



DISCOVER ASHFIELD BOARD MEETING

**Friday 31st January 2025
9am – 11am**

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

ATTENDEES

| Name | Position on Board | Position/Organisation | Present |
|----------------------|--|---|---------|
| Martin Rigley OBE | Chair / Theme Lead – Succeed in Ashfield | Director, Gordian Consulting | ✓ |
| Louise Knott | Vice Chair | Vice Principal, West Nottinghamshire College MA2020 Representation | ✓ |
| Darron Ellis | Theme Lead – More to Discover | Historian, Sutton Living Memory Group | |
| 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 | |
| Andrew Cropley | Observer | Principal, West Nottinghamshire College | |
| 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 | |
| Cllr Keith Girling | Notts County Council Representative | Economic Development and Asset Management, Notts County Council | |
| David Williams | Substitute for Jean Sharpe | 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 | |
| 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 | ✓ |
| James Biddlestone | Observer | CEO, Mansfield District Council | ✓ |
| Kieran Percival | Observer | Gardens of Giving | |
| Kelvin Eatherington | Presenting | Enterprising Ashfield Project and Economic Programme Manager, NTU | ✓ |
| Kirsty Blyth | Substitute for Peter Gaw | Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries | |
| Leanne Monger | Board Member | Interim Programme Director, Mid Notts PBP | ✓ |
| Lee Anderson, MP | Board Member | MP for Ashfield and Eastwood | |
| Mayor Andy Abraham | Observer | Executive Mayor of Mansfield | ✓ |
| Matthew Staniforth | Presenting | Employer Engagement Projects Manager , NTU | ✓ |
| Mark Spencer, MP | Board Member | MP for Sherwood | |
| Mark Yates | Substitute | PCN Development Managers, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICB | |
| Melanie Phythian | Observer | Towns Fund Policy Advisor, Cities & Local Growth Unit | |
| 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 Speight | Observer | Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost, NTU | |
| Sarah Mayfield | Substitute for Sarah Speight | Director of Mansfield Hub and UK College and Civic Partnerships, 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 | |
| Abbie Smith | Supporting Officer | Senior Communications Officer, Ashfield District Council | |
| 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 | ✓ |
| Paul Crawford | Supporting Officer | Investment Manager – Regeneration, Ashfield District Council | |
| Sarah Curtiss | Supporting Officer | Service Manager for Communications and Events, Ashfield District Council | |
| Sarah Daniel | Supporting Officer | Assistant Director - Regeneration, Ashfield District Council | ✓ |

