

**PART I MINUTES [DRAFT FOR AGREEMENT BY THE BOARD]**  
**of the Board meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC)**  
**held at 13:00 on Wednesday 18 December 2019 at the Eastgate Community Centre,**  
**141 Springhead Parkway, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent DA11 8AD**

**Board Members Present:**

Michael Cassidy CBE (Chairman)

Sandra Fryer

Louise Hardy

Bob Lane OBE

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

Cllr Mike Whiting (*attending as the Kent County Council nominated representative, awaiting Secretary of State confirmation*)

Ian Piper (EDC CEO)

**Apologies:**

David Holt

Cllr Jeremy Kite MBE

**In Attendance:**

Colin Lovegrove

MHCLG

Janet Davies

EDC Project Manager (for Julia Gregory, Director of Projects)

Kevin McGeough

EDC Head of Strategy and Placemaking

Mark Pullin

EDC Chief Planning Officer

Gerard Whiteman

EDC Director of Finance

Mark Templeton

EDC Head of Communications

James Richardson

Board Secretariat

Denise Johnson

Board Secretariat

**PART ONE**

**Item 1**

1.1 The Chair opened Part One of the meeting and welcomed the new Kent County Council nomination to the Board, Cllr Mike Whiting, KCC Cabinet Member for Economic Development. The Chair advised that Cllr Whiting's formal appointment was awaiting Ministerial approval. The Chair advised that Secretary of State confirmation was still also awaited in respect of Cllr John Burden's appointment as the Gravesham Borough Council nominee Board member. On the two EDC Non-Executive Director vacancies, the Chair said that following the recent Election he hoped that MHCLG would soon confirm appointments.

**Apologies**

1.2 There were apologies from David Holt and Cllr Kite. Julia Gregory had also given apologies, with EDC Project Manager Janet Davies attending in her place.

**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. Cllr John Burden advised of his directorship of The Grand (in relation to Item 2b).

## **Part 1 Minutes of the 19 November 2019 Board Meeting**

1.4 The Part I minutes were approved.

### **Board Actions**

1.5 Ian Piper advised that there were no Part I actions open from previous Board meetings. 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 019/092)**

2.1 Ian Piper presented Paper 019/092, updating on EDC progress since the November Board meeting. He advised that following the Election, Robert Jenrick had been re-appointed as the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with Esther McVey retaining her role as Minister of State for Housing and Planning. Ian said that he hoped the continuity of these roles would enable the Ministry to quickly resolve the outstanding issues in relation to EDC decisions.

2.2 Drawing attention to 1.3 of his Paper, Ian said that 2019/20 spend was on track and EDC was confident of achieving both the capital and admin spend for the year. He added that MHCLG had still not been able to confirm the admin budget for the Corporation in 2020/21 and as a result this placed a number of current and planned EDC projects at risk of delay. Colin Lovegrove said that the Ministry was aware of the issues this uncertainty was causing and he expected budgets to be confirmed very soon in the New Year.

2.3 On performance, Ian said that the housing delivery numbers were still strong. He reported that the failure of a contractor had impacted on the delivery of some units and also the village centre in Castle Hill, but that work was expected to start again in the New Year. Although this would mean some of these units would not be completed this year, it was still considered that the overall annual target of 580 Garden City units would be achieved.

2.4 Ian informed Board that the newly appointed Thames Estuary Envoy, Kate Willard, had visited the Garden City on 10 December. This had provided an opportunity to present the progress so far at Ebbsfleet Garden City, setting out some of the key challenges and remaining opportunities. The Estuary Strategic Board had its inaugural meeting today, chaired by Kate, which would be attended by Cllr Kite.

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

#### **2(b) Ebbsfleet Living (Paper 019/093)**

2.6 Kevin McGeough presented Paper 019/093, summarising community building activity over the November/December period and informed Board that earlier today he had met with Ian Piper and Board members Jeremy Kite and Sandra Fryer to discuss Community Board applications. Following conclusion of the recruitment process the first meeting of the Board was expected to take place in February 2020.

2.7 Kevin advised Board of a presentation to Swanscombe and Greenhithe's Resident Association updating on EDC's activity over the past year. There had been significant interest in the recent acquisition of the Central Area, on potential employment/business opportunities, health provision and new infrastructure to improve connectivity between Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet. Kevin also reported on the November meeting of the

Community Partners' Group, which will now take place quarterly in advance of Community Board meetings.

2.8 Kevin gave an update on community activity funded by the EDC, and also reported on interest in the recently launched 'Creative Ideas Fund' (CIF); 10 ideas had been received to date and these were now being assessed. Kevin also summarised a number of other initiatives that had benefitted from EDC support.

2.9 Finally, Kevin referred to the recent Community Carol Service on 15 December and the Google Digital Garage on 16 December, and summarised community events that were planned for the New Year. This included the Winter Gathering showpiece event which will be held on 7 February 2020 in Castle Hill School and Community Centre.

## **2(d) Communications Update (Paper 019/094)**

2.10 Mark Templeton introduced Paper 019/094 updating Board on communications activity during the last month. Starting with media, he said that most coverage had been focused on the press release on the discovery of Roman and Saxon remains at the Springhead Bridge site and that since writing his paper, coverage had extended as far as the Smithsonian Magazine. In addition, there had been a follow up analysis article in Property Week following EDC's announcement on the acquisition of the Central Area.

