

PART 1 MINUTES
of the Board meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC)
held at 13:15 on Monday 25 September August 2017 at
the North Kent Community Centre

Board Members Present:

Michael Cassidy CBE (Chairman)
David Holt (Deputy Chairman)
Louise Hardy
Cllr Jeremy Kite MBE (Dartford Borough Council)
David Lock CBE
Paul Spooner
Cllr David Turner (Gravesham Borough Council) [temporary, awaiting formal Secretary of State Approval]

Apologies:

Bob Lane OBE
Cllr Mark Dance (Kent County Council)
Julia Gregory EDC Director of Projects
Sarah Gemmell Board Secretary

In Attendance:

Ian Piper EDC Interim Chief Executive Designate
Mark Pullin EDC Chief Planning Officer
Gerard Whiteman EDC Finance Director
Lucy Hutton DCLG Policy Team
Colin Lovegrove DCLG Policy Team
Jen Hunt *For EDC Director of Projects*
James Richardson *For Board Secretary*

Note: EDC Officers attended to observe and present

PART ONE

Item 1

1.1 The Chairman opened Part One of the meeting. After welcoming those present, the Chair thanked the Interim Chief Executive, Paul Spooner, for his work leading the Corporation since January 2016. Paul was leaving the Corporation that day. The Chair also welcomed Interim Chief Executive designate Ian Piper, who would be taking over from Paul in an interim capacity from 26 September.

Apologies

1.2 Apologies were received from Bob Lane, Councillor Dance, and the EDC Director Projects, Julia Gregory. The Chairman confirmed that the EDC was still waiting formal approval from the Secretary of State for Councillor Turner's appointment to the Board as the nominated Gravesham Borough Council representative, and reconfirmed that until formal approval was received Councillor Turner had full voting rights as a temporary Board Member.

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 16 August 2017 Board Meeting

1.4 The Part I minutes were approved.

Board Actions

1.5 The Chairman confirmed 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 017/061)

2.1 Paul Spooner presented Paper 017/061, providing an update on EDC progress since the August meeting of the Board. He said that highlights over the past month had included:

- the start of UKPN's electricity design work;
- the start of early investigative works on the Springhead Bridge;
- approval from the DCLG Investment Sub-Committee of the business case for investment in the upgrade of Fastrack;
- agreement between all parties on outstanding matters in relation to the Northfleet West development (532 new homes); and
- the opening of the Garden City's first primary school in Castle Hill (Eastern Quarry).

2.2 Paul reported that during September the 700th home in the redline area had been completed, and that for the current year house builders were projecting 444 new homes would be completed, slightly below the EDC's target of 520 units.

2.3 On Garden City highway verge maintenance, Paul reported that progress had been made with KCC and Land Securities to enhance the frequency and quality of maintenance programmes for highways and related landscaping in the area, and confirmed that Land Securities' contractor had agreed to effect immediate improvements to the landscaping around the first two roundabouts off of the A2 which had become overgrown. Paul added that inappropriate lorry parking at these roundabouts continued to present a problem, and that the EDC would report to the Board in October on the progress of work with KCC to resolve this, including through the potential creation of barriers.

2.4 Finally, Paul reported on progress of the potential future Crossrail extension, HS1's research into the economic and tourism impact of the service, and the summary version of the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework that had been produced.

2.5 David Holt asked about obligations on developers in respect of construction traffic. Mark Pullin confirmed he was comfortable that developers were meeting their commitments in relation to construction traffic movements as agreed at the planning application stage of each development, but that the EDC could not control the movement or parking of other lorry traffic in the area.

2.6 The Board acknowledged the upcoming challenges facing the EDC of potentially three NSIP applications in the area at the same time - the A2 upgrade, Theme Park and Lower Thames Crossing, and on the potential future resource pressures on the EDC of these NSIPs.

2.7 David Lock thanked Simon Harrison for his work to produce the summary version of the Implementation Framework. The Board agreed that the document could be finalised once the Chief Planning Officer had signed-off the work.

