ONE ILFRACOMBE BOARD MEETING

Draft Minutes

Item	Details
Date	Wednesday 30 September 2026
Time	14:00 - 16:00
Venue	Ilfracombe Centre (+ Via Teams)
Chair	Ken Miles – North Devon Council

1. Attendance and apologies

Present

- Ken Miles (Chair) – North Devon Council
- Richard Merryfield – Devon County Council
- Sabrina Maines-Blatherwick – Primary Care Network (PCN)
- Dominie Dunbrook – North Devon Council
- Steven Seatherton – Ilfracombe Town Council
- Charmain Lovett – Ilfracombe Town Council
- Laura Donovan – Ilfracombe Town Council
- Mary Midson – Ilfracombe Town Council
- Cllr Sara Wilson – Devon County Council
- James Lander – Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Simon Kitchen – Devon County Council
- Hannah Harrington – North Devon Council
- Marc Rostock – North Devon Homes
- Sarah Jane Mackenzie-Shapland
- Cllr Dan Turton – Ilfracombe Town Council
- Kier Duffin – Devon County Council
- Peter French – Independent Board Member
- Insp Joey Lester – Devon and Cornwall Police

Apologies

- Andrea Beacham – Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Cllr Malcolm Wilkinson – North Devon Council
- Neil Ingram – Ilfracombe Town Council
- Cllr Paul Crabb – Ilfracombe Town Council
- Rod Donovan – Independent Board Member

2. Programme update

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. The Secretariat reported that it had met once since the previous Board meeting, with the principal focus being how theme-group activity should be reported and consolidated into the overall One Ilfracombe programme.

Different theme groups had submitted updates in different formats and levels of detail, even though a preformatted template was sent. The Board agreed that the reporting approach should be proportionate and should focus on progress, key actions, roadblocks, opportunities and matters requiring Board support, rather than lengthy narrative reports.

The Board reviewed the outstanding actions from the previous meeting:

- The Monday.com programme dashboard and consolidated reporting remain in progress and will be completed once the reporting format is agreed.
- Employer engagement and sector pathways remain ongoing through the Economy and Skills work.
- The Closing the Gap Chair handover to Cllr Sara Wilson has been completed.
- The Belles Place partner meeting on funding and sustainability has taken place.

- The Link Centre, Landmark Theatre and health hubs have been included within One Public Estate discussions.
- The Town Centre Regeneration reporting route through IRB has been progressed and is now incorporated into the proposed reporting structure.
- Town centre case-study and communications work has been progressed.
- A One Ilfracombe letter of support for the youth worker funding application has been provided.
- The One Ilfracombe response on ASB/community safety was completed alongside Ilfracombe Town Council.
- Poverty Truth Commission mapping has substantially progressed but still requires completion and alignment with Northern Devon Futures.
- The Coastal Navigators Network workshop outputs have been mapped against One Ilfracombe projects and priorities.
- The review of the Articles of Association, membership, voting rights and quorum arrangements remains outstanding and will now be prioritised.
- The refreshed One Ilfracombe website design is progressing, with development expected to begin during the following month.
- Thanks have been sent to John and Sheila Rolls for their contribution to One Ilfracombe.

It was agreed that Steven Seatherton would recirculate the proposed simplified reporting template after the meeting so that a consistent format could be agreed electronically and then used to populate Monday.com.

3. Town of Culture update

3.1 Progress update

Charmain Lovett provided a detailed update on the Town of Culture bid. The submission deadline is 13 November 2026, leaving approximately eight and a half weeks from the date of the meeting.

- Approximately 3,000–3,500 people have been engaged through surveys, pop-up activity, focus groups and targeted conversations, representing a significant proportion of the town.
- Engagement has included the Poverty Truth Commission, Hope Kitchen, young people and schools, disability groups, care homes, carers, Aspire, the Museum and other community organisations.
- Feedback from young people has highlighted boredom, concerns about feeling safe in the town centre and a strong desire to be involved in local activity.
- Jenny Cousins and Joe Parsons have been appointed as cultural researchers and began work in September.
- The Town of Culture website is live as a holding page, with a fuller website being developed as part of the longer-term cultural legacy.
- Branding guidance has been issued to Culture Club members and local businesses.
- Seven headline programme events are being developed, including launch and closing events, a Youth Arts Week, coastal celebration, history/digital activity, a diversity festival and the Lanes Project.
- Work is also underway to strengthen the local events network so that knowledge, resources and support can be shared more effectively in future.
- The programme is now moving into detailed programme design, staffing, budgets and letters of support.

The Board noted that the national timetable continues to evolve. The current expectation is that the top three places will be announced around late January or early February 2027, with a final decision expected by the end of March 2027.

Partners offered support with connections, programme development and in-kind contributions once the detailed programme and specific requirements are clearer. The importance of capturing community, public-sector and private-sector in-kind support was noted, together with the need to demonstrate a strong legacy beyond the funded year.