2.11 On the website, Mark said that this had been viewed by 4,890 individuals over the past month, with the most popular page being the story on the tunnel scheme to link Bluewater to Ebbsfleet Garden City. Posts across all social media channels were seen by in excess of two million people in the last month.

2.12 The Board **NOTED** the update.

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

### **Planning and Housing Delivery Programme (Paper 019/095)**

3.1 Mark Pullin reported Paper 019/095. Mark started by drawing Board's attention to the December Planning Committee meeting that would take place that evening. The application for the new pub at Castle Hill would be considered, and the Committee would also receive an update from the EDC on the Public Realm Strategy.

3.2 Mark said that in advance of the formal meeting the Committee would also receive a presentation from David Wilson Homes on their plans for the first phase of Alkerden. There had been a public consultation on this the previous evening at Castle Hill Community Centre.

3.3 In Section 3 of his Paper, Mark explained that work was continuing with both Dartford and Gravesham on different elements of their respective local plans. DBC were looking to consult in the New Year and EDC would be supporting one of the consultation events which would be held in or near to Ebbsfleet. KCC were also consulting on main modifications for their Minerals and Waste Plan.

3.4 Moving to Section 4, Mark said that the regular developers' meeting held in December had been well attended and the group were pleased to hear of the Central Area acquisition. He said that he and Jen Hunt had attended and answered questions on Ebbsfleet Central at the Kent Developers' Group meeting and that he had also been to a 'Locate in Kent' meeting where he updated on the Garden City and EDC's achievements to date.

3.5 With regard to Section 5, Strategic Sites update, Mark said that there were some points to note, including supportive comments on the Fastrack application, submission this month on the first reserved matters for Ashmere by Countryside and Clarion, submission on the Alkerden Education Campus and also the temporary school for Ebbsfleet Green.

3.6 Finally, on housing numbers Mark advised that overall numbers for the year were looking positive, with 445 completions now confirmed for the year. The total year forecast had been adjusted to 588 which was in excess of the EDC's business plan target of 580 for the year.

3.7 The Chair asked for any questions. Sandra Fryer asked about membership of the Kent Developers' Group; Mark replied that EDC had corporate membership and that there was a varied mix of developers, including SMEs, as well as other parties. Board also noted that the completion of the 2,000<sup>th</sup> home in the Garden City was also expected in the next Quarter. Board members suggested that the EDC should make plans for publicity to celebrate this. Bob Lane asked about feedback from developers on the local housing market; Mark said that developers were continuing to say that whilst there were signs of a slowdown across Kent, the local market continued to be strong, with the Garden City outperforming other housing developments.

3.8 The Board **NOTED** the update.

<b>01-12</b>	EDC to prepare publicity to celebrate the forthcoming completion of the 2,000 home in Ebbsfleet  <b>Action: Ian Piper/Mark Templeton</b>
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#### **Item 4**      **Finance Director's Report**

##### **Finance and Operations Report (Paper 019/096)**

4.1 Gerard Whiteman presented Paper 019/096 updating Board on budgetary, workforce and other operational issues for the month of December 2019.

4.2 Gerard summarised the budget position shown at Annex A to his paper and advised that the indicative net operational budget for 19/20 of £3,743,000 had been formally confirmed by MHCLG. The report showed there was an additional £2m of revenue support specifically for programme expenditure and that confirmation was awaited from MHCLG for EDC to utilise any planning fee income in excess of the income budget, to support further programme revenue and feasibility expenditure. Gerard said that following acquisition of the Central Area there would be some additional rental income from HMRC and that approval was being sought from MHCLG for EDC to retain this to fund further Corporation activities.

4.3 On the 19/20 Capital Budget, Gerard said that due to slippage of some potential acquisitions, the 19/20 capital forecast had been revised for a full year spend of £62m. The acquisitions that have been slipped are now anticipated to occur in 20/21.

4.4 Finally, Gerard summarised the current EDC staffing position, and also reported that there continued to be no progress on MHCLG's exercise to recruit two new Board members.

4.5 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  
(to be published with Part I Minutes)**

**Item 6**

The Board approved the Part II minutes of the previous month's Board meeting.

**Item 7 CEO'S Commercial/Confidential Update (Paper 019/097)**

The Board received an update on commercially confidential matters from the CEO, including progress on Fastrack and arrangements for future stewardship of the Garden City. The Board noted the update.

**Item 8 Ebbsfleet Central Update (Paper 019/098)**

The Board received and agreed an update on the Ebbsfleet Central site from the CEO and Project Manager, including recommendations on project resourcing, governance and strategy.

**Item 9 Investment Programme (Paper 019/099)**

The Board received an update on the EDC Investment Programme and on project progress from the Projects Director. The Board noted the update and approved the recommendations as set out in the paper.

**Items 10-13 Business Cases for EDC Investment (Papers 019/100 – 019/103)**

The Board considered and agreed a number of Business Cases for investment as follows:

- The Board agreed gross investment of £9.71m for the Green Corridors 3 project (walking and cycling routes in the Garden City area), based on the Business Case presented.
- The Board agreed expenditure of £1.213m capital and £120k revenue for environmental improvements at Bean Triangle, based on the presented Business Case.
- Board agreed investment in a mobile exhibition and engagement unit *[value of investment not disclosed with Part I minutes due to commercial sensitivity as a procurement exercise is about to commence]*
- Board agreed investment in the acquisition of a site in the Garden City area, subject to due diligence and Government approval *[site details and investment value not disclosed with Part I minutes as commercial negotiations are ongoing with the vendor for the site]*

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Chairman's signature:

Date: