



## **DISCOVER ASHFIELD BOARD MEETING**

**Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2025**  
**9am – 11:00am**

**Hybrid – Meeting Room 1, Urban Road & Microsoft  
Teams**



# ATTENDEES

Name	Position on Board	Position/Organisation	Present
Kieran Percival	Chair	Director, Gardens of Giving CIC	✓
Louise Knott	Vice Chair	Vice Principal, West Nottinghamshire College MA2020 Representation	
Darron Ellis	Theme Lead – More to Discover	Historian, Sutton Living Memory Group	
Martin Rigley OBE	Theme Lead – Succeed in Ashfield	Chief Commercial Officer Devtank Ltd.	
Liz Barrett OBE	Theme Lead – Love Where You Live	Principal, Academy Transformation Trust Further Education (ATTFE)	✓
Pete Edwards	Theme Lead – Be Happy, Be Healthy	Chair, Ashfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership	✓
Claire Hinchley	Board Member	Acting Director Strategy and Partnerships Sherwood Forest Hospitals	
Clare Hitchings	Substitute for Tim Hepke	Communications Lead, ITP Aero	
Cllr Helen-Ann Smith	Board Member	Deputy Council Leader, Ashfield District Council	
Cllr Julie Gregory	Board Member	Scrutiny Representative, Ashfield District Council	
Cllr Matthew Relf	Board Member	Executive Lead Member for Growth, Regeneration and Local Planning, Ashfield District Council MA2020 Representation	
David Williams	Substitute for Shola Olawole	Partnerships Manager North Nottinghamshire DWP	
Edward Johnstone	Board Member	Assistant Principal (Development), Portland College	✓
Gary Jordan MBE	Board Member	Community Engagement and Learning Lead, ATTFE	✓
Graham Ward	Board Member	Chair of Board of Directors, Sherwood Forest Hospitals Trust	
Holly Shuttleworth	Substitute for Paula Longden	Strategies and Partnerships Lead, Sherwood Forest Hospitals Trust	
Ian Bond	Substitute for Peter Graw	Director of Learning, Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries	
Jackie Insley	Board Member	Chief Executive Officer Citizens Advice Central Nottinghamshire	
Kirsty Blyth	Substitute for Peter Gaw	Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries	
Leanne Harwood	Substitute for Simon Cartwright	Operations Lead - Transforming Notts Together	
Leanne Monger	Board Member	Interim Programme Director, Mid Notts PBP	
Lee Anderson, MP	Board Member	MP for Ashfield and Eastwood	
Mark Spencer, MP	Board Member	MP for Sherwood	
Mark Yates	Substitute	PCN Development Managers, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICB	
Paula Longden	Substitute for Claire Hinchley	Associate Director of Strategy and Partnerships Sherwood Forest Hospitals	✓

Peter Gaw	Board Member	Chief Executive Officer, Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries	
Sarah Mayfield	Board Member	Director of Skills and UK College and Civic Partnerships, NTU	
Sarah Speight	Observer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost, NTU	
Sam Howlett	Substitute for Lee Anderson, MP	Office Manager, Ashfield & Eastwood MP's Office	
Simon Cartwright	Board Member	Chief Officer Transforming Notts	✓
Simon Martin	Board Member	Vice Principal, Academy Transformation Trust Further Education (ATTFE)	✓
Shola Olawole	Board Member	North & East Midlands Group Performance Lead, DWP	
Tim Hepke	Board Member	UK Head of Maintenance and Group Property, ITP Aero	
Theresa Hodgkinson	Board Member	Chief Executive, Ashfield District Council	
Una Key	Board Member	Chief Officer, Ashfield Voluntary Action	
Andrea Stone	Supporting Officer	Wellbeing Manager, Ashfield District Council	
Charles Edwards	Supporting Officer	Executive Director – Operations, Ashfield District Council	
Christine Sarris	Supporting Officer	Assistant Director – Planning and Regulatory Services, Ashfield District Council	
Hollie Maxwell-Smith	Supporting Officer	Discover Ashfield Lead, Ashfield District Council	✓
Joelle Davies	Supporting Officer	Group Manager for Growth, Infrastructure and Development	✓
John Bennett	Supporting Officer	Executive Director, Place, Ashfield District Council	✓
Kate Porter	Supporting Officer	Towns Centre Manager, Ashfield District Council	
Melanie Wheelwright	Supporting Officer	Forward Planning & Economic Growth Team Manager Ashfield District Council	✓
Millie Connell	Supporting Officer	Communities Graduate - Regeneration, Ashfield District Council	✓
Paul Crawford	Supporting Officer	Investment Manager – Regeneration, Ashfield District Council	✓
Paul Coffey	Supporting Officer	Interim Service Manager for Communications and Events, Ashfield District Council	
Sarah Daniel	Supporting Officer	Assistant Director - Regeneration, Ashfield District Council	

Agenda Item	
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome / Introductions / Apologies – Kieran Percival</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apologies were made for Leanne Harwood, Sarah Daniel, Ian Bond, Jackie Insley, Liz Barrett, Tim Hepke, Dave Williams, Shola Olawole, Christine Sarris, Theresa Hodgkinson, Cllr Relf and Una Key.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Review of Previous Meeting – Kieran Percival</b>
<b>a</b>	<b>Board Meeting Minutes</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All minutes were agreed.</li> </ul>
<b>b</b>	Action Log (these include actions from the below minutes)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board to send a letter of congratulations to the two Kings Award for Enterprises 2025 winners, who reside in Ashfield.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>New Declarations of Interest – ALL</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were no new declarations of interest.</li> </ul>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Regeneration Programmes Update – Paul Crawford</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul updated on the May Board report.</li> <li><b>Succeed in Ashfield District</b></li> <li>ADMC - The start date of the contract work has slipped due to the current technical design approval still progressing for the Section 278 works. The S278 work had increased due to requirements set out through the planning process. The main building work is now due to commence late June / early July.</li> <li>Melanie Wheelwright updated the board on Economic Development</li> <li><b>Enterprising Ashfield</b></li> <li>Enterprising Ashfield and Ashfield District Council have agreed an action plan to improve performance of the HeadStart project, as forecasts show this will not achieve the required profile targets by the end of the contract. Officers will be closely monitoring progress over the next 3 months.</li> <li><b>Enterprise Development Grants</b></li> <li>These provide up to £10,000 for small to medium sized established enterprises (SMEs) with commercial premises based in the District of Ashfield. The grant will also allow membership organisations to apply that are based outside the district providing their growth plans support Ashfield SME's.</li> <li>Test trading opportunities – Provides up to 4 days trading as a guest at any of the ADC markets to test out new business ideas with access to a small grant of up to £500.</li> <li>Ashfield Business Leaders Networking Events: <b>Future of Work: Artificial Intelligence</b>. Sherwood Observatory and Planetarium which took place on 29th April-25. 58 people attended out of 60 places offered.</li> <li><b>Ashfield “Golden Ticket” Training Fair</b> at Kirkby Leisure Centre on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2025 from 10am-2:30pm. DWP organising and ADC supporting.</li> <li><b>Ashfield Careers Fair 2025</b> at Kirkby Leisure Centre on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025 from 10am-2pm. ADC organising and focus will be to promote STEM vacancies.</li> <li>Business leaders networking event is in Nov-25.</li> <li>High Street Business Support - This support will offer light touch 1-2-1 service that will enable small businesses to utilise grant opportunities to support commercial growth.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Melanie updated the board on People and Skills (included within the agenda pack).</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pete Edwards explained he had recently met with the senior leadership team at Sutton Community Academy, and he asked the Careers Officer, where he expressed the need to have more businesses present at Careers Fairs, as opposed to education providers. He is keen to help with arranging Ashfield businesses to visit schools.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Melanie explained Nathan McNicholas is working closely with secondary schools and businesses to link these together and have more business presence at the Careers Fair. Melanie will ensure Pete is invited to the Secondary School Network meetings.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gary Jordan added that the Aspiring Ashfield group have a strong list of businesses which can be utilised.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul continued with the board updates.</li> <li>• Visitor Digital Offer – the Discover Ashfield website usage has increased by 729% since its launch. The refinement changes for the app are complete and app marketing is being rolled out shortly.</li> <li>• Cornerstone Theatre - The main contract work is progressing and remains on target for completion in July. Cost impact continues to be challenging with ongoing negotiations with the contractor seeking solutions to minimise the impact.</li> <li>• The opening resourcing plan has been developed by the College with support from a specialist consultant. The college will progress a soft launch from August 2025 providing performances from the school. The full public offer will be launch in March 2025.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simon Martin added that the public programmer will shortly be in place and the programme will be from early Spring, which is currently being developed, as they have 10 months of contracted programming.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul continued with Kings Mill Reservoir Leisure Development - A draft lease is progressing with an operator. The kitchen fit out has now been agreed and the contractor has been instructed to progress to minimise further delays whilst the operator lease is finalised.</li> <li>• Kirkby Sports Hub - The Football Foundation funding application outcome is anticipated at the end of May. Procurement of the work has been completed, and a preferred supplier has been selected. Work is ongoing on a legal review between ADC and the Football Foundation and will be a condition of the grant funding.</li> <li>• Sutton Lawn Sports Hub - The PCSA agreement to enable the pre-construction phase work including surveys and minor works is being completed. The grant offer has been provided by the football foundation and the team have reviewed clarifications to enable the grant award to be signed. The Project team are working with the football foundation and ATT to enable works to be delivered.</li> <li>• Noth Kirkby Gateway - A mini tender has been completed through a framework provider to appoint the principal contractor under a design and build contract to take forward the Ellis Street Development. Subject to the contract team appointment being finalised in May 2025 the stage 2-3 Surveys and development work will proceed June 2025. The grant agreement and</li> </ul>

	<p>associated due diligence is progressing, which will support the pond hole site to the rear of the Ellis Street development being brought forward by a developer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>West Kirkby Gateway - The stage two development work and cost plan has been completed and actions agreed to maintain the project within the cost envelop. The appointment of a design and build contractor has now been awarded, The Pre-construction services are underway to develop project through RIBA stage 3&amp;4 to secure planning approval.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simon Cartwright asked if unsuccessful applicant of the UKSPF 2025-26 schedule were notified of the Community Grants which are in place.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hollie confirmed that these applicants were notified of these grants in their email correspondence., so if they are eligible and wish to submit, they have another round to do so.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simon followed by explaining he had recently been in Sutton Town Centre and noticed many community buildings being underutilised and noted there is a majority of capital spend, and lack of revenue spend. He expressed his concern that the lack of revenue is causing community buildings to not be fully exploited.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul explained the capital and revenue split for Towns Fund was set by central government which limited the Boards scope. ADC have worked with partners over the years to ensure assets remain active and have partners working within them. The Board is a great example of assessing needs and working to rectify these as the environment changes. Paul asked if there were any sites Simon wished to flag, and he would see if these fall within the forward plan strategy.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simon understood the challenges; however he feels the voluntary sector would benefit from revenue spend. He flagged the SureStart buildings which had previously been used as some which are standing vacant for some time, and also All Saints Huthwaite and the Bridge Baptist Church in Sutton where managers are stretched running these facilities.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>John Bennett commented that under UKSPF, and the outcomes set by EMCCA and central government, many of these factors raised by Simon do not fall under these.</li> <li>It will be worth the Board understanding who owns these premises and what funding streams are available to them.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simon agreed and suggested this being raised at the Discover Ashfield Board Away day in July.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul continued with Portland Square and Fox Street - Contract work is on site and the programme has been amended due to slippage on site. The layout of the new public realm is taking shape with the majority of Portland Square to be completed by the end of June and the rest of the works including Fox Street carpark is scheduled to complete at the end of July.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1.3 Monitoring and Evaluation</b></li> <li>The monitoring and evaluation return has been drafted for the Towns Fund and Future High Street Fund programmes. The Towns Fund and Future High Street Fund programmes have been presented to the subgroup on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May with the group confirming the approval for the subgroup chair (Simon</li> </ul>

