

**MINUTES OF THE ASHFORD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP  
HELD ON 18 JUNE 2015  
AT  
ASHFORD BUSINESS POINT**

**Present:** Terry Botfield (Chair), Andrew Osborne, Heather Grigson, Mandy Bearne, Graham Galpin, Richard Stafford, Bryan Hall, Hugh Summerfield, Geoff Hilton, Gary Heard,  
Guest speaker – Fergus Pryor from Cathedral Group

Before the meeting started TB introduced Fergus Pryor and asked members of the group to introduce themselves and say a few words about the company they represented.

**1. Minutes of the last meeting**

These were agreed to be a true record and TB signed them.  
There were no matters arising

**2. Chairman's Comments and Report**

TB reported that there had been some responses to the application for the Outlet Centre and that he would circulate the information to the committee and asked for feedback from the committee so that he could report back.

HS was concerned that the quality of the food at the Outlet Centre was stopping people going to the town centre. AO said things would change and people would be using the town centre and the Outlet Centre would be providing for the people visiting the Outlet Centre.

Broadband – the Chamber is interested in taking this forward across the county. Fibre cables are available in certain areas.

TB welcomed Graham Galpin back on to the committee

Joanne Fowler who works for the college and reports to the Principle of Hadlow Group is going to sit on the AEDG and WKEDG

Aylene Hicks who is a member of the council is to cover Education and Skills.

**3. Fergus Pryor from the Cathedral Group** gave a presentation about the works they have carried out in the south east.

Fergus finished his presentation by saying that their company is looking at a lot of sites around Kent. GG said Cathedral Group is showing an interest in Victoria Way and Ashford Borough Council is very keen to have their interest.

**4. Portfolio Reports**

RS reported that the business is very busy and they are running out of units. The retail market is picking up. His company has taken on a new member of staff. MB said it has become harder and harder to place companies in the area

HS reported that banks are still quite keen to lend money and the rates should settle shortly.

BH reported that the new membership brochures are out. Membership is going to push the Ashford/Canterbury areas over the next few weeks. Sarah Trotter is going to be helping out with membership in the Ashford and Swale areas.

GG reported that contracts have now been exchanged on Park Mall. AO added that the main areas would be retail and the image is to be improved.

HG said they are watching closely the revamp of Bank Street but had nothing else to report.

Because of the time factor everyone else said they would wait until the next meeting to report.

TB said he would report back on the Lydd airport meeting next time but would send out the bullet points prior to that date

Date of next meeting: **16 July at 4pm**