

Date: 19th April 2024

Report Title: Board Terms of Reference

1. Context

Hastings is one of 75 towns to be selected to receive up to £20,000,000 of endowment style funding over 10 years to deliver a Long-Term Plan for Hastings. The selection was based on the towns ranking in the English Index of Multiple Deprivation, using metrics covering pay, skills, productivity, and health to identify those with the lowest rankings. The funding profile is 25% revenue, 75% capital to be delivered over ten years within three priority investment themes:

- Safety and security
- High streets, heritage, and regeneration
- Transport and connectivity

The Hastings Board will bring together the private, public and community sectors to provide strategic leadership to develop and deliver a Long-Term Plan and schedule of interventions focusing on the town’s assets, opportunities and challenges.

2. Funding Profile

in 000's	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	Total
Total Revenue	50	449	423	449	449	449	449	454	467	467	467	4,574
Total Capital		491	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605
Total amount												19,510

3. Purpose

The Hastings Board is the vehicle through which the vision and strategy for the town is defined. It will be responsible for developing and delivering a Long-Term Plan for Hastings; starting with up to £20,000,000 of endowment style funding from the government to regenerate the town.

The Hastings Board will develop a plan that meets local priorities across the three investment themes: safety and security, high streets heritage and regeneration, and transport and connectivity. The plan will be a ten-year vision, evidenced by engagement with local residents and submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities by 1st August 2024.

4. Key Tasks

The Hastings Board will:

- Be responsible deciding on the 10-Year vision and investment plans for Hastings, clearly identifying longer term priorities for the town based on evidence;
- Establish a clear programme of interventions to address the priority themes and to ensure coordinated and effective delivery;
- Ensure that delivery sticks to timescale and budgets;
- Provide leadership and maximise visibility and champion Hastings at a local, regional and national level; and
- Ensure communities' voices are involved in shaping design and decision making at each phase of development.

Community engagement is at the heart of the Long-Term Plan for Towns so the plan should reflect local priorities. The Board should be able to demonstrate how it has engaged with residents.

The Board will drive the priorities for investment, ensuring that they align with work that has already been undertaken or is underway in the town. This board should look to build civic capacity, levering in further funding including philanthropy and other support to enable the board to continue beyond the initial ten-year term.

5. Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members

The main role of Board members is to play an active part in the development and delivery of the Long-Term Plan and 3-year Investment Plan for the town. Members will bring their own perspectives and also represent their organisations, interest groups or areas. They will:

- Take a town-wide perspective and develop ideas in the best interests of the town as a whole;
- Act to bring together intelligence, expertise and community and business support to identify priorities and develop solutions to maximise the town's economic opportunities and address barriers to regeneration;
- Minimise bureaucracy and build upon existing structures; and
- Focus on the needs of the whole Borough, with an inclusive concern for all citizens, especially the marginalised and disadvantaged.

All Board members will strive to apply the following principles:

- **Commitment** to attend every meeting where possible and be properly briefed and prepared;
- To be **focused and strategic** and to contribute positively to discussions and work with others Board members to achieve consensus;
- To **respect others** and take into account the views of other participants; and
- To **contribute their experience and expertise** to achieve good workable solutions.

6. Chair and Deputy Chair Term and Responsibilities

The role of the Chair and Vice-Chairs is to lead the Board in defining the vision and direction and in delivering the desired outputs, whilst ensuring that appropriate procedures for governance and management of resources are in place.

The key responsibilities of the post are to:

- Lead the Board in achieving its objectives, maintaining an overview of activity and championing and supporting partnership working;
- Effectively chair meetings of the Board;
- Ensure that decisions are made in accordance with good governance principles;
- Be an effective influencer and ambassador for Hastings at a local, regional and national level;
- Ensure that all Board members participate actively in the work of the Board; and
- Sign and submit the Long-Term Plan to Government on behalf of the Board.

The Chair and Vice Chairs would rotate bi-annually but also support chairing in conflict-of-interest situations.

It is proposed to establish a smaller Executive Group of the Board with executive authority to advise and support the Accountable Body and its advisors on urgent matters to support the development of the Long-Term Plan if such decisions are required between meetings of the Board. The proposed membership to include the Chair, one vice-chair and one other Board member.

7. Code of Conduct for Members

The Hastings Board will be based on collaboration and business will be conducted in the spirit of partnership working and abide by the Nolan Principles of Public Life. Appendix A outlines a statement of intent for Board Members, based on these principles.

All invited members will be asked to sign up to this statement and to adhere to the spirit and letter of the statement at all times in their contribution, both in meetings and outside in public life.

Failure to adhere to the Hastings Board Code of Conduct could result in removal from the Board.

8. Meeting Procedures

The Board will meet quarterly, and more frequently if required.

The agenda and supporting papers will be circulated five working days prior to meetings and minutes will be kept of each meeting by the Secretariat and circulated to members within five working days of the meeting.

The general rule about decision making is that any decision of the Board must be a majority decision at a meeting. Decisions will be reached by consensus as far as possible.

The Board will appoint either Hastings Borough Council or an alternative organisation to provide the secretariat and support the Board. The Board shall appoint co-chairs to conduct its meetings and act on its behalf between them.

9. Declarations of Interest

The Board will operate three levels of declarations of interest as follows:

- Level 1: A register of declarations of interest must be filled in by all Board Members and supporting Officers.
- Level 2: At the beginning of each agenda item, all Board Members will be asked to declare verbally any interest, direct or indirect, in the item for discussion/decision. These declarations will be recorded as part of the minutes of the meeting.
- Level 3: Members with a direct financial interest (whether personal or in relation to the organisation they represent) must leave the meeting for the duration of discussion/decision for the relevant agenda item.

10. Sub-Groups

The Board may set up working groups as may be appropriate for the efficient conduct of its business.

To support the immediate task of preparing the evidence-base and identifying priorities under the three investment themes, three Sub-Groups will be set up based around existing relevant group (s) in the town as set out below.

LTP Intervention	Partnership Lead Group	Board 'lead'
Safety & Security	Hastings & Rother Community Safety Board	To be agreed
High Street, Heritage and Regeneration	To convene a meeting with St Leonards Town Team, Hastings BID, representatives of Hastings Town Deal, Cultural NPO organisations, Heritage Action Zone Board representatives, others TBC	To be agreed
Transport & Connectivity	Hastings and Rother Transport Action Group	To be agreed

A Board Member will be nominated to attend meetings of the Sub-Group based on their areas of experience and expertise.

11. Accountable Body Arrangements

The Hastings Board is not a legal entity. It is not the accountable body for any grant or funding regime.

Hastings Borough Council will be the accountable body for the funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Hastings Borough Council will act as the Lead Council for financial matters on behalf of the board.

All accounting arrangements will be made under the supervision of the Council's S151 officer.

12. Updating Terms of Reference

The Board may amend these terms of reference at any time and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Board Considerations

1. To consider and approve the Terms of Reference.
2. To agree to establish a smaller Executive Group with executive authority to advise and support the Accountable Body and its advisors on urgent matters to support the development of the Long-Term Plan if such decisions are required between meetings of the Board.

Seven Principles of Public Life: Nolan Principles

Selflessness:

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity:

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity:

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability:

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness:

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.

Honesty:

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership:

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Board Structure

