

NAME OF MEETING:	Town Board Meeting
DATE/LOCATION:	Friendship Lodge, Hill Street, Crawshawbooth 05.09.2025
ATTENDEES:	Alyson Barnes (AB), Andy McNae (AM), Barbara Ashworth (BA), Charlotte Scheffman (CS), Dave Motley (DM), David Smurthwaite (DS), Deryck Allen (DA), Iain Taylor (IT), Jaid Flatley (JF), Jann Shutt (JS), Jodie Oatway (JO), Kimberly Haworth (KH), Leonie Ford Miah (LFM), Lynn Smith (LS), Megan Eastwood (ME), Nick Harris (NH), Peter Terry (PT), Rachel Gildert (RG), Sam Sandford (SS), and Stephen Anderson (SA).
APOLOGIES:	David Gould (DG), Kimberley Whitehead (KW), Rob Huntington (RH), Nicola Avery (NA), Joanne Ash (JA)
MINUTE TAKER:	Jodie Oatway (JO)

THE MEETING

1	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Minutes Accepted and agreed Thanks to council officers for preparing update and finance report.</p>
2	<p>Regeneration and Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Arcade Redevelopment • Prioritised for feasibility funding. • AEW commissioned to produce a full masterplan for the site (including B&M and adjacent properties). • Broader aspiration: regeneration of Rawtenstall town centre. • Delivery route: joint venture with Barnfield. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feasibility study exploring 3 options: 2. Residential + cinema + mixed-use development. 3. Fully residential with ground floor community/retail uses. • Retain heritage arcade, redevelop remainder of site. • Preferred option to be identified; architect to present at next meeting. <p>Tricketts Arcade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valley Heritage completing feasibility study with Architectural Heritage Fund. • Canopy design options (being costed): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full removal. 2. Replace/repair like-for-like. 3. New artistic canopy design (potential stained glass). • Awaiting designs; architect to present. • Pro forma expected.

- Valley Heritage- Will present at the next board meeting.

Business Interest

- Lanx Shoes: interested in opening presence in Rossendale.
- Concept: experiential venue in Rawtenstall (store, workshop, heritage exhibition, manufacturing hub).
- Fits heritage/town centre/commercial strategy.
- Links to college for training opportunities.
- Deni Deni (handbag maker, Haslingden): potential training and partnership links.

Groundwork Feasibility Bid

- PFN funding to support discounted contributions for businesses.
- Pro forma expected; engagement to commence Q3.

Healthy Communities

- Multiple pro formas expected; many have match funding.
- Focus on Marl Pits:
 1. Extension project (delayed pending council leisure study).
 2. Feasibility on car park for new netball court.
 3. Working with Football Foundation to redevelop under-used cages (convert to 9v9 pitch for junior league).
- Revenue ask: Community Development Officer (youth engagement/diversion at Marl Pits).
- Walking routes: ongoing work (wayfinding, furniture).

Community Engagement

- Recent evening session had low turnout.
- Sports clubs given opportunity to engage.
- Other groups expected to submit pro formas.

Housing & health project work at Staghills:

- Issues: environment, walking routes, youth provision, ASB (underreported), e-bikes, poor wayfinding/access.
- Proffitts commissioned to map projects.
- Potential projects:
 - Mountain bike trails, pump track formalisation.
 - Better footpaths, lighting, signage.
 - Community use of disused bowling green (discussions with Hurstwood).
 - Dark Lane estate (improved play area, fencing, safer space).
 - "The Hut" & garage site: potential service base.
 - Cobden House: underused space, opportunity for play/community use.
- Traffic & safety issues:
- Staghills–school access path unsafe.
- Newchurch Road crossing concerns.
- St Peters School lacks zebra crossing.
- Key Note: Ensure older people's needs are included in planning.

Jobs and Skills

Bridge Project

- Feasibility study previously completed a few years ago.
- Focus: adult learning and skills in Town Hall.

Two strands:

- Engagement with inactive community (confidence/skills).
- Employer-led skills development (esp. digital).
- Ongoing discussions with college (committed, awaiting clarity on contributions).