	<p>Martin) to make the recommendation to accept the return and for the chair of the Discover Ashfield to sign off the return.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LUF monitoring return has been completed and submitted to MHCLG on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2025.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simon added that the group went through every project comprehensively, with a new and revised reporting format which made it clearer for subgroups members to understand how projects were progressing. This was delivered by Paul and Heather Frecklington from Focus Consultants.</li> <li>The members of the subgroup unanimously agreed that the report should be recommended to the Board for sign off and approval.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board were asked to accept the subgroup recommendation to approve and sign off the monitoring and evaluation return.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gary Jordan proposed the decision, and Edward Johnstone seconded.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1.7 Proposals</b></li> <li>Cost pressures remain monitored across the Towns Fund programme as projects progress through the RIBA stages and the delivery is de-risked.</li> <li>High risks remain within the following projects and recommendations are made to manage the variations in cost risks: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>TF18: Cornerstone Theatre:</b> Retrofitting works within the building continues to raise unforeseen challenges to enable the project to be completed to meet the required regulatory standards. The full impact of project changes, and additional fire protection has prolonged the contract period increasing construction and preliminary costs.</li> <li><b>TF09: Kirkby Sports Hub:</b> Cost have increased due to obligations identified through the planning process to secure planning approval. Higher costs identified during the tender stage associated to drainage works has also increased pressure on the budget.</li> <li><b>TF15: Sutton Lawn Sports Hub:</b> Cost have increased due to obligations identified through the planning process to secure planning approval including additional parking spaces. Further invasive surveys have also revealed the roof of the pavilion required additional repairs.</li> <li><b>TF: Portland Square:</b> Cost have increased due to design changes during the work to address unforeseen drainage and levels issues which would impact the S278 work signoff. The changes have prolonged the contract increasing all associated fees.</li> </ol> </li> <li>The projects below both have balances unallocated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TF07 High Street Property Fund - The market for vacant properties which fall within the scope of the business case has been limited. The market failure hasn't been as severe as anticipated, and no further properties have been identified for acquisition which meets the project criteria. The project has a balance of £350k unallocated. The proposal is to reallocate this balance between Cornerstone Theatre and Kirkby Sports Hub.</li> <li>TF02 Construction Centre - The project development, costs, site acquisition and delivery grant have now been completed. The project has a balance of £200k unallocated. The proposal is to reallocate this balance between Portland Square and Sutton Lawn Sports Hub.</li> </ul> </li> <li>The reallocation of funds falls within the Discover Ashfield Board delegated powers. Decisions on a single project resulting in a change of up to £500k</li> </ul>



