including sports groups, the Sea Cadets, etc.

KO'D also added she was pleased to see focus on SEND groups within the Draft Engagement Strategy and suggested that Wargrave House / Ascent College could be appropriate to engage.

KO'D emphasised that the working aged population should also be considered in how consultation is targeted. Engagement outside of working hours at times to enable the availability of as many people as possible will ensure consultation allows all groups to feel heard when projects are suggested.

KO'D suggested community groups such as Parkside Community Forum and other groups such as High Street Hive and Earlestown Thrive could be engaged with as they have existing community reach.

DW noted that spreading the awareness of online tools as well as in-person events is important in reaching some of the mentioned audiences, such as young and working people, and that the language should reflect this.

Fiona Ruddy (FR) expressed that she is delighted to see that a lot of the Engagement Sub-Group comments had been taken on board and added into the Draft Engagement Strategy.

FR further supported KOD's suggestion of considering sport groups due to their reach and footfall, and added that costing of additional engagement would need to be discussed.

FR raised that in Joanne Edge's (JE) absence, branding and a concise message were discussed at the Workshop on Wednesday 15 January 20205 as being important, so a clear message can be given of what is being consulted. Alex Myhill (AM) agreed on the importance of branding to differentiate the consultation and Long-Term Plan for Towns programme from other regeneration delivery across the area.

FR suggested schools could potentially be involved in the logo creation to provide community involvement through the development of the branding. Paul Romanko (PR) noted enterprise and marketing qualifications are delivered at local schools and colleges which presents a potential opportunity to link into this resource. John Unsworth (JU) also added that similar opportunities may be accessible within the uniformed services, such as the Sea Cadets.

MB commented that community involvement is a good idea and will need to be coordinated to ensure all assets are appropriate across social media, letterheads etc. MB further advised that the programme name 'Long-Term Plan for Towns' will most likely change as part of the revised prospectus from government, which consequently will affect branding, and therefore Board need to wait for this update.

PR added that Board should best use the resources available in delivering all aspects of the branding.

It was noted by DW, DC and KO'D that procurement of branding should be through local Graphic Designers or sourced from local groups where possible and that this would be another social value commitment to the local community.

MB provided a financial update to Board and advised that approval for additional expenditure on consultation will be brought before Board at its next meeting on 21 March 2025.

AM suggested the last weekend of May would be a good date for launching the programme and raising awareness due to existing events with high footfall. CH also mentioned that Newton Sports Club is a great venue for a similar well-attended event to achieve comprehensive community engagement.

DW emphasised to Board that the overall programme timeline and mapping needs to be considered to incorporate Board ideas into a deliverable timeline of consultation and project development.

MB noted that the milestones from government have not yet been received and could dictate the timeline of events. It may be that some events can be attended by council officers and not always the PLACED team to give flexibility in targeted events.

FR asked if there was any anticipation that the programme would deviate from the previously advised investment themes. KO'D advised that the programme should be based around the three current investment themes and whilst there is not a solid indication from central government, it is not expected that the three headings will change dramatically. MB added that the current guidance is that 'Town Boards should feel empowered to continue their work' and the key decision for the Board is to decide on how consultation is best delivered to engage all aspects of the local community.

KO'D noted that any feedback received from consultation, which does not necessarily fit within the new programme investment themes, can be signposted to appropriate programmes that may be running suitable projects.

JH noted that a key decision is to identify the groups for the five drop-in sessions ahead of the next Engagement Sub-Group.

NOTE: The Draft Engagement Strategy to be further refined and brought back to Town Board on 21 March 2025 for endorsement.

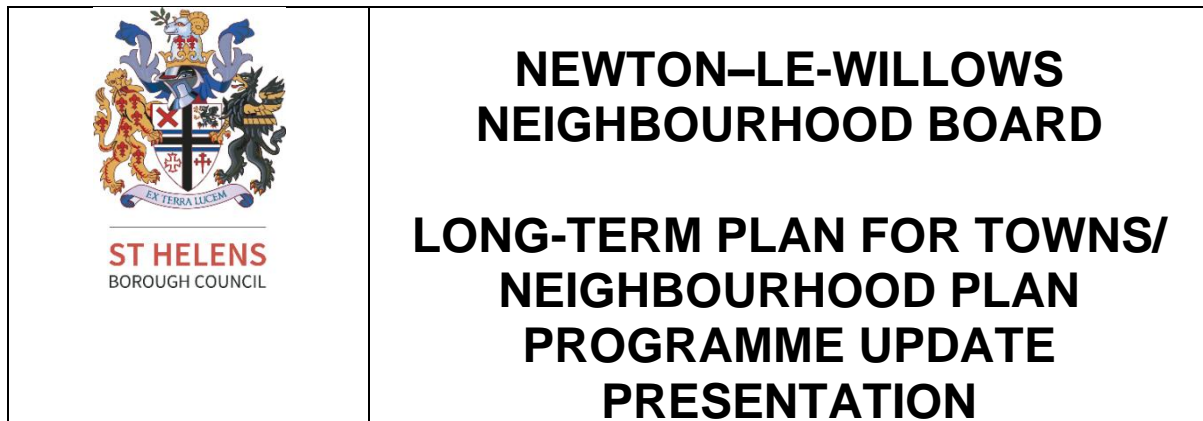
ACTION: Council officers to coordinate suggestions of suitable groups for drop-in sessions via email, to be shortlisted for the next Engagement Sub-Group.

5. Any Other Business

Rachel Bebbby (RB) reminded Board Members that an availability spreadsheet for future Town Board meetings has been circulated and asked for this to be populated.

ACTION: All Board Members to populate availability spreadsheet.

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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this presentation is to provide Board members with an overview of the prospectus and milestones for the Plan for Neighbourhoods initiative, which has replaced the Long-Term Plan for Towns.

2. Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

- 1) Note the contents of this presentation and the updates within the revised prospectus.
- 2) Approve the proposal to alter the 'default' area boundary as set out in Appendix 1.
- 3) Approve a freeze on Board membership until such time that the Regeneration Plan is developed, and a skills review can be undertaken aligned to the projects defined in the Investment Plan.

