

Ebbfleet Development Corporation

Board Meeting Part One

Date of meeting :	18 May 2016	Agenda item :	EDC 016/035
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Title of paper	Strategic Priorities Update
Presented by	Paul Spooner, Interim Chief Executive
Sub-committee	Not applicable

Purpose of Paper and Executive Summary	
To provide the Board with an update on the interim Chief Executive's assessment of the EDC's strategic priorities.	
EDC business plan and KPIs	The EDC's strategic priorities are geared to enable the business plan and KPIs to be achieved
Recommendation	FOR INFORMATION The Board is asked to DISCUSS and NOTE the progress on the strategic priorities.
Annexes	None
Delegation	Not applicable

Financial impact	Not applicable
Legal impact	There are no legal implications associated with this paper
Stakeholder impact	Not applicable
Sponsor impact	DCLG have been engaged in agreeing the strategic priorities and further details will be contained in the Corporate Plan and Business Plan.

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Strategic Priorities

1. Overall Performance and EDC Dashboard

- 1.1 Board Members will have seen a revised EDC Dashboard showing the picture of our performance as at May 2016. In revising the dashboard we have sought to reflect the desire of the Board to see in one place a summary of our progress, of trends in the housing market and of projected 2016/17 performance. Board will note that the returns from house builders suggest a lower level of completions by year end than previously reported, although the number of projected starts on site in 2016 remains encouraging. From the June Board we will be providing the dashboard monthly as a Part I report item.
- 1.2 The site investigation works at Castle Hill which were causing delays have now been resolved. Countryside and Ward Homes have started on site and Circle and Persimmon propose their start on site within this quarter.
- 1.3 Board will be aware of the national commentary regarding the slowdown in the housing market. The House Builders Federation (HBF) has issued a statement confirming their members' commitment to deliver more homes and indicating that they are confident the construction sector can support this objective. From our discussions with the developers operating locally, they are less concerned about general market uncertainty and continue to believe there is strong demand for their products in this area.
- 1.4 We have considered the Housing Minister's challenge for us to continue to increase build out rates in the Garden City and in our Business Plan Workshop we indicate how this may be achieved, particularly from 2017/18 when we expect more builders to be on site with more products being marketed through more sales outlets. As Board Members will see from other reports, we are focussing our efforts on ensuring that our strategy of forward funding infrastructure is accelerated to give more confidence and certainty to our land owners and developers. As an example of this, in the next month we will be bringing together all the house builders (including new developers who are in the planning stages) and the utility companies to discuss the detailed programme we are establishing for delivering the core utilities, the capacity this will create, and the connections to their sites.

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1.5 We are also making plans to establish a housing summit at the Garden City in July, as discussed with Brandon Lewis MP and his team. The aim of the summit will be to encourage developers to push on with their developments and for the government to understand further any ideas and opportunities they may suggest. More details will be provided for Board members shortly. We now have four house builders signed up to work with us on a new marketing campaign to promote the Garden City to prospective purchasers through national media.

2 Starter Homes

2.1 The HCA has launched a new funding programme to support the development of starter homes. This programme is designed to encourage low cost home ownership and to enable more first time buyers to have access to the market by providing financial support to facilitate more development starts and to support buyers directly. The HCA has agreed with us that although we are not a local authority we can bid for funding from this programme to facilitate development and the creation of starter homes. Helpfully, the HCA has confirmed that this funding can embrace costs associated with creating infrastructure and development platforms for both additional housing sites and for those existing housing sites with planning permission which are stalled.

2.2 As a Part Two update I have enclosed our Expression of Interest bid that includes commercial information about the sites we are suggesting and the total of the funding we are bidding for. DCLG has confirmed this will not affect our existing funding. Our bid is supported by both Gravesham and Dartford Councils. A summary of our bid will be available after the Board Meeting.

3 Utilities

3.1 With the support of the Infrastructure Projects Authority (IPA) in the Cabinet Office, we are progressing the agreements with utility companies and land owners to co-finance and deliver the integrated core utility corridors and provide additional capacity. As we reported last time our plan is to bring a full report to the June Board which will include the business case for significant investment in forward funding a major part of this infrastructure. We have therefore not included a separate update on this Board agenda.

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4 Ebbsfleet Central

- 4.1 We continue to have productive discussions with EIGP on the planning and development of the commercial area. There are two specific developments that are worth noting. First, the Chairman and I have met with the Chief Executive of HS1 and we have agreed that we will form a small project team with EIGP to start work on the planning, design and implementation of future car parking arrangements in order to release land for early phases of new commercial and mixed use development. This project team will report in July and, subject to Board's consideration, their proposals will be incorporated within the EDC's master plan. We continue to work with EIGP's own master planners, Arups, on the joint approach to master planning the whole of Ebbsfleet Central.
- 4.2 Second, since the last Board meeting, we have had approaches from several major developers and occupiers who would be interested in working with ourselves and the land owners to invest within the new Ebbsfleet Central area.

5 Thames Estuary Commission

- 5.1 We have just received notice that Mark Francois MP, Minister of State for Communities and Local Government and a member of Lord Heseltine's Thames Estuary Commission is to visit us on 20th May. The Chairman and I will meet with the Minister and take the opportunity to show him the major development sites and progress in the Garden City. We will also reiterate the points we made to Lord Heseltine about the importance of delivering major transportation improvements with this area.

6 Staff and Team Development

- 6.1 With the agreement of the Chairman and Vice Chairman, we have recruited an experienced interim senior manager to work with us on our infrastructure and investment programme, to lead the projects team and our work on the core utilities infrastructure. We are now close to full establishment with the new permanent Project Director post under recruitment. We will update Board on the Performance and Programme Manager role.

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6.2 We welcome Janet Davies, our new Project Manager (in the projects team) and Michael Jessop, our new Principal Planning Delivery Officer. Nina Shuttleworth will also be joining us, in the Summer, on secondment from DCLG.

7 Independent Programme Assurance Review (IPA) – Project Assessment Review (PAR) by Government

7.1 The planned IPA review has now been completed and we are due to receive their report shortly. I am grateful for the time and contributions of those Board members who have been interviewed.

8 Public Consultation on the Masterplan / Implementation Framework

8.1 Following Board consideration of the Masterplan / Implementation Framework we propose to run a public consultation programme through the Summer and early Autumn.