

Notes of **WHAT'S IN STORE PROJECT BOARD** held on **TUESDAY 28th OCTOBER 2025** at 10:00 a.m. in the St Leonards Room Newton's Place.

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| In attendance: | Gwen Jennings (GJ) | Vice Chairperson (presiding) Councillor & Museum Volunteer |
| | Charlotte Dixon (CD) | Curator |
| | Helen Smith (HS) | Project Coordinator |
| | Kate Green (KG) | Community Engagement Consultant |
| | Phil Rowe (PR) | Town Clerk |
| | Pierre Doutreligne (PD) | Projects & Strategy Officer |
| | Alandra Elendill (AE) | Museum Volunteer |
| | Linda McGuirk (LM) | Principal Administrator |
| | Rob Woodger (RW) | Facilities Maintenance Team Leader |

40. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Cllr Mike Ryan (Chairperson), Cllr Colin Parker, Cllr A Hall and Sam Scott, Deputy Town Clerk.

41. NOTES

Members agreed the notes of the meeting held on the 8th April 2025.

CD – reported that since the last meeting the Heritage Lottery Fund application has been agreed for the delivery phase of the project.

HS advised that, in relation to Minute 37B, it was noted that the NLHF grant will be disbursed in quarterly tranches, with 10% of the total funding withheld until completion of the project. The Board had considered submitting a request to reduce this retention to 5%. It was confirmed that this retention has now been reduced to 6%.

42. REVIEW THE PURPOSE OF THE BOARD

Members considered the Terms of Reference, as circulated prior to the meeting, and confirmed that all members understood the purpose of the Project Board.

PR reminded members that the Council's Financial Regulations must be adhered to, and that a recommendation should be submitted to the Council to approve delegated authority with regard to the tendering process..

43. APPROVED PURPOSES OF THE GRANT

CD referred to Appendix C, as circulated, outlining the approved purposes and aims of the project which must be achieved.

It was noted that any minor divergence from the approved list would need to be referred back to The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) for consideration. Members discussed how both minor and major divergences should be managed.

CD advised that a meeting with Helen Wheatley is scheduled for the following day to discuss and obtain permission to start the build stage of the project, at which point clarification on this matter can be sought. Members were reminded that this meeting is prior to the official project start date.

Members also noted the importance of including appropriate contingency margins within the project planning.

44. SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENT PHASE

CD, HS, and KG gave a visual presentation to remind members of what had been agreed during the Development Phase, covering the following key areas:

- Project definition
- Background to the project
- Capital works
- Activity plan
- Build timetable – project completion anticipated October 2028
- Costs
- Store fit-out
- Key changes during the development phase
- Plans for the coming months

Members were then invited to ask questions.

PR asked what material would be used for the external cladding. CD confirmed this would be zinc, with a film of etched designs created by members of the community.

AE asked when the Collections Manager would commence employment. It was confirmed this is expected to be November 2026.

PR also asked

- the appointment of a Project Build Advisor – this was confirmed as Jeremy Newcombe;
- the name of the space, noting that this will involve community input;
- who would be writing the tender specifications – confirmed as Jeremy Newcombe and HS.

GJ asked whether there would be opportunities for volunteers to get involved, to which it was confirmed yes.

It was noted that an Information Day will be held next week for councillors, staff, and volunteers, with an update session and newsletter to ensure regular communication throughout the project.

AE asked who would make the final decision on the tender. PR advised that delegated authority is required from the Council.

45. FUNDING AND FUNDRAISING

Members were advised that a number of funding applications are currently being investigated and submitted.

PD asked whether naming rights for sponsorship could be offered. It was confirmed that this would not be permitted under The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) guidelines, however there will be a 'Role of Honour' to acknowledge those who make donations to the project.

46. NEXT STEPS

It was noted that a meeting with Helen Wheatley will take place tomorrow to discuss the project start permissions.

An Information Day will be held on Wednesday of next week for councillors, staff, and volunteers to provide updates on progress and next stages of the project.

It is anticipated the project will be able to commence in November with the build starting in April. Once the project starts the tendering process will begin as well as advertising for the Marketing Consultant.

47. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 16th December 2025, 10am – 12pm.

The Meeting closed at: 11:12