3. Background

- 3.1 Published on 4 March 2025, the Government announced its ['Plan for Neighbourhoods'](#) programme and released the prospectus, pre-approved interventions, and list of powers to replace the Long-Term Plan for Towns programme.
- 3.2 Each Neighbourhood Board (formerly known as Town Board) will, in partnership with their local authority, develop a 'Regeneration Plan', (previously known as a Long-Term Plan) setting out its vision for the next decade including a detailed Investment Plan for the first 4-Years of the programme (previously set out as 3-Years).
- 3.3 Previously, under the Long-Term Plan for Towns programme, investment themes covered three key areas; High Streets, Heritage, and Regeneration;

Safety and Security; and Transport and Connectivity. The Plan for Neighbourhoods retains the original three themes but is expanded to include a further five themes; Housing; Work Productivity and Skills; Cohesion; Health and Wellbeing; and Education and Opportunity. The approach reflects learning from previous community programmes, namely the 1998 New Deal for Communities that focussed on place and people related outcomes.

3.4 The Plan for Neighbourhoods prospectus re-emphasises the need for a community-led approach outlining the ambition to develop more well-connected communities with greater social trust. Boards are encouraged to focus their investments to deliver the greatest impact in areas within their boundary that have the greatest need. In this regard, flexibility is provided to Boards to target investment themes that align to the new strategic objectives rather than being tied to a specific theme. The new strategic objectives include:

- **Thriving Places** – “places should be able to design public services that are accessible, responsive and tailored to local need”.
- **Stronger Communities** – “empower Boards to tackle the root causes, rebuild relationships, and restore a collective sense of belonging to their community”.
- **Taking Back Control** – “Talent is spread equally but opportunity is not” “Empower people to enter the workplace, workers to progress, and businesses to grow”.

3.5 Neighbourhood Boards have been provided with a list of ‘pre-approved interventions’ and given autonomy such that, if that activity can be evidenced as a clear priority of the community, it can be pursued without the need to provide a business case. The [pre-approved interventions](#) listed are considered to have a strong case for investment, value for money and benefit-to-cost ratio.

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

5. Engagement

5.1 An Engagement Sub-Group has been established from Neighbourhood Board Members, and are supported by the Council’s Head of Communications, Engagement and Reputation Management to develop the Engagement Strategy, which was previously shared in draft at the last Board meeting of 7 February 2025. Further information on the Engagement Strategy is set out below under Agenda Item 5: Engagement Strategy.

6. Milestones

6.1 The Plan for Neighbourhoods prospectus contains new milestones for the initiative that are contained in the table below:

Activity	Date
Neighbourhood Boards to receive tailored data packs.	February to April 2025
Neighbourhood Boards to confirm finalised membership and proposal to alter 'default' area boundary to MHCLG.	22 April 2025
MHCLG to review membership and boundary proposals and confirm whether acceptable.	Spring 2025
Further guidance on fund delivery, Regeneration Plan submission, assessment, and approval to be published.	Spring 2025
MHCLG to issue 2025-2026 capacity funding.	Spring 2025
Neighbourhood Boards to submit their Regeneration Plan for assessment and approval by MHCLG.	Spring 2025- Winter 2025
First programme delivery funding payment, followed by commencement of delivery phase.	From April 2026
MHCLG to issue 2026-2027 capacity funding.	From April 2026

- 6.2 Neighbourhood Boards are expected to receive their tailored data pack detailing key metrics across the 3 strategic objectives, and polling on local sentiment around the investment priorities for their area before the end of April 2025.
- 6.3 Community and co-opted Board members were shared their 'default' area boundary for Newton-le-Willows, taken from the ONS website based on Built Up Area data at the 'Welcome Meeting' in October 2024. Board members highlighted their concerns that key green spaces were not included within the boundary and therefore requested we submit for a boundary change once the map is obtained.
- 6.4 Responding to Board member feedback, Neighbourhood Board Specialists (Hatch Associates, Layer.Studio and PLACED) have produced a revised boundary map (contained within this report at Appendix 1) to expand the red line boundary to include key green spaces. Neighbourhood Board Specialists have used this revised boundary to inform their baseline mapping for the Visioning Workshop held with Board members on 7 February 2025. MHCLG has advised that the approach to expand boundaries to include green spaces, which are excluded from built up area data, is one that they support. Neighbourhood Boards must submit their updated boundaries by Tuesday 22 April.
- 6.5 Government published further [governance and boundary guidance](#) on 12 March 2025, which details that Plan for Neighbourhood Board membership may be refreshed at the end of the first 4-year investment period cycle, with previously directly appointed Board members on for a period of 3 years and discretionary positions 1 year (with potential for extension) under Long-Term Plan for Towns.

- 6.6 With finalised membership to be submitted by Tuesday 22 April, Neighbourhood Board are recommended to freeze Board membership until such time that the Regeneration Plan is developed, and a Board Skills Audit can be undertaken to identify any skills gaps in relation to the list of projects to be delivered. As part of the 22 April submission, Board members information will be shared with MHCLG and a [privacy notice](#) has been provided in accordance with General Data Protection Rules (GDPR).
- 6.7 As set out in Agenda Item 5 (Engagement Strategy), consultation will set to take place from April 2025 onwards, undertaking a range of public facing and targeted stakeholder engagement, with Regeneration Plans to be finalised and submitted for assessment and approval by MHCLG by Winter 2025.