2.8 Finally, the Board noted that the tender for the South East rail franchise was due soon and that the EDC had input into this work; the Board noted Paul's commitment that details of the tender would be circulated to the Board for information when formally launched.

2.9 The Board **NOTED** the interim CEO's update.

Actions:

01-09	Implementation Framework summary version to be reviewed and signed off by the Chief Planning Officer Action: Mark Pullin
02-09	EDC to circulate details of the SE rail franchise tender exercise once formally launched Action: Julia Gregory

2(b) Communications and Engagement Update (Paper 017/062)

2.10 Mark Templeton presented Paper 017/062, updating the Board on the EDC's communications activity.

2.11 Mark reported on a very positive article in the Estates Gazette that had remarked on the rapid progress the EDC was making, strong national and international publicity for the Healthy New Towns programme, and the featuring of Ebbsfleet in the BBC programme Home Truths and the imminent feature on The One Show before the end of the month. The EDC's stories across communications channels had been seen by an estimated 20 million people in the past month.

2.12 Mark added that the second edition of the Ebbsfleet Garden City magazine had been published at the start of September, at no cost to the EDC, and that since its publication there had now been in excess of 10,000 Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework document downloads from the EDC website. During August, there had been 4,300 individual visitors to the EDC website, representing around 16,000 page views.

2.13 David Holt asked whether the results the EDC was seeing in its communications activity was in line with what the Corporation had hoped to achieve. Mark said that it was, and that there had been a positive shift over the past year; whilst a year ago press stories on Ebbsfleet had often been negative in nature, the majority were now highly positive, and reflected the progress the Corporation had made.

2.14 Councillor Kite asked whether the EDC had plans to separate the EDC corporate website from what would be an increasing demand for community focussed content, for example 'what's on' listings of community events. Mark confirmed that the EDC was

currently still leading the reporting on community events, including deploying a photographer to local activities, and that that there was currently not the resource to begin to lead and build a separate channel. He added that local people were beginning to use social media for some community activity, and he would expect this type of activity to be community-led. The Board agreed that as the Garden City community grew, the EDC should begin to consider future options for separation of channels.

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

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

Planning and Housing Delivery Programme (Paper 017/063)

3.1 Mark Pullin presented paper 017/063 which provided an update on planning and housing delivery across the EDC area. Included with the paper was the EDC's regular planning and housing performance dashboard.

3.2 Mark reported that at the August Planning Committee two applications for Castle Hill and one application for Springhead Park had been approved, providing consents for 250 new homes and also the retail area that would sit at the heart of Castle Hill. The September Planning Committee which would take place that evening would consider one large scheme at Northfleet East, seeking detailed consent for 598 dwellings and other supporting infrastructure and services.

3.3. During the course of the last month several new applications had been received by the EDC, including the reserved matters application for the new 2 form entry primary school and nursery at Springhead Park, an outline planning application for the Croxton & Garry site, and two reserved matters applications for further residential parcels at Castle Hill.

3.4 Mark confirmed that the Board would consider the Eastern Quarry S73 application in more detail as a Part II item, reported a very positive visit to the Garden City from representatives of the Town & Country Planning Association's 'New Communities Group' (TCPA) on 15 September, and summarised the current progress in housing delivery as set out in the dashboard.

3.5 David Lock raised the issue of house price and rental indicators, and requested that this information be provided to the Board regularly. Paul Spooner confirmed that this house price and market information was typically included quarterly in his interim CEO's Part I report, and that the next update would be due soon.

3.6 On housing delivery, David Holt noted that the EDC was currently not expecting to meet the target of 520 completions for 2017/18. He requested that officers begin to provide a more detailed commentary to the Board on housing delivery and specifically any issues holding up pace so the Board could consider how any underlying issues could be dealt with.

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

Actions:

03-09	EDC to provide a greater level of commentary on housing completions and starts for future Board meetings, and specifically any issues/blockers for the Board's
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	attention Action: Mark Pullin
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Item 4 **Finance Director's Report**

Finance and Operations Report (Paper 017/064)

4.1 Gerard Whiteman presented Paper 017/064, reporting on the EDC's budget, workforce, and other operational issues for the month of August. He confirmed that the EDC still expected to utilise all of its revenue budget allocation in 2017/18, and that the Corporation had not yet received confirmation from DCLG that the EDC could retain planning application fee income. DCLG representatives noted the continued delay and agreed to report back to DCLG that the Board was keen for this issue to be resolved to provide the EDC with more certainty on its budget.

