Meeting Notes

Meeting	**Active Kent and Medway Partnership Board**	**Date**	**15th October 2025**
Location	**Kent Event Centre, Detling Showground**	**Time**	**3.30 - 5.30pm**

Board Members	**Graham Razey** (Chair), **Gurvinder Sandher, Derek Lewis, Chris Morgan, Liu Batchelor, Claire Shelton, Barbara Grogan, Caz Conneller, Tom Marchant** (Kent County Council – Host Representative), **Liz Davidson** (AP Director),
Board Members Present	Graham Razey (GR), Derek Lewis (DL), Tom Marchant (TM), Chris Morgan (CM), Barbara Grogan (BG), Claire Shelton (CS), Caz Conneller (CC), Liz Davidson (LD)
Attendees Present	Andrea Murphy (AM), Sophie Ward (SW), Karen Bird (KB), Stuart Butler (SB), Selina Baker (SBa) (Active Kent and Medway – Notes)

Item No.	Item	Comments		
1.	Welcome and Apologies for Absence	GR welcomed CC to the Board. CC gave a brief introduction, sharing her background in active travel. Apologies were received from Gurvinder Sandher and Liu Batchelor.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
		-	-	-
2.	Declarations of Interest	DL informed the Board of his recent appointment as a Trustee of Gravesend Spartans Basketball Club. No further declarations were made.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
		-	-	-

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<tr><td rowspan="3">3.</td><td colspan="2">Minutes of the meeting held 08/07/25 including any confidential minutes</td><td colspan="3">The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record, with no comments.

As part of the agreed actions, Adam Lawrence has been personally thanked for his service on the Board. The decision to write to Kent County Council (KCC) will be deferred until further updates are received from the Structural Committee. However, GR noted that this action is close to being progressed.

Meetings between Board members and their team pillar links were discussed: Supporting Sport has met; Children & Young People (CYP) is scheduled to meet on 5th November; Active Environments will meet on 21st November; and the Health team are touching base regularly.

It was also noted that Kathyrn Edwards has stepped down from the Board but remains willing to support the Forever Active campaign.

Regarding support for the Partnership around devolution, LD shared that Sport England (SE) has begun engaging with the 10 of the 42 Active Partnerships which are still hosted. A forum has been established to help facilitate discussions and explore opportunities and challenges related to devolution, with the first meeting taking place last week, during which SE provided reassurance that any costs incurred while exploring future structural options can be covered by the SE grant—provided they are informed in advance. There were also constructive conversations around economies of scale and the potential for cost-sharing among hosted partnerships.</td></tr>
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<tr><td rowspan="3">4.</td><td colspan="2">Matters arising not covered by this agenda</td><td colspan="3">No other matters were raised.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">Action Items</td><td>Action</td><td>Assigned To</td><td>Due Date</td></tr>
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<tr><td rowspan="3">5.</td><td colspan="2">Update Reports - <u>Chairman's Report</u></td><td colspan="3">GR invited questions from Board members. DL commented that the report was useful addition to proceedings. No further questions or comments were raised.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">Action Items</td><td>Action</td><td>Assigned To</td><td>Due Date</td></tr>
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<td rowspan="3">6.</td>
<td>Update Reports
- Directors</td>
<td colspan="3">LD commented that significant work had been undertaken around governance, the partnership’s strategic pillars, and risk management. Continuing that place-based work has now formally begun in Gravesham and Thanet, alongside the £467K funding award for Medway over the next year.

Positive conversations are ongoing with Public Health regarding the extension of funding through to 2028, which would align with the duration of place-based funding. The Forever Active programme continues to progress, looking to work closely with community partners.

In terms of strategic risks to the Partnership, LD highlighted key areas including the comprehensive spending review, potential changes in government, devolution and LGR, as well as the recent change in CEO at Sport England.

DL noted that Board members have been allocated to specific places and questioned at what stage they would be engaged. LD confirmed that engagement is expected to begin with upcoming training sessions involving local leaders and the voluntary sector. These sessions are scheduled for two days in December for Gravesham, with invitations due to be sent out within the next week.

GR raised a query regarding the significant funding coming in from the place-based work and the associated governance. LD confirmed that contracts are in place for all except Swale. LD also clarified that the funding is received directly into AKM’s account and must be reconciled with Sport England every six months. LD added that the Projects and Programmes Committee will take on a role in reviewing and challenging the spending to ensure robust oversight. Additionally, GR emphasised the importance of ensuring that the maximum amount of funding reaches the communities with a close eye on any facilitating costs being an important role for the board.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Update on Sport Welfare Officer Programme – Outputs, Outcomes and Progress</td>
<td colspan="3">SB highlighted that there is budget available for sport welfare initiatives and welcomed suggestions or relevant contacts from Board members. Part of the budget is being allocated to training, marketing and the implementation of “top tip” cards.

With regards to engaging stakeholders, a new newsletter is going out and SB has been actively attending events, including badminton-specific training and a sailing conference, and is also delivering training sessions, including work to strengthen the relationship with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The Sport Welfare Officers are engaging directly with clubs to explore and understand their organisational culture. Engagement across the sector is improving, with many National Governing Bodies (NGBs) introducing new minimum standards e.g. badminton.</td>
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<tr><td rowspan="3"></td><td></td><td colspan="3">DL commented that certain clubs mandate the use of specific safeguarding courses, prompting GR to ask how this practice is being challenged. SB responded that the team is exploring areas where they can add value to baseline training, including the introduction of online safety and neurodiversity training.

CC raised a question about opportunities to engage directly with NGBs. In response, SB highlighted the national away day and Keep Your Child Safe Week as key opportunities to showcase and promote safeguarding. GR also noted that many clubs struggle to recruit Welfare Officers and suggested exploring ways to encourage more individuals to take on the role. GR emphasised the importance of bringing safeguarding policies to life. CC proposed the idea of creating a video, potentially featuring a young woman who SB had mentioned who had recently become a Welfare Officer, to help raise awareness and inspire others. SB commented that toolkits for new welfare officers would be beneficial and confirmed that an animation focused on sport welfare is currently in development.</td></tr>
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<tr><td>8.</td><td>Overview and update on Place Programme – including investment and capacity implications for AKM</td><td colspan="3">AM advised that work is progressing in Thanet and Gravesham, with leadership training scheduled for 2nd and 3rd December in Gravesham. Recruitment for the Community Connectors currently being finalised – two for Thanet and one for Gravesham. Governance structures are being explored.

AM continued that in Thanet, a successful test-and-learn project was complete, with key learnings embedded into ongoing work. The initiative has been positively received, demonstrating a system-wide approach. A Youth Advisory Panel was established and actively contributed to the evaluation process. The next test-and-learn project will focus on older people, while continuing to involve the Youth Advisory Panel. Interviews for Medway are scheduled to take place tomorrow including people on panel from local areas. Gravesham also had £2m investment into Cascades which will link into the place work.

AM moved on to speak about the Place Universal Offer (PUO), valued at £665K, will focus on continuing support for the family hub work, Every Day Active (EDA) schools, and expanding our EDA campaign. Targeted local work will be delivered in Maidstone, Dartford, Ashford, and Folkestone & Hythe. Adding that it included for SEND provision in Ashford and funding for evaluation and learning, potentially involving a university partner. The outcome of the bid is expected in December.</td></tr>
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<tr><td rowspan="3"></td><td></td><td colspan="3">GR noted that PUO is the area the Board is least familiar with and stressed the importance of routing it through the Projects and Programmes Committee. LD confirmed that we had included this within the submission as part of the governance arrangements for this investment.

AM highlighted the introduction of new EDA champions who will lead focus groups and gather community insight. CS shared that Ashford’s Health Alliance has identified young people as a priority group. CC queried the existing collaboration with the Active Travel team’s programmes, noting that uptake has been limited—potentially due to funding constraints. AM confirmed that there will be opportunities to work more closely with the Active Travel team as part of the place-based work.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Action Items</td><td>Action</td><td>Assigned To</td><td>Due Date</td></tr>
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<tr><td>9.</td><td>AKM Approach to Marketing and Communications</td><td colspan="3">GR advised to take the paper as read.

BG noted that while statistics are strong, engagement with the Active Kent & Medway website remains low and suggested exploring ways to drive more traffic to the site. AM explained that reports, which were previously hosted on the website, are now produced using Canva, which offers a more visually appealing and user-friendly format. Additionally, we lose traffic, as our website is primarily used to signpost users to further information externally hosted.

GR commented that the main website feels static, and although organisations engage with the partnership, there is concern that they are not actively participating. He suggested that place-based work may help improve this. He also questioned how organisations are interacting beyond signing the pledge and whether they are contributing to the Move Together initiative. A discussion followed around how to highlight ongoing organisational engagement. BG queried whether there was a way to showcase what organisations have done post-pledge, perhaps in the newsletter.

GR noted that LinkedIn followers for Active Kent & Medway remain low. AM also added that there may be some duplication with followers from the EDA account, and that work was required to ensure they were following the most relevant page. The group discussed strategies to increase page followers through improved targeting and questioned whether a professional LinkedIn account is in place.

AM highlighted that place-based work will allow for more targeted engagement and better mapping of the user journey. CC raised a concern that the EDA website does not allow users to search by location, which may be a barrier to access. User testing was suggested as a way to better understand this issue. AM confirmed that some testing was conducted when the site first launched, but none has been done since.</td></tr>
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<tr><td rowspan="2">Action Items</td><td>Action</td><td>Assigned To</td><td>Due Date</td></tr>
<tr><td>Lucy Tomlinson to attend next Board meeting to take any further questions re Marketing and Communications activity.</td><td>AM/ LD</td><td>Jan 26</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">10.</td><td>KPI Update</td><td colspan="3">GR noted that the availability and consistency of equalities data remains a concern. AM commented that, compared to the same period last year, the number of individuals reached through programmes has decreased due to the conclusion of the Together Fund and Opening School Facilities (OSF) funding. However, current place-based work and multisport initiatives are expected to help increase reach again.

