**Old River Lane Delivery Board Meeting**

**Teams/ Room 1.15**

**Thursday, 17 July 2025 15:30 – 16:30**

**Minutes of the meeting**

**Present:** B Cllr Mione Goldspink (MG) – Chair, Ben Wood (BW), Cllr Miriam Swainston (MS), James Ellis (JE), Helen Standen (HS), Cllr Carl Brittain (CB), Cllr Sarah Hopewell (SH), Rob Allwood (RA), Cllr Sarah Copley (SC), David Falco (DF)

**Apologies:** Cllr Ben Crystall, Brian Moldon

MG opened the meeting as Cllr Crystall had given apologies, so she will be acting as Chair.

**Declarations of interest:** MS, SC and MG noted their roles on the Town Council.

**Item 1: Minutes from the last meeting**

Agreed.

**Item 2: Project update**

DF updated the Board in regards to the main scheme:

CH continue to have dialogue with the NHS about a facility on the site.

Masterplan public engagement has closed with a final steering group taking place on the 22 July. Headline feedback so far includes:

* 173 attendees at the face to face events
* 73 online responses + 9 phone calls
* 163 people signed up to receive regular updates
* Height and massing a key issues – some people felt 4-5 storeys was appropriate, others that it should be 3
* Strong support for a health facility on site
* Mixed views on the retail/ hospitality ground floor offer, some felt Stortford was already well served, others that independent businesses should be found if possible

CH still confident a planning application can be submitted in the Autumn. Site investigation works have also commenced which is why Members may have seen operatives on site in the past few weeks.

**Public Square:**

DF presented the latest design from Howells on the public square. This includes amendments to the size of the square to make it slightly smaller, allowing wider access spaces/ through routes for pedestrians and more soft landscaping and green spaces (see attached)

MS & SC fed back that they liked the new design and felt it looks better than the previous iteration.

SC raised the point about on-going ownership and management of the space – this has been an issue with the causeway car park and asked officers to think about how this could be supported in future. MG also asked that as part of this, uses for the pavilion are thought about in terms of working with community groups and local stakeholders.

CB asked about the ability to turn this space into an arts centre at some point in the future, as per the original idea of the scheme. DF noted that would still be possible and retains the same footprint as previously, albeit designed differently.

MG, MS and SC also raised feedback received from Cllr Estop on the public square and noted the new design addresses some of the challenges she has raised. The group asked BW and DF to meet with her and go over the latest designs.

**Item 3: Water Lane Hall**

BW updated the Board on the comms that had gone out this week about the listening events on Saturday the 19th and 26th. He would arrive at 9.30 and help set up ready for a 10am start on the 19th.

The Board emphasised the purpose of these meetings which is to make it clear what investment is needed to make the building usable and listen to ideas from any groups about its future.

MS asked about the £170k capital monies that Council has allocated for maintenance. CB noted that is still in the budget and can be called upon when needed. DF added that the survey from AECOM should really be treated as a minimum investment level given that, as with any older buildings, there will inevitably be further costs should any work begin. Whilst £170k was helpful it is still short of the £1.6m required. At this stage the Board is unsure how many people will be attending the events although we are aware the Friends of Water Lane Hall do wish to share their ideas via a presentation.

**AOB**

None