

Stocksbridge Towns Fund Board (STFB)

DATE & TIME: Monday 11 August 2025, 10am

LOCATION: Stocksbridge Community Leisure Centre,

CHAIR: Yuri Matischen

ATTENDEES:

Board Members attending:

- Yuri Matischen, Stocksbridge resident - Co-Chair (**YM**) (Active Trails Representative)
- Hilary Osborn, Stocksbridge resident (**HO**) (Joint Community Representative) via Teams
- John Crawshaw, Stocksbridge business owner (**JC**) (Placemaking Representative)
- Graham Silverwood, Stocksbridge Training and Enterprise Partnership (STEP) & Stocksbridge Community Leisure Centre (SCLC) (Sports Hub Representative)
- Tony Goddard, Liberty Steel (Joint Education & Skills Representative) via Teams
- Ian Sanderson, SLR Outlets (**IS**) (Community Hub 519 Representative)
- Cllr Janet Ridler, Stocksbridge and Upper Don (**Cllr JR**)

Also attending:

- Sean McClean, Director of Regeneration and Development, SCC (**SM**)
- Jonny McQuillin, Finance Officer, SCC (**JM**)
- Jonathan Harty, Chief of Staff to MP Marie Tidball (**JH**) (via Teams)
- Jess Thompson, Senior Associate Rider Levett Bucknall (Project Management) (**JT**)
- Hilary Coulson, Head of Libraries, SCC (**HC**)
- David Ambrose, Senior Land & Property Surveyor, SCC (**DA**)
- Gareth Hayden, Community Project Officer, SCC (Physical Activity, Sport and Leisure) (**GH**)
- Darren Chiumento (RG Carter Construction: contractor for 519 Hub) (**DC**)

Apologies:

- Marie Tidball, MP for Penistone & Stocksbridge -Co-Chair (**MT MP**) (Hopper Bus Representative)
- Liz Sedgwick, Valley Medical Centre (**ES**) (Health Representative)
- Charlotte Coleman, Sheffield Hallam University (**CC**) (Joint Education & Skills presentative)
- Michelle O'Neill, Acting Programme Manager, SCC (**MO'N**)

- Leigh Sanders, Communications Team, SCC (**LS**)
- Alex Parker, Match Funding Consultant, SCC (**AP**)
- Richard Nield (newly appointed Board member) (**RN**)
- Kate Martin, Executive Director City Futures, SCC

Minutes:

- Melanie Crawford, Service Support Officer, SCC (PMO) (**MC**)

Item 1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

Marie Tidball MP was in Parliament, but Jonathan Harty attended on her behalf as a reporter and observer.

Cllr Janet Ridler was formally welcomed onto the Board and introductions were made.

Item 2: Governance and declarations of interest (for items on the agenda)

It was noted that Cllr JR has already completed a declaration of interests form for SCC.

Action copy to be provided for upload to Stocksbridge page on SCC website.

It was noted that a new Board member, Richard Nield, has been appointed through email correspondence, following the meetings in June and July when he was nominated.

RN will work on the 519 Hub project, bringing skills in facilities management.

It was noted that Alex Parker has now formally started in post but could not attend today due to holidays. His role will be to secure additional finance, and he has already met with several colleagues.

Post -meeting note:

Minutes of the previous meeting (2 July) were agreed following this meeting.

Item 3. Finance (Jonny Mcquillin)

YM requested clarification of some of the figures that appeared to be different on the different docs that had been provided to the Board (Board report/financial pack).

JM informed the Board that this was due to capital and revenue spend being treated differently within SCC. Both were reported on in the financial pack. The figures for actual spend are based on when bills are received, so the spend for June (£132k) is higher than July (£38k) as it includes April and May spend.

Hopper Bus and Ed/Skills have revenue spend as well as capital. Some of the funding can only be spent on capital so this is shown separately (in a filter on the sheet).

Changes in project by budget were outlined, the main one being that the 519 Hub has been allocated additional funds whilst Placemaking has been reduced.

The figures for allocations to the cricket club are different in each report (£603k vs £103k). This is due to a difference in information sources. Michelle's information reflects the Boards allocated spend profile. The information in the financial pack reflects the Council's formal accounting software. For example, the proposed grant of £500k to the cricket club is therefore included in the figure of £603k, but it has not yet been formally added to the Councils capital approval system.

A discussion was held to clarify what funds had been spent on the cricket club and on Track and Trails. Confirmation was given that the agreed grant allocations are in addition to historical spend.

A discussion was held around Gainshare funding. £3 million is going through approval from South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA). This funding could be allocated for the 519 Hub, which would free up Towns Fund money from that budget to be spent on one or more of the other projects.

