

PART I MINUTES
of the Board meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC)
held at 11.30 on Wednesday 16 December 2015 at
the North Kent Community Centre

Board Members Present:

Michael Cassidy CBE (Chairman)
David Holt (Deputy Chairman)
Cllr John Cubitt (Gravesham Borough Council)
Cllr Mark Dance (Kent County Council)
Louise Hardy
Cllr Jeremy Kite MBE (Dartford Borough Council)
Bob Lane OBE
David Lock CBE
Katie Perrior

Apologies:

None

In Attendance:

Tracey Coleman	EDC Chief Planning Officer
Steve Pritchard	EDC Director of Land and Regeneration
Gerard Whiteman	EDC Finance Director
Louise Wyman	EDC Strategy Director
Ruth Collins	DCLG Sponsor Team
Katie Law	DCLG Sponsor Team
Sarah Williamson	DCLG Sponsor Team
James Richardson	Board Secretary

The Chair opened the meeting, welcoming members of the public to Part I of the meeting.

The Chair informed the Board and those present that Robin Cooper had left his post as Chief Executive of the Corporation.

Item 1

Apologies

01.9.15 No Apologies were received.

Declarations of interest

02.09.15 The Chair reminded Board members to raise any potential conflicts in relation to specific issues under discussion, and of their responsibility not to participate in the discussion or determination of any matter in which they have an interest. No declarations were made.

Part 1 Minutes of the 18 November 2015 Board Meeting

03.09.15 The Part I minutes were approved.

Board Actions

04.09.15 James Richardson confirmed that all actions from previous Board meetings were complete, not yet due or were due to be considered as agenda items at the meeting.

Item 2 Major Sites and Infrastructure Update (Paper 15 / 061)

05.09.15 Tracey Coleman presented the Board with a new report that sought to capture the key information relating to planning history, current planning situation and developer obligations for sites with the EDC area. The report also contained information on developer contributions and obligations secured through Section 106 Agreements or planning conditions. The intention of the report - which would evolve over time and that would be provided to the Board monthly - was to provide transparency of the work being carried out and assist with monitoring.

06.09.15 The Board agreed that the information provided in the report would be crucial for Board members' understanding of the sites and the issues. Bob Lane highlighted the importance of making sure that the information was factored into the work on Masterplanning. Katie Perrior noted that at some of the recent Masterplanning engagement events it was clear that people did not always understand some of the significant land challenges affecting delivery, and the report could assist in managing expectations by clarifying these issues.

07.09.15 Cllr Kite welcomed the report but felt that the current draft format lacked a narrative about what the EDC was attempting to achieve at each site, including the intention and objective for each. He said that the report should also highlight any issues within Dartford or Gravesham that affected each site.

08.09.15 David Holt welcomed the report and requested that officers ensure that the various EDC Board and performance reports are joined up. He added that colour coding might be added to the Major Sites report, showing the stage of planning, timings of home delivery and underlying spend. David Holt highlighted the quarterly Housing Delivery report as another performance report that covered similar territory, and Board members supported a single report showing progress where possible. David Holt offered to provide support to the EDC in developing its reporting tools.

09.09.15 Board members considered the impact of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) that applied in Dartford but not Gravesham, including how charges would be treated for developments in Ebbsfleet within the Dartford Borough Council area.

10.09.15 Board members asked for an update on when they would be offered a tour of the Ebbsfleet Garden City sites. Louise Wyman confirmed that it was her intention to confirm a date during January, and Board members would be contacted about dates imminently.

11.09.15 The Board **NOTED** the report and **SUPPORTED** its completion monthly for reporting to the Board.

Actions:

09-01	Bring the Major Sites and Infrastructure report to the Board each month, incorporating the changes proposed by the Board on additional content (Tracey Coleman)
09-02	EDC to consider opportunities to rationalise the range of EDC housing delivery, sites and infrastructure reports so that a single report can be developed (Tracey Coleman)
09-03	Deliver a comprehensive Ebbsfleet site tour for the Board in the New Year (Louise Wyman)

Item 3 Planning Service Transition

12.09.15 Tracey Coleman provided a verbal update to the Board on the progress in transitioning to the EDC planning service from January 2016. She said that there were four main areas of work; the implementation of the planning IT system, procuring equipment to support the running of the planning service, staffing, and the provision of a public interface.

13.09.15 Tracey Coleman reported that the planning IT system was the main issue affecting the transition. The system, which was being provided by Idox, would not be available by 4 January and this meant that the continuation of a service level agreement with Dartford Borough Council and Gravesham Borough Council would be required for a further period.

