

**Notes of a meeting of the
Ashford Strategic Delivery Board
Friday 25 January 2019 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
Mr Mike Whiting – KCC, Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways,
Transportation and Waste
Barbara Cooper – KCC, Director – Growth, Environment and Transport
Paul Harwood - Highways England
Mark Lumsdon – Taylor, Hadlow Group
Chris Moore, Homes England
Tracey Kerly, ABC

Non Board Members

Cllr Neil Shorter, ABC
Cllr Aline Hicks, ABC
Matthew Hogben, KCC
David Smith, KCC
Jonathan White, KCC
Victoria Thistlewood KCC
Len Mayatt, ABC
Stewart Smith, ABC,
Lorna Ford, ABC
Andrew Osborne, ABC
SallyAnne Logan, ABC
Dean Spurrell, ABC
Jessica Brown, ABC
Keith Fearon, ABC

Item	Notes	Action
1.	Declaration of Interests Cllr Galpin declared an interest in respect of the discussion under the Ashford Strategic Delivery Board Projects – Next Steps item as his son was involved in the Scale Up Scheme.	ABC

2.	<p>Welcome</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed all those present and said he was pleased to report that he had recently attended the opening ceremony for the new Travelodge. He said that the quality of finish was to a very high standard and that the hotel was also disabled friendly. In terms of the new cinema, he understood that attendance figures for the previous weekend had been in the region of 1500.</p> <p>In terms of this meeting he believed that the Board was now at the stage when it needed to re-focus and to help take forward new projects.</p>	
3.	<p>Ashford Strategic Delivery Board Projects – Next Steps</p> <p>Tracey Kerly (TK) gave a presentation on the report enclosed within the agenda papers. The report, four years on from the adoption of the original ‘Big 8’, suggested that the Board review its future role and agree upon a way forward. Circulated at the meeting was a paper which set out the detailed progress on the original ‘Big 8’. The Board noted the position that they were all now more or less delivered.</p> <p>The Board then considered each of the suggested new projects and following questions agreed that the following projects form the new Big 8:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mecca/Vicarage Lane • New multi- storey car parks • Newtown Works • Accessible Ashford • Town Centre place-making • Cultural Quarter • Chilmington Green and the wider south of Ashford growth area • Commercial Quarter <p>In addition to the new ‘Big 8’ the Board agreed that they would keep a ‘watching brief’ on a series of other projects which were currently well underway and oversee ‘emerging projects’, details of which are set out below:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elwick Road • Station Spurs • Ashford College • Designer Outlet Expansion • Junction 10a 	ABC/KCC

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jasmin Vardimon • Victoria Park • Conningbrook Country Park • Park Mall and Somerset Road <p>During discussion on the proposed new Multi Storey car parks, it was acknowledged that as part of the work on this there would be a need to develop a Transport Strategy for the town centre.</p> <p>In terms of the recent announcement about the closure of the Marks and Spencer store in the town centre, the Board regretted the decision but hoped that another operator could be found to take over that particular unit.</p> <p>In terms of future working with the private sector, the Board favoured the options of holding annual breakfast briefings and also making specific invitations for key investors and developers to meet with the Ashford Strategic Project Delivery Board. It was also accepted that the use of Ashford story tellers and Scale Up work with small and medium enterprises would help to enliven developments.</p> <p>Paul Harwood (PH) also referred to the future upgrade of the Orbital Park junction following the J10a works. TK said that consideration needed to be given as to how best to incorporate this project into the work of the Board.</p>	
4.	<p>Jasmin Vardimon and Javelin Way Development</p> <p>Jonathan White (JW) and David Smith (DS) gave a presentation on KCC’s proposals for a development on their land at Javelin Way, Henwood Industrial Estate. This would comprise a creative laboratory for Jasmin Vardimon Dance Studio and the provision of 29 new industrial units which would help financially to support the overall scheme.</p> <p>The dance studio element would provide a rehearsal facility and offer training for local people and it was hoped that work could be started in April 2019, with completion in 2020.</p> <p>The Board were very supportive of the project, particularly as Jasmin Vardimon had in the past been encouraged to establish a rehearsal space in the Stour Centre. TK advised that the use of the existing facility by Jasmin Vardimon would need to be managed in the interim until the new facility was available.</p>	KCC/ABC

5.	<p>Chilmington Green and the Provision of Waste Water Infrastructure</p> <p>SallyAnne Logan (SAL) and Victoria Thistlewood (VT) gave a presentation on the progress of the Chilmington Green development and Cllr Neil Shorter (NS) updated on discussions with Southern Water.</p> <p>In terms of governance, SAL explained that Regen Co, had been appointed to provide assistance with the creation of a fit for purpose governance structure and to aid project management. Work was also ongoing in terms of the provision of electrical charging points and the developer wished to expand the CMO. VT also advised that Chilmington Green Primary School was currently operational off site but it was hoped that the first primary school would open on site in Chilmington in September 2020, but that there were issues with agreeing an acceptable haul route with the developer.</p> <p>NS said that Officers had recently met with Southern Water regarding the provision of waste water infrastructure and he confirmed that good progress had been sustained. There was a credible programme to deliver the infrastructure by Spring 2021. A decision was also needed from KCC about whether the scheme needed to have a full Environmental Impact Assessment. Focus had also now changed from provision for Chilmington to Ashford generally and the local plan team had provided information covering the next 15 years.</p> <p>In terms of the improvement works required on the A28, Chris Moore (CM) said that there was an urgent need to identify a funding solution with partners and government to enable these works to take place. The Rt Hon Damian Green MP said that the Secretary of State had been asked to look into this matter.</p>	ABC/KCC/ HE
6.	<p>Commercial Quarter</p> <p>Stewart Smith (SS) advised that the project was progressing well and only 20% of the office space was still available to be let.</p> <p>In terms of the development at the Coachworks, this had received planning approval and it was hoped that work would commence on site in February.</p>	ABC

7.	<p>Elwick Place</p> <p>SS advised that the cinema had opened before Christmas and the Travelodge the previous day. In terms of the retail units, there was a lot of interest, but at this stage no contracts had been signed.</p>	ABC
8.	<p>Ashford International Station Spurs Project</p> <p>Andrew Osborne (AO) advised that Atkins had been appointed to undertake a feasibility study and detailed design to resolve the technical fault regarding the power supply which would be completed in April 2019 with remedial work to follow later in the year.</p> <p>AO also explained that Eurostar continued to serve Ashford International with the same pattern of service which operated between December 2016 and April 2018. However, AO said that the Council was in the future keen to seek improvements to the service to Brussels.</p>	ABC
9.	<p>Ashford College Campus</p> <p>Mark Lumsdon-Taylor (MLT) explained that a property on the Wooton Road Industrial Estate had been acquired to house the Technical and Engineering Centre which had been displaced from the Jemmett Road site. In the near future another site for Construction trades might also be required. A funding package would be in place by late March/early April for Phase 1A.</p> <p>MLT also explained that Hadlow had also merged with West Kent College, but the identity of Ashford College would be retained.</p>	Hadlow Group
10.	<p>Designer Outlet Expansion</p> <p>Cllr Graham Galpin (GG) advised that he had met with the Outlet Manager who had confirmed that the project was both on time and within budget and that work was also underway with Network Rail on potential improvements to the railway underpass off Newtown Road.</p> <p>AO also explained that he understood that the Outlet had had its best figures for the Boxing Day sales despite the current building works. The Board noted the importance of maintaining good communications in terms of the future road closure.</p>	KCC

11.	<p>Junction 10a of the M20</p> <p>PH advised that construction work was progressing well, with the second of the bridge sections being put in place that weekend. He undertook to check the diversion route for lorries whilst the motorway closure was in place.</p>	HE
12.	<p>Conningbrook Country Park</p> <p>Len Mayatt (LM) explained that the Masterplan had now been drafted and that he would be meeting with adjacent landowners to discuss the document. In terms of the potential use of the KCC depot, good progress had been made initially and a response was now required from the Property Team.</p> <p>It was anticipated that the Masterplan would be reported to the Cabinet in June 2019.</p>	ABC
13.	<p>Victoria Park Rejuvenation</p> <p>LM advised that the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund of £3m would be submitted by the end of February, with a response expected by July. LM also undertook to send a 1 page summary of the bid to the Rt Hon Damian Green MP.</p>	ABC
14.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Friday 26th July 2019</p>	

Queries concerning these minutes? Please contact Member Services
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