

**PART I MINUTES**  
**of the Board meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC)**  
**held at 13:30 on Wednesday 16 October 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)

Sandra Fryer

Louise Hardy

Bob Lane OBE

Cllr John Burden (*attending as the Gravesham Borough Council nominated representative, awaiting Secretary of State confirmation*)

Ian Piper (EDC CEO)

**Apologies:**

Cllr Mark Dance

Cllr Jeremy Kite MBE

**In Attendance:**

Mark Pullin	EDC Chief Planning Officer
Gerard Whiteman	EDC Finance Director
Julia Gregory	EDC Director of Projects
Mark Templeton	EDC Head of Communications
James Richardson	Board Secretariat
Denise Johnson	Board Secretariat
Colin Lovegrove	MHCLG

**PART ONE**

**Item 1**

1.1 The Chair opened Part One of the meeting and advised that Secretary of State confirmation was still awaited in respect of Cllr John Burden's appointment as the Gravesham Borough Council nominee Board member.

**Apologies**

1.2 Apologies were noted from Board members Councillor Jeremy Kite and Councillor 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 18 September 2019 Board Meeting**

1.4 The Part I minutes were approved.

## **Board Actions**

1.5 It was noted that there was one Part I action still open from previous Board meetings in respect of the recruitment of Board members for the new Community Board. Ian Piper said that planning for the recruitment was underway, and the first meeting of the Community Board was expected to take place in the New Year. A further update would be provided at the November Board. Other actions 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 019/075)**

2.1 Ian Piper presented Paper 019/075, updating on the EDC's progress since the September Board meeting. Ian said that confirmation was still awaited from MHCLG on budgets for 2020/21; he said that he had raised the issue of the impact of the continued delay with MHCLG and that he would continue to do so.

2.2 Ian said that housing delivery was on target for the annual business plan target of 580 homes, and that Mark Pullin would report on this further in Item 3.

2.3 Moving to the Central Area, Ian reported significant progress. The EDC had completed on the acquisition of the freehold of land at Ebbsfleet Central the day before Board - 15 October. He said that it had not been possible to report on the EDC's plans to acquire the land in previous meetings because of commercial sensitivities. Ian said that this marked a very significant step forward in the delivery of the Garden City Vision, and he thanked EDC officers Jen Hunt and Ruth Bryan for their work on the acquisition. Ian also commented on the support that the EDC had received from Colin Lovegrove and colleagues at MHCLG.

2.4 In respect of the Swanscombe Peninsula, Ian said that there was no significant news to report and that details of the LRCH DCO were still awaited. Ian reported that, following an LRCH representation to the A2 Inquiry earlier in the month, which could have resulted in the junction improvements being delayed, he had issued an EDC response setting out EDC's view that the A2 scheme should not be delayed because we could not be confident, based on past missed milestones, of LRCH bringing the resort proposals forward on a timescale that would not cause significant delay if the scheme were to be adjusted now to take their proposals into account. Ian said that now the EDC was the Ebbsfleet Central landowner he expected there to be an opportunity for closer engagement between the EDC and LRCH.

2.5 Finally, Ian provided a short update on the continuing work to acquire land at Grove Road.

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

#### **2(b) Ebbsfleet Living (Paper 019/076)**

2.7 In Kevin McGeough's absence, Ian presented Paper 019/076 on Ebbsfleet Living. Ian specifically drew the Board's attention to the issue of Public Art, and the intervention by the EDC to ensure that the master developer engages appropriately with the local community on the development of public art at Whitecliffe.

2.8 David Holt welcomed the report, and asked for a future update to cover how much community activity is stimulated by local people rather than being initiated by EDC. He said that would be a measure of the community developing. Ian said that he would discuss this matter with Kevin McGeough and provide a future update to Board.

## **2(d) Communications Update (Paper 019/077)**

2.10 Mark Templeton introduced Paper 019/077. Mark said that there had been a press conference earlier that day to announce the acquisition of land at Ebbsfleet Central, attended by a number of press partners including Property Week, Kent Online and Radio Kent. A press release had been issued in parallel to the press conference.

2.11 Mark continued by advising Board that the lifting of the final beam into Springhead Bridge had been covered by BBC, ITV, Kent Online, Dartford & Gravesend Messenger and BBC Radio Kent. In other areas of activity, Mark advised that there had been a feature in Horticulture Week on the work with Healthy New Towns and mentions on BBC Radio Kent and in the Metro newspaper in relation to affordable new homes in Ebbsfleet Garden City.

2.12 Mark informed Board that the EDC's 'Picnic in the Park' consultation earlier in the year had won the gold award at the Chartered Institute of Public Relations Pride Awards in the Construction, Property and Infrastructure section. This event gathered ideas from families about what they would like to see in Ebbsfleet's future parks.

2.13 Referring to the Website, Mark reported statistics relating to visits and pages viewed in September, with the most viewed being for two staff vacancies, Springhead Bridge and land acquisition at Grove Road. Mark said that social posts across LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube had been seen by an estimated 120,000 people during the month.

