

PART 1 MINUTES
of the Board meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC)
held at 13:15 on Wednesday 21 February 2018 at
the North Kent Community Centre

Board Members Present:

Michael Cassidy CBE (Chairman)
Cllr Mark Dance (Kent County Council)
Louise Hardy
Bob Lane OBE
David Lock CBE
Ian Piper (EDC Interim CEO)
Sandra Fryer
Cllr David Turner (Gravesham Borough Council)

Apologies:

David Holt (Deputy Chairman)
Cllr Jeremy Kite MBE (Dartford Borough Council)
Sarah Gemmell Board Secretary

In Attendance:

Julia Gregory	EDC Director of Projects
Mark Pullin	EDC Chief Planning Officer
Gerard Whiteman	EDC Finance Director
Mark Templeton	EDC Head of Communications
Kevin McGeough	EDC Head of Strategy and Place-making
Colin Lovegrove	DCLG Policy Team
Jen Hunt	EDC Employment and Enterprise Project Manager
Lorna Hughes	HNT Community Programme Manager
Laura Rushe	<i>For Board Secretary</i>

PART ONE

Item 1

1.1 The Chairman opened Part One of the meeting, reminding attendees that this part of the meeting was being live broadcast.

Apologies

1.2 Apologies were received from David Holt and Jeremy Kite.

Declarations of Interest

1.3 The Chairman reminded Board members to raise any potential conflicts of interests 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 had an interest. No declarations were made.

Part 1 Minutes of the 24 January 2018 Board Meeting

1.4 The Part I minutes were approved.

Board Actions

1.5 The Chairman noted that all actions from previous Board meetings were complete, in progress, or due to be considered as agenda items, as set out in the Board Action Log.

Item 2 Interim Chief Executive's Report

2(a) Interim CEO's Strategic Report (Paper 018/010)

2.1 Ian Piper presented Paper 018/010, updating on the EDC's progress since the January Board. Ian advised that MHCLG had now published the Tailored Review report on findings and was pleased to report that EDC will continue under its current function for at least further five years. The implementation of the report's recommendations was discussed in part II.

2.2 Ian reported that during the past month he had continued to meet with a wide group of stakeholders, which included attending the North Kent and Thames Gateway Partnership Group (David Turner and Mark Dance were also in attendance). Ian asked the Board to note that the Partnership Group had an opportunity to share priorities and influence the work of the Thames Estuary Commission and their subsequent report, due to be published in May 2018, by Sir John Armit. Ian will continue to update the Board on this engagement activity.

2.3 The Board discussed the emphasis on housing numbers versus place and community, particularly referencing amendments to design at an appeal stage. This led to conversation on the assessment process for determining house building targets for District Councils and the pressure to meet this target resulting in applications for house building on greenbelt land.

2.4 Ian was pleased to announce that a suitable candidate was found at the recent interviews held for a Business Support Officer.

2.5 The Board **NOTED** the update.

2(b) Communications and Engagement Update (Paper 018/011)

2.6 Mark Templeton presented Paper 018/011, updating the Board on the EDC's communications activity in the past month.

2.7 Mark reported that the approval of the Berkeley Modular application had the most media coverage over the last month, receiving some national coverage. Other national media included resident case studies in the Evening Standard. Locally, Healthy New Towns received press coverage on the Digital Movement Project. The Chairman and David Lock also quoted in the media in this reporting period linked to the Tailored Review announcement.

2.8 Mark was pleased to report that EDC's website had 4000 visitors last month, with the recruitment page being most popular with 1000 views alone. On social media, the Berkeley and Clarion pieces were the most popular.

2.9 Last month's Board had 112 views of the live stream. The recent video upload received 500 views in the first hour and at the time of writing views had reached 3000.

2.10 Mark had commissioned new drone footage to be taken to show the progress of the Garden City.

2.11 The Board **NOTED** the communications update.

Item 3 **Chief Planning Officer's Report**

Planning and Housing Delivery Programme (Paper 018/012)

3.1 Mark Pullin presented paper 018/012 providing an update on planning and housing delivery across the EDC area. Mark reported that January's Committee saw the outline approval of 220 homes at the Croxton and Garry site near Ingress Park and three applications relating to the Berkeley modular housing factory. The Committee had extensive discussion regarding how Berkeley would store their modular units, particularly the height limitations for 'stacking' units. Mark advised that on 20 February EDC received a request from Berkeley to review the condition relating to height limitations for storing units. Mark will review the request in detail and, if it is deemed necessary, will return to the Committee for consideration.

3.2 Mark advised that Officers are assessing applications for Phase Three of Ebbsfleet Green by Redrow and the last phase at Springhead Park by Countryside. A reserve matters application had been submitted for 103 homes at Craylands Lane.

3.3 EDC and KCC have been working on balancing highway safety and design at Castle Hill South in schemes by Clarion and Taylor Wimpey, in order to create suitable road hierarchy. This stage of the process is to be followed by negotiation with developers on housing typologies and materials. It was confirmed that Planning Performance Agreements are in place. David Lock queried whether this was a Board issue. Mark confirmed that he deemed it appropriate to highlight the Garden City wide issue, the absence of clear street hierarchy; and to provide reassurance to the Board that steps are being taken by EDC and KCC Adoptions and Development teams. This includes beginning to utilise KCC's Design Quality Audit with Developers during pre-applications.

3.4 Separate S106 agreement negotiations are in progress for Northfleet Embankment East and West.

3.5 Mark highlighted to the Board that Highways England had begun its statutory consultation for improvements to the A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet Junctions.

3.6 Mark drew the Board's attention to the latest construction activity. To date there had been 510 starts on site (an increase of two since the time papers were written). This now meets the developers target for the year. The completions figure is 245, which is below target.

3.7 Finally, Mark advised the Board that he and Officers continue to progress work on setting housing targets for 2018/19 and will bring a proposal to the March Board as part of the final draft business plan. Mark highlighted that EDC targets are likely to differ from an accumulation of Developers' targets, as they tend to be overly optimistic. BL asked that, given the disparity between completion forecast and actual completions, if the revised forecast is the best estimate for year end and; whether EDC attributes this disparity to any softening in the market? Mark responded, advising that there are a number of completions coming forward in March to bring EDC closer to this year-end target and; assured the Board that feedback from Developers indicates strength in the housing market. The Chairman reiterated the need for EDC to develop a credible and realistic housing target.

3.8 The Board **NOTED** the planning and housing delivery update.

Item 4 **Finance Director's Report**

Finance and Operations Report (Paper 018/013)

4.1 Gerard Whiteman presented Paper 018/013, reporting on the EDC's budget, workforce, and other operational issues for the month of January.

4.2 Gerard advised that there was little change from last month's report. The EDC are still forecasting to utilise all the 17/18 revenue / operational budget and are forecasting to spend £34.4million of capital by the end of March 2018. The year to date capital spend as at the end of January stands at £23m.

4.3 Finally, Gerard re-confirmed the recruitment of a Business Support Officer.

4.4 The Board **NOTED** the finance and operations update.

Item 5 **Responses to Written Questions from Members of the Public**

5.1 Ian Piper confirmed that questions from the public were received and responded to by EDC Board, which were circulated at the meeting.

5.2 **The Chairman declared the public part of the meeting 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.**