

**Notes of a meeting of the  
Ashford Strategic Delivery Board  
Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April at 10.00am**

**Present:**

**Board Members**

Cllr Gerry Clarkson (Chairman) – Leader, ABC  
Rt Hon Damian Green MP  
Cllr Paul Clokie – Portfolio Holder for Planning, ABC  
Cllr Graham Galpin – Portfolio Holder for Town Centres Focus & Business Dynamics, ABC  
Cllr Matthew Balfour, KCC, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment  
Cllr Mark Dance, KCC, Cabinet Member for Economic Development  
Chris Moore, HCA  
Paul Harwood, Highways England  
Mark Lumsdon-Taylor – Hadlow Group

**Non Board Members**

Tracey Kerly, ABC  
Kirsty Hogarth, ABC  
Richard Alderton, ABC  
Paul McKenner, ABC  
Lois Jarrett, ABC  
Andrew Osborne, ABC  
Simon Cole, ABC  
Christina Fuller, ABC  
Katie Stewart, KCC  
Jonathan White, KCC  
Rosie Reid, ABC

**Apologies**

David Smith – KCC

<b>Item</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.	<b>Welcome</b>  The Chairman welcomed all those present. He said that the Board had been extremely effective so far, and he hoped this would continue into the future. He thanked Damian Green for making the time to be present during such a busy election period. He advised that Cllr Clokie had taken over as Portfolio Holder for Planning, while Cllr Bennett would now be Portfolio Holder for Culture. Cllr Mrs Blanford had	

	<p>stood down as she would be Mayor in 2018/19. He had appointed Deputy Portfolio Holders, subject to Council approval on 18<sup>th</sup> May. He advised that there would be two by-elections in Ashford, to be held at the same time as the General Election on 8<sup>th</sup> June.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Commercial Quarter</b></p> <p>Paul McKenner introduced this item and said this project provided a unique opportunity to stimulate the office market locally, with the first office building now under construction. It was already clear that there was currently a good level of demand for office space. However, there was still work to be done, particularly in relation to the area around the station and the provision of extra car parking facilities. There were also plans for several other buildings as part of the Commercial Quarter. This was an ambitious programme which would create a new office employment centre in the town.</p>	<b>ABC/KCC</b>
3.	<p><b>Elwick Place</b></p> <p>Paul McKenner (PMcK) said this project was the culmination of partnership working between ABC, Stanhope and KCC. Completion of due diligence was underway and reaching conclusion. The contractors were on site, with a completion date of December 2018. Interest had been secured in the cinema and hotel, and the A3 users were likely to commit once the unconditional contract had been announced publicly. There would be a press announcement and PR event in due course. PMcK advised that Stanhope had been instrumental in undertaking enabling works, and that ABC Members would be involved in a series of monitoring meetings to oversee the proposed works.</p>	<b>ABC/KCC</b>
4.	<p><b>Designer Outlet Expansion</b></p> <p>Lois Jarrett said that planning permission had now been issued, alongside the S106. The Judicial Review period had expired successfully. Subsequently, a non-material amendment to the plans had been received in February. This proposed extensive changes in response to proposed occupier feedback. County Square and Stanhope had been consulted, and further discussions were taking place between ABC and the applicants. It was hoped to be in a position to sign off the non-material amendment shortly, which would enable consequential amendments to the S106 to be executed, with works proposed to commence in late summer or autumn of this year. It was noted that care had been taken to ensure that eating establishments provided a</p>	

	<p>range of choice for customers, to suit differing demands.</p> <p>The Chairman said this had been a complex application and he was pleased that it was coming to fruition.</p>	<b>ABC/KCC</b>
5.	<p><b>Ashford College</b></p> <p>Mark Lumsdon-Taylor introduced this item. He advised that there was some minor damage on the façade of the new College building, but this would be rectified immediately. This was a signature building for Ashford and it was important that its appearance was perfect. The project was on programme and on budget, with handover of keys planned for the following week. There were inevitably some snagging issues but these would be addressed. KCC would be involved in the road frontage and development works. Student numbers were 98% ahead of the figure for last year, and a significant number of students who would have travelled out of the Borough for education would now be retained locally. Work was also underway to attract local companies to use Ashford College for their staff training requirements. Student demand was across a broad range, with the highest demand in fashion and retail. Future focus would be on training for heavy industries, such as engineering and construction. Hadlow Group were working with ABC on parking provision, and options for additional temporary parking space were being considered. The bottom floor of the College would be given over to commercial use, with restaurants, salons and shops. Phase 1a was planned to commence towards the end of 2018. This was the heavy industries block with a focus on engineering, motor vehicles and technology. The block would not be large enough to house construction studies, and an alternative strategy was being considered on where to site this facility.</p>	<b>ABC/ Hadlow</b>
6.	<p><b>Junction 10A</b></p> <p>Simon Cole advised that progress had been good. The examination was ongoing, with the first set of hearings in February and the second set scheduled for mid-May. This would tie up any loose ends. The examination would be concluded by 2<sup>nd</sup> June, and would be delivered to the Secretary of State by September. Paul Harwood added that as far as Highways England was concerned, the project was on plan, with works to commence at the beginning of 2018.</p>	<b>ABC/KCC/ HA</b>
7.	<p><b>Jasmin Vardimon</b></p> <p>Christina Fuller introduced Jonathan White (JW), the KCC</p>	

