

Thanet Regeneration Partnership Board Meeting Minutes

- Date:** 25 April 2025
10.30 am - 12.30 pm
- Venue:** Thanet District Council, Business Suite
- Membership:** Brian Horton (BH), Polly Billington MP (PB), Chris Butler (CB), Zoë Carassik (ZC), Colin Carmichael (CC), Cllr Rick Everitt (RE), Cllr David Green (DG), Frank Martin (FM), Bob Porter (BP), Rebecca Smith (RS), Cllr Rob Yates (RY),
- In attendance:** Louise Askew (LA), Tom Marchant (TM), Pauline Smith (PS), Mike Humber (MH), Julia Jacobs (JJ)

1. Apologies

Apologies received from Cllr Ruth Duckworth (RD), Rebecca Smith (RS) and Polly Billington MP (PB)

2. Declarations of interest

FM declared that he is the chair of the Creative Rail Partnership that is involved in the renovation of the grounds at Margate Train Station.

BH declared that he is a trustee of Turner Contemporary.

3. Agree Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Chair and Board Members agreed that the minutes of the Board meeting held on 31 January 2025 were an accurate record of the meeting.

4. Actions from the previous meeting

Action	Lead	Update
EKC Group to share images of the hoardings.	Dan Shelley	Still to be provided. EKC have been asked for an update, which will be shared. Board members were keen to see

		<p>hoardings up - it was considered important to show the public and visitors what the plans are for the building.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Remove</p>
<p>LA to liaise with DS to arrange for a date for Board members to visit the Margate Digital site.</p>	LA	<p>This will happen at a future meeting, closer to Sept.</p>
<p>DS to update the Board on EKC Groups engagement with other education organisations</p>	DS	<p>This will be added to the programme update for the project.</p> <p>LA met Lucy McLoad and the team. There is an action with LA to arrange a meeting with MCLT with a view to the two organisations holding a joint event. Board members were keen that the Margate Digital site is operated at weekends and evenings for the community and stakeholders in the town.</p> <p>The Head of Margate Digital Campus role will be advertised shortly.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Remove</p>
<p>DS to send note to BH about engagement with The Turner Contemporary</p>	DS	<p>The Chair was reassured following engagement with Turner Contemporary that there are discussions taking place.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Remove</p>
<p>PB to communicate with appropriate Government officials to gain support for the Port project and possible additional funding.</p>	PB	<p>There has been engagement through PB with senior civil servants in the Department for Transport and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Remove</p>
<p>CB to check dates for future meeting to be held at Thanet Earth</p>	CB	<p>CB advised that due to works traffic and construction, Thanet Earth is unable to host the April meeting.</p> <p>Future dates to be considered.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Remove</p>

Review scope and timing for site visits	LA	LA to contact MCLT for a site visit/host a Board meeting
Public Sector Devolution and Local Government Reform Update - this item to stay on the agenda	LA/PS	Actioned Remove

LA advised the Board that there have been changes to Government departments. Gregory and Grace have moved on. Our main contact remains the Pathfinder team.

5. Public Sector Devolution and Local Government Reform Update

CC provided an update on Public Sector Devolution and Local Government Reform.

KCC and Medway were not accepted for the priority programme.

Work has been completed on an interim submission to the central government, which was made on 21 March. This can be viewed on the KCC and TDC websites. The submission suggested four possible geographical models that could work for Kent. Feedback on this submission is expected next week or after the elections on 2 May.

A consultant is being engaged to support the preparation of a business case for the models suggested by the end of November.

It was noted that by the time a new council starts in 2028, the Pathfinder projects will be completed and funding spent. The ongoing Local Government Reform should not affect the progress of the projects.

Action: This item to stay on the agenda for future meetings

6. Programme Updates

LA provided a verbal update on all the projects:

Margate Creative Land Trust: The Trust has purchased its first site. They are currently going through a pre-application process and reviewing the opportunity for meanwhile uses on the site. The design team is almost all in place and RIBA stage one is nearing completion. The Trust team will have an office on site and they are aiming for the People Dem Collective to move the week of 26 May.

Theatre Royal: Architects and Design Team, Project Manager and Cost Manager tenders received and are being evaluated. Appointment due Spring 2025 (delayed). Utilising a phased masterplan approach to match the Town Deal fixed budget. Legal advice is being sought on the appropriate route to secure an operator.