| Agenda Item | |
|-------------|---|
| 1 | Welcome / Introductions / Apologies – Martin Rigley |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions were made for all meeting attendees, including Mayor Andy Abraham and James Biddlestone, CEO at Mansfield DC. • Apologies were given for Andrew Cropley, Christine Sarris, Cllr Girling, Pete Edwards, Leanne Harwood, Kieran Percival, Ian Bond, Peter Gaw, Claire Hinchley, Sarah Speight, Darron Ellis, Cllr Relf, Shola Olawole, Theresa Hodgkinson. |
| 2 | Review of Previous Meeting – Martin Rigley |
| a | Board Meeting Minutes |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted by Paula Longden that an action from the previous meeting was to add further development to the evaluation tools. • Sarah Daniel noted this and explained this is being worked on, with the aim to add to the next Board agenda pack. |
| b | Action Log (these include actions from the below minutes) |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members to let Hollie know if they would like to join the funding subgroup. Information to follow board meeting. |
| 3 | New Declarations of Interest – ALL |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no new declarations of interest. |
| 4. | Regeneration Programmes Update – Sarah Daniel |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah went through the programmes update, starting with Succeed in Ashfield (included in the agenda pack). |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melanie Wheelwright updated on Supporting Local Business. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Williams added that the GradConsult team will be visiting the DWP centre on 12th February to pick up another case load of unemployed graduates who they can support. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah continued with the report, from More to Discover (page 22 of the agenda pack). • Item 1.3 Monitoring and Evaluation. • Awaiting feedback on the Towns Fund / Future High Street Funds (FHSF) and LUF M&E, which was submitted on 21st November. • The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) requested that accountable bodies submit a request for funding to be reprofiled for funding of more than £200k which hasn't already been drawn down and would need reprofiling into 2026/27. The submission was submitted on the 22nd of January for approval. • The North Kirkby Gateway scheme is the only project that is affected because funds are still due to be drawn down. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5 Risk Registers. • The risk registers for Towns Fund, FHSF and UKSPF are included in the annexes to the agenda pack. |
| | 1.7 Proposals |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cost review has identified an underspend in the Construction Centre and West Kirkby Gateway projects. • The cost plan for the Construction Centre has been finalised including the deliverables through a grant agreement with Vision West Notts College and the purchase of a building to facilitate delivery. |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cost plan for the West Kirkby Gateway is at Stage 2 and a principal contractor is being appointed thereby minimising cost risk as the project progresses. Subject to final cost review £400k is currently unallocated within the budgets. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board is asked to approve the reallocation of the balance of funds from West Kirkby Gateway and the Construction Centre projects to Kirkby and Sutton Sports Hub projects. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gary Jordan proposed the decision, Louise Knott seconded. |
| | <p>2.0 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) 2025-26.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UKSPF of c.£25m has been awarded to the East Midlands Mayoral Authority (EMCCA) for 2025-26, following the end of the initial three-year programme which will provide a transition to a new, future funding framework from April 2026. EMCCA have indicated that the allocation to each authority will be c.60% of this year's UKSPF allocation. For Ashfield this is c.60% of £2,029,950 - £1,217,970. EMCCA have advised of a potential change to the revenue/capital split from 70/30 to 60/40 which would mean c.£487k capital. The EMCCA Board will consider the plan to deploy the UKSPF allocation at its next meeting on 10th February and will confirm council allocations thereafter. EMCCA will set out regional priorities for the investment grounded in the national framework. They are also reviewing plans to utilise other funding sources to augment this regional allocation, particularly around Visit and Invest activities. The fund's three priority areas of Communities and Place; Support for Local Businesses; and People and Skills are unchanged. Funding for 2025-26 can be used to support activities from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026, including continuations of existing activity where appropriate. A reduced and updated list of outputs and outcomes for 2025-26 will be published in due course, reporting will continue every six months through EMCCA. The suggested process is for the Discover Ashfield Funding Subgroup to be convened to review existing projects and proposals for new projects. The group's Terms of Reference (TOR) will need to be reviewed. Proposals would then be brought to the board for sign off. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board is asked to discuss and agree its approach to facilitate the allocation of the UKSPF 2025-26 funding. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Martin asked how soon, following the EMCCA 10th February meeting, the board will have an idea of funding. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah expected this to be shortly following their Board meeting. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> He continued, once there is confirmation, what is the timeframe for the Discover Ashfield board to agree and submit their proposals. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah explained they are unsure at the moment, however previously there was an investment plan, and it was relatively simple. She expected similar as there is a short timeframe of the funding spend. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Martin suggested the funding subgroup be reestablished, once it was clear on funding, and this group then bring proposals back to the main Board for review. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah agreed, and added the funding subgroup would need to agree how submissions could be made for funding. |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leanne Monger commented that she believes there is no Place-Based Partnership representation on the Funding subgroup and was keen to have an NHS voice on it, to incorporate joint funding opportunities and wider health aspects can be looked at. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paula Longden agreed with Leanne and added the funding subgroup's role should be to review submissions and ensure they are in line with the priorities and important for the communities. She felt it would still be beneficial to have some communications to smaller groups who had not been involved in the first round of funding, so they did not miss out. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gary Jordan agreed on targeted communications but has reservations regarding any new consultation to be used. He felt it would be useful to look at projects which did not make it through to funding previously as these may be ready to go on short notice. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joelle Davies has had similar conversations across the County and explained that whilst EMCCA had allocated this funding to districts and boroughs, they have also held some of this back, so there will be regional commissioning for business support. They have also allocated some of their Gainshare funding toward inward investment and visitor economy, so there are already commitments made. EMCCA are also receiving further funding for employment skills and training. Joelle offered to attend the funding subgroup to offer an insight into this. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Martin thanked Joelle. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor Andy explained he is part of the overview and scrutiny committee at EMCCA and one of his concerns is the flow of information from council officers to the scrutiny committee for them to scrutinise plans, as these can sometimes come across vague without more detailed information. He was also keen for councils to look at areas of success and where projects can join with others for the future within funding such as what follows UKSPF. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simon Cartwright agreed with previous comments and building on success. He thought it important to look at regional projects and where these can be funded, along with collaborative projects. Simon asked if there was voluntary sector representation on the funding subgroup. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah confirmed there are currently representatives from ADC, ATTFE, VWNC, Business rep, NTU and DWP. This group is a volunteer basis and there is scope to welcome more volunteers to attend this as it evolves. <p>Sarah thanked Joelle for her information and confirmed that ADC were linked with EMCCA on other programmes being developed.</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Bennett added that he too was keen for a wide representation on the group and was also keen for there to be a pragmatic approach when recognising programmes which could continue after March whilst recognising gaps for opportunities, and working with neighbours of the district when feasible by looking at the regional area and identifying where Ashfield can fit into this. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simon Martin, the chair of the funding subgroup, confirmed the group has taken on other functions in the past such as evaluation, and it does have the capacity to broaden membership and remit whilst being manageable. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board is asked to agree its approach to facilitate the allocation of the UKPSF 2025-26 funding. |