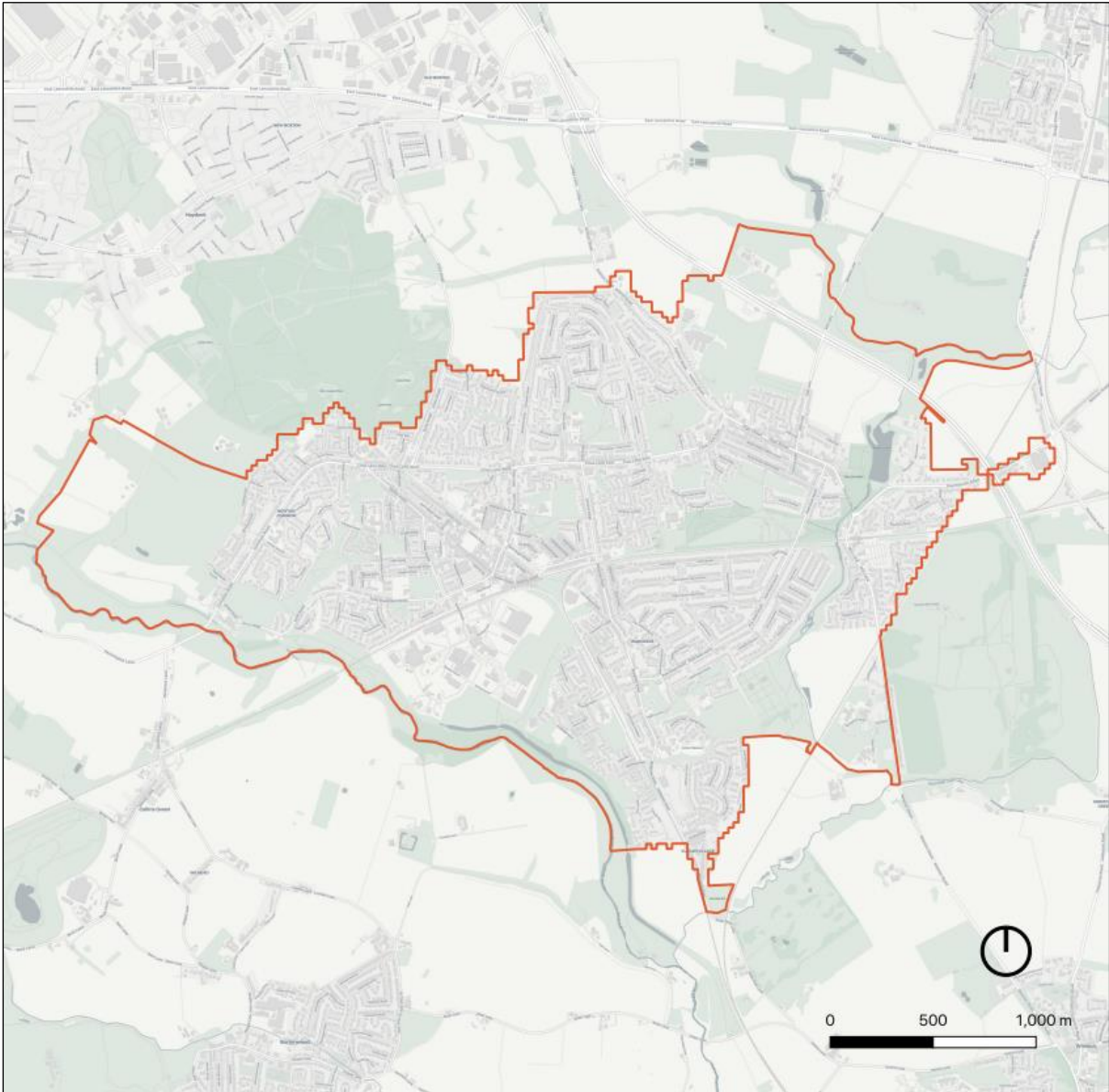
7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The Plan for Neighbourhoods prospectus contains additional investment themes, new governance guidance, and new milestones for the programme, such as the submission of Board members and agreement to the Boundary Plan (which is yet to be received) by 22 April 2025, and the submission of a Regeneration Plan (previously the Investment Plan) by Winter 2025. The recommendation of this report is therefore for Neighbourhood Boards to note the updates within the revised prospectus and endorse the revised boundary map and approach to membership.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Proposal to alter the 'default' are boundary for Neighbourhood Plan funding.

Appendix 1: Proposal to alter the 'default' area boundary for Neighbourhood Plan funding.



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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update and seek approval from Neighbourhood Board on the progress made in the development of an Engagement Strategy. This report also seeks endorsement of the Communications Plan which accompanies the Engagement Strategy. The Engagement Strategy informs community consultation activity and has been created in consultation with the Engagement Sub-Group.

2. Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

- 1) Approve the Engagement Strategy contained at Appendix 1.
- 2) Endorse the expenditure of capacity funding for additional public engagement activities as set out in Section 4.
- 3) Endorse the Communications Plan contained at Appendix 2.

3. Background

- 3.1 An Engagement Sub-Group has been established drawing membership from Neighbourhood Board Members and supported by the Council's Head of Communications, Engagement and Reputation Management. The Sub-Group has developed the Engagement Strategy, which was previously shared in draft at the last Board meeting of 7 February 2025.
- 3.2 The Draft Strategy was well received at the 7 February 2025 Board meeting, with a recommendation being that the Draft Engagement Strategy should be shared to allow for any additional comment to contribute to further refinement. Board members were asked to review the Draft Strategy, provide comments, and identify key stakeholders before being brought back to the Neighbourhood Board on 21 March 2025 for endorsement. No additional comments were received from Board members in relation to the Draft Strategy.
- 3.3 Following the release of the new prospectus for Plan for Neighbourhoods, the Engagement Sub-Group were required to consider the emphasis given to

community engagement as a “key pillar” within the Plan for Neighbourhoods programme and a broadened project scope.

- 3.4 MHCLG within their prospectus, announced they are providing the further time, space, and funding (£0.200m) to avoid under-resourced and generic consultation, to ensure Neighbourhood Boards hear from everybody. They are keen to highlight that community engagement should be iterative, so that people understand how their priorities are reflected in the plan and a requirement for feedback loops with the community.
- 3.5 The Engagement Sub-Group met with Council Officers on Thursday 13 March 2025 following release of the updated prospectus. The Engagement Sub-Group acknowledged the need to ensure that public consultation is broad reaching, with a geographic spread of events utilising a range of communication methods, to meet the aspirations of MHCLG. The group noted that they felt the Engagement Strategy largely already met that brief.
- 3.6 Responding to feedback from the Engagement Sub-Group, PLACED have refined the Engagement Strategy (contained within this report at Appendix 1), adding further engagement activity and production of promotional materials that will seek to deliver against the aims of MHCLG and the Engagement Sub-Group.
- 3.7 The table below contains the project deliverables outlined in the Neighbourhood Board Specialists initial proposal, with PLACED leading on the engagement and Layer.Studio and Hatch Associates leading on the Neighbourhood Board and Stakeholder engagement.

PLACED initial proposal
Engagement Strategy Workshop and Engagement Strategy refinement
Online Engagement Platform
2 x Pop-Up Events
Final Report

- 3.8 Following the second Engagement Sub-Group meeting, PLACED have amended their additional activities, contained in the table below, to include longer drop-in sessions to now include 4 x 3-hour sessions (previously 1-hour sessions) to ensure we can maximise attendees without excluding certain groups. Equally, noting MHCLG’s emphasis on feedback loops to the community, PLACED have since included project feedback and updates via their online engagement platform to ensure those who were consulted understand how their concerns and priorities have been captured.

Additional PLACED activities
1 x School Workshop
1 x SEND School Workshop
4 x Drop-In Events (extended sessions to include 3 hours, rather than 1 hour)
Self-led Engagement Materials (summary boards about the project to include a QR code and scope for a comments box)

Production of Social Media Assets
Interim Engagement Report
In-Person Flyer Distribution and Walkaround
Project Feedback/ Updates via Online Engagement Platform

3.9 The Council, alongside the Engagement Sub-Group, have carefully considered the location and audience of engagement activities to ensure they are geographically spread and those from marginalised communities can be captured, detailed within Appendix 1 - Draft Engagement Strategy.

3.10 At the initial Engagement Sub-Group Workshop, Sub-Group members requested that a Communications Plan is developed to sit alongside this Engagement Strategy and will advise members on how the Project Team and Neighbourhood Board Specialists will communicate with key stakeholders, and when they will receive information. Appendix 2 contains this plan, to ensure everyone is clear and consistent about internal and external communications.

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

5. Next Steps

5.1 Subject to endorsement from Board, consultation will take place during April and May 2025, undertaking a range of public facing and targeted stakeholder engagement, with Regeneration Plans to be finalised and submitted for assessment and approval by MHCLG by Winter 2025.

6. Conclusion

6.1 The Engagement Strategy appended to this report sets out the consultation and engagement approach for the Regeneration Plan and 4-Year Investment Plan to ensure engagement is thorough and sufficiently widespread to gather views representative of the diverse local community, in accordance with the updated prospectus for Plan for Neighbourhoods.

6.2 The Neighbourhood Board is therefore recommended to endorse the Engagement Strategy, Communications Plan, and the expenditure of capacity funding for additional public engagement activities as set out in Section 4.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Engagement Strategy

Appendix 2: Communications Plan

Newton-le-Willows Plan for Neighbourhoods

Engagement Strategy

Prepared by: Jo Harrop

March 2025

Background

St Helens Borough Council has been successful in securing Plan for Neighbourhoods funding for Newton-le-Willows. This was formerly Long-Term Plan for Towns. Plan for Neighbourhoods funding will build upon recent investment in the town and see up to £20 million in funding spent on local priorities over the next 10 years.

A Neighbourhood Board of local representatives from the community, local businesses, sports clubs, the third sector, faith groups and public sector agencies, alongside the local MP and relevant representatives from the Combined Authority and St Helens Borough Council (the Council) has been established to inform and shape the Newton-le-Willows's Plan.

Plan for Neighbourhoods funding will enable the delivery of projects that address key issues facing residents and stakeholders across eight themes:

- Regeneration, high streets and heritage
- Housing
- Work, productivity and skills
- Cohesion
- Health and Wellbeing
- Transport
- Safety and security
- Education and opportunity

Following the Autumn Budget, the Labour Government confirmed that the Long-Term Plan for Towns programme would be retained but reformed as a new regeneration programme. In March 2025, the Government published the Plan for Neighbourhoods prospectus, which set out the changes to the former Long-Term Plan for Towns programme. The updated programme includes the updated intervention themes (listed above) and three new strategic objectives – Thriving Places, Stronger Communities, and Taking Back Control.

The Council and the Neighbourhood Board want to ensure local people can actively contribute to the Plans, sharing their challenges, opportunities, and ideas, and shaping the 10-year Regeneration Plan for Newton-le-Willows.

Layer.Studio, Hatch Associates, and PLACED will be supporting the Council and the Neighbourhood Board in this process, delivering a comprehensive stakeholder and public engagement programme.

Underpinning our approach to engagement is a recognition of the importance of understanding the local area and context to frame the proposed engagement

activities. Layer.Studio and Hatch Associates are currently undertaking a local data and context review, drawing upon a range of available information, which will provide important insights to shape our initial understanding of Newton-Le-Willows, as well as encourage discussion and feedback from the public and stakeholders.

The conversations that take place through the engagement programme will help the Council and the Neighbourhood Board to prioritise the project proposals that could have the greatest impact on Newton-le-Willows, and to decide where funding should be invested.

Refining Expectations

PLACED, along with Layer.Studio and Hatch Associates, led an engagement strategy workshop on 15th January 2024 at Newton-le-Willows Sports Club. Four Neighbourhood Board members were in attendance following an application and selection process led by the Neighbourhood Board Chair and the Council. The four members, alongside officers from the Council, formed the Engagement Sub-Group to participate in the workshop and shape the Engagement Strategy.

The purpose of the workshop was to review the proposed engagement approach submitted as part of the tendering process, clarify expectations for engagement and lead to this refined Engagement Strategy document. In the session we covered;

- expectations for engagement,
- audience,
- engagement scope,
- timescales,
- challenges and opportunities, and
- any other business.

What are the key success criteria and outcomes? What would good engagement look like?

Our discussion of success criteria, outcomes and what good looks like included:

- **Reaching a broad and inclusive range of voices:** Of critical importance is reaching a diverse, representational range of voices.

The desire to reach many people was also expressed. This priority is shaped by a concern that a small reach would appear poor value for money and could lead to criticism. PLACED noted that engagement will be varied, promoted and shaped by local knowledge; however, many people

will choose not to engage, for a wide range of reasons and therefore, PLACED typically focuses on ensuring quality, meaningful conversations.

Whilst there were aspirations to reach people from a range of age groups, a need for targeted engagement with young people was identified as it was recognised this group is typically less heard in consultations.

- **Quality, clarity and accessibility:** The engagement delivered must be of a high quality. The importance of clear and accessible communication was highlighted along with the need for materials (both promotional and engagement) that effectively explain the funding opportunity to local people. This is vital to ensuring that the local community can understand how to engage in the process.
- **Utilising a range of engagement methodologies:** A wide range of engagement approaches and methodologies will be utilised including online consultation, drop-in events, youth workshops, unmanned displays, and meetings with local community groups. This comprehensive and varied approach is expected to encourage good engagement levels and wide reach.
- **Engagement impact and legacy:** It is anticipated that engagement outputs set the direction of the 10-year plan. There were also aspirations for the public engagement delivered to build confidence in what the Council and Neighbourhood Board are aiming to achieve, developing trust and community buy-in. There was interest in understanding what 'quick wins' local people feel could be delivered as part of the funding that could make positive impacts in the more immediate future.

It was recognised that a transparent approach is required and there should be a clear evidence trail on why certain projects have been prioritised. It is hoped that the project will leave a positive legacy in Newton-le-Willows, fostering local people's feelings of pride and ownership.

- **Locations and geographic spread of events:** We will need to ensure we use the right locations with high footfall. Further, there needs to be a good geographic spread of consultation events - delivering events across the whole of Newton, Wargrave and Earlestown. It is anticipated that we will plot consultations on a map online to show we have been in different locations and have made notable efforts for broad reach.
- **Findings and outcomes:** It is important that the engagement findings and outcomes clearly illustrate what the community feels most strongly about and the town's priorities. This will include a visual public summary of engagement.

- **Evidencing outputs:** It was felt that any outputs or events delivered should be recorded (e.g. case studies or videos and photos) and these could be shared online to evidence efforts to reach a broad audience. PLACED should highlight in their evaluation report the broad reach to show efforts.

Audience

Our discussion identified the need for engagement with a broad reach with residents, along with more targeted meetings with local community groups. The following outlines initial feedback from the Sub-Group workshop, while further discussion with the Sub-Group and Neighbourhood Board will be required to identify the key groups and individuals.

There was interest in delivering several meetings with local groups whose members are 'community anchors' and whose work may relate to the broad investment themes of the Plan for Neighbourhoods funding e.g. heritage groups and transport groups.

Targeted engagement with young people from Newton-le-Willows is required, as it was perceived they are typically underrepresented in consultation processes. Hope Academy was identified as a potential pathway to accessing young people.

It was recognised that opportunities need to be provided for working people to participate, hosting events on days and times and at locations that are accessible to them.

It was acknowledged that the Neighbourhood Board members collectively had an excellent network of contacts – both formal (e.g., direct contacts, collaborators and service users) and informal (social media, friends, family). Utilising these in addition to other more formal methods would help the success of engagement. Providing appropriate promotional materials will assist in connecting with these networks e.g., digital posters, social media assets etc.

In addition to the public audience, there will be targeted engagement for the Neighbourhood Board and the Stakeholders identified in the tender. This will be led by Layer.Studio and supported by Hatch Associates. The following are identified stakeholder groups who the team will reach out to:

- Neighbourhood Board
- Ward Councillors and Elected Members
- SHBC Internal Teams, such as Highways, Transportation, Planning, Regeneration, Housing, and Public Health
- External Investment Theme Representatives, such as ECF Programme Team, Developers/Housing Associations, Merseytravel, Network Rail and/or Northern Rail, local NHS workers, and so

What things can people really shape?

Although there are ideas about the type of projects that could be supported through the fund, it is important to acknowledge that we are starting with engagement before certain ideas have been 'locked in.' PLACED, Hatch Associates and Layer.Studio will also be working closely together throughout, ensuring ideas can shape the project as they are heard. Therefore, there is a genuine opportunity for the community to shape the development of the Plan.

The themes and objectives highlighted in the Plan for Neighbourhoods prospectus will be a key determiner of what project types can be funded. However, it is recognised that the updated programme now includes eight intervention themes, and it will not be possible to cover every theme with a project.

What is off the table?

'Off the table' will be anything beyond the scale and scope of the funding. Whilst we will aim to focus engagement and conversations on the scope of this funding, where themes and comments emerge beyond that we will capture the information so this can be utilised later by the Council and other agencies. We will communicate that comments beyond the scope will be reported for information but may not directly shape the Plan.

Timescales

Timescales are outlined in the 'Deliverables' section below. Broadly, we will look to deliver most public engagement early in the process to ensure maximum impact. Public engagement is expected to launch in April 2025.

Key Challenges and Opportunities

Key challenges of delivering this engagement programme include:

- We have been awaiting updated programme details from central government. The Plan for Neighbourhoods prospectus has only recently been published (March 2025) with notable changes to intervention themes and strategic objectives.
- A great deal of engagement has already been delivered in Newton-le-Willows and there is therefore the risk of engagement fatigue. The Council and Neighbourhood Board are acutely aware of this. It is therefore essential that the specificity and purpose of this consultation is clearly communicated.
- Developments that have been the focus of previous engagement activity are not yet underway, and so residents cannot see any changes. This could

create a sense of apathy and a view that Plan for Neighbourhoods might not happen.

- There are many different communities in the area and there will be a need to balance the geography and communities of Earlestown, Newton and Wargrave. If events focus on only one of these communities, this could attract criticism. Alongside this, there is a possibility that there might be too much focus on Earlestown as that is what is fresh in people's minds following the most recent consultations.
- It will not be possible to deliver all projects that residents and stakeholders suggest. Expectation management will be important.
- There have been negative responses from the public on social media. It will be vital to monitor and moderate all responses to the online engagement to ensure it remains respectful.

Opportunities / local strengths:

- There are many public events in Newton-le-Willows that receive high footfall and are attended by diverse audiences. These could be excellent locations for pop-up events.
- Earlestown Market was a successful location for previous consultations, which also experienced high footfalls.
- Diverse communities in the area and many active local community groups.
- Active and engaged heritage groups.
- PLACED have previously delivered a positive engagement workshop in Hope Academy.
- The Neighbourhood Board have strong links and a commitment to success which will be key in driving the project.

Communications

A Communications Approach for the project is set out later in this document, outlining the deliverables and leads for these. Note that this is the approach for this engagement specifically, rather than the longer-term communications approach for the Neighbourhood Board.

In addition, the Council's Communication Team will deliver an education piece on the Neighbourhood Board, and funding more widely, prior to any promotion about the events or engagement. The aim of this is to inform the public of the Neighbourhood Board, the differences between this project and the Earlestown Masterplan and clarify the purpose of engagement.