2.14 The Board **NOTED** the update.

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

### **Planning and Housing Delivery Programme (Paper 019/078)**

3.1 Mark Pullin reported on Paper 019/078. He explained that there had been an informal meeting of the Planning Committee in September to consider a pre-application case at Springhead Park and an update on the parking work being carried out by EDC consultants, which would be explained further in Part II of today's Board. Mark drew attention to the table at section 2.2 of his Paper outlining applications, status and the date of the anticipated Committee meeting where the application would be discussed. He confirmed that there would be no Committee meeting following Board.

3.2 On Section 3 of his report, Mark provided an overview of the Public Inquiry on the A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet Junctions, advising that a revised statement which overcame the final minor areas of EDC concern had been submitted shortly after the inquiry opened. The Inquiry closed on 11 October.

3.3 On Ebbsfleet strategic sites Mark summarised a number of developments including progress of the Castle Hill Local Centre. He said that the first of the commercial units in the Newcrest development should be opening before Christmas, and it was understood that all five of the units had either been let or were about to be let, with a good mix of occupiers. Continuing, Mark said that Newcrest had been marketing their new suite of townhouses, and also that there had been positive discussions relating to parcels of land across Eastern

Quarry including the parcel identified for custom build. Mark said that it was likely that the first case to be considered by the new Ebbsfleet Design Forum would be Alkerden Barn.

3.4 Looking ahead, Mark summarised the focus of work ahead of a November Planning Committee, with revised plans submitted by Redrow (currently being reviewed), discussions continuing on the new primary schools, and at Northfleet Riverside work continuing on the number of planning conditions relating to the Keepmoat scheme. Similarly on the Peninsula, Craylands Lane had a number of conditions to progress through and submissions were being made regularly.

3.5 On housing and delivery, Mark advised that to date a total of 1,770 homes had been built in the Garden City. The annual completions number was 306 homes, and the EDC was on target to achieve the business plan target of 580 for the year. Mark said that developers continue to report that the market is strong in this area and that it was generally performing better than other locations.

3.6 Finally, Mark advised of the need to submit a quarterly report for statutory planning performance this month; all cases continue to be either determined in accordance with the statutory timescales or within bespoke timetables agreed with the developers.

3.7 David Holt asked about Annex F, and whether quarter by quarter sales figures from the previous year could be layered upon the sales chart. He said this would enable the Board to check whether any lower sales were in line with seasonal trends.

3.8 The Board **NOTED** the update.

<b>01-10</b>	Planning dashboard to be updated to include previous year sales figures by quarter to enable year on year comparisons <b>Action: Mark Pullin</b>
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#### **Item 4**      **Finance Director's Report**

##### **Finance and Operations Report (Paper 019/079)**

4.1 Gerard Whiteman presented his Paper 019/079, updating the Board on budgetary, workforce and other operational issues for the month of September 2019. He drew attention to the detail of the budget at Annex A and the indicative net operational revenue budget for 2019/20 which had been formally confirmed by MHCLG. Gerard explained that there had been an increase in planning fee income, and the Corporation intended to utilise any planning fee income in excess of budget to support programme revenue expenditure.

4.2 On the Capital budget for 2019/20, Gerard explained that the forecast position for 2019/20 was capital spend of up to £66m for the year. Regarding the pay budget, Gerard said that this covered the full budgeted staffing complement, together with Board member pay and agency/temporary staff. Savings accrued as a result of planned vacancies, particularly in the Projects Team, was being utilised to fund external Project Management resources. On staffing, Gerard advised that an extension to the CEO's secondment from Homes England was currently being finalised. A new Major Projects Development Manager had started on 9 September, and two new staff members had now also started in the finance team. Recruitment was also ongoing for two new Business Support Officers.

4.3 Finally, Gerard advised that there was still no news from MHCLG on progress of the recruitment of two new Board members and also confirmation on the appointments of Cllr John Burden to the EDC Board and Cllr Dr Lauren Sullivan to the Planning Committee.

4.4 The Board **NOTED** the update.

## **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.**

### **Summary of Part II Agenda Items and Decisions**

#### **Item 7      Chief Executive's Report**

##### **CEO's Commercial/Confidential Update (Paper 019/080)**

The Board received an update on commercially confidential matters from the CEO

#### **Item 8      Stewardship Full Business Case (Paper 019/081)**

The Board discussed and agreed the Full Business Case for future stewardship of the Garden City. The Board agreed that the Business Case could now be submitted to Central Government for consideration

#### **Item 9      Investment Programme (Paper 019/082)**

The Board received an update on the delivery of the EDC capital programme

#### **Item 10     Mid-Year Review of Performance (Paper 019/083)**

The Board received an update on EDC performance covering the Corporation's key performance indicators for the period 2016-2021 and also delivery against the 2019/20 Business Plan

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Chairman's signature:

Date: