

**Notes of a Virtual Meeting of the
Ashford Strategic Delivery Board held on Microsoft Teams on
Friday 23rd September 2022 at 10.00am**

Present:

Board Members

Cllr Gerry Clarkson (Chairman) – Leader, ABC
Cllr Matthew Forest – Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Leisure, ABC
Cllr N Shorter - Portfolio Holder for Finance, IT and Digital, ABC
Cllr P Feacey - Portfolio Holder for Policy and Performance, ABC
Cllr N Ovenden – Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, ABC
Mr David Brazier – Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, KCC
Paul Sayers - East Kent College
Richard Penn – Area Manager, Environment Agency

Non Board Members

David Smith, KCC
Matt Smyth KCC
Sandra Norvell, Southern Water
Andy Adams, Southern Water
Ben Lockwood, ABC
Paul McKenner, ABC
Simon Cole, ABC
Charlotte Hammersley, ABC
Andrew Osborne, ABC
Jo Fox, ABC
Anthony Baldock, ABC
Dean Spurrell, ABC
Clare Ricketts, ABC.

Apologies

Damian Green, Nathan Iliffe, Rebecca Spore, Simon Jones, Derek Murphy, Shona Johnstone, Tracey Kerly, Terry Mortimer, Tracey Butler, Maria Stevens.

Item	Notes	Action
1.	Welcome The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting and gave a brief history of how the Board was formed in 2013 to include key stakeholders in discussions. During Covid, the meetings were held virtually, but now physical meetings were able to resume, it presented an opportunity	

	to press the reset button and embrace the projects currently ongoing in Ashford and the surrounding area. He welcomed Cllr Ovenden who had been invited to join the Board.	
2.	Minutes of Previous Meeting – 22nd April 2022 Noted.	
3.	Ashford’s Super Six Andrew Osborne (AO) gave a presentation on the new six strategic projects that ABC would be delivering in collaboration with external partners. These were Newtown Works, Stodmarsh, Town Centre Reset, Ashford College phase 2, Project Green and South of Ashford Garden Community. All of the projects sat within the Corporate Plan and fitted inside the themes of Green Pioneer, Caring Ashford and Targeted Growth. The current aim for the Project Team was to brand and badge these six projects, and look to support others under this banner, as it was anticipated that over the next few years there would be additional projects to add to the Super 6. The Chairman thanked AO for his presentation and acclaimed the success of the Big 8 projects that came before the Super 6. He recapitulated how Ashford were proactive in delivering strategic projects and worked effectively with central government and partners to bring them to fruition. The Board endorsed the Super 6 projects and supported the development of the new Ashford For campaign.	
4.	Newtown Works Paul Mckenner (PMcK) gave a presentation, which included a promotional video of the facilities for Ashford International Studios. The project was a mixed-use regeneration scheme and was expected to create 2000 jobs locally. There had been a successful Levelling Up funding bid, and the current focus was around the Locomotive Shed. Subject to negotiation and the completion of due diligence, it was anticipated that the ABC Development Company would purchase 65% of the Quinn Estates Newtown Works Development Company. A Project team had been established and they would assist in this process. Construction was expected to start on the site in August 2023 with completion estimated to be July 2025.	

	<p>The Chairman thanked PMcK for his presentation and spoke to the Board about the location of the Studio and the railway works past since its creation in the 1860's. He confirmed that Historic England had approved the works on the site, and this indicated that Ashford demonstrated a sensitive approach to the development, and were focussed on retaining the significant importance, where a number of people had sadly perished during a bombing of the railway works in WW2.</p>	
5.	<p>Stodmarsh Update</p> <p>Simon Cole (SC) gave a brief verbal update regarding Stodmarsh (a full update would be presented at the October Cabinet meeting). ABC continued to work alongside other Districts, KCC and Natural England to compile a nutrient mitigation strategy for the Stour catchment. A bid for Defra funding would be submitted in November, which would help to create new wetlands that in turn would provide nutrient mitigation in the short/medium term. Further formal changes to national planning policy and ministerial updates from central government were still expected, pertaining to the implications for housing land supply in nutrient constrained areas. The issue had been ongoing for two years, and Canterbury and Ashford had somewhat different issues to neighbouring LA's owing to greater housing developments. Work was now underway to produce a new SPD to pull all the issues together and set out developer requirements for nutrient neutrality.</p> <p>The Chairman noted that funding from central government was expected to be recouped over time and encouraged the Planning Team to be bold when forming the SPD.</p>	
6.	<p>Water Infrastructure and Use in the Borough</p> <p>Sandra Norval (SN) and Andy Adams (AA) from Southern Water attended the meeting and gave a comprehensive presentation covering Planning for Future Growth, Stodmarsh Investigation Report, Storm Overflows, Sustainable Development Plan, Nutrient Neutrality, Chilmington Green, Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans and Wastewater Catchments in the Stour.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked SN and AA for attending the meeting and for providing the crucial and informative update. He suggested a representative from Southern Water be enrolled on the ASDB, and SN agreed this would be beneficial and volunteered to.</p>	<p>CH</p>

7.	<p>Eurostar Update on latest position</p> <p>AO spoke about the decision by Eurostar to extend the closure of their Kent stations to and beyond 2023. They had cited challenges around border entry and exit points as one of the reasons for the extension. A meeting had been scheduled with Eurostar and Damian Green MP to discuss this in more detail, and AO would report back to the Board.</p>	AO
8.	<p>Project Updates</p> <p>Paul Sayers (PS) of East Kent College gave a verbal update on the construction works for phase 2 of the College, and funding had been secured to increase capacity. Since April 2020, the college intake had grown by 25%, which in turn correlated with jobs growth for Ashford. There had been some supply chain issues, and PS would provide more details on this at the next meeting.</p> <p>In response to a question asking if small to medium size local companies were engaging with the college in terms of work placements, PS confirmed this was the case and that the College had been working with the Chamber of Commerce to increase placements for 16/18 year olds and apprenticeships. He added that ABC were a great source of support for the College.</p> <p>The report enclosed with the agenda gave the latest position on progress in respect of the core projects, to be noted.</p>	
9.	<p>Dates of Future Meetings</p> <p>Friday 20th January 2023 Friday 21st April 2023</p> <p>All at 10am</p>	DSh

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