Engagement Approach

Public engagement

It was discussed at the Engagement Workshop that there is a mix of communities and groups within Newton-le-Willows that need to be given the opportunity to engage. Following the Engagement Workshop and discussions with the Sub-Group, PLACED has refined the Engagement Strategy, adding activities and approaches that will seek to deliver against the aims and respond to the challenges identified.

Our initial proposed engagement deliverables consisted of:

- Engagement Strategy Workshop and Engagement Strategy refinement
- Online engagement
- Pop-up events x 2
- Final report

Following the Engagement Strategy Workshop, the following have been added:

- Hope Academy school workshop x 1
- SEND school workshop x 1
- 3-hour drop-in events x 4
- Self-led engagement materials
- Production of social media assets
- Interim engagement report
- In-person flyer distribution and walkaround
- Project feedback / update via online engagement

The proposed drop-in events can be for any group the Sub-Group / Board agrees on targeting, and these will likely include SEND, community groups, sports groups, heritage groups and businesses. This will need to be informed by the Sub-Group and Board's local knowledge of key groups.

Some suggestions provided by the Sub-Group include Wargrave House School/ Ascent Autism Specialist College (SEND), Crownway Community Centre (Community Groups), Newton Sports Club (Sports Groups), Newton-le-Willows Library (Heritage Groups), and St Peters Church (Business Groups). It is envisaged that some of the students participating in the Hope Academy school workshop will also contribute from a SEND perspective. This can be reviewed and monitored during delivery.

Council Officers will support our efforts to reach a diverse audience and local minority groups with informal visits to different groups, sharing information about the funding and flagging the different opportunities to engage in-person and online, this is detailed within the Engagement Activity Breakdown.

Further consideration by the Sub-Group of inclusive engagement approaches with local minority groups (e.g. BAME, disabled, and LGBTQIA+) is required. This will need to draw on their local insights and knowledge, as well as consider the most effective ways to raise awareness amongst groups through the proposed engagement activities (e.g. drop-in events, pop-ups, engagement materials, and online).

Further refinement has been undertaken with the Engagement Sub-Group following feedback from the Neighbourhood Board, with the Strategy brought to the Board meeting on 21 March for endorsement.

Stakeholder engagement

In addition, Layer.Studio and Hatch Associates will lead on the delivery of the following for the Neighbourhood Board and stakeholders:

- 3 x Neighbourhood Board & Stakeholder Workshops
- 1-1 place observation sessions
- 3 x Thematic Stakeholder workshops

Final attendees and invites for these sessions will be aligned to the identified stakeholder list provided above and confirmed through an online session with the Engagement Sub-Group (e.g. working with the group on stakeholder identification/mapping). This discussion will also include the most appropriate forum for the various stakeholders. For example, a Thematic Workshop may serve well the engagement of local business groups - not only high street, but also key industrial and logistics areas i.e. Sankey Valley Industrial Estate.

Project Engagement Charter

To support the project in ongoing communications, we suggest establishing a Project Engagement Charter. This consists of setting out three or four 'next steps' that the Council / Neighbourhood Board commits to, helping to ensure people feel the process is transparent. These can be communicated during engagement, so people know how they can be kept 'in the loop.'

For example:

- Sharing of the engagement report on social media and websites. This can either be the full report or the visual summary.
- Committing to public updates via the Plan for Neighbourhoods website at a minimum of every six months.
- Identifying and sharing specific areas where engagement findings have shaped decisions.

The above are optional. As a minimum, we would suggest sharing the public summary report. These have been discussed with Council Officers, and no issues identified. They need to be further agreed with the Neighbourhood Board prior to the commencement of engagement delivery.

Engagement Deliverables Plan

The following provides our proposed revised engagement deliverables schedule. Please note that the milestones are indicative at this stage and will be informed by the timings of the publication of the updated prospectus, guidance from central government and local elections.

Deliverable	PLACED responsibilities	Council / Neighbourhood Board / wider Design Team responsibilities	Milestones
Engagement strategy Workshop and production of this strategy document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Engagement Strategy Workshop with Sub-Group • Review engagement strategy for agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input at meetings • Engagement Strategy sign-off 	January 2025 / Sign off March 2025
Online engagement Online platform with survey, ideas wall and map features. Includes full management, and a project update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft and launch online engagement platform • Manage engagement process, moderating comments • Update website as appropriate throughout the process • Update based on feedback • Undertake analysis of findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and feedback on the website in a timely manner, with all online engagement materials additionally signed off from the Council's Comms Team • Provide materials required to create the platform e.g., images, logos, text, as required • Respond to PLACED where questions arise • Promote on social media and the Council website, alongside other communication channels • Feedback on analysis to enable reporting 	Launch April 2025 Can remain live for project duration, with updates. Scope to keep live after the project, with timeframes to be discussed.

<p>In-person flyer distribution and walkaround (1/2 day) Direct promotion through hand-delivering flyers to businesses to help raise awareness and enable informal conversations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design flyers promoting engagement opportunities • 2 x PLACED staff to conduct in-person flyer distribution/walkaround • Locations with high footfall e.g. Earlestown Market Street and Newton High Street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback and sign-off flyers from the Council • Provide any contacts / key target businesses 	<p>April 2025</p>
<p>Pop-up events x 2 (proposed as being at existing events) Visual events with a range of structured engagement questions / activities for all. Ideally tap into existing events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate event locations • Create draft questions and materials for agreement • Lead on the creation of engagement materials and activities • Co-ordinate input from wider design team • Print all materials • Deliver 2 x pop-ups at approx. five hours each • 2 x PLACED Team members to deliver each event • Undertake analysis of findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend events that we could deliver in conjunction with • Agree questions prior to design of engagement materials in-line with dates set out below • Provide project information and wider context information as required • Provide collective feedback (single point of contact per org) on draft boards • Sign-off of materials in a timely manner 	<p>April 2025</p>

<p>Workshop with young people at a local secondary school x 1 Targeted design workshop for young people at Hope Academy. Creative session also delivering social value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as the lead contact for school • Design tailored workshop • Provision of workshop resources and materials • PLACED Team to lead delivery • Undertake analysis of findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm preference on workshop and age range • Provide timely feedback on draft activities 	<p>April 2025</p>
<p>Workshop at a local SEND school x 1 Targeted SEND workshop at Wargrave House. Creative session also delivering social value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as the lead contact for school • Design tailored workshop • Provision of workshop resources and materials • PLACED Team to lead delivery • Undertake analysis of findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide timely feedback on draft activities 	<p>April / May 2025</p>

