



Greater Ashford Borough – Environment & Land Mapping Commission

NOTES of the 3rd Meeting held on 7 December 2021 at 1030 in the Council Chamber

Present

Commission Members

Neil Bell	Chair of Commission & ABC Portfolio Holder Planning & Development
Michael Bax	Weald of Kent Protection Society (WKPS)
Peter Dowling	River Stour Internal Drainage Board
Christine Drury	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE)
Shona Johnstone	Homes England
Sue Cobb	For Sandra Norval, Southern Water
Chris Reynolds	Kent Downs AONB
David Robey	KCC Elected Member & Deputy Portfolio Holder for Economic Development
Jeremy Smith	Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)

Professional Advisers

Jeremy Baker	ABC Principal Solicitor & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Simon Cole	ABC Head of Planning & Development
Tom Marchant	KCC Head of Strategic Planning & Policy
Andrew Osborne	ABC Economic Development Manager

Apologies

Noel Ovenden	Vice Chair of Commission & Leader of Ashford Independent Party & ABC Chair of Overview & Scrutiny
Nick Fenton	Kent Housing & Development Group
Jo James	Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce (KICC)
Sam Loades	NFU
Tracey Butler	ABC Head of Environment & Land Management
Lorna Ford	ABC Head of Corporate Policy, Economic Development & Communication

Notes of the Previous Meeting

The Notes of 9 November were agreed as a true record.

Chairman's Update

The Chair commended the Spatial Planning Manager for putting together a comprehensive paper/presentation for the Commission's December meeting, and he invited everyone to submit questions and have a discussion on the way forward.

Presentation

The Spatial Planning Manager went through his paper, highlighting various elements and stating the importance of the Local Plan as an important mechanism for shaping the future of the borough. How the Commission's work could feed into the process of putting the next Local Plan together – a Local Plan which looks at housing, employment, jobs, infrastructure, etc., and how to deliver them – was important too.

Members of the Commission requested that a map with overlays denoting various designations – e.g. AONB, SSSI, etc. – be produced so that a comprehensive 'picture' of the borough is made available.

It was also agreed that the Commission should look at definitions and working assumptions to add to the overall 'picture'; as well as consultation and see who should be consulted, how this should take place, and put together a timetable.

It was agreed that two working groups (of three or four Commissioners each, facilitated by relevant Council officers) should be set up to look at these issues.

In view of the short timescale (because of Christmas), it was agreed to move the January meeting to 18th January 2022 and to hold one or two Working Group meetings on the two areas so that proposals can be put to the January meeting.

The Commission also proposed that a consultant should be appointed to carry out the relevant mapping, and that a presentation on the various mapped areas would benefit the Commission and so should take place at the February meeting.

A proposal was made to look at Net Zero and what this would entail and to have a greener planning agenda generally, but it was agreed this would form a later part of the Commission's work (possibly March onwards).

Circulation: 11.1.22

All Commission Members + Executive Leader of the Council

All Professional Advisors + Chief Executive

Secretariat:	Linda Stringer	ABC Senior Executive Assistant*
	Jeff Simms	ABC Senior Communications Officer
	Danny Sheppard	ABC Member Services Manager*
	Kirsty Hogarth	ABC Head of Secretariat

(* denotes not in attendance for meeting)