	can be taken by the board. MHCLG will be notified of any approved changes through a project adjustment notification.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paula Longden asked for clarification on the Boards delegated powers to reallocate funds up to £500k and if this was accumulative, or per project each time.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul confirmed it is relatable to each occasion. The reallocation delegation is where the funding is coming from, not where it is going to. TF07 and TF02 have previously had no other changes made to them.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paula agreed it was sensible to use the funding in other areas it was needed as things change however questioned the schemes where the monies were being allocated to, and if these were still value for money. With Kirkby Sports Hub as an example, if £200k was transferred to this it would bring the total project amount to around £2m, which would be an extra 10% on the project costs and asked if the Board would have made the decision if this was the initial cost.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul agreed this was a valid point to raise and the challenges faced with the four projects highlighted are in the delivery phase, within this risk, and there are timing issues within this to find funding elsewhere when other costs are highlighted during this delivery phase.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>John Bennett added reassurance to the Board that prior to the Board viewing the reallocation of funding decisions, the team at ADC look within the existing project and assess the projects. All of the projects with reallocated funds are within the 5-10% extra.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simon Martin agreed with Paulas comments, and he declared an interest as he has been involved with the Cornerstone project. He expressed that if projects were continually needing funding moved from one scheme to another then this would raise red flags, however if the one reallocation closes that funding gap, then it instils more confidence.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul further explained that the cost risks are clearer as Cornerstone is within its last 6 weeks of delivery, the Sports Hubs have not started on site however the team understand the risks with the contractor will take on some of the risks.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board were asked to approve the cost allocation / adjustments set out.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pete Edwards proposed the decision, Gardy Jordan seconded.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul continued with <b>2.0 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)</b></li> <li>The proposed funding allocations for 2025-26 were agreed at the Funding Subgroup meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> April. The new projects and allocations are included in the report and a table summarising the allocations and rationale for the funding is included in the annexes.</li> <li>The £1,305,17 (Capital - £571,831, Revenue - £733,346) has been allocated over a range of projects.</li> <li>The annual reporting for 2024/25 was submitted to MHCLG by the deadline of 1<sup>st</sup> May and confirmation was received that there are no outstanding queries.</li> <li><b>3.0 Kirkby Neighbourhood Plan</b></li> <li>The Long-term Plan programme has been repurposed as the Plan for Neighbourhoods and is based on 3 goals: thriving places, stronger communities, and taking back control.</li> <li>Further engagement with local residents and groups is being planned. This will build on the engagement already completed and be a mixture of face-to-</li> </ul>

	face engagement and an online survey. A Board away day has been organised for 6 <sup>th</sup> June 2025. This will enable stronger working relationships between Board Members, provide an update of the discussions/decisions taken so far, and help develop future plans.
<b>5</b>	<b>Theme Lead Updates – Theme Leads</b>
<b>a</b>	<b>Succeed in Ashfield – Martin Rigley</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were no updates from Succeed in Ashfield.</li> <li>Melanie Wheelwright added that two Ashfield businesses had won the Kings Award for Enterprises 2025 and asked the Board if they were keen to write a letter of congratulations to them.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board agreed to this.</li> </ul>
<b>b</b>	<b>Love Where You Live – Liz Barrett</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simon updated the Board on Liz's behalf.</li> <li>The VE Day celebration on Sutton Lawn saw everyone come together in an intergenerational day with primary school activities and community aspects.</li> <li>The Ashfield Show dates are set for August, and ATTFE look forward to this community event.</li> </ul>
<b>c</b>	<b>More to Discover – Darron Ellis</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hollie met updated the Board on Darron's behalf.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>She met with Darron recently to discuss the Visitor Economy workshop plans, following the Destination Management Plan. This will bring together visitor and heritage groups to look at an action plan going forward and three focus groups within this.</li> </ul>
<b>d</b>	<b>Be Healthy Be Happy – Pete Edwards</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The management group are busy with the strategy for 2026-36.</li> <li>Pete has visited the subgroups including Leamington, Coxmoor, Children and Young People and Butlers Hill &amp; Broomhill meetings.</li> <li>The work these groups are doing will be within the Strategy.</li> <li>A management group meeting is to be held on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June to discuss the action plans for each area.</li> <li>On 19<sup>th</sup> June there will be an Ashfield Wellbeing Network meeting with partners to finalise the draft of the Strategy. This will then be presented at the Board following this.</li> </ul>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Board Member Updates - All</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were no board member updates.</li> </ul>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Any Other Business – All</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was no other business raised.</li> </ul>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July</b>