4.2 Gerard reported that the EDC was now forecasting capital investment of £21,382k for 2017/18, a reduction from the original estimate, and that the Corporation was discussing with DCLG potential re-profiling of spend to future years.

4.3 On staffing, Gerard reported that three new staff members had started work with the EDC since the last Board meeting, James Richardson within the Finance Directorate, and Che Eade and Jennine Andrews in the Planning team.

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

Actions:

04-09	DCLG to provide formal confirmation on whether EDC planning income can be used to support EDC revenue budget Action: DCLG
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Item 5 **Responses to Written Questions from Members of the Public**

5.1 Paul Spooner summarised the responses to questions submitted by the public. A copy of the questions and responses are published at the end of these minutes.

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.

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

Question 1: On 25 Aug-17, Highways England made their "A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet Junction Improvements Preferred Route Announcement". Sadly, the plans are identical, despite suggestions during the single 'option' consultation (18-Jan to 1-Mar-17). Only the cost has changed, from £123.9m to £127.6m. Will EDC reply to the Scheme Assessment Report (SAR) or await formal consultation?

Highways England set out, through consultation material and supporting technical reports, the rationale for having one proposal for each junction. Highways England has taken cognisance of comments made at the public consultation and will reconsider the removal of the link between the B255 and the A296 as well as review the use of traffic lights as the scheme progresses.

The EDC will be responding to the SAR as part of the formal consultation. Forward funding by the EDC is capped at £45,000,000 any increase in cost will be held by Highways England.

Question 2: The SAR says, "An IDC meeting ... on 18-Jul-17 ... approved an initial £1M of Highways England funding in order for the project to proceed until third party funding is in place. Liaison and ongoing discussions are being held between DCLG, Treasury, DfT and Highways England". Who attends for EDC?

We are represented in these discussions by the Chief Executive and the Director of Projects.

Question 3: There is an 823-word article* on the EDC Web Site, describing the proposed Bean and Ebbsfleet Junction Improvements. Why didn't the author mention it would involve the loss of 11 Homes and a Horse Sanctuary and, so far, no commitment has been made to their relocation nearby?

* <http://ebbsfleetdc.org.uk/2017/08/29/ebbsfleet-development-corporation-invests-45million-in-a2-improvements/>

The article on our website is our press release relating to our investment in the A2 upgrade. As the potential loss of homes is part of the Highways England proposal it would not have been appropriate for us to include it.

Question 4: Is the EQ temporary waste water tank still serving homes in Parcels 1 (Wards Homes), 2 (Persimmon/Circle) and 5 (the School/community centre)? The Retrospective Application for it (17/0007), received on 18-Jan-17, is shown as “Withdrawn” and “Decided” on 23-Aug-17. Please explain.

The planning application for the waste water tank was withdrawn 23 August 2017. The planning IT system classifies a withdrawal as a decision as no further work will be carried out on the application, the case is therefore also classified as decided.

Question 5: Is there a September Planning Committee meeting?

Yes, the papers were published online last week. We are reporting the mixed use residential-led development from Keepmoat at Northfleet East.

Question 6: The Highways England 18-Aug-17 Scheme Assessment Report says, “Third Party Funding is planned to be sourced from Developer S106 contributions via STIPS from Ebbsfleet Garden City development (£25m) and Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) via Ebbsfleet central development (£20m). EDC will underwrite both sources of funding via funding from the DCLG which has been approved by Treasury”. An Outline Construction Programme shows Works starting in March 2020. Will the £45m investment come out of the £310m 5-year EDC allocation? Will it be paid as a lump-sum or in what stages?

The £45m investment from the EDC towards this scheme will come from the 5 year capital allocation. It will be paid to Highways England in stages to coincide with their work activities on the project. The first EDC payment is forecast to occur this financial year (17/18).