

Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce – Ashford Economic Development Group

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of the AEDG Limited held at KICC HQ on 19th January 2023 at 3pm.

PRESENT:	NAME	POSITION
	Nettie Buss	Chair
	Richard Stafford	Arrived 3.30
	Andrew Osborne	
	Katie Hodson	
	Dan Sherlock	
	Tim Sheppard	
	Maria Callow	
	Alexandra Syrotiuk	Deputy for Susan Bonett
[APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED FROM:]	Richard Lavender, Jason Rainbird, Susan Bonett, Peter Heritage	

1. NOTICE AND QUORUM

The chair reported that enough notice of the meeting had been duly given and that a quorum was present. The chair declared that the meeting was open.

2. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES

A draft of the minutes of the board meeting held on 17th November 2022 was sent prior to the meeting. It was agreed to approve this draft without amendment and the chair was authorised to sign them as a complete record of the relevant meeting.

MC commented that there is a lot of opposition to the solar farm at Aldington which was the purpose of the November meeting discussions.

AO advised that ABC had contacted businesses in the area likely to be affected

3. BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

- 1. NB advised that a meeting had been had with Neil Vanstone at KiCC to discuss how the AEDG will operate going forward and about raising the profile of the group to the local community.

The initial ideas are that there will be a feature in ‘Thinking Business’ and other areas promoting the group, and that each portfolio member was to provide an up to date headshot and max of 25 words. All members to connect on LinkedIn and we will ask the chamber if an AEDG LinkedIn group can be set up for us to share information

DS advised that he had tried to engage with local lawyers to see if they would give him

a feel for local law businesses but had not had any take up.

2. Following the briefing in section 1 above a broader discussion followed which included thoughts about how we could proceed as a group.

AO – ABC send a regular newsletter which is delivered to 1500 email addresses – info re the AEDG could be included.

MC – suggested we link up with the relevant chamber surveys and use data which should help influence areas to focus on

AO – Damian Green breakfasts could be supported by AEDG members

DS – the importance of linking the group with education and particularly Ashford College. General ideas were then discussed which included;

A diary of events of speaks was considered and guests suggested.

AO – gave a presentation on Ashford Town Centre Reset, which focused on 4 areas and the T for development.

Other areas also on the agenda, such as buses, empty units in the town, EV charging, Play areas and Feature Lighting, amongst other items.

RS asked if there is another local town (!) with a similar footfall and population that we could compare with

MC commented with regards to anti-social behaviour in the town, **AO** advised it is being addressed and a group in the town centre are working with the police.

Portfolios-

As the time had been taken, it was agreed that unless anyone had any portfolio issues / comments that they felt they should make now, we would discuss in the next meeting. **RL** sent a report which will be circulated with the minutes.

RS advised concerns regarding rateable values and how the thresholds have not increased with the rates as before, which he is looking into.

A list of items to action was then produced as follows:

Action Items	Owner(s)	Deadline	Status
Bios and Headshots	All members	Before next AEDG meeting	Pending
LinkedIn	NB to speak with KiCC	Before next AEDG meeting	Pending
ABC Newsletter	AO to send link to NB who will distribute the group.	Send with agenda & minutes	Pending
Circulate RL portfolio notes	NB	Send with agenda & minutes	Pending

4. NEXT MEETING

16th February 2023 @ 3pm @ KiCC

5. CLOSE

There was no further business and therefore the chair declared that the meeting was closed.

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Chair – Nettie Buss - Date