

## **PART I MINUTES**

**of the Board meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC)  
held at 13:00 on Wednesday 19 February 2020 at the Eastgate Community Centre,  
141 Springhead Parkway, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent DA11 8AD**

### **Board Members Present:**

Michael Cassidy CBE (Chairman)  
Sandra Fryer  
Louise Hardy  
David Holt  
Cllr Jeremy Kite MBE  
Ian Piper (EDC CEO)

### **Apologies:**

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*)

### **In Attendance:**

Julia Gregory	EDC Projects Director
Mark Pullin	EDC Chief Planning Officer
Gerard Whiteman	EDC Finance Director
Kevin McGeough	EDC Head of Strategy and Placemaking
Mark Templeton	EDC Head of Communications
Denise Johnson	Board Secretariat
James Richardson	Board Secretariat

## **PART ONE**

### **Item 1**

1.1 The Chair opened Part I of the meeting and welcomed members of the public who were present. The Chair advised that Cllr Mike Whiting and Cllr John Burden's appointments were both still awaiting formal Ministerial approval.

### **Apologies**

1.2 There were apologies from Bob Lane, Cllr John Burden and Cllr Mike Whiting.

### **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 I Minutes of the 22 January 2020 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 Report Updates (Paper 020/010)**

2.1 Ian Piper presented Paper 020/010, updating on the EDC's progress since the January Board meeting. He reported good progress on housing delivery, advising that with 29 completions since the last Board the Corporation remained on target to achieve the annual target of 580 by end March.

2.2 Ian reported that the forecast capital expenditure for the full year had been revised to £55m. This was primarily due to likely slippage in two planned acquisitions and also some spend re-profiling on Fastrack into later years following agreement on revised commercial arrangements with KCC. Ian added that this did not indicate there would be any slippage to the delivery of the infrastructure required to run Fastrack to Bluewater. Ian added that EDC was on track to spend all of the £2m of programme revenue allocation.

2.3 Ian reported on the Winter Gathering community event which had taken place on 7 February at Castle Hill. He said that the event had attracted a significant number of residents, estimated to be around 500 and that good feedback had been received from attendees.

2.4 On Strategic Priorities, Ian said that the work to procure a consultant team to help bring forward Ebbsfleet Central had resulted in strong interest and it was hoped to have a full team in place in May 2020. Ian also confirmed that meetings had taken place with a number of major national developers on opportunities to develop the site. This engagement had provided positive feedback on EDC's strategic thinking on how it was intended to bring the site forward.

2.5 Ian said that he had attended a meeting with MHCLG and Treasury officials earlier that month to discuss the EDC's proposal for a future stewardship solution for the Garden City. He said that further detail and analysis had been requested by HMT, but overall he felt some progress had been made.

2.6 The Chair said that it would be good for the Board to meet the new Ebbsfleet Central consultant team once it had been appointed.

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

#### **2(b) Ebbsfleet Living (Paper 020/011)**

2.8 Kevin McGeough presented Paper 020/011, summarising the community building activity which had taken place in preceding weeks. He informed Board that the inaugural meeting of the new Ebbsfleet Community Board had taken place on the previous evening.

2.9 Kevin explained that EDC officers had attended a number of recent local resident association and other group meetings. Topics covered had included the day to day operation of Springhead Bridge, primary health provision, construction traffic, parks and open spaces, schools, the Alkerden Barn building and Swanscombe Heritage Park.

2.10 Kevin said that following local interest, EDC officers now produced a monthly poster highlighting various forthcoming events and activities happening in and around Ebbsfleet.

2.11 Under community activity funded by EDC, Kevin provided an update on the Creative Ideas Fund and Community Investment Fund. He said that to date a range of activities had been funded through the Creative Ideas Fund, including early years street dance, art and play sessions for children with autism, a new book club, community yoga for toddlers and parents and also community film screenings, which had been extremely popular. In addition the Community Investment Fund had supported Ebbsfleet Academy Junior Archers and had agreed to fund equipment for a youth TV production club, Boom TV, based in Castle Hill, which would be encouraging participation from the local community.