<p>Drop-in events x 4 Attending up to four existing groups to informally talk through project and enable them to engage with a reduced set of engagement boards / activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend existing local community or business groups (dropping into already planned sessions) up to 3-hours each • Create draft questions and materials for agreement • Co-ordinate input from team • Print all materials • 2 x PLACED Team member to deliver • Undertake analysis of findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Officers to support the delivery of sessions alongside 2 x PLACED team member • Guidance on which groups to attend • Agree questions prior to design of engagement materials in-line with dates set out below • Provide project information and wider context information as required • Provide collective feedback (single point of contact) on draft boards, with a maximum of three rounds of comments • Sign-off of materials in a timely manner, with additional approval from the Council's Comms Team 	<p>April / May 2025</p>
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<p>Mobile self-led engagement Produce an A1 summary board about the project to include a QR code and scope to leave comments in a box</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create questions and materials for self-led engagement (expected to be one A1 board printed three times, directing people to online engagement / events) • Lead on the creation of engagement materials and activities • Create draft questions and materials for agreement • Co-ordinate input from team • Print copies for three venues • Undertake analysis of findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree questions prior to design of engagement materials in-line with dates set out below • Provide project information and wider context information as required • Provide collective feedback (single point of contact) on draft boards • Sign-off of materials from the Council in a timely manner • Provide guidance on where activity can be placed and contact to enable this to happen. Up to three venues. 	<p>April / May 2025</p>
<p>Social media / info gathering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of social media graphics with links to online engagement • Gathering of social media numbers on those posts PLACED lead. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback and sign-off materials created from the Council 	<p>April / May 2025</p>

<p>Reporting Interim highlight report and full report with qualitative and quantitative data, along with public summary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular summary updates on engagement findings (bulleted, emailed) • Provide interim highlight report to inform visioning and project ideas • Draft and provide final engagement findings report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback • Review and sign-off in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft w/c 12/05 • Final 26/05
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All above dates are indicative and can be adjusted following further discussion.

The proposed stakeholder engagement activities, led by Layer.Studio and supported by Hatch Associates, outlined above (Neighbourhood Board workshops, stakeholder discussions, and thematic workshops) will be programmed during February-June. For example, Layer.Studio and Hatch Associates used the Neighbourhood Board Meeting on the 7th of February as a first engagement event with Neighbourhood Board members.

Communications Plan

Communication	PLACED	Council
Press and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None included in budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council to lead on any press and media comms Council to deliver education piece prior to commencing engagement Council to lead on capturing the engagement on video, attending several events and speaking to the Neighbourhood Board / design team / officers about the project
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide social plan for sign off Provide assets and details of events Post about events and engagement opportunities on own platforms Post on local groups Track engagement on own posts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign off PLACED posts Post about project, tagging PLACED in social media
Posters / flyers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create flyers with QR code linking to online consultation. Print 20 A3 posters and 200 flyers In-person flyer distribution / walkaround 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council to sign-off flyers
Direct email comms with networks / contact lists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council to lead on any email comms with key stakeholders Neighbourhood Board to share information with contacts / share email contacts where appropriate

Key dates and materials sign-off process

The following sets out our standard approach for sign off and should provide a sense of potential timeframes for consideration.

- **Four weeks prior to the event:** PLACED will draft questions for agreement.
- **Three weeks prior to the event:** PLACED will work with the consultant team to develop materials.
- **Two weeks prior to the event:** PLACED to provide draft materials. Note this is dependent on provision of information (images, text).
- **Within three days of issue/eleven days prior to the event:** Comments for each organisation come from a single source i.e., all client comments are sent via one person to ensure there is consensus prior to sending.
- **Eight days prior to event:** PLACED will amend the boards in-line with comments and issue a second version.
- **Within three days of issue:** Comments are received as per point 2.
- **Four days prior to the event:** PLACED will make final changes and issue for print. A final copy will be shared with the client and design team.

Engagement Activity Breakdown

Engagement Activities			
Engagement Activity	Description	Targeted Groups	Potential Locations
PLACED			
Online Engagement Platform	Online platform with a survey, ideas wall and map features	Open to all	Online platform
2 x Pop-up Events	Visual events with a range of structured engagement questions/activities	Open to all	Tapping into existing events with high footfall
1 x Targeted School Workshop	Workshop with young people using creative engagement	Young people	Local secondary school
1 x Targeted SEND School Workshop	Workshop with young people with SEND needs, using creative engagement	Young people with SEND needs	Local SEND school
4 x Drop-in Events	Attending locations with existing stakeholder groups, and inviting themed groups to 'drop in'	Community Groups Sports Groups Heritage Groups Businesses	Well established locations with classes taking place
Mobile Self-led Engagement	Production of A1 summary boards about the project to include a QR code and scope for a comments box	Open to all	Up to 9 locations with high footfall, locations to rotate approx. every 2 weeks
Social media/ information gathering	Creation of social media graphics and links to online gathering	Open to all	PLACED social media
In-person flyer distribution and walkaround	Direct promotion through hand-delivering fliers to local people to raise awareness and	Passerby's and local businesses	Locations with high footfall and business

	enable information conversation		
Reporting	Engagement findings report, summary updates and interim highlight reports	n/a	St Helens Borough Council to publish appropriate information
Layer.Studio and Hatch Associates			
01 Neighbourhood Board & Stakeholder Workshop	Information gathering to inform the baseline mapping and findings against the themes from Neighbourhood Board	Neighbourhood Board members - complete	Neighbourhood Board meeting - complete
1-1 Place Observation Sessions	1-2-1 meetings with Board members and stakeholders to focus on sector specific issues	Neighbourhood Board members and stakeholders	Online - Teams
3 x In-Depth Thematic Stakeholder Workshops	In-depth themed workshops to be undertaken with stakeholders	Ward Councillors and Elected Members, SHBC Internal Teams, External representatives from each investment theme	Accessible locations
02 Town Board & Stakeholder Workshop	Feedback on challenges and opportunities to gain the emerging vision	Neighbourhood Board members	Neighbourhood Board meeting
03 Town Board & Stakeholder Workshop	Vision outcomes/ objectives alignment to opportunities linking to 'on menu' activities	Neighbourhood Board members	Neighbourhood Board meeting
St Helens Borough Council			
Education Piece	Education piece on who the Neighbourhood Board is and the	Open to all	Council social media Council website