AM acknowledged that data on equalities and disability remains inconsistent, but conversations are ongoing to improve reporting and data collection. Work is also being done with Sport England, who are currently developing a new system of metrics for reporting. The system is now in its second phase of development, and the team is actively involved in shaping its design.

AM advised that efforts are underway to embed customer satisfaction data more effectively into reporting and evaluation frameworks. This aims to improve understanding of partner perceptions and enhance the overall quality of insight.</td></tr>
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<tr><td>11.</td><td>Finance Update</td><td colspan="3">KB advised that income is currently on track and performing as expected. However, due to KCC’s recent change in finance systems, there is a two-month delay in receiving fully accurate expenditure figures. An underspend of £228k has been identified, primarily within the Place work, as programmes have only recently commenced. The audit process is underway, with sample checks being conducted.

GR raised a query regarding staffing costs, noting that they remain the largest area of expenditure. He asked whether KCC had removed paid progression. LD confirmed that the Total Contribution Pay (TCP) system has been removed. The members discussed salary planning, with the assumption that a 3% increase will apply next year. However, it was noted that confirmation of any increase typically comes after the start of the new financial year.

GR raised a query regarding the level of protection around Public Health (PH) funding. LD confirmed that £300,000 payment for this with this year’s allocation expected to be received in December, which would take us through to</td></tr>
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<tr><td rowspan="2"></td><td></td><td colspan="3">March 2026. We are awaiting confirmation (expected) of MoU to take us to 2028. GR noted that several substantial posts are funded through this grant, highlighting it as a key financial risk and to ensure it was in our Risk Register.</td></tr>
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<tr><td rowspan="2">12.</td><td>Annual Governance Cycle and Key Dates</td><td colspan="3">SBa shared the new governance cycle document which aims to give the Board greater oversight of the whole annual process, outlining key documents and processes in the governance cycle. SBa requested that dates for the 2026–27 Board Meetings be agreed to enable preparation for the next cycle.

The new annual events document was also discussed, as a tool to help align the team and Board members. It will be shared as a tab on Microsoft Teams, which prompted a discussion about Board members’ access to the platform.

It was agreed that future committee meetings should be scheduled to take place ahead of Board meetings. SBa will co-ordinate and organise all meeting dates.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Action Items</td><td colspan="3"><table><tr><th>Action</th><th>Assigned To</th><th>Due Date</th></tr><tr><td>Liaise with Cantium regards Board members access to Teams</td><td>KB</td><td>31/10</td></tr><tr><td>Schedule Board meetings for 26-27</td><td>SBa</td><td>15/11</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>13.</td><td>Audit, Risk and Governance Committee Update</td><td colspan="3">DL advised of a positive meeting and TM’s first, with BG co-opted to support the committee’s work in KE’s absence. Two new Board member candidates were presented: Nick Jennings, recommended for the Finance role following a meeting with GR and LD; and Timothy Oladimeji, who met virtually with DL and LD. DL elaborated that Timothy brings valuable lived experience, a background in education (complimentary to existing Board members experience), and strengths in equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Board unanimously approved both appointments. It was also noted that a new Board member is needed to represent the health sector, and members were asked to forward any potential candidates to DL for consideration as well as requesting LD to go out to recruit as well. Ensuring a geographical spread of Board members, from across the county was also highlighted as a consideration. (Including potentially Medway/ Swale to reflect Place investment)

DL advised that the Reserves Policy was discussed alongside the governance maturity matrix and the risk register. The committee reviewed the organisation’s risk appetite and asked the Board to approve it as outlined in the paper. The only area requiring further discussion was reputational risk.</td></tr>
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		GR noted that, as a hosted organisation, reputational exposure is considered low risk due to the shielding provided by the host authority. LD added that it's also highlighted how positive it is to have a funder like Sport England—who supports a culture of testing and innovation and who we also have a very transparent relationship with. CS commented that we have the governance structures in place, where issues to reputational risk could be openly discussed, to help to safeguard the organisation against potential threats. The higher risk appetite was approved. The Annual Governance Statement and Accounts was presented to the Board for approval. It was noted that next year's away day will include a discussion on the contents of the document and whether it should be combined with the Annual Report into a single document, with more direction from Board members. The Annual Governance Statement and Accounts was approved.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
		Upload annual governance statement and accounts to website	SBa	20/10
		Add agreed risk appetite to the Risk Register	SBa	20/10
14.	Strategic Projects and Programme Committee Update	CS advised that the first meeting of the committee was held and served as a scene-setting exercise to identify areas where the committee can add value and offer challenge. CS added that LD presented an overview of the partnership's various programmes, and it was agreed that the next meeting would focus on Health, based on risk assessment of the programmes. LD noted that this would also provide an opportunity to consider EDA too and the PH investment. CS advised that it had been agreed that the ToR should be revised to allow for ad hoc meetings outside of the three scheduled per year, providing flexibility for timely decision-making. GR requested that the Board should have sight of any decisions made during these additional meetings.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
		Schedule meetings for 26-27	SBa	15/11
15.	Any Other Business and Date of Next Meeting	The next Board meeting is scheduled to take place on 20th January via Teams.		
		-	-	-