2.12 With reference to directly delivered community and stakeholder activity, Kevin said that Ebbsfleet Academy had hosted a careers fair in January which had been well attended. He said that EDC and a number of partner developers and contractors had attended to raise awareness of the construction career opportunities emerging at Ebbsfleet. Kevin added that EDC had also been represented at the Northfleet Technology College Careers Fair.

2.13 On partnership community activity, Kevin referred to the previously mentioned Winter Gathering and advised Board that 50 'feedback' cards had been completed with positive feedback and suggestions.

2.14 The Chair asked Kevin how these events were communicated. Kevin advised that a variety of approaches had been used, including the EDC website, community coffee mornings, leaflet drops and social media. Design of material was generally led in-house within the EDC.

2.15 The Board **NOTED** the update.

## **2(c) Communications Update (Paper 020/012)**

2.16 Mark Templeton introduced Paper 020/012 updating the Board on communications activity throughout the month. He reported that the EDC website had been viewed by its highest audience since the site was redeveloped, with 6,168 individuals looking at 24,799 pages. He said that the interest had been helped by job adverts and two education stories. Mark explained that the recently launched community section included pages on public consultations, events and information from the new Community Board. He said that a schools page, with information on current schools in and around the Garden City should soon go live and a comprehensive guide (with interactive map) to parks went live last month.

2.17 On media coverage, Mark said that the Planning Committee's approval of 133 Redrow homes had been featured in the trade press. He said that there was also coverage in print and radio of the Alkerden education campus and updates on Springhead Bridge.

2.18 Mark said that posts across social media channels had been seen by more than 110,000 in the last month, with the most popular being on the schools stories and a CGI of the new Keepmoat site.

2.19 David Holt referred to the graphics included in Annex B showing sentiment. He asked how much negative coverage was reflected. Mark replied that it whilst it would be positive to have completely green charts, indicating entirely positive media, this would in practice be difficult to achieve as the software used to prepare the charts would include any perceived negative wording in stories in the charts, and the charts also take account of individual comments. He said that overall the EDC was performing well and the charts did not indicate

any issues. The Chair enquired about the next Ebbsfleet magazine. Mark said that the next edition was due around May/June 2020.

2.10 The Board **NOTED** the update.

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

#### **Planning and Housing Delivery Report (Paper 020/013)**

3.1 Mark Pullin reported his Paper 020/013. He started by giving an update on the Planning Committee, and the January meeting to consider the application by Redrow for their penultimate residential phase at Ebbsfleet Green. Having debated various landscaping, parking and design issues, the application was approved, with the Committee noting the sustainable development features included.

3.2 Mark continued by advising that the Committee would meet again that evening to consider Bellway's proposals for 221 homes at Croxton & Garry. He said that this scheme had achieved 10 out of 12 green lights under 'Building for Life', and that the application had been recommended for approval. Continuing, Mark said that prior to the meeting the Committee would have an informal presentation from Countryside/Clarion for Ashmere Phase 2 and from David Wilson Homes for Parcel 3 in Alkerden. Both schemes were at pre-application stage with Ashmere Phase 2 reviewed by the Design Forum the previous week.

3.3 Mark said that the table at 2.6 in his report had been updated to reflect current live applications. He advised that there was likely to be a meeting in March.

3.4 Referring to the Local Plan update at Section 3, Mark advised that EDC planners had supported a DBC event at Ebbsfleet International station. He said that a good number of people, mainly local residents, had engaged with officers, giving generally positive feedback, with consistent messages about enhanced walking, cycling and bus connections. Mark added that the latest consultation on the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) was now underway and a draft response would be brought to Board in March.

3.5 Moving to Section 4 and the updated highlight reports, Mark advised of agreement to an amendment to the S106 for Springhead Park and as a result it would now provide a 36% affordable housing provision. He continued by explaining that consultation was underway on an application received from DW Homes for Swanscombe Edge and that consultation was also taking place on Ebbsfleet Green school, with conditions for schemes being determined at Northfleet Riverside and Craylands Lane.