	<p>Skills Development Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business survey planned to assess skills gaps. • Charlotte visiting tech centres (e.g., Derby College) for models. • Hyper Island (Manchester) as potential case study. • Opportunity for a digital/tech hub in Rossendale (co-working, training, gaming, heritage, arts links). • Blackburn “Making Rooms” £1.2m project as example. <p>Employer Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to Lancashire Growth Plan. • Incentives for NEET employment could extend Rossendale Works. • Ross Works: funding ends March → submitting pro forma for extension. • Includes outreach bus (rotating services: mental health, Citizens Advice, etc.). • Aim: engage inactive residents in communities (not just town centre). <p>Business Support Package</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring support for job creation (e.g., new machinery tied to employment). • Challenges around boundaries noted. <p>Empowering Young People</p> <p>Youth Provision Gaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception: few/no free activities available. <p>St Mary’s Chambers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential youth-friendly “safe space” (no forced activities). • Concept: silent disco-style listening bars (using headphones). • Weekly “hang out” night being explored. • Collaboration with WHP on performance/work experience: • Lighting, sound, song-writing workshops. • Not to replicate college, but to provide hands-on sessions. <p>Cocoon Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info centre + workshop + mentorship hub. • Pilot at Alder Grange (art workshop, merch design). • Wayne Hemingway commissioned to complete feasibility. • Aim: town-centre location with glass-front workshop (visibility, engagement). • To link with other workstreams. <p>Other Notes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach ongoing (e.g., Staghills). • Appointment scheduled with Zoe
3	<p>Financial overview- plan for spend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding Available: £450K to support project ideas and board development. • Spend to Date: £85,714 including Staffing, Professional fees, Events, Travel <p>Expected Spend (current/forthcoming):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tricketts Arcade canopy design • Staffing • Heritage Arcade • Regeneration plan • Project and skills development conversations • BID feasibility work <p>Flexibility: Funding must be spent, but can be rolled forward into next year.</p>
4	<p>Regeneration Plan Content and format</p> <p>10-year Regeneration Plan: static vision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sections: context, spatial targeting, future vision, case for change, programme alignment, match funding, engagement, governance. • Community engagement and ownership are critical. <p>4-year Investment Plan: flexible delivery.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online portal. • Sets out projects and funding profile. • Can be updated every 6 months. • Funding & Priorities • Group to agree approach for selecting priority projects. • All ideas encouraged – may become reserve or seek other funding. • Must align with Lancashire Growth Plan. • Pathways to Work could offer match funding. <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darwen Town Deal grew £20m → £120m. • Council forward funded £3m project, drew down later. <p>Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link with East Lancashire council officers. • Keep consistent conversations for quick wins.
5	<p>Government Update Regeneration Plans must be submitted by 28th November. Funding released in block amounts at the start of each financial year. Branding guidance still awaited – updates to follow.</p> <p>Polling Data (Rawtenstall, Apr–May 2025, 116 respondents)</p> <p>Satisfaction & Pride</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 81% satisfied with local area. • 68% proud to live in Rawtenstall. • Pride reasons: 73% green spaces, 41% local facilities. <p>Trends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 46% feel area improved in past year. • 37% expect further improvements in next two years. <p>Services & Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 42% fairly satisfied with town centre services. • Above average for safety (+30%). • Below average for well-paid jobs (-2%). <p>Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35% anti-social behaviour. • 32% limited shops/services. • Biggest issues: 43% vehicle-related ASB, 36% drugs/drug use. <p>Community & Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Above average place to raise children (+25%). • Fewer believe young people fall into crime (-19%). <p>Trust & Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% feel unable to influence decisions. • 57% not consulted on local services. • 48% unaware of Plan for Neighbourhoods. <p>Investment Priorities (£20m)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve town centre. • Tackle crime. • Enhance youth services. • Increase shops/amenities.
6	<p>Progress report inc overview of likely projects and project selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ME presented update (details in agenda pack). • Additional element: design project with children at St Nicholas for the Hut on Staghills. • Webinars delivered; opportunity provided for community to put forward ideas. • IT featured on BBC Radio Lancashire breakfast show. • Designing out crime audit

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project selection approach discussed in preparation for board meeting on 17th October 2025.• Emphasis on that schemes must not reinforce inequalities across the valley.• Projects should be wide-reaching and demonstrate this in the Investment Plan.• Focus on Waterfoot could drive prosperity further down the valley.
7	<p>AOB</p> <p>Board Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oliver Halland (NJ Finance, Bank Street) has requested to join the board.• Milly Davy has stepped down from her role. <p>Comms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need stronger emphasis on communications.