There are two business cases going through at the moment for the Community Hub. The SCC Business case has been approved at CPG and will go to committee 22nd September. The SYMCA FBC is targeting approval at a programme board in early September. The Board have requested additional allocation of Gainshare- this will go through Council processes.

The deadline for Gainshare spend is not tied to the spend deadline for the Towns Fund money. It was clarified that the definition of 'spend' for the purposes of the Towns Fund is when the money has left the account.

Item 4. 519 capital projects

519 Construction -update: Jess Thompson / Darren Chiumento

JT informed the Board that some positive cost savings have been made by RG Carter. The total cost for the works is now estimated at £11.6 million. The fit-out is likely to be a further £1.1 million, and there is contingency for this.

There is further contingency for risks such as potential Right to Light claims, although it is expected that these will be resolved in the next couple of months and any remaining contingency can therefore be released back into the programme.

DC provided an update on the construction works. These are due to be completed in November 2026 (excluding the fit-out).

Button Row will be closed from 14 August. Demolition will begin on site on 1 September. The soft strip will take eight weeks with demolition due to be completed by the end of October. The foundations will then be built, and the steel frame is due to be installed in Feb 26.

Contact has been made with residents regarding the Button Row closures. Discussion has also taken place with the waste management company and Wells Pharmacy regarding how to deal with the closure. There will be access to the rear car park of the chiropractor, Johnson St and the rear of the medical centre. Everywhere else will be closed for deliveries.

Following discussion with Highways a decision had been taken to close the roads for the full period of construction rather than having on/off closures as originally planned. This was due to the potential for confusion leading to safety issues.

A new connection is needed for substations managed by Northern Power Grid -key design to be ready by end of August.

Engagement is taking place with the supply chain and core contractors such as the lift manufacturer and steel works contractor.

The groundworks have been done, and the piling contractor is on board.

Cabins are in place and the contractor is using part of the Co-Op car park for their compound. Hoardings are being put up around the main site and welfare area. An allowance has been made for graphics -to be developed with JT and the comms team.

There have been a couple of security incidents, but cameras have now been put in place which are monitored.

Drainage is a key element of the works. Works need to be carried out on Manchester Rd which will involve partial road closures during October half term if licences are in place.

Asbestos has been found above and below ground at St Luke's but none of it was reportable. This will be dealt with during the demolition. It seems that the asbestos may come from terraced houses that were previously on the site.

JT noted that this has been flagged as a key risk in terms of money and time, and contingency has been allocated accordingly.

It was noted that it was positive to see activity on site.

A discussion was held around the need for the layout of the building to support the potential uses of the space. Some decisions may need to be made before the walls go up.

IS is due to meet with Tom Wolfenden from Sheffield Tech Parks to look at the proposed floor plan. Discussions will need to include Libraries, RN (newly appointed Boad member), TG and CC as Ed/Skills reps as part of the Hub in Operation working group.

There was a discussion around the aspiration for the building to link the library to skills and education and for it to be a modern interactive space providing a range of services, using technology, in addition to providing access to books.

JT advised that, in terms of the fit-out, the designers need to understand the potential uses of the spaces and the specification for the technology before this can be priced up.

Infrastructure will be treated as capital expenditure, but other items (eg Wifi service contracts) will come under revenue.

HC noted that connectivity with the rest of the 28 Sheffield libraries was essential to ensure that Stocksbridge was not standing in isolation.

DC proposed that a design team meeting be arranged once the requirements were understood. The steel frame has already been designed. The mechanical and electrical installation needs to go alongside this to avoid retrofitting later or delaying the build. Different suppliers deal with data, lighting etc. so this needs to be co-ordinated.

Currently the building has been designed as an office space. If some spaces are to be used by community groups for example with amplified music this will affect acoustics etc.

Action: Functional brief to be drawn up by Hub in Operation Working group, covering use of spaces, lighting, acoustics, data etc.

HO to research audio/PA systems used in schools, by community groups.

519 Title, Appropriation and risks/ Update on Progress with property and acquisitions (David Ambrose)

Bargain Booze (BB): now close to agreeing contracts - exchange may take place in two weeks but timescale is dependent on responses from the vendors solicitor. Some delays caused by new solicitor acting for BB wanting to re-negotiate terms.

Factory Shop: terms have been agreed.

Chemist: Option to buy or keep in -situ.

A discussion was held around the option of moving the pharmacy to an alternative location if the Board seek to demolish the Factory Shop and the potential issues with this eg cost and need for licences.

The alternative of keeping the chemist and re-roofing and doing up the shopfronts (rather than demolishing) was discussed. This had been explored in the past and designs were produced by Coda Design Ltd. This is the current preferred option.

Issues to consider:

Purchase of freehold at £150k?