3.6 Mark drew attention to housing numbers at section 5 and on the dashboard. He said that the low number of starts at the Keepmoat scheme would be picked up next month but with 509 completions and 2 months remaining in the reporting year, the 580 target still looked achievable. It was anticipated that the 2000<sup>th</sup> home could be completed during March.

3.7 Referring to the Lower Thames Crossing, the Chair asked about EDC's comments and also whether the project was running to schedule. Mark confirmed that a draft response would be brought to Board next month, and that it appeared as though the project was making good progress and was well resourced. Jeremy Kite added that due to its controversial nature, the consultation responses had taken longer to consider and he believed had caused a delay overall of 6-8 months.

3.8 Sandra Fryer referred to the Public Questions that had been received that month, and asked about the EDC's enforcement work. Mark said that the EDC's work tended to be reactive rather than proactive due to resource constraints. He added that whilst he could bring a summary of enforcement work to Board if required, enforcement work was confidential and so he was unable to bring detailed information on this to Part I. Discussion continued on the extent to which residents were altering their homes and also how the EDC's resident guides helped residents with information on what was permitted. Finally, the Board briefly discussed the Secretary of State's recent speech on planning, and comments within this on relaxation of regulations.

3.9 Sandra Fryer noted that the Board had not had an opportunity recently to meet with developers, and asked that the date of the next forum be agreed soon.

3.10 The Board **NOTED** the update.

<b>01-02</b>	Agree date for the next meeting of the Board with developers <b>Action: Mark Pullin</b>
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#### **Item 4**      **Finance Director's Report**

##### **Finance and Operations Report (Paper 020/014)**

4.1 Gerard Whiteman presented Paper 020/014 updating Board on budgetary, workforce and other operational issues for the month of January 2020.

4.2 Gerard summarised the budget position shown at Annex A to his Paper. He said that the realistic capital spend for the year was likely to be £55m, and that the EDC expected to spend all of its revenue budget. He also advised that permission had been granted by MHCLG to utilise receipts from rental income generated from the acquisition of the Central Area in-year to fund EDC activities.

4.3 On recruitment, Gerard said that processes for two part-time project managers for the Health, Education and Innovation Quarter and also the Health & Wellbeing Hub were drawing to a conclusion. He added that there was no further progress from MHCLG on the EDC Board appointments.

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.

5.2 One question concerning water supplies would be carried forward until the March Board as a response was required from utilities companies.

**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 6**

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

### **Item 7 CEO'S Commercial/Confidential Update (Paper 020/015)**

The Board received an update on commercially confidential matters from the CEO, including progress on Ebbsfleet Central and arrangements for future stewardship of the Garden City, and the EDC's bid to the Government's Industrial Challenge Fund. The Board noted the update.

### **Item 8 EDC Draft Business Plan 2020/21 (Paper 020/016)**

The Board received a draft version of the EDC's Business Plan for 2020/21. The Board noted the Plan, ahead of a future Board decision on the final Plan.

### **Item 9 Investment Programme (Paper 020/017)**

The Board received an update on the EDC Investment Programme and on project progress from the Projects Director. The Board noted the update.

The Board also agreed revenue spend on the water reuse project [*value of investment not disclosed with Part I minutes due to commercial sensitivity as a procurement exercise is about to commence*] and investment of up to £285,000 of capital on enhancements to the Ebbsfleet Green school.

### **Item 10 Health Provision in Ebbsfleet Garden City (Paper 020/018)**

The Board received an update on the approach to health provision in Ebbsfleet Garden City. The Board noted the update.

### **Item 11 Ebbsfleet Draft Sustainable Travel Strategy (Paper 020/019)**

The Board received a report on the draft Sustainable Travel Strategy for Ebbsfleet Garden City and agreed that EDC officers can now begin to engage publicly on the draft Strategy.

### **Item 12 Strategic Risk Register Review (Paper 020/020)**

The Board received an updated strategic risk register and risk appetite statement and noted the report.

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Chairman's signature:

Date: