

**PART I MINUTES**  
**of the Board meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC)**  
**held at 13:00 on Wednesday 19 August 2020 by video conference**

**Board Members Present:**

Michael Cassidy CBE (Chair)

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

Sandra Fryer

Bob Lane OBE

Ian Piper (EDC CEO)

**Apologies:**

David Holt (Deputy Chair)

Louise Hardy

Cllr Jeremy Kite MBE

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

MHCLG did not send a representative to the meeting this month

**In Attendance:**

Julia Gregory

EDC Projects Director

Mark Pullin

EDC Chief Planning Officer

Gerard Whiteman

EDC Director of Finance

Kevin McGeough

EDC Head of Strategy and Placemaking

Denise Johnson

Board Secretariat

**PART ONE**

**Item 1**

1.1 Board members were welcomed to the meeting, which was taking place by video conference as a result of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

1.2 Board members noted that Part I of the meeting was being recorded and that the video would be published on the EDC's website immediately after the meeting. The Board also noted that Part I papers had been made available on the Corporation's website.

**Apologies**

1.3 Apologies were received from David Holt, Louise Harding, Jeremy Kite and Mike Whiting. No representatives of the MHCLG sponsorship team attended the meeting this month.

**Declarations of Interest**

1.4 A declaration of interest was raised by Cllr John Burden as Leader of Gravesham Borough Council in respect of Grove Road, Milton Place and Blue Lake. It was also noted that whilst Cllr Mike Whiting and Cllr John Burden's appointments were progressing through the required Government approvals process, both were still awaiting final approval.

## **Part I Minutes of the 15 July 2020 Board Meeting**

1.5 The Part I minutes were approved.

### **Board Actions**

1.6 Ian Piper advised that the action relating to MHCLG confirmation of the Corporation's Admin budget for 2020/21 could now be closed as written confirmation had been received. Remaining 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 020/076)**

2.1 Ian Piper introduced Paper 020/076, providing an update on the EDC's continuing response to the Covid-19 pandemic, explaining the controlled use of The Observatory by selected staff, and also reporting on the pace of construction around the Garden City. Ian updated the Board on the launch of the Thames Estuary Growth Board, and also the recent publication of 'The Green Blue' action plan focussing on growth opportunities, infrastructure and partnerships. He said that this offered great potential to the Garden City. Reporting on the Government's next Spending Review, Ian said that EDC was well advanced in the preparation of its Business Case. Finally, Ian reported that verbal approval had been given by the MHCLG Senior Sponsor for the 2020/21 Business Plan. Written approval was expected shortly at which point the Plan could be published.

2.2 Ian moved on to provide strategic updates on Springhead Bridge, which was now open to the public, Ebbsfleet Central, which was now at the 'visioning' and 'optioneering' stage, and also the Grove Road consultation.

2.3 In respect of EDC Governance, Ian said that he had been advised by MHCLG that the level of sponsorship had been moved to 'Intermediate'. In practical terms this meant that the level of oversight was reduced, but there would be continued engagement with the Ministry monthly, and also at formal, quarterly Accounting Officer meetings.

2.4 The Chair invited comments and questions from Board members, adding that he thought it would be appropriate to let it be known to the public that staff were in the office to respond to correspondence. Ian reminded Board that only a limited number of staff were in , and that no external meetings were currently being scheduled. This continued to be under ongoