

PART I MINUTES
of the Board meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC)
held at 13:00 on Wednesday 15 May 2019
at the North Kent Community Centre, Eastgate
141 Springhead Parkway, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent DA11 8AD

Board Members Present:

Michael Cassidy CBE (Chairman)
David Holt (Deputy Chairman)
Cllr Jeremy Kite
Sandra Fryer
Louise Hardy
Bob Lane OBE
Ian Piper (EDC CEO)

In Attendance:

Julia Gregory	EDC Director of Projects
Mark Pullin	EDC Chief Planning Officer
Gerard Whiteman	EDC Finance Director
Colin Lovegrove	MHCLG Policy Team
James Richardson	Board Secretariat
Denise Johnson	Board Secretariat
Kevin McGeough	For Part I of the agenda

PART ONE

Item 1

1.1 The Chair opened Part One of the meeting and confirmed that Cllr David Turner had resigned from the EDC Board. The Chair made reference to the outcome of the recent local elections; Cllr Kite would continue as the Dartford representative on the Board, and the new Gravesham Borough Council representative was expected to be confirmed soon

Apologies

1.2 Apologies were noted from Cllr Mark Dance.

Declarations of Interest

1.3 The Chair reminded Board members to raise any potential conflicts of interest 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.

Part 1 Minutes of the 17 April 2019 Board Meeting

1.4 The Part I minutes were approved.

Board Actions

1.5 The Chair noted that all Part I 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 Chief Executive's Report

2(a) CEO's Strategic Reports (Paper 019/031)

2.1 Ian Piper presented Paper 019/031, updating on the EDC's progress since the April Board meeting. Ian remarked that as there had been very few working days since the last Board as a result of the Easter break and additional Bank Holiday, and also due to the Purdah period leading up to the local elections, there was only limited progress to report on this month.

2.2 On the forthcoming Government Spending Review, Ian reported that the EDC had continued to develop its funding bid. Due to the broader political situation there was still a lack of clarity in terms of timetable and process for the SR; EDC preparations therefore continued to focus on various scenarios, and the Corporation was well placed to make a bid when the Government timetable was announced. Ian said that as part of the preparations for the SR he had recently attended a briefing session for Government ALBs.

2.3 Ian advised that good progress was being made on projects linked to the SR bid that were in feasibility stage, including Ebbsfleet River Park, the sewerage treatment works and Blue Lake. Emerging proposals would be presented to Board in due course.

2.4 Moving onto strategic priorities, Ian said that engagement with the owners of the Central Area was continuing, but that there had been no new engagement with LRCH since the developers' recent announcement regarding a deal with ITV Studios. On Grove Road, work continued on land assembly, with significant progress in procuring professional advisors. The Chair asked about the acquisition of the KCC land in the Grove Road area; Ian confirmed that the EDC was awaiting input from KCC solicitors and he was hoping to bring this to a conclusion soon. Ian noted the supportive role Cllr Dance had played in this work.

2.5 Ian drew Board's attention to the images in his paper on project progress, and specifically to the Springhead Bridge which was rapidly progressing.

2.6 The Chair asked for any questions. Bob Lane referred to the Spending Review, and whether if there was continued delay to the announcement of the timetable for the SR this would have an impact on the EDC. Ian said that if there was delay this could impact on 2020/21 in particular, as if there was any stalling of feasibility work this would impact on future years' capital spend delivery. Ian said that the EDC was preparing a bid that could be flexed depending on the length of the SR, whether this be a short SR covering just 2020/21, or a longer SR period of up to 5 years. Colin Lovegrove remarked that once the SR was announced Government Departments would be asked to respond rapidly, and that the work the EDC had been doing placed it in a strong position.

2.7 The Board **NOTED** Ian's update.

2(b) Ebbsfleet Living (Paper 019/032)

2.8 Kevin introduced Paper 019/032 advising that the Purdah period had limited activities since the last Board meeting and his last update. Kevin said that there had been a number of activities during the Easter holidays, including Dartford Football Club – supported by the Ebbsfleet Community investment Fund - which ran a soccer school providing a good opportunity for the club to get involved with both the new and existing communities.

2.9 Kevin also reported that, also with support from the EDC Community Investment Fund, the South East Baptist Church had hosted an Easter egg hunt in Castle Hill with over 250

people of all ages joining in. He went on to explain that the South East Baptist Church continued to attract people to the Sunday Active initiative each week which was originally funded through the Healthy New Town Programme.

2.9 The Edible Ebbsfleet initiative had continued to grow and evolve, with the roll-out of the first phase of signage at Ebbsfleet International Station. The signage is intended to bring a consistent identity to the programme while allowing each site to develop a bespoke approach. This was part of the Healthy Workplace initiative with station staff tending the gardens/planters during their breaks; this initiative had also been funded by NHS England through the Healthy New Town Programme. Continuing, Kevin advised that the new garden at St Peter & St Paul Church, Greenhithe would be open next month.

2.10 The Chair commented on the recently reported work in Leeds to combat childhood obesity and asked about healthy eating classes for parents. Kevin responded by advising of the small pilot held at Castle Hill to encourage parents and children to learn to cook together at school. He said this was something that had the potential to be expanded.

2.11 Cllr Kite took the opportunity to introduce the two new Labour councillors for Ebbsfleet Ward - Sacha Gosine and Romana Gosine – both of whom were in attendance in the public part of the meeting. Cllr Kite advised that the third new councillor for the Ward was Danny Nicklen, Conservative.

2.12 The Chair closed the item by putting on record the good work on community building that was now beginning to really ramp up, and that that this was important if Ebbsfleet Garden City were to grow as a community focussed place to live.

2.13 The Board **NOTED** the update.

2(c) Communications Update (Paper 019/033)

2.14 Mark Templeton introduced Paper 019/033. Several press releases had been issued in the last month, including one with UK Power Networks to mark the start of work on the future electricity supply for Ebbsfleet Garden City electricity supply, and two on recent EDC land acquisitions at Station House, Northfleet and Milton Place in Gravesend. Mark also advised that Ebbsfleet had been featured in a Daily Telegraph article on Garden Cities and Villages, which asked if the Corporation's approach could be replicated across the country. Mark concluded this part of his report by advising that online and broadcast media was seen by an estimated 22 million people during the past month.

2.15 Mark then reported on plans for further drone filming of the Springhead Bridge development, with footage to be shown on the EDC website and YouTube channel and also intended to be cut into a time-lapse format. Also on the Springhead Bridge, Mark said that on-the-ground time-lapse footage taken by the bridge builders, Balfour Beatty, showed the first year of construction in less than a minute.

2.16 Moving onto the EDC website, Mark advised that in April 4,243 individuals had visited the EDC website looking at nearly 15,000 pages. On Social Media, Mark said that posts across social media channels had reached more than 150,000 people with most popular posts on a recent job vacancy and several hundred views of some pictures taken around Castle Hill.

2.17 Mark confirmed that the publication of the third Ebbsfleet Garden City Magazine was imminent, and this would be made available to Board members at the June meeting and available at the Garden City Information Centre. The April EDC Newsletter was sent to our

680 subscribers updating them on the latest developments in the Garden City.

2.18 The Chair asked for any questions. Louise Hardy asked if there was a way in which Springhead Bridge could be used for site visits, and particularly for children to stimulate interest in science and engineering. Julia Gregory and Mark responded by informing Board that Balfour Beatty had already engaged with over 2,000 local children and students through the Springhead Bridge project. Sandra Fryer asked about the pages in Annex A – the media summary – relating to health developments in other parts of Kent. Mark said these had been included as they were part of the wider North Kent Enterprise Zone which included three Ebbsfleet sites.

2.19 The Board **NOTED** the update.

Item 3 Chief Planning Officer's Report

Planning and Housing Delivery Programme (Paper 019/034)

3.1 Mark Pullin introduced Paper 019/034 by explaining that the Planning Committee would be meeting informally in May to receive various briefings from developers and officers on emerging proposals and other work streams. He explained that the significant decisions relating to Eastern Quarry would be considered in June, that Keepmoat are expected to start initial groundworks on site at Northfleet East on 20 May and that for the first month of the year he was reporting on 46 starts and 66 completions.

3.2 Mark explained that the informal meeting after this Board was to receive a pre-application presentation from Bellway on their proposals for the Croxton & Garry site; this presentation was expected to cover the detailed scheme following outline consent previously granted for up to 220 homes. The Committee would also receive a presentation on some strategy work being undertaken by EDC.

3.3 Mark advised that Redrow had been given a deadline of Monday 13 May for their revised plans for Phase 2C at Ebbsfleet Green, but that these were not received and so instead consideration of this matter would be targeted for the July Planning Committee. Mark said that EDC officers were working with developers and consultees to help progress the Eastern Quarry Area Masterplans and Design Codes and these are likely to be reported in June as planned. Referring to Alkerden Barn, Mark said that this was dependant on further information to be submitted by Henley Camland following the consultation process.

3.4 Mark said that the work with Dartford Borough Council had continued with regards to the new Local Plan and consultants interested in carrying out the 'Dartford and Ebbsfleet Residential Needs Assessment' (DERNA) have been appointed. Tendering for transport assessment work was currently underway.

3.5 In his Strategic Sites update, Mark drew Board's attention to the highlight reports attached to his paper in Annexes A-E, including milestones for the next month. Highlights included delivery of homes at Springhead Park, with EDC officers continuing to work their way through the remaining planning conditions, mainly for Phase 3; the first occupations in this Phase are expected by Autumn 2019. At Eastern Quarry Newcrest were making good progress with the local centre at Castle Hill, Clarion had started on their parcels close to the school, and Taylor Wimpey and David Wilson Homes continued work on their sites.

3.6 Mark continued, explaining the work within the Central and Western Villages, where there is much focus on the Area Masterplans and Design Codes. Henley Camland had recently carried out a public consultation on their ideas for the education campus. At Ebbsfleet Green pre-application discussions had also started on the school site following

appointment of the Maritime Trust. At Northfleet Riverside, Keepmoat were due to start on site on 20 May, and at Craylands Lane Bellway were moving at pace.

3.7 On housing numbers, Mark reported on 46 starts and 66 completions in the first month of the year.

3.8 The Chair asked for any questions and asked for the significance of passing 1,500 homes in the Garden City to be minuted. Cllr Kite referred to Alkerden Farm proposals and expressed his concern at the suggestion by developers in their latest plans, that the building would be dismantled and then reassembled. He asked for confirmation of the heritage status of the building, which Mark confirmed as being a “non-designated asset”. Mark explained that the Area Masterplan currently proposes that the building be restored in the same location and within a new neighbourhood green, and said that EDC officers would be scrutinising the proposals very carefully. Board discussion continued on the merit of protecting the building by removing it or making it more stable in its present location. Sandra Fryer remarked that she agreed the EDC needed to fully recognise any heritage assets in the area and protect these. She also commented on the recent consultation exercise held in the area on the proposed new education campus.

3.9 Bob Lane reiterated his previous requests for Board to be provided regularly with information on home values per square foot/metre. Mark explained that developers had not been forthcoming with this information, citing commercial reasons, and that it was therefore providing difficult to track. Bob asked whether a sample could be prepared from Land Registry sales data, and Mark agreed to consider this further. David Holt asked for clarification on the dashboard graphs where there was what appeared to be a disconnect in some of the diagrams. Mark agreed to clarify this matter at the next meeting.

3.10 The Board **NOTED** the update.

01-05	EDC to review planning and housing dashboard graphs and data and report back to Board in June Action: Mark Pullin
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Item 4 **Finance Director’s Report**

Finance and Operations Report (Paper 019/035)

4.1 Gerard Whiteman presented Paper 019/035, updating the Board on budgetary, workforce and other operational issues for the month of April 2019. The Corporation’s net operational revenue budget for 2019/20 – which had not yet been formalised by MHCLG – was £3,743,000, with an additional £2m of revenue support specifically for programme expenditure. The capital forecast for the year was £66m.

4.2 Gerard advised that the National Audit Office were now on site at the EDC’s offices completing their annual audit for 18/19. The Corporation’s draft Report and Accounts were now being finalised and would become a public document once laid before Parliament in June/July 2019.

4.3 On Board appointments, Gerard explained that the recruitment process was continuing to be managed by MHCLG, and that expectations were currently that the appointments to be finalised by early Summer 2019. Gerard also confirmed the resignation of Cllr Turner from the Board ahead of the local elections.

4.4 On staff recruitment, Gerard explained that there were a number of vacancies which resulted in on-going savings against the Pay budget. He went on to explain the various

recruitment plans, including a campaign currently underway for a Major Projects Development Manager.

4.5 Outlining sections 6 and 7 of his paper, Gerard asked for Board approval of the Scheme of Delegation document and the Standing Financial Instructions (SFIs).

4.6 The Board **NOTED** the update and **APPROVED** the Scheme of Delegation document and Standing Financial Instructions.

Item 5

Responses to Written Questions from Members of the Public

5.1 The Chair confirmed that a number of public questions had been received, and that these questions and the responses were now published on the EDC's website.

The Chair declared the public part of the meeting closed. 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.