3.2 OI / ITC / Town of Culture working relationship

The Board discussed the proposed Terms of Reference between One Ilfracombe, Ilfracombe Town Council and the Town of Culture working arrangements. A draft has been prepared and reviewed by the core group.

Further clarification is required on the accountable-body and delivery-body arrangements because of VAT, governance and financial-control considerations. The programme has been asked whether Ilfracombe Town Council could hold the accountable-body role while One Ilfracombe remains central to delivery and partnership coordination.

It was agreed that the Terms of Reference would be circulated to the Board once the accountable-body arrangements have been clarified.

4. Review of theme plans

4.1 Economy and Skills

Kier Duffin and Dominie Dunbrook

- The Ilfracombe training programme has been promoted and will run through to Easter 2027.
- Planning is underway for a further Work and Skills Fair, following the successful format used previously. The previous programme supported around 200 people with training/upskilling and contributed to nearly 50 people moving into work.
- A flexible resilience fund of up to £500 per individual has been introduced to remove practical barriers to employment. This can support items such as interview clothing, training, certification and transport.
- £50,000 is available in the current financial year, with further £50,000 allocations anticipated in each of the following two years. Partners were encouraged to maximise use of the fund for Ilfracombe residents.
- The Landmark Theatre and Learn Devon partnership is developing a theatre/creative skills programme expected to launch in October.
- Work with DWP is developing a five-week diagnostic work and skills programme for Jobcentre customers, with a planned start in October.
- Further work is required on sector pathways, growth sectors, employer engagement and opportunities for young people, including links with the Coastal Navigators Network.

Kier will link with Sara, Dominie and relevant partners on growth-sector development opportunities and ensure that Northern Devon and Ilfracombe benefit from emerging funding and programme opportunities.

4.2 Closing the Gap

Cllr Sara Wilson

- The group continues to progress its programme but has experienced some capacity and attendance issues, which may be a cross-cutting issue for several theme groups.
- The Campus Model is developing through focused workstreams covering the directory/map, peer support, and integrated referral/care pathways.
- Belles Place needs mapping is underway. Four partners have each committed £5,000, and the Crisis & Resilience Fund bid remains awaiting an outcome.
- There has been no substantive update on Link Centre repair timescales. Security measures have been installed in response to antisocial behaviour around the site.
- The group remains awaiting progress on the public-sector estate business plan.
- An update on the Health and Justice pilot will be sought at the next Closing the Gap meeting.
- Maternity services have become a significant issue for the group because of access and transport impacts. A letter has been sent to senior Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust representatives, who have offered to attend and engage with the group.

The Board discussed the value of senior NHS representatives attending a future full Board meeting because maternity services and wider access issues cut across several themes. Cllr Sara Wilson will circulate the correspondence sent to the Trust and the response received.

Kier Duffin offered to work with Ilfracombe Town Council to obtain a clear timeline for Link Centre works. Steven will also chase the outcome of the Belles Place Crisis & Resilience Fund application.

4.3 Town Centre Regeneration

Hannah Harrington

- A comprehensive written update had been prepared by Neil Ingram, setting out the background, projects, risks and linkages across the town-centre work.
- IRB will take on the role of the Town Centre Regeneration theme group, creating a clear reporting route from operational work through to the One Ilfracombe Board.
- Future reporting should focus on a concise action tracker and key changes rather than repeating the full contextual report at each meeting.
- Links with Town of Culture are particularly important in relation to vacant units, activation of the town centre and improving public perception.
- Partners will also engage with forthcoming work around town-centre visioning.

4.4 Housing

Sarah-Jane Mackenzie-Shapland and Marc Rostock

Work is underway to align the One Ilfracombe Housing theme with the Northern Devon Futures Housing and Infrastructure Group, allowing local priorities to connect more effectively with strategic partners such as Homes England and the Combined County Authority.

Healthy Homes:

- 36 and 38 Oxford Grove have been procured and work has commenced on site, with completion targeted for December 2026.
- The funding gap for the Royal Mail project has been approved by Full Council. Contractor procurement is underway, with a target site start in late October/early November and completion around October 2027.
- 37 Oxford Grove has also been acquired and is expected to be incorporated into the Healthy Homes programme.
- A funding application to Homes England through the Affordable Homes Programme is planned.

Landlord Charter: the work will be reviewed in light of the Renters' Rights legislation to determine whether the intended outcomes are already covered by statutory changes or whether there remains value in a local charter.

Housing supply: current market conditions remain difficult for affordable and social housing delivery. Work will continue to focus on realistic local opportunities, stalled developments, community-led models and projects where public-sector intervention may unlock delivery.

4.5 Ilfracombe Futures

Charmain Lovett

- Work is increasingly focused on educational transition, youth provision, outreach and transport barriers.
- Activity is developing around transition from nursery to infant, infant to junior, junior to secondary and post-16 education.
- Transport for post-16 young people remains a significant issue.
- The Wednesday youth club continues to attract increasing numbers but is constrained by volunteer capacity; one recent session had to be cancelled because safe staffing levels could not be maintained.
- Thursday street-based youth outreach has proved valuable and is expected to continue.
- A part-time support role is being recruited to strengthen the youth offer, with additional outreach funding also supporting work in the town.
- Young people have repeatedly identified a need for more accessible facilities in the town centre, including strong interest in a pump track.
- Relationships with the Academy, sixth form and Youth Council are developing well and provide opportunities for youth voice to inform future work.

The Board discussed linking young people into the emerging Northern Devon/Torridge spatial strategy so that youth priorities can influence longer-term planning.

The potential acquisition/development of community woodland behind Slade was also discussed. The Board agreed that this could link to Futures and other workstreams through access to open space, youth activity, community gardening and forest-school opportunities.

5. Cross-cutting agenda

5.1 Poverty Truth Commission – update

James Lander

- The embedding phase of the Poverty Truth Commission is structured around products, people and place.
- A number of products are in development, some are being delivered and others have already been embedded into mainstream activity.
- Examples of embedded activity include adult education/work and skills activity, Wellbeing Wednesday improvements and trauma-/poverty-informed approaches.
- Community Commissioners continue to contribute to programme activity and some are engaging with national Poverty Truth Network work.
- The principal challenge is reduced capacity and funding, with less frequent meetings and too much reliance on a small number of individuals to coordinate activity.

The next Poverty Truth Commission meeting will consider which products remain realistic, who should lead them and how reporting responsibility can be shared so that activity remains sustainable.

5.2 Coastal Navigators Network – update

Sarah-Jane Mackenzie-Shapland and Dominie Dunbrook

The Board reviewed the first year of involvement in the Coastal Navigators Network (CNN). The Network has helped connect Ilfracombe with national partners and has supported work on skills, sector development and future investment.

Continued participation would require a renewed financial commitment. The lowest membership level discussed was £7,200, with a higher tier of £15,000. The Board was generally supportive of continuing, subject to clarification of the offer, timescales and any relationship with wider Devon/Northern Devon discussions.

Members emphasised that any future model must retain a clear focus on Ilfracombe as a distinct rural/coastal community and should not dilute the town-specific work already underway.

It was agreed that the Network should be contacted to clarify what is included in the £7,200 membership and whether the expression-of-interest deadline can be extended. Sarah-Jane, Dominie and relevant DCC colleagues will also align discussions regarding any wider geographical proposal.

5.3 Belles Place – funding and sustainability

Steven Seatherton

- Partner funding of £5,000 from each of the main organisations has now been committed, allowing Belles Place to continue operating in the short term.
- Carol has indicated that she wishes to step back in the future, so succession and sustainability now need to be addressed.
- One Ilfracombe and North Devon Voluntary Services are appointing a new Community Developer for two days per week, with Belles Place as a principal focus.
- The appointment is expected to begin at the end of October on an initial one-year basis, with continuation funding being sought.
- The review will consider governance, funding, service duplication, future delivery models and whether some activity should transfer to other established organisations.
- The Board agreed that all realistic future options should remain on the table.

Relevant North Devon Council housing colleagues will be included in the sustainability work because there may be opportunities to connect the service to longer-term housing and homelessness funding.

6. 2026/27 finances, project delivery and commissioned work

The Board received the September 2026 financial update. One Ilfracombe held £147,095.07 in the bank, with a further £8,453.06 of Wellbeing Team income expected, giving total funds/income of £155,548.13.

Proposed expenditure and ring-fenced commitments total £134,229.41. This includes core and wellbeing costs, programme/project activity, the youth project, transport work, the One Ilfracombe website, Town of Culture funding of £56,200.92 and Poverty Truth Commission funding of £4,801.35.

The estimated balance at 31 March 2027 is £21,318.72. The Board welcomed the improved financial position and noted that the projected carry-forward provides a reasonable level of resilience. Steven will circulate the detailed finance paper and bring a draft 2027/28 budget to the next Board meeting.

Project delivery was considered covered through the theme updates and the discussion on the programme reporting format.

The Primary Care Network commissioned social-prescribing work is currently being evaluated by a former member of staff who helped establish the model. The evaluation is expected to be completed by the end of the year and will be presented to the PCN as part of discussions about renewal beyond the current contract period.

The Board noted that the commissioned model is a strong example of neighbourhood delivery and also makes an important contribution to One Ilfracombe's organisational sustainability.

7. Board and governance

The Chair confirmed that the review of independent membership is linked to the wider review of the Articles of Association and Board structure. Progress had been delayed by other priorities but will now be brought forward.

The review will cover membership, directorship, voting rights, quorum arrangements and potential gaps in independent/associate representation. Ken Miles will progress this work before the next Board meeting.

8. Next steps

- Finalise a proportionate and consistent theme-reporting format.
- Update the programme action log and Monday.com once the reporting format is agreed.
- Circulate theme-group updates to Board members.
- Progress the governance and membership review.
- Continue preparation of the Town of Culture bid and clarify accountable-body arrangements.
- Progress the actions arising from individual theme and cross-cutting updates.

9. Any other business

The Board agreed to add Culture as a sixth One Ilfracombe theme, reflecting the scale of the Town of Culture programme and wider cultural activity.

Insp Joey Lester invited members to raise any policing or community-safety matters. The Board discussed the value of wider sharing of positive enforcement and community-safety communications so that partners can amplify successful activity. Joey also advised that the Chief Constable is expected to visit Ilfracombe before Christmas. There may be an opportunity to connect the visit with local schools, the Town of Culture work and One Ilfracombe partners.

10. Decisions and agreements

Area	Decision / agreement
Reporting format	Theme-group reporting to be simplified and focused on progress, key actions, roadblocks, opportunities and decisions/support required from the Board.
Town of Culture governance	Terms of Reference to be circulated once accountable-body and delivery-body arrangements are clarified.

Area	Decision / agreement
Town Centre Regeneration	IRB to act as the Town Centre Regeneration theme group/reporting route.
Housing	Landlord Charter work to be reviewed against the new legislative framework before deciding whether it should continue.
CNN	General support to continue CNN involvement, subject to clarification of the £7,200 offer, deadline and any wider geographical proposal.
Belles Place	All realistic options for future governance, delivery and location to remain under consideration as part of sustainability planning.
Culture theme	Culture to be added as the sixth One Ilfracombe strategic theme.
Governance	Articles, membership, directorship, voting rights, quorum and independent/associate membership to be reviewed before the next Board meeting.

11. Action log

No.	Action	Owner	Timescale
1	Recirculate the simplified theme reporting template and seek agreement electronically.	Steven Seatherton	Immediate
2	Update Monday.com and the consolidated action log once the reporting format is agreed.	Steven Seatherton / Secretariat	Before next Board
3	Progress review of the Articles of Association, membership, directors, voting rights and quorum arrangements.	Ken Miles / Secretariat	Before next Board
4	Identify and seek specific partner support required for the Town of Culture bid.	Charmain Lovett	Ongoing to submission
5	Circulate the OI / ITC / Town of Culture Terms of Reference once accountable-body arrangements are clarified.	Steven Seatherton / Charmain Lovett	Before submission
6	Link with partners on growth-sector development opportunities and maximise benefit for Ilfracombe.	Kier Duffin	Ongoing
7	Promote and maximise use of the employment resilience fund for Ilfracombe residents.	Economy & Skills partners	Ongoing
8	Circulate maternity-services correspondence to Board members.	Cllr Sara Wilson / Steven Seatherton	Immediate
9	Work with Ilfracombe Town Council to obtain a clear Link Centre repair timeline.	Kier Duffin / ITC	Ongoing
10	Chase the outcome of the Belles Place Crisis & Resilience Fund application.	Steven Seatherton	Immediate
11	Continue alignment of One Ilfracombe housing work with Northern Devon Futures and strategic housing partners.	Housing leads	Ongoing
12	Review the Landlord Charter against the Renters' Rights legislative framework.	Housing leads	Before next update
13	Explore opportunities for young people to contribute to the emerging spatial strategy.	Futures / relevant planning leads	Ongoing
14	Add the Slade/community woodland opportunity to relevant One Ilfracombe workstreams.	Secretariat / Futures leads	Ongoing
15	Clarify the £7,200 CNN membership offer and whether the expression-of-interest deadline can be extended.	Sarah-Jane Mackenzie-Shapland / Dominie Dunbrook	Immediate
16	Align CNN discussions across partners and clarify any wider geographical proposal.	Sarah-Jane Mackenzie-Shapland / Dominie Dunbrook / DCC	Immediate
17	Include appropriate housing colleagues in the Belles Place sustainability work.	Steven Seatherton	Ongoing

No.	Action	Owner	Timescale
18	Circulate the September finance paper.	Steven Seatherton	Immediate
19	Prepare a draft 2027/28 budget for the next Board meeting.	Steven Seatherton	Next Board
20	Progress the independent/associate membership review.	Ken Miles / Secretariat	Before next Board
21	Explore wider sharing of relevant positive enforcement and community-safety communications.	Police / NDC / Secretariat	Ongoing
22	Explore links between the Chief Constable's pre-Christmas visit, local schools and Town of Culture activity.	Police / ITC / Town of Culture team	Before Christmas