Who has ownership/liability? Would it be SCC or the Community Trust?

A covenant is in place re sale of alcohol

During the development shop units would be exempt from rates, but empty shops are liable for full rates.

Action:

IS to circulate CODA designs for factory shop

JC to arrange assessment of roof condition by contractor on site.

RLB to produce a cost estimate for roofing and shopfronts work.

SM advised that the costs of retaining and refurbishing the factory shop and benefits would need to form the basis of a business case to justify a decision if the building was to remain.

Action:

IS to circulate CODA designs for factory shop

JC to arrange assessment of roof condition by contractor on site with a view to getting quote for roofing and shopfronts work.

SM advised that the costs of re-roofing etc and benefits (eg rental income) could form the basis of a business case. The roof will need to comply with Building Regulations.

Item 5. Hub in Operation/Business Planning

YM noted that there is an aspiration on the Board to make the Hub a modern facility offering flexible spaces. So, for example, the cafe could be used in the evening for community groups or business workshops.

Conversations have been held with various organisations regarding potential educational activities, including Inspire Development Agency (IDA) who use sport and physical activity as an educational tool. IDA currently operate at the Arena.

Feedback on Library brief (Hilary Coulson)

HC shared her findings on what needs to be considered when designing provision within the Hub. Key points:

- The vision is different for different people. The focus needs to be on what the community needs in Stocksbridge. For comparison, Firth Park Library has a Post Office, a bank and a food bank, so it is focused on social provision.
- The impact of libraries is measured in terms of increases in reading for pleasure, life chances, mobility, social isolation and so on -it is not just about books, these issues are interconnected.
- In terms of the customers the offer needs to be coherent and cohesive - including signposting to other services.
- Due to risks of anti-social behaviour, spaces may need to be sub-divided.
- Technology has its place, but what is the limit? (Eg in Sweden, robots take books from shelves.)
- Thought needs to be given to opening times/when the library is staffed and provision of access outside these times and how this fits into operation of the rest of the building.
- The library staff have only seen the library floor plan so far, but the Hub should be seen as one total offer with shared spaces.
- What need will there be for out of hours use of computers- who will staff this?
- How much of the provision will be library and how much education and skills?
- Starting point needs to be knowing why we are providing a service, then how technology can help.
- Upfront costs of technology may be a risk if it declines later but there is no money to replace it.

A discussion was held around the need for the Hub to become self-sustaining rather than relying on initial grant funding. This may mean that some areas of provision make a surplus and subsidise others.

DA noted that there had been a working group set up through STF Board approximately two years ago to look at the issues discussed around making the space flexible, eg bookshelves on wheels, 24-hour access, concertina door to the cafe. Barnsley Library was used as a model.

JC advised that any proposed changes were limited by the fact that the order for steelworks will be firmed up imminently and by the fire strategy. Different uses of the building pose different risks and the fire strategy is complex.

DA advised that fire rated walls are installed from floor to soffit, so use of double doors is a more realistic option than moveable walls.

Education/Skills provision (Tony Goddard)

TG and CC met with the Emma- chief exec Northern College (NC) earlier in the year to understand what discussions had previously taken place. The outcome was that NC felt unable to provide a service for the revenue funding available from the Towns Fund Board and were concerned about the provision being sustainable after the end of the initial two- year period.

TG has since met with SCC's Family, Adult and Community Education Service (FACES) who operate in other parts of the city and are keen to have a presence in Stocksbridge. They have offered to run courses for unemployed adults (16+) and can bring their own computers to occupy the top floor. They would only need a lock-up, facilities to make drinks and carpets (to reduce noise which impacts on some service users with specific needs).

There are a range of other providers who may also be interested in using the space. New expressions of interest would be required for potential new providers. This could include Northern College if they were interested.

A short discussion was held around whether the rooms would be rented or offered to community/educational users on a reduced or subsidised basis.

A discussion was held around possible use of the revenue amount currently allocated to education provision to kit out the education space. The space may be attractive to local 6th form colleges/ schools for year 10/11 students as an enrichment opportunity. The infrastructure could be provided to make the space adaptable for a range of uses, eg interactive whiteboards for teaching and business seminars.

SM advised that if a community trust is to be set up to manage the building, there would be a community asset policy to transfer ownership of the resources from SCC. This organisation would need to do a business case to ensure funds were in place by time that the Town Deal funding runs out (2027). If there is no asset transfer, then the building would be run by the Council. The original plan was for different organisations (including Libraries) to take different floors of the building, which would

mitigate the risk. It was noted that AP has expertise in setting up charitable trusts and could offer support with this.

A decision will need to be made as to who is running the building and the form that the organisation takes -eg CIC, charity -as this will affect how the spaces can be let.

Actions:

Agenda item to be added to next meeting around community asset transfer and future operation of the building. 'Task force' to be set up to look at this to include AP. SCC/Board to formally contact Northern College re the existing MOU.

Public Art update (Hilary Osborn)

HO had circulated a paper in advance of the meeting describing the proposed public art project celebrating the History of Stocksbridge and working with local schools. Key points are:

The proposal seeks to achieve four measurable outputs:

1. Library Mural
2. Published story book
3. Plans for a performance space - after discussing budget restrictions we felt that this was still achievable using street art to delineate an area
4. Sculptural artwork -the current preference is for a metal and water feature reflecting steel and the upper don river.

An allocation of £10k is requested from the Towns Fund which will be enough to satisfy the requirements for a public art installation as part of the Planning conditions for the Hub. The building cannot be opened until the proposals are agreed.

The intention is to use this initial amount as match funding/leverage to draw down a maximum of £100k, through a lottery bid by the end of August and applications to smaller pots with advice from South Yorks Funding Advice Bureau (SYFAB).

Decision: the Board agreed to allocate £10k from Placemaking for the public art project.

Item 6. Sports Projects: Graham Silverwood/ Gareth Hayden

3G Pitch

GH gave an update on progress. Initial surveys were carried out by the Football Foundation (FF). The outcome was a need for a desk top coal mining report, which the club funded directly. The outcome of the desktop study was a need for intrusive surveys. It has been agreed that this will be funded by the Towns Fund Board up to the value of £30k. This will provide enough information to assess if the project is feasible. These surveys will be carried out in the first week of September. Decision re progress of project depending on results of survey by mid-September.

A discussion took place regarding how much funding the Board, FF and any other sources could provide respectively.

GS has introduced AP to the football club to look at ways that he can support with fundraising. It is a pre-requisite for the FF funding that the club helps raise funds. The contribution by percentage from the FF is to be confirmed. It was also noted that the changing rooms that are across the road from the proposed pitch need refurbishment, however these are not owned by the club.

Action:

AP to work with club around governance issues
SCC Sport and Leisure to manage the grant agreement with the club.

Cricket pavilion

The Board have agreed to provide a grant to the Cricket Club. The club will appoint contractors, with the Board having oversight. The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) will contribute some funding and AP will be assisting with sourcing additional funding. About £500k will be needed for the build based on a quotation from the contractor that built Outbridge pavilion.

It was noted that there are both advantages and disadvantages to setting up a new Community Trust as opposed to linking in with existing ones in the area.

JH informed the Board that MT (MP) has drafted a letter to the ECB on behalf of the cricket club.

Action:

JH to send copy of the letter to GH, with a view to the approaches being co-ordinated.
GS to arrange meeting with GH, AP and club.

Item 7. Tracks and Trails Project: Yuri Matischen

YM fed back re developments on behalf of CC. He has met with the lead from Upper Don Trails Trust (UDTT) to discuss proposals for wayfinding improvements in the Stocksbridge Town Deal Board area. A grant of £100k would enable them to carry out two feasibility studies into improvements to include crossings on Manchester Rd and near Morehall.

YM proposed that the grant be offered as UDDT is a well-established organisation and the money would enable enrichment of the area and leverage of further funding through Yorkshire Water leading to further improvements.

SM noted that the mechanics of how the grant would be drawn down and the conditions needed to be worked out. It was noted that if the project impacts on the highway there could be additional costs but this would be the responsibility of UDDT.

Decision: Grant agreed in principle by Board in line with the paper on Upper Don Trails -to be circulated to Board again with minutes.
Funding agreement to be drawn up.

Item 8. Shopfronts scheme

JH informed the Board that the meeting with shop owners had gone ahead as planned with MT (MP). This had been arranged in her constituency role, but the next meeting will be regarding the Towns Fund.

There are plans to improve communication with shop owners by setting up a liaison group with owners, Board members and SCC officers. MON has also suggested a website link where questions can be posted.

DA informed the Board that a letter has been drafted about the proposals which outlines qualifying criteria in term of electrical testing, asbestos and insurance. Images will be attached of the proposed plans. The letter explains that the Planning application is due early September. There are issues that need to be discussed with shop owners, eg around drainage and the fact that each shop owns its own section of the canopy.

Action: Meeting to be coordinated by MT's PA (Gi Copley). MON has confirmed attendance along with Ellie Parry (Assistant project manager). IS and JC also to attend.

9. Communications plan

LS had shared the first draft of the comms plan before the meeting. There is an emphasis on building trust by keeping people informed. YS has responded directly to LS.

10. Any Other Business

None

Date of next meeting: Monday 22 September, Stocksbridge Community Leisure Centre.