

**Notes of a meeting of the  
Ashford Strategic Delivery Board  
Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017 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 Corporate Property, ABC  
Cllr Matthew Balfour - KCC, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment  
Cllr Mark Dance - KCC, Cabinet Member for Economic Development  
Tracey Kerly – Chief Executive, ABC  
Barbara Cooper – KCC, Director – Growth, Environment and Transport  
Chris Moore – Homes and Communities Agency  
Paul Harwood - Highways England  
Mat McLoughlin – Hadlow Group (Substitute for Mark Lumsdon-Taylor)

**Non Board Members**

Cllr Mike Bennett, ABC  
Cllr Jessamy Blanford, ABC  
Cllr Gareth Bradford, ABC  
Mark Ellerby, Network Rail  
Richard Alderton, ABC  
Paul McKenner, ABC  
Lois Jarrett, ABC  
Andrew Osborne, ABC  
Simon Cole, ABC  
Christina Fuller, ABC  
Stewart Smith, ABC  
Steve Parish, ABC  
Lorna Ford, ABC  
Len Mayatt, ABC  
Nicholas Clayton-Peck, ABC  
Jamie Cox, ABC  
Hannah Clayton-Peck, ABC  
Stephen Gasche, KCC  
Matt Hogben, KCC  
Danny Sheppard, ABC

**Apologies**

Mark Lumsdon-Taylor – Hadlow Group  
Katie Stewart – KCC

Item	Notes	Action
1.	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed all those present. He thanked those who had attended the Breakfast Briefing prior to the meeting and trusted all had found it useful.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Ashford International Station Spurs</b></p> <p>Mark Ellerby, Network Rail, introduced this item and gave a presentation on the project to date and the timetable going forward. He said he had good news to present in that the project had already begun ‘on the ground’ and would be delivered on schedule. This was in no small part down to the work of the Project Governance Board and the support of partners. Signalling work would also be completed without any disruption to existing Eurostar services, which had not always looked possible and was a credit to them. The signalling parts of the project were due for completion by the end of February 2018, platform gauging works to be completed shortly afterwards, with new International train services commencing from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.</p> <p>The Chairman said that the work undertaken to get to this stage had been outstanding, particularly to ensure no interruption to service, and he asked Mark to relay the Board’s pleasure to his colleagues.</p> <p>Stephen Gasche advised that the project was well within its financial envelope and would be delivered for below the £10.5m funding allocated. They were meeting with Eurostar in March to review the launch and they would take the opportunity to raise a potential enhancement of services from Ashford – particularly to Lille and Brussels.</p> <p>In response to a question about resilience, Mark Ellerby advised that they had a vast amount of spare parts for the signalling (indeed all that were in existence) and the parts themselves had a low failure rate and a 45 year lifespan, so there was no concern about resilience.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Conningbrook Country Park</b></p> <p>Steve Parish and Len Mayatt gave a presentation outlining this emerging new project. The presentation gave an overview of the site location and the existing land use. It also focussed on the emerging development opportunities of housing, expansion of the Julie Rose Stadium leisure offer, delivery of a pub/restaurant/hotel, extended sailing and</p>	

	<p>water sport facilities and provision and car parking. Section 106 money should soon start to come through from the housing development and there were already plans to use this to provide a circular walk throughout the entire park, a large destination play area, links to cycling routes, public art and further leisure opportunities. Len Mayatt advised that Conningbrook was an important site and a hub for leisure in Ashford's emerging development plans. A lot of work had been undertaken to improve water quality at the lake to enable it to stay open for leisure events. In the past it had suffered from invasive aquatic weed and blue/green algae, but a combination of the dye that had been applied this year, and the new aeration system to be installed in December 2017, were considered to be sufficient to solve the problems going forward. There was great demand from water sports clubs to use the lake and pressure to provide a hub building which could provide dedicated shower and changing facilities.</p> <p>The Chairman said that Conningbrook was a 'jewel in the Borough's crown and advised that the only remaining stumbling block to their ambitious plans for this site was the purchase of the former KCC depot. They already owned the land on three sides of the depot and wanted to acquire it from KCC in order to provide the water sports changing facility. He was hopeful that sensible discussions could be held shortly over this relatively small piece of land. Mark Dance advised he was on the case and was already discussing this matter with KCC Property. He said that he and Barbara Cooper would accelerate matters as this was potentially a considerable resource for the County and he wanted it to be up and running by next spring.</p> <p>Lois Jarrett referred to the recently completed highway works at the A2070 'pinch-point' which had been delivered by KCC and had been extremely important in improving connectivity in the area. The Chairman concurred and thanked KCC for the amount of highway works they were currently delivering in the Borough.</p>	<p><b>MD/BC</b></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Newtown Works</b></p> <p>Stewart Smith introduced this item and gave the Board an overview of the site, which included the 330m Grade II listed railway sheds. He showed some drone footage showing the extent of the site. The intention of the project was to deliver a mixed use development of residential, commercial and cultural uses on this previously allocated site, whilst at the same time making use of the historic sheds. It had remained undeveloped for some time due to viability issues but it was</p>	

	<p>now hoped that they were in a position to move forward following more positive discussions with the landowners. An application was being made to the Housing Infrastructure Fund and if that bid was successful it would solve the funding gap itself, but if not, there was also a Plan B in place, and a Heads of Terms that all parties had signed up to.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that this was a scheme that ABC was very keen to see succeed. It was patently more than a standalone housing development and the wider implications could not be emphasised enough. These included the enabling affect it would have on other developments as well as the jobs it would create, its effect on tourism (through AIMREC) and the positives of its proximity to the expanded Designer Outlet. The improved outlook it would give to people arriving at the International Station was also important. Chris Moore re-iterated that recent negotiations with the landowner had been positive and they were now certainly keen to engage. The outcome of the Housing Infrastructure Fund bid would be known by late November/early December.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Elwick Place</b></p> <p>Paul McKenner said that the scheme had moved on considerably in recent weeks. Since the last meeting contractors had been appointed and started work on site. The overall completion date of December 2018 was still well on schedule. Cinema and hotel operators were signed up and efforts were now focussed on re-engaging with the market to assess interest in the A3 units. The Elwick 2 site, for circa 200 apartments was also progressing and Officers were hoping to put a formal proposal to the ABC Cabinet/Full Council shortly.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Commercial Quarter</b></p> <p>Paul McKenner advised that all would have witnessed the emergence of the impressive new office building on the Dover Place car park which formed Phase 1 of the scheme. Work was ahead of schedule with completion now expected by March 2018 (rather than May), with offices being occupied by April. The project would also unlock a wider range of interlinked initiatives in addition to the office space, such as car parking, taxi waiting provision and access to and from the International Station. A brief for the Ashford Digital Hub project was being sent out the following week.</p>	

7.	<p><b>Designer Outlet Expansion</b></p> <p>Lois Jarrett advised that the non-material amendment application submitted in February 2017 had necessitated a number of relatively minor changes to the S106 and planning conditions. These related to minor layout and elevation changes and a reconfiguration of the restaurant quarter, and had all been agreed and signed. Some internal moves had commenced with offsite highway works and construction on site due to start between November 2017 and January 2018. Completion was still expected by the end of 2019 and the intention was to keep the Centre open throughout construction. A new contractor had been appointed and meetings with ABC Planning Officers were planned for the coming weeks.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Ashford College</b></p> <p>Mat McLoughlin introduced this item on behalf of Mark Lumsdon-Taylor. He advised that the new campus and the Phase 1 building had been completed in Summer 2017 and opened for students in September. It had already proved a great success and there was much more to come. A new coffee shop (open to the public) would open in the New Year, hair and beauty courses would be launched from January 2018 and a fine dining restaurant (again open to the public) would be introduced in Summer 2018. In terms of Phase 1, it was a complete 'good news story'. It had all been built to budget, student levels had been higher than expected and people were travelling from both Canterbury and Folkestone to use the facility. Phase 1a had begun and they were aiming to complete by April 2019 with it fully operational by that Summer. Detailed design work would be completed by December 2017, with a contractor appointed by Spring 2018 and work to start next May/June. Phase 2 was embryonic at this stage, but the target completion date was Summer 2020 at the very latest, and discussions with KCC Property had already commenced. He concluded by advising that Hadlow Group were pleased with the ongoing support of ABC, KCC and the SELEP as well at the local MP and thanked them for their partnership.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Junction 10A</b></p> <p>Paul Harwood advised that the Development Consent Order (DCO) Examination had concluded over the Summer and they were now awaiting a decision on grant of the DCO from the Secretary of State by 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2017. No major problems were expected and they were continuing design work with their contractor. There would be a meeting in the</p>	

	<p>coming weeks regarding the Barrey Road issue and he was hoping for a more positive outcome for both businesses and residents. Assuming there were no unforeseen delays they were hoping to start work on site in Spring 2018.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Jasmin Vardimon</b></p> <p>Christina Fuller said that there was a commitment and passion to providing the Jasmin Vardimon Company (JVC) with a new facility at Javelin Road. A Growth Fund bid of £2m had been submitted to support the build out and a decision was expected in December 2017. JVC had been successful with bids for funding from Arts Council England (ACE) and had also received National Portfolio Status which guaranteed ACE funding each year from 2018-22. This was an achievement that should not be underestimated.</p> <p>The Chairman wanted to thank KCC for their input and for taking on the lead role in this project. Barbara Cooper explained that the hard work would continue on the business case and site plans over the coming weeks and months to secure a sustainable future for JVC.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Chilmington Green (Strategic Issues and Community Management Organisation (CMO))</b></p> <p>Lois Jarrett explained that on the strategic side, access roads were now open and early access works had commenced. She thanked Jo Davies at KCC Adoptions for her hard work on this. The first reserved matters application for housing had been registered (346 dwellings) from Hodson Developments and applications from the other three developers were expected before Christmas, bringing registered applications to around 1000 dwellings. On site construction for the first dwellings was expected by Spring 2018 and construction on the first school to commence during Summer 2018. Regarding the A28 widening and junction improvement works, Barbara Cooper advised that KCC was working hard to address the outstanding objections from statutory organisations.</p> <p>In terms of the CMO, Lois Jarrett advised that set-up has been slightly delayed due to delays in construction of housing, but with first occupation now predicted for December 2018, this would also be the date for a 'live' CMO. In the meantime work would continue with the shadow CMO to try and avoid last minute decision making, however the Board noted concerns about delays in decisions from developers on the key matters required to set up the CMO.</p>	

12.	<p><b>Items for January's Ashford Strategic Delivery Board</b></p> <p>The Chairman advised that these would include the Ashford Town Centre Framework and Victoria Park Rejuvenation.</p>	
13.	<p><b>Dates of Next Meetings</b></p> <p>Friday 26 January 2018  Friday 27 April 2018  Friday 27 July 2018  Friday 26 October 2018</p>	

Queries concerning these minutes? Please contact Danny Sheppard:  
Telephone: 01233 330349 Email: [danny.sheppard@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:danny.sheppard@ashford.gov.uk).  
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