| | |
|----------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gary Jordan proposed, and Tim Hepke seconded that proposals would come through the Funding Subgroup for the board to review and agree. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melanie continued with the programme report from page 33. • E23 General Business support: Graduate Economic Development Officer port. • The post of Graduate Economic Development Officer is required to ensure continuation of support for the delivery of the Supporting Local Business theme projects. An allocation of £39,985 (including oncosts) is proposed to support the extension of the post for an additional year. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin endorsed this officer post extension. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board was asked to agree a one-year extension to the post of graduate economic development officer, for the period of 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026 and associated allocation of £39,985. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Rigley proposed the decision, and Louise Knott seconded. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melanie continued. • There has been identified an underspend of £8,077 in the E28 programmes and propose running an extra event at one of the local universities to help graduates (both within and outside of Ashfield, past graduates and those graduating in 2025) to gain an increased understanding of employer expectations. • This will support them in sustaining employment and in understanding how to succeed in role, and to identify any skills gaps (can signpost to further development, volunteering). • An Ashfield based business would be used as an experiential case study for the session, to showcase the great work that locally based businesses are doing and help graduates see Ashfield businesses as an attractive destination to start their careers. • 10-15 people could be attracted to the event, ensuring they receive referrals into further development and are aware of Ashfield as a potential future employment destination. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board were asked to agree the allocation of underspend £8,077 to work being undertaken by GradConsult. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louise Knott proposed the decision, Tim Hepke seconded. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah continued with Kirkby Long-Term Plan for Towns. • We are awaiting a revised prospectus to be published by the government in the New Year, with associated timelines and new strategic objectives aligned with the government's missions. This will include a broader range of policy interventions, affording places greater flexibility in how they improve their areas. • The Safety and Town Centre subgroups are continuing to meet. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hucknall Levelling Up Fund. • The Council submitted a consultation response together with further letters of support from partners in December and the outcome is due by the end of January. |
| a | Enterprising Ashfield - Graduate Placement Update Proposal – Kelvin Eatherington & Matthew Staniforth |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelvin thanked the board for giving them an item to propose changes. • He went through an update on Enterprising Ashfield's delivery up to date, including within the agenda pack. |

| | |
|-----------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor Andy raised if graduates were living in Mansfield but working in Ashfield and if people were missing out due to their postcode, which could alleviate issues, as he had previously raised. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelvin explained that if the individual lives or works in the eligible postcode they are then eligible to take part. There have been people who live outside of Ashfield who have been able to take up these offers. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew Staniforth continued with the update from 1.7.1 Graduate Placements. • He went through graduates placed and funds awarded, and the impact across Ashfield that the business development activity has had, year on year. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelvin added that there had been engagement, which is increasing, and the vision is to develop this pipeline of roles in the future with businesses who have never taken graduates on and improving on this. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew confirmed the ask is to reduce the minimum graduate placements from 150 to 50 for the remaining period. • There would be a shortfall expected of £957 which could be covered by a slightly smaller fund for a graduate on a shorter term. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor Andy asked if people living in Ashfield but worked in Mansfield were eligible. He also enquired if graduates working within local authorities were eligible. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew reiterated that with the graduate placements the postcode of the business within Ashfield makes the business eligible for the grants. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jackie Insley explained Citizens Advice Nottinghamshire are a recipient of the graduate talent programme and it has enabled them to recruit a trainee debt case worker. This has been invaluable for the business as the post is an FCA regulated post and requires ample training. • She thanked the team for the opportunity, as the process has been seamless. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leanne highlighted there is a note within the report surrounding lack of graduate roles in healthcare within Ashfield, and asked who the team's contact was for this, and commented that the postcode eligibility could limit this. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew will contact Leanne with this information. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin asked Sarah Daniel what the procedure would be to reduce the output. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah explained the process would be to complete a project adjustment request and submit this to MHCLG, if the board were to agree the proposal. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board were asked to agree Enterprising Ashfield's contingency plan to change the number of graduate placements to a minimum of 50. Although recognising this is a reduction of the initial target, by helping create graduate level roles as they go, they are developing a pipeline of graduate level roles for the future. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gary Jordan proposed the decision, and Jackie Insley seconded. |
| 5 | Theme Lead Reports – Theme Leads |
| a. | Succeed in Ashfield – Martin Rigley |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin continues to support Sherwood Observatory such as seatsponsoring events. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simon Martin added that the café at the Observatory had achieved 5 stars food safety during their Environmental Health Officer visit. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin attended an ATTFE Stakeholder meeting to look at their #InThisTogether activities. |

| | |
|-----------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He met with Portland College to continue connections. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gary Jordan and himself are supporting the Aspiring Careers Ashfield programme. |
| b. | Love Where You Live – Liz Barrett |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BIG Congratulations to Andrew Cropley of West Notts for his MBE success. We are all proud of his achievement. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Planetarium has now been officially opened. A stella achievement in Ashfield for us all and we are over the moon! The Observatory has a waiting list of over 3000 for the open days and 280 awaiting to book the space for private functions. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vertical veg from an ATTFE College stance is moving forward with pace. • ATTFE College learners are building individual microgreen units which will be rolled out across Ashfield in Feb and March with learning attached to them. • Over 100 venues will also receive larger units to be able to produce microgreens en masse. Microgreens are extremely high in nutritional content and very tasty. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashfield’s Big Spring Clean is about to commence, which enables the whole of Ashfield to clear out rubbish and have it taken away for free. This annual initiative is usually very popular and productive. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congratulations to Theresa for becoming chair of the mid-Nottinghamshire place-based partnership. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theresa and Liz attended a Commonwealth meeting to explore how Ashfield could become more involved with it. The Commonwealth has pockets of funding which Ashfield and Ashfield residents can have access to so this is something that will be explored further. |
| c. | More to Discover – Darron Ellis |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darron has had a few enquiries to visit Lindley’s Mill which is positive. |
| d. | Be Healthy, Be Happy – Pete Edwards |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playzones are progressing. The 5 sites are Morven Park (Kirkby), Selston High School, Titchfield Park (Hucknall,) Stamper Rec (Stanton Hill) and Cow Pasture Rec (Sutton). Football Foundation have begun to carry out investigatory works on the sites. • Sport England Place Partnership Funding, Leamington. A 2-day Leadership event has been held as a condition of the funding. The event saw partners (including education, public health, VCS, councils and more) from across Ashfield, coming together to look at what needs to be done, and what they can do, to increase physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour in the area. Notes from the meeting will be circulated to the board shortly. • Action plans are currently being developed for all networks – this includes the Community Partnerships, Children and Young People’s Network and Feeding Ashfield. These are all based on the Building Blocks of Health model. • Through UKSPF 200 growing packs, 150 indoor packs, and 200 litter pickers (and associated equipment) will be made available to residents. The application process for this will open in the first week of February 2025. 18 green activity mental health grants have been approved. Please continue to promote the scheme. • The link for the grants is here - https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/environment-health/health-wellbeing/feeding-ashfield/green-activity-grant-scheme/ |

| | |
|-----------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leanne Monger also congratulated Theresa on her role within the Place-Based Partnership. |
| 6. | Board Member Updates - All |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gary updated that ATTFE opened a community hub in Idlewells at the end of last year. • On 17th February at 10am – 12:30pm there will be a run of four sessions inviting organisations to learn more about wellbeing in the workplace. • Further information will follow on this. |
| 7. | Any Other Business – All |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin thanked Mayor Andy and James for attending the meeting. |
| 8. | Date of Next Meeting – Friday 7th March |