Minutes of the meeting of the Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board
Pride in Place Sheppey East
Thursday 8th October 2026 at 7.00pm
At Little Groves Holiday Park Village

Present:
Garry Ratcliffe (Chairman); Bobbie Taiano; Tracy Rogers; Serena Williams; Peter Constant; Lee Jarmain; Gary Hunt; Lee-Anne Moore and Kevin McKenna.

In Attendance:
Ashley Jones (Community Engagement Officer); Chris White (Minute Taker)

Apologies:
Danny Mays; Nathan Wood; Dean Grace Hicks; Jamie Woodrow and Nicola Waghorne

Observers: None

1 Welcome
The Chair Garry Ratcliffe welcomed members and attendees to the meeting and thanked Little Groves holiday park once again for hosting the meeting. The minutes of the meeting held on 17th September were reviewed page by page and were agreed and approved by all present, the Chair gave thanks to Christine for the quality of the minutes and for the speed in distributing them.

2. Disclosure of interests
Members were reminded of the declaration and register of interests' requirements and the standards expected of board members. There were no additional interests relevant to the meeting declared. Members were reminded that disclosure of interests would be an agenda item at each board meeting and were asked to raise any conflicts or interests with the Chair or secretariat.

3. Chair Update
The Chair said it had been very busy since the previous board meeting and reported visits to Minster, Warden and Leysdown Parish Councils with Eastchurch to follow. All visits had been extremely positive and welcoming. Garry had invited all three of the parish councils he visited to suggest any thoughts and ideas on possible quick wins through an appointed link person to Ashley Jones, Community Engagement Officer. The Chair commented on Warden parish council's strong feelings on their own identity. The Chair had met the central government delivery team, including the new delivery officer, Emily Atwood-Hermanis. The Chair reported on how the neighbourhood board had been set up and the excellent working relationship with Swale Borough Council, it was reiterated we would be looking to meet the November deadline to submit the Pride in Place plan. There was further discussion around the possibility of the neighbourhood board becoming an entity in its own right.

The three team members will be invited to spend a weekday morning in Sheppey East during November so they can see the area outside of the summer season, the date for this would be publicised once it has been arranged.
A positive meeting had also taken place with the principal of the Leigh Academy. A short pupil survey will be developed and the results filtered by postcode. An approach will be made to local Councillor Tara Noe so that her ward role can contribute to the programme. Finally the Chair had met with Vice Chair Peter Constant to talk through both the draft plan and investment plan.

Action: The Chair will publicise the central government team's visit once the date is fixed.

Action: The Chair and Ashley Jones will develop a five-question pupil survey with the Leigh Academy, with postcode-filtered results.

Action: The Chair and Ashley Jones will follow up with Councillor Tara Noe and invite her involvement.

4. Board Member's Update and engagement feedback
Peter Constant reported from the Island Forum where forum members discussed the long running campaign for a brown tourism sign from the M2 signposting to the Isle of Sheppey and tourist attractions. Lee -Anne stressed that existing campaigners must be involved and credited.

Action: Kevin McKenna offered to establish the current position with the Under Secretary of State Justin Meadows and look at requesting a brown visitor sign signposting from the M2 to the Isle of Sheppey. Kevin said this could be a really good quick win as it had been an issue that had been talked about for many years.

Lee Anne Moore reported that a new Explorer Scout section for 14 -18-year-olds had opened in Eastchurch and was willing to host engagement with young people. Guides, schools, cadets and any other youth groups should also be approached so that the youth voice is not limited to one organisation. Ashley agreed to liaise with Lee-Anne around further youth engagement.

Gary Hunt suggested a resource audit and simple customer relationship management (CRM) system to reduce duplication and connect existing services. Ashley suggested we should get a meeting of local voluntary and community providers together possibly with the help of Swale CVS to help inform a database of local resources and services already working in East Sheppey. Chris White agreed to meet with Ashley outside of the meeting to look at putting a meeting together.

Members also highlighted non-digital communications, noticeboards, faith and community connectors, befriending, digital inclusion, mentoring, violence against women and girls, prevention and the White Ribbon model. The Chair reminded the board we should enable capable local delivery partners rather than directly operate services.

Action: Programme officers will research proportionate, low-cost CRM's and resource audit options, building on the Swale CVS activities and services directory.

5. Discuss the Draft Pride in Place Plan and socialise the Draft Investment Plan
To be discussed in the continuation meeting scheduled for Monday 12th October at 7 pm Chris White was asked to circulate a Teams invitation.

6. Branding and Marketing of the Pride in Place Programme
The Chair circulated an initial communications proposal and a desktop review of potential suppliers. Members agreed that communications and branding must begin promptly, while any longer-term contract should follow an appropriate procurement process and include measurable outcomes, particularly for social media. No supplier appointment was made at this meeting. Danny Mays, Programme Manager had put in a budget of between £40,000 - £80,000 for future branding and marketing. Further discussion to follow at the online meeting scheduled for Monday 12th October.

Action: The Chair will circulate the communications proposal and desktop market review for discussion at the online continuation meeting.

7. Vision, Aims and Priorities
The Chair shared the 'Our Vision' document with the headline:
'Proud, connected and open all year'
Five supporting themes were proposed:

- Connected
- Healthy
- Inspired
- All Year
- Safe

Members agreed to take the wording away for consideration with the discussion deferred to the online continuation meeting on Monday 12th October.

8. Community Engagement Officer's Report
Ashley Jones, Community Engagement Officer reported that the initial engagement phase ended on 30th September with over 850 resident interactions which is broadly equivalent to 10% of the Sheppey east population. The next engagement phase will road test emerging ideas and themes with residents, businesses and community groups.
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Further work had included a business discussion at the Harty Ferry; youth-project conversations; possible walking and running routes; and an Elmley National Nature Reserve proposal for four annual apprenticeships for young people that were not in education, employment or training (NEETS)).

Action: Ashley will review the Elmley apprenticeship proposal and present it for further consideration.

Quick Wins

1) Half term crafting activities - Ashley reported he would be running October half-term activities for families making Halloween and autumn decorations at the Eastern Sheppey Community Hub in Leysdown and the Sheppey Matters Hub in Eastchurch also providing further engagement opportunities with the attendees.

Decision: Up to £500 was approved to be spent across both locations for the room hire, Halloween and autumn materials and promotion of the activities

2) Leysdown Christmas Market - Members considered lantern-making and a small lantern parade linked to the market on 12th December, organised by Mary Culver and up to 25 local volunteers. Big Fish Arts was suggested as a potential delivery partner, subject to availability.

Decision: Up to £1,500 was approved for the Christmas activity, including professional arts support, materials and promotion.

3) **Pride in Place Launch Fund** - A request for equipment for Warden Bay Boxing Club prompted a discussion about fairness, transparency and possible perceived favouritism. Members preferred an open small-grants process for clubs and community organisations, clearly presented as a non-recurring Pride in Place Launch Fund.

Decision: The Board agreed to allocate £10,000 to a launch fund, subject to an open application and assessment process. Individual awards, including any award to the boxing club, will be considered through the process.

Action: Ashley Jones agreed to put together a micro-grant application template, publicise the fund and propose assessment arrangements and dates for Board approval.

4) **Eastchurch football goals.** Replacement goals at Anne Boleyn Close were proposed in direct response to feedback from young people at an indicative cost of approximately £1,000.

Decision: The Board agreed in principle to fund the replacement football goals, subject to final quotations and suitable installation and maintenance arrangements.

Action: Ashley Jones will obtain quotations and confirm ownership, installation and ongoing maintenance arrangements.

5) **Community Noticeboards** - Pride in Place branded noticeboards for the three parishes were supported in principle by members. No expenditure was approved pending consultation, locations, full costs and maintenance commitments.

Action: Ashley Jones will consult parish councils and clerks and return with locations, supply and installation costs and written maintenance arrangements.

9. Commitment to Photography Project
Ashley Jones reported on a 16-week photography project led by graduate Jessica Bootes. The project would use photography to celebrate the natural and historical character and pride in the Sheppey East area engaging and encouraging young people to become involved. There would be exhibitions at the end of the project which could support with extending the season. Board members supported the concept of the project but requested clearer outputs, outcomes, marketing, accessibility arrangements and costings.

Decision: The board agreed the photography project in principle with an indicative maximum cost of £6,000, subject to a costed proposal and compliance with procurement requirements

Action: Ashle**y** will obtain a final costed proposal covering outputs, accessibility and marketing information.

10. Next Steps
A one- hour online continuation meeting was arranged for Monday 12th October 2026 at 7.00 pm for one hour. The meeting will focus on the draft Pride in Place Vision, the draft Pride in Place plan and Investment plan, branding, marketing and communications. Christine was asked to circulate our vision document and this would be the first item to be discussed at the online meeting. All members present agreed that in the future further online meetings would need to held in between the face to face meetings to ensure continuity of the work of the neighbourhood board.
Action: Working groups that were set up at the last meeting were asked to identify a lead for each group and arrange meetings as required.

11. Any Other Business
Board members were encouraged to join engagement activities where availability allowed and to share opportunities through the Board's communication channels. The possibility of a local media contact and a celebrity ambassador with a genuine connection to east Sheppey was raised for future exploration.

Members supported a small Pride in Place presence at the church Christmas tree festival and requested that the dates for the half-term sessions be shared in the board Whatsapp group.

Action: Ashley Jones will share the half-term activity dates in the board Whatsapp group.

12. Date of Next Meeting:

Additional online meeting on Monday 12th October from 7.00pm – 8.pm
on Microsoft Teams, Chris to send out a Teams invitation.

The next scheduled face to face meeting will be held on Thursday 5th November 2026 starting at 7.00 pm at Eastchurch Cricket Club, ME12 4BN

The entrance is partially concealed and accessed through a driveway located between two houses on the left- hand side of the high street. There is ample parking at the venue. Refreshments available from 6.45 pm

The meeting closed at 9.07pm