	funding more widely		
Engagement Video	Capture the engagement on video/ photograph at a pop-up event to form an evidence base	Open to those who attend / engage	Pop-up event location
Social Media and Press	Post and advertise the engagement opportunities taking place	Open to all / targeted posts if needed	Council social media
Council Website	Hosts information on the engagement opportunities and signposts to PLACED online platform	Open to all	Council website
Targeted Advertising - Email	Targeted emails inviting stakeholders to events and providing promotional materials and links to online engagement activity	Aligned with the investment themes and key stakeholders	Online - Email
Targeted Advertising -Posters	Targeted locations to leave a physical poster and/or surveys, or hand out at key events	Open to all	Notice Boards or Digital Notice Boards or hand out at key events
Direct Engagement	Visits from the project team or attendance at events to talk through the programme and direct to the online platform	Aligned with harder to reach communities	Across Newton-le-Willows



Newton-le-Willows Plan for Neighbourhoods Programme

Communications Plan

Date: March 2025

Engagement Activity Breakdown

Engagement Activities			
Engagement Activity	Description	Targeted Groups	Potential Locations
PLACED			
Online Engagement Platform	Online platform with a survey, ideas wall and map features	Open to all	Online platform
2 x Pop-up Events	Visual events with a range of structured engagement questions/activities	Open to all	Tapping into existing events with high footfall
1 x Targeted School Workshop	Workshop with young people using creative engagement	Young people	Local secondary school
1 x Targeted SEND School Workshop	Workshop with young people with SEND needs, using creative engagement	Young people with SEND needs	Local SEND school
4 x Drop-in Events	Attending locations with existing stakeholder groups, and inviting themed groups to 'drop in'	Community Groups Sports Groups Heritage Groups Businesses	Well established locations with classes taking place
Mobile Self-led Engagement	Production of A1 summary boards about the project to include a QR code and scope for a comments box	Open to all	Up to 9 locations with high footfall, locations to rotate approx. every 2 weeks
Social media/ information gathering	Creation of social media graphics and links to online gathering	Open to all	PLACED social media
In-person flyer distribution and walkaround	Direct promotion through hand-delivering fliers to local people to raise awareness and enable information conversation	Passerby's and local businesses	Locations with high footfall and business
Reporting	Engagement findings report, summary updates and interim highlight reports	n/a	St Helens Borough Council to publish appropriate information
Layer.Studio and Hatch Associates			
01 Neighbourhood Board & Stakeholder Workshop	Information gathering to inform the baseline mapping and findings against the themes from Neighbourhood Board	Neighbourhood Board members - complete	Neighbourhood Board meeting – complete
1-1 Place Observation Sessions	1-2-1 meetings with Board members and stakeholders to focus	Neighbourhood Board members and stakeholders	Online - Teams

	on sector specific issues		
3 x In-Depth Thematic Stakeholder Workshops	In-depth themed workshops to be undertaken with stakeholders	Ward Councillors and Elected Members, SHBC Internal Teams, External representatives from each investment theme	Accessible locations
02 Town Board & Stakeholder Workshop	Feedback on challenges and opportunities to gain the emerging vision	Neighbourhood Board members	Neighbourhood Board meeting
03 Town Board & Stakeholder Workshop	Vision outcomes/ objectives alignment to opportunities linking to 'on menu' activities	Neighbourhood Board members	Neighbourhood Board meeting
St Helens Borough Council			
Education Piece	Education piece on who the Neighbourhood Board is and the funding more widely	Open to all	Council social media, media, Council website
Engagement Video	Capture the engagement on video/ photograph at a pop-up event to form an evidence base	Open to those who attend / engage	Pop-up event location
Social Media and Press	Post and advertise the engagement opportunities taking place	Open to all / targeted posts if needed	Council social media
Council Website	Hosts information on the engagement opportunities and signposts to PLACED online platform	Open to all	Council website
Targeted Advertising - Email	Targeted emails inviting stakeholders to events and providing promotional materials and links to online engagement activity	Aligned with the investment themes and key stakeholders	Online - Email
Targeted Advertising - Posters	Targeted locations to leave a physical poster and/or surveys, or hand out at key events	Open to all	Notice Boards or Digital Notice Boards and key events
Direct Engagement	Visits from the project team or attendance at events to talk through the programme and direct to the online platform	Aligned with harder to reach communities	Across Newton-le-Willows

Communication Opportunities

Communication Opportunities					
Comms Activity / Description	Responsible Officer / Service	Message	Audience	Method	Date required by
Education Piece	Council Comms Team	Education piece on who the Board is and what the fund is for	Open to all- public, businesses, Ward members	Social media, press	April 2025
Online Engagement Platform Advertisement	PLACED & Council Comms Team	Notifying the public of the interactive digital elements and online survey that can be filled in as part of the engagement for Plan for Neighbourhoods, and sharing the link for this page	Open to all - public, businesses, Ward members	Included within social media, press, and website	April 2025
Pop-up Event Advertisement	PLACED & Council Comms Team	Notifying the public of what pop-up events people can attend to engage, where they are, and what time they are taking place	Open to all - public, businesses, Ward members	Included within social media, press, and website	April-May 2025
Drop-In Event Advertisement	PLACED & Council Comms Team	Notifying key stakeholder groups that they can attend 'drop-in' sessions, detailing the locations and times	Community Sports Heritage Businesses	Included within social media, press, and website	April-May 2025
Engagement Video for Plan for Neighbourhoods	Council Comms Team	Positive news and progress made with engagement, captured through photos and videos of the public engagement events	Open to all - public, businesses, Ward members	Included within social media, and website	Spring 2025
Published Public Facing Document	Council Comms Team	Positive news and progress made on Plan for Neighbourhoods with the release of the public facing document of the Regeneration Plan	Open to all - public, businesses, Ward members	Included within social media, press, and website	Winter 2025