14.09.15 Tracey Coleman said that the main IT system issues were around system connectivity, and this had impacted on the build of the system, on data transfer from Dartford and Gravesham, and on training. There were also delays being caused by Planning Portal changes that impacted on the planned transition date. As a result the project had been re-planned and it was now expected that the system would go live on 1 April 2016. In the meantime some planning functions would transition to the EDC, including planning casework and determinations. All EDC related planning correspondence would continue to be issued with the EDC logo and details.

15.09.15 On equipment, Tracey Coleman reported that the EDC was still awaiting office phones, and these were expected in January alongside a new plotter. On staffing, a planner from Dartford Borough Council would be joining the EDC as a contractor at least part time from January, and interviews would be taking place on 21 December for a permanent Planning Registrations Officer. Job adverts for Principal Planning Delivery Officers and a Planning Officer would be placed before the New Year.

16.09.15 Tracey Coleman thanked Dartford Borough Council, Gravesham Borough Council and Kent County Council and their officers for their continued support.

17.09.15 The Board **NOTED** the issues raised by Tracey Coleman and requested that reports on progress are provided monthly to the Board until the transition is complete.

Actions:

09-04	Tracey Coleman to report to the Board each month on the transition of the planning service to the EDC (Tracey Coleman)
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Item 4 Communications and Engagement Update (Paper 15 / 062)

18.09.15 Louise Wyman updated the Board on the EDC's recent communications and engagement activities, and on the proposed engagement activity for the Phase 2 of the Framework Masterplan project.

19.09.15 There had been significant engagement with the public and partners on the Framework Masterplan earlier in December, including two very well attended session for stakeholders at the Springhead Community Centre on 8 December and six drop-in sessions in w/c 7 December for the public across Ebbsfleet, Dartford and Gravesham. Louise Wyman updated the Board on the key messages arising from the engagement sessions.

20.09.15 Several Board members had attended one or more of the engagement events. Bob Lane and Katie Perrior both remarked that one of the key messages from the events was the positivity of the public and the stakeholders in the Garden City development. Board members agreed that the Corporation needed to deliver quickly and in line with the expectations of the public and stakeholders otherwise this positivity could quickly be lost.

21.09.15 Bob Lane raised the 'central park' concept that had been suggested at some of the events, and that should be considered as part of the Masterplanning work, and Cllr Cubitt highlighted the importance of the Corporation now articulating exactly what it would be doing and when so that local people are clear on the plans and timescales. The Board all agreed that a detailed session with Aecom on the Masterplan project should be arranged for the Board in the New Year, coinciding with the proposed site tour if possible.

22.09.15 Louise Wyman updated the Board on other communication and engagement activities, including the Utilities and Technical Working Group on 9 December, recent press and media coverage, social media activity and the confirmation of a new permanent Head of Communications and Engagement for the Corporation who would be joining in early February 2016. The Board discussed some of the significant utilities challenges affecting delivery, and emphasised the crucial importance of a coherent utilities delivery strategy for enabling development at pace in the Ebbsfleet area.

23.09.15 The Chair updated the Board on the House of Lords Select Committee on National Policy for the Built Environment, where he had been a witness at an evidence session on Ebbsfleet on 1 December.

24.09.15 The Board **NOTED** the communications and engagement progress and plans for the proposed Phase 2 Framework Masterplan engagement activities.

Actions:

09-05	With Aecom, deliver a detailed session for the Board in the New Year on the Masterplan, and form a Masterplan Steering Group involving Board Members (Louise Wyman)
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Item 5 Finance and Operations Report (Paper 15 / 063)

25.09.15 Gerard Whiteman updated the Board on the Corporation's budget, workforce, premises and other operational issues as at 30 November 2015.

26.09.15 Gerard Whiteman confirmed that the total forecast expenditure for the year remained as c. £3.4 million. Recruitment was continuing, with several new staff members having joined in late November and early December, and with several recruitment exercises now underway or about to start. There was continuing delay in DCLG implementing the EDC payroll, and the current expectation was that it would be operational at the end of January.

27.09.15 David Holt asked the Corporation to revisit the progress descriptors for the finance and operational performance indicators in the report as some of these, including that for the planning IT system, did not seem to match the Board's understanding of the issues.

28.09.15 The Board **NOTED** the issues raised by Gerard and **APPROVED** the report.

Actions:

09-06	Update the 'RAG' rating definitions for the performance actions in the monthly Finance and Operations report (Gerard Whiteman)
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Item 6 Responses to Written Questions from Members of the Public

29.09.15 The Chairman summarised the responses to questions submitted by the public in advance of the meeting. A copy of the questions and responses are recorded at the end of these minutes and also published on the EDC website.

The Chair declared the public part of the meeting as closed, thanking those members of the public present for their attendance. He declared that Part Two of the meeting concerning matters solely of commercial or personal confidentiality and for which the public was excluded would commence.

PART TWO

Items 7 – 8 (30.09.15 – 30.09.15) were dealt with as Part II items

Date and Time of Next Meeting

40.09.15 The next meeting of the Board will be held on 20 January 2016 at the North Kent Community Centre. The Quarter 3 meeting of the EDC Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the second meeting of the EDC Planning Committee would be taking place on the same day.

Chairman's signature:

Michael Cassidy

Date:

20 January 2016

Public Questions

EDC Board 16 December 2015

The following questions and responses can also be found on the Corporation's website at www.ebbsfleetdc.org.uk.

- 1. We mentioned to the last Board that EDC staff had accepted our invitation to visit and meet residents and businesses at Bean Triangle. A day later we were informed that the visit arranged for 25th November, by two EDC staff and a DBC Officer, was postponed until 2016. Please explain.**

Response

The EDC is keen to include both its Board Members and Local Councillors in community meetings and events, and invitations of this type are extended to Board Members and Local Councillors. The planned meeting date was not confirmed with enough time to include both groups, and for this reason the meeting has been rescheduled.

- 2. Highways England's presentation at Bean on 7th December said Highway Improvements are to open in 2022/23. Do you agree this is too long to wait?**

Response

The EDC continues to liaise with Highways England to understand their programme - and its context and drivers - for the Bean and Ebbsfleet Junction Improvement works. This dialogue will continue, and we hope it will help to ensure that the best solution for the area is ultimately delivered.

- 3. Three members of our Committee attended the AECOM Masterplan Event (one am and two pm) on 8th December. There was an impressive turn-out of local 'Movers and shakers'. What form will the Masterplan take, as EDC has no statutory planning powers? Won't any Masterplan have to be supplementary planning guidance to be consulted upon and approved by the three Local Authorities? Who will bear increased costs of changes to existing approved Masterplans? To whom will any savings accrue?**

Response

The EDC does not have plan making powers. As such the EDC intends for the Framework Masterplan for the Garden City to be adopted by both Dartford and Gravesham Borough Councils as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), the form and details of which is being discussed with each Council, including the need for additional consultation beyond that being undertaken by EDC. If accepted and approved as a Supplementary Planning Document, it would be material to the determination of future planning applications.

The SPD will better help developers to understand the development vision and expectations for Ebbsfleet Garden City, providing them with greater cost understanding and certainty both in terms of negotiating individual site acquisition and at the time of making planning applications.

4. The 2015 Autumn Statement said the government would:

- a) ... provide £310 million of funding to deliver 15,000 homes at Ebbsfleet. Is this extra to the “up to £200M” announced in March 2014? What is the breakdown?
- b) ... continue to provide funding to support the Ebbsfleet regeneration scheme. What is this and what amount?

Response

In his speech, the Chancellor stated “We’ll extend loans for small builders, regenerate more run-down estates and invest over £300 million in delivering at Ebbsfleet the first garden city in nearly a century”. The £310 million therefore replaces the “up to £200 million” for Ebbsfleet that had previously been announced.

The phasing of the £310 million covers the period 2016/17 to 2020/21 as follows:

- 16/17 £39 million
- 17/18 £46m
- 18/19 £61m
- 19/20 £56m
- 20/21 £109m

Regeneration is mentioned in the HM Treasury documentation on the Spending Review. It states that the Government is “investing £310 million to deliver the first new garden city in nearly 100 years, at Ebbsfleet. This is part of a wider £700 million programme of regeneration at Barking Riverside, Brent Cross, Northstowe and Bicester Garden Town. Together these will support up to 60,000 new homes”.

It also states that “The Government will support growth and job creation through a new wave of Enterprise Zones and extending the Coastal Communities Fund to 2020-21. The Government will support areas to make the most of the economic opportunities created by HS2 and will continue to provide funding to support regeneration schemes at Bicester, Brent Cross, Ebbsfleet and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park”.

Aside from the possibility of Coastal Communities funding there is currently no identified funding over and above the £310million for Ebbsfleet regeneration.

- c) ... extend/expand the North Kent Innovation Zone. Is this an Enterprise Zone? Is it whole of EGC; if not, where are areas?

Response

The North Kent Innovation Zone has been allocated Enterprise Zone status and is a multi-site proposal encompassing three schemes, parts of Ebbsfleet Garden City, Kent Medical Campus and Rochester Airport Technology Park. The Enterprise Zone status does not apply across the whole Ebbsfleet Garden City area, but is focused on areas of vacant land zoned for commercial and industrial use, specifically - Northfleet Embankment East, Northfleet Embankment West and the area to the North East of the International Station.