Board Meeting Notes

Meeting	Active Kent and Medway Partnership Board	Date	28th July 2026
Location	Online via Teams	Time	10.30am – 12.30pm

Board Members	**Derek Lewis** (Chair)**, Chris Morgan, Claire Shelton, Barbara Grogan, Caz Conneller, Nick Jennings, Timothy Oladimeji, Tom Marchant** (Kent County Council – Host Representative), **Liz Davidson** (AP Director),
Board Members Present	Derek Lewis (DL), Nick Jennings (NJ), Chris Morgan (CM), Barbara Grogan (BG), Caz Conneller (CC), Tom Marchant (TM), Liz Davidson (LD)
Attendees Present	Nicky Affleck (NA, Affleck & Co.), Andrea Murphy (AM, Active Kent and Medway for Item 10) , Karen Bird (KB, Active Kent and Medway for Item 11) and Selina Baker (SB) (Active Kent and Medway – Governance)

Item No.	Item	Comments		
1.	**Welcome, Introduction and Apologies for Absence**	Apologies were noted from CS, who had provided some comments and questions on the Board papers to DL in her absence. DL welcomed Nicky Affleck, who attended as an observer for the external Board effectiveness review. CC and BG had confirmed they would join the meeting at 11am.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
		-	-	-
2.	**Declarations of Interest**	No declarations of interest were received.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
		-	-	-

3.	**Minutes of the Last Meeting**	The minutes of the last meeting held on 6th May 2026 were approved as an accurate record.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
		-	-	-
4.	**Matters Arising not Covered by this Agenda**	There were no matters arising that were not otherwise covered elsewhere on the agenda.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
		-	-	-
5.	**Chair's Update**	DL noted that he continues to meet regularly with LD. He reported that three Board members had signed up to the new mentoring scheme and encouraged any others interested in taking part to contact SB. DL also referred to the recent Board recruitment process and thanked Board members who had contributed to it.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
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6.	**Directors Report including Sport England Investment Update**	The paper was taken as read. LD highlighted the significant commitment and resilience demonstrated by staff during a period of considerable organisational uncertainty, including ongoing discussions regarding independence, LGR, senior leadership team changes and the forthcoming Sport England (SE) funding cycle. The Board acknowledged the team's positive response to these challenges and welcomed the recently established Management Team, which will support communication, coordination and workforce wellbeing. It was noted that activity within the Active Environments workstream had been temporarily paused following a staff departure, with LD confirming that funders and partners had been kept informed. Recruitment decisions would be considered once greater clarity had been received on future funding arrangements and the organisational structure. Questions around organisational capacity were discussed, with LD noting that the quieter summer period had helped ease pressures. Members were also advised that recruitment to a Finance Assistant post would commence shortly.		

The Board discussed the development of AKM's Place-based work and the potential implications of forthcoming Place Full Awards, including future workforce requirements. LD advised that any additional Place-related capacity would likely continue to be hosted within community partner organisations. Current indications suggest Place funding could continue until 2031, and future planning would focus on embedding Place-based working as a core part of AKM's operating model rather than a standalone programme.

Opportunities to strengthen the tracking of outcomes for young leaders supported through AKM programmes were discussed as well as the potential future value of AKM's neighbourhood scan methodology, noting that there may be opportunities to commercialise the approach in the future. The importance of ensuring that any associated intellectual property is protected and appropriately transferred as part of the move to independence was highlighted.

LD provided an update on developments at SE, including the appointment of its new Chief Executive and the organisation's increasing focus on demonstrating impact through both quantitative and qualitative evidence. It was noted that further clarity regarding reporting and measurement expectations is expected in the coming months.

An update was also provided on the forthcoming SE System Partner investment process. Active Partnerships will be invited to submit funding applications between September and October 2026, with the investment programme expected to build on the existing Uniting the Movement strategy. Early indications suggest a modest increase in available funding compared with the current cycle, with Active Kent & Medway's indicative funding allocation expected within the next fortnight. Given the significance of the application and the timing of the submission window, the Board agreed that an additional meeting would be arranged to review and approve the final submission prior to submission.

	Action	Assigned To	Due Date
Action Items	Forward SE slides	LD	10/08
	Schedule interim Board meeting RE: SE funding application	SB	30/08

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<tr><td rowspan="4">7.</td><td>Strategic People Review</td><td colspan="3">The Board received the findings of the independent Strategic People Review and viewed a presentation summarising the methodology, key findings and recommendations. They welcomed the positive assessment of AKM's culture, leadership and workforce. Members noted the opportunities identified to further strengthen organisational development, learning and future capability.

Discussion focused on the transition to independence and the associated cultural shift from a KCC-hosted service to an independent organisation. LD advised that whilst some compliance-based training currently provided through KCC would need to be replicated through alternative systems, the greater opportunity was to develop a stronger culture of learning, mentoring and continuous professional development.

Members welcomed the emphasis on coaching, mentoring and leadership development, including greater engagement between Board members and staff through knowledge-sharing and support. The Board recognised the opportunity presented by independence to strengthen organisational ownership, autonomy and culture, and agreed that the transition should be viewed as a collective endeavour rather than a distinction between Board and staff.

CS's comments were noted, highlighting the importance of aligning the refreshed People Plan with AKM's future purpose and operating model. Priority areas identified included future capability requirements, capacity and succession planning, leadership development, knowledge-sharing and key skills such as systems leadership, influencing, evaluation, data, finance and governance.

The Board supported the development of a refreshed People Plan, with a stronger focus on organisational development, learning and culture. Members also welcomed the proposal to introduce a Board People Champion role to support this work. The Board confirmed that its role would be to provide strategic oversight, monitor progress and ensure alignment with organisational priorities, rather than becoming involved in operational people management.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Action Items</td><td>Action</td><td>Assigned To</td><td>Due Date</td></tr>
<tr><td>Develop refreshed People Plan</td><td>LD/SMT</td><td>31/03</td></tr>
<tr><td>Identify Board Workforce Champion</td><td>LD/DL</td><td>31/08</td></tr>
<tr><td>8.</td><td>KPI Update</td><td colspan="3">The paper was taken as read.</td></tr>
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		AM advised that AKM remains in a strong position on data collection, while awaiting further guidance from SE on future reporting requirements. Positive engagement was reported across the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning series, Everyday Active Schools and Everyday Active workshops, supporting a broad range of partners and stakeholders. Participation data also showed strong engagement in disability-focused activity, particularly through the School Games programme. AM also noted that AKM has begun requesting postcode data, as it has done with Active Lives. AM noted that forthcoming Place-based funding awards and the introduction of the Moving Communities platform may create additional data collection and reporting requirements. Given AKM's move towards independence, forthcoming Place submissions and the application for future SE System Partner funding, she advised that it was timely to review the current KPI framework. Future reporting may need to include measures relating to organisational development, independence milestones and workforce development, and Board input was invited on the information needed to provide meaningful oversight of organisational progress. DL advised that the strategic topic for the next Board meeting would be impact, which should help inform discussion on future KPIs that better reflect AKM's strategic and system leadership role.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
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9.	**Finance Update**	The paper was taken as read. KB advised that an underspend from the previous year was identified, however it was intended to fully utilise the award by the end of the funding cycle. Discussions focused on future reserves management, particularly in light of the proposed transition to independence and the need to distinguish between operational reserves and those held for future pension or employment liabilities. It was noted that restricted reserves currently stand at approximately £500,000. DL advised that this would be an important area over the coming year and suggested that the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee review it in more detail in the short term before reporting back to the Board.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
		Add reserves to ARG agenda	SB/BG	30/08

10.	**Board Recruitment**	DL advised that following consideration by the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee in June, two rounds of interviews were held in July, resulting in three recommended candidates, of which information had been circulated in the Board pack. Members discussed the preferred candidates' skills and experience, and how these would strengthen the Board's collective expertise. DL noted that Chris Manley, the proposed Senior Independent Board Member, was already known to both DL and NJ and had worked with AKM. The appointment of Chris Manley as Senior Independent Board Member; and Jo Ferry and James Duncan as Board members was approved with effect from 1st August.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
		Inform new members of appointment and arrange induction	SB	31/07
11.	**Audit, Risk and Governance Committee Update**	BG advised that the June Committee meeting had focused primarily on Board recruitment, with other risk-related matters linked to the independence decision already covered elsewhere on the agenda.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
		-	-	-
12.	**Remuneration Committee Update**	DL advised that the Terms of Reference had been updated to reflect the committee's responsibility for setting LD's objectives and appraising her performance. The Terms of Reference were approved.		
	Action Items	**Action**	**Assigned To**	**Due Date**
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<tr><td rowspan="2">13.</td><td>Any Other Business and Date of Next Meeting</td><td colspan="3">The Board discussed Committee membership for the new Board members.
It was agreed that James Duncan would be appointed to the Structural Review Committee given his HR experience.
Chris Manley, as Senior Independent Board Member, would automatically sit on the Structural Review and Remuneration Committees.
Jo Ferry was proposed for the Projects and Programmes Committee.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for 13th October at the Kent Event Centre.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Action Items</td><td>Action
Assign new Board members to Committees</td><td>Assigned To
LD/DL</td><td>Due Date
10/08</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">14.</td><td>Review of Meeting</td><td colspan="3">DL advised that all future meetings would conclude with a short review to assess their effectiveness and invited feedback from participants. LD noted that the short video update had been a good format, with other Board members in agreement. DL praised the quality of the decision paper on independence, noting that this had been integral in helping the Board to make this key decision.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Action Items</td><td>Action
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