	<p>lead for assisting in the delivery of the Jasmin Vardimon project. JW explained that the JVC Dance School was part of the Javelin Way development. A decision was expected at the end of June from the Arts Council England (ACE), regarding a proposal put forward for funding for £3m. The project set up was going well, with the outline business case nearing finalisation. A Memorandum of Understanding was being drawn up, together with clarification of governance arrangements. Work was underway on the feasibility of the JVC long-term business plan, along with prospects for long-term development in Ashford. The proposed site was complex, with some noise and pollution issues, but JW was confident that these could be overcome through close working with the Planning department. Submission of a Stage 2 bid to ACE would be by December 2018 at the latest, although it was hoped to achieve this by July 2018 through close partnership work between JVC, ABC and KCC.</p>	<b>KCC/ABC</b>
8.	<p><b>Chilmington Green</b></p> <p>Lois Jarrett explained that planning permission had been granted and the first S106 had been issued. The Judicial Review period had expired and the main S106 was complete. Work had commenced on site with the provision of three of the main access points, which allowed the developers to get on site. Officers were currently working on the discharge of pre-conditions for the remainder of the development.</p> <p>The Chairman said that this was such an important project that it must remain on the agenda for future Board meetings. It was critical to have the support of other members of the Board, especially KCC and HCA, and he thanked partners for their support so far, in particular the HCA who had provided invaluable contributions.</p>	<b>ABC/KCC</b>
9.	<p><b>Station Spurs</b></p> <p>Andrew Osborne (AO) introduced this item and advised that good progress had been made so far. An allocation of funding had been made to the project through Local Growth Round 3, subject to approval of the business case in late May. Network Rail were confident that they would be able to deliver the scheme by end of February 2018, but were looking at the possibility of bringing this timescale forward if possible. Station survey works were underway, and Network Rail had appointed design partners. Materials were being delivered to the Ashford Depot, and work had begun on a marketing and communication strategy.</p>	

	<p>AO reported that Cllr Matthew Balfour had led a delegation to meet the Chief Executive of Eurostar, with a very positive outcome. The Chairman warmly thanked Cllr Balfour for leading the delegation and said this was a very significant project for Ashford. Cllr Balfour responded with his thanks to officers, Network Rail and to Eurostar for their attitude and response.</p>	<p><b>KCC/ABC/ Network Rail</b></p>
10.	<p><b>Where next for the Strategic Project Delivery Board</b></p> <p>Richard Alderton (RA) said that there had been good progress on all the Big 8 projects, and over the last two years the Board had achieved a great deal against its priorities. This was a notable achievement, but it was now necessary to consider the question of what next. RA did not advise abandoning the Big 8. Even though most of the projects were now in the process of being delivered, there would still be follow up and related work to be done. At Cabinet's request, RA had drawn up a new list of projects, over and above monitoring the Big 8. He considered that several of these would benefit from the particular support of the Board, and he had highlighted these in his report.</p> <p>Board Members discussed the need for talks with utilities providers, in order to ensure there were no shortfalls in utilities provision in long-term projects. It was agreed to invite utilities, technology and signal providers to a meeting, which could include a presentation of future development plans in the Borough. It was important to encourage providers to be part of future plans, and major builders could be included in the invitation for networking and communication purposes.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Local Enterprise Partnership should be invited to attend the next Board meeting.</p>	<p><b>All</b></p> <p><b>ABC</b></p>
11.	<p><b>Dates of Next Meetings</b></p> <p>Friday 28 July 2017 Friday 27 October 2017 Friday 26 January 2018</p>	

Queries concerning these minutes? Please contact Rosie Reid: Telephone: 01233 330565 Email: [rosie.reid@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:rosie.reid@ashford.gov.uk). Agendas, Reports and Minutes are available on: [www.ashford.gov.uk/committees](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/committees)