Access Walpole Bay: Works to the tidal pool are scheduled with the Engineering Services team to coincide with the routine drainage of the pool for maintenance w/c 28 April. Works include improvements and repairs to the concrete steps and replacement of escape ladders.

Testing New Uses Walpole Bay: LA to arrange a walking tour of the site. The council has run an advertisement for one-year licences along the coastline, with some proposals put forward for this area of the coast. Once the licences are awarded, the team will engage with the new vendors.

Skatepark: Tender documents are being finalised to go out for procurement for a specialist design and build contractor. This appointment will include: design, engagement, planning and construction of the skatepark. Technical consultancy services have been procured. Employer's Agent has been appointed to support the tender process.

Active Movement and Connections: RIBA Stage 3 designs for the Margate Main Sands toilets have Planning Approval. A Building Control pack for the toilets is prepared. The Wayfinding project has been reallocated to the new Programme Manager for delivery. A decision will need to be made shortly on the £1m contingency that is being held.

Margate Winter Gardens: Westwood One is the preferred partner for the Winter Gardens. The council is going through the due diligence process before a lease and grant agreement is provided. The Cabinet have agreed a revenue grant of up to £80,000 for Westwood One to engage specialists to support with due diligence preparation.

Margate Digital: Construction onsite continues. EKC Group is submitting monthly drawdown requests from their grant allocation for the works. These are being agreed and signed off by the council's Finance department.

Creative Workspace and Access to Opportunities: Broad Street - we have increased the budget from the Ramsgate contingency allocation and are working with contractors on a quote. A decision will be required imminently on whether it should go back out on the Kent Business Portal for open procurement.

Pier Yard and Highways Improvements: The contractor's design team is progressing designs to RIBA stage 3 for Pier Yard and updating the designs for the highways scheme. A Section 278 Notice has KCC approval. Engagement continues with KCC on the scheme. Decisions are expected once the next set of designs and costs are provided by the contractor.

RE advised that this is seen as a political priority as part of the programme.

Port Infrastructure: The open Port Operator concession procurement process was unsuccessfully closed. Alternative funding arrangements are being pursued with central

government, with support from the MP, Thames Estuary Growth Board and other key stakeholders.

Board members asked what the timescale would be for any future decision making in relation to the funding allocation. MH advised that there have been discussions about alternative uses for the funding as outlined in the earlier Cabinet report. There has also been engagement with the MHCLG Pathfinder Team and the Levelling Up Fund Team on timescales and other funding resources.

Green Campus: The team aims to submit the planning application in June. A report is being put together to identify the most suitable model of management for the site, which may require Cabinet approval.

Clock House: The contractors are working on value engineering proposals to discuss with the team. The planning application has been submitted with engagement with Planning, Conservation and Historic England.

Newington Community Centre: The main contractor has been appointed and started on site mid mid-April 2025.

LA advised the Board that a new Regeneration Programme Manager has started and is looking at every site within the programme in relation to models of management.

7. Finance Update

LA provided an update on the financial position. Board members asked for high level detail on spend details for the projects.

Action: LA to update and re-issue the finance report.

The M&E Return is due to be submitted on 16 May, which will be shared with the Board via email.

Action: LA to circulate the Pathfinder M&E return to the Board prior to submission

The next meeting is in July but it may be necessary to hold a meeting before then.

Action: LA and BH to agree on an agenda for an additional Board meeting and decide whether it should be in person or virtual

8. Plan for Neighbourhoods Update

LA summarised the update on the Plan for Neighbourhoods programme. The council has made a submission to MHCLG on 22 April, including:

- High level proposed board membership
- Geographical boundary

- Outline a budget for capacity funding
- Consultation has taken place with the MP
- Secretariat for the programme

The next steps are to recruit members of the Board, agree a permanent Chair of the Board and recruit a project officer (and possibly an apprentice).

BH has agreed to support the new Board as Interim Chair to help put the Board together and engage a Chair. BH stressed he is happy to do this but keen to pass on the baton at the earliest opportunity. Board members felt it was right to have a separate Board - it will be a new, decision making board, but there may be some cross-engagement.

9. AOB

There were no AOB items.

BH extended an open invitation to JJ to visit Thanet at any time so she could view the ongoing projects and familiarise herself with the area.

Next meetings:

4 July 2025

17 October 2025