Notes of **WHAT'S IN STORE PROJECT BOARD** held on **TUESDAY 23rd JUNE 2026** at 10:00 a.m. at Newton's Place.

In attendance:	Councillor Mike Ryan (Chairperson) - presiding	
	Councillor Gwen Jennings	(Vice Chairperson)
	Joanna Eccles	Curator (maternity cover)
	Alandra Elendill	Museum Volunteer
	Kate Green	Community Engagement Consultant
	Linda McGuirk	Principal Administrator
	Colin Parker	Councillor
	Phil Rowe	Town Clerk
	Helen Smith	Project Co-ordinator
	Rob Woodger	Facilities Maintenance Team Leader
	Jeremy Newcome	Architect

54. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Heather Holve - WIS Project Marketing Officer, Emily Farrell - Newton Abbot CIC, Sam Scott - Deputy Town Clerk & RFO, Nigel Canham - Communications Advisor.

Councillor A Hall did not attend

55. NOTES

Members agreed the notes of the meeting held on the 16th December 2025.

56. BUDGET & FINANCIAL PLANNING

a) Build contracts tender

Members were advised that the tender process had been completed, with six tenders received.

The tender returns were significantly higher than anticipated, with the lowest tender exceeding the original project estimate by £76,948 (28%). As a result, the three preferred contractors had been invited to review their submissions and identify potential cost savings.

A document was tabled outlining areas where specifications could be amended to reduce project costs. The most significant potential saving related to the removal of the external mirrored cladding, which serves no thermal function. Other potential savings were identified in relation to stone finishes, external wall cladding, floor finishes and insulation options.

JN advised that any change to the external mirrored glass cladding would require a variation to the existing planning consent.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the retention of the mirrored glass cladding. HS suggested that HS, JN and PR meet to consider the matter further and make a final recommendation.

Arising from the discussion. It was:

AGREED:

1. To retain the mirrored glass cladding within the project specification.
2. To continue negotiations with Classic and Unicorn and remove Prime Build from the tender consideration process.
3. That HS convene a design team meeting and report back to the Board.
4. That a recommendation be brought to the Council meeting on the 15th July for acceptance of the preferred tender, noting that the tender value exceeds the approved budget by more than 10%.

1. To proceed with the mirror glass cladding
2. Continue negotiations with Classic and Unicorn – drop Prime Build from the tender process.
3. HS will convene a design team meeting and feedback to the Board.
4. At its meeting on the 15th July the Council will need to accept the tender as it is above 10%.

b) Fit out contract tenders

Members were advised that three tenders had been received for the internal fit out contract.

HS recommended the appointment of Rackline Storage Systems as the preferred contractor. The approved fit out budget is £64,300 whilst Rackline Storage Systems submitted a tender of £42,762.38 plus VAT, representing a saving against the allocated budget. Although caution will be taken to ensure the fit out is fit for the future.

Accordingly, it was:

AGREED:

That Rackline Storage Systems be appointed to undertake the fit-out contract.

c) Funding update

HS presented an update on the project funding position.

Members noted that further funding opportunities continue to be explored. HS advised that the MEND grant programme may provide a potential funding source in the next application round; however, a condition survey would be required to support any future application.

Additional opportunities discussed included applications to the Swire Trust, crowdfunding initiatives, corporate sponsorship, the production of a fundraising video, and further support from Newton Abbot Town Council.

HS reported that grant funding opportunities continue to be actively pursued.

Members also discussed the potential for funding support from Teignbridge District Council. It was suggested that HS speak with Pierre to explore any available opportunities.

57. ACTIVITY PLAN

a) **Phase 1 delivered**

KG reported that Phase 1 of the community engagement programme had been completed. Since January, a total of 59 activities and workshops had been delivered, engaging 962 participants.

b) **Breadth of engagement**

KG provided an overview of the range of activities undertaken and the associated participation figures. Members were shown photographs illustrating a variety of activities and community engagement sessions.

c) **Next focus**

KG advised that the outcomes from Phase 1 activities are currently being evaluated and that planning for Phase 2 is underway, with activities scheduled to commence at the end of July.

Meetings are being held with community groups and stakeholders to develop and programme the next phase of workshops.

58. MARKETING UPDATE

Members were advised that Heather has now joined the project team and is working closely with the Museum team to support the development and delivery of marketing activities.

An update was provided on audience research and digital insights, including the results of on-street surveys and digital analytics reporting.

The Board noted progress on the development of the project's brand narrative, target audiences, key messaging and user journeys. The project is now being referred to as the Heritage Store Project for marketing and engagement purposes.

An update was also provided on campaign planning, including a review of activities undertaken during the year and the development of a marketing plan for 2027.

ACTION: PR requested examples of the marketing and engagement activities undertaken to date.

59. OPERTIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING

Members received an update on operational planning for the project.

It was reported that the collection move is scheduled to commence on 6th July 2026. In preparation for this, the FMO team has constructed a wall within Room 4 to support the storage and display requirements of the collection during the build.

Work is ongoing to prepare the museum for operational use, including the development of risk assessments, an operations manual, policies and procedures and other supporting documentation required for the effective management of the space.

The museum team are also considering the future programme of activities and the operational capacity required to ensure the efficient and sustainable running of the museum.

Discussion took place regarding the future growth and success of the project. Members noted the importance of carefully managing increased demand and considering how the Museum may expand its services and capacity in the future.

60. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 22nd September 2026

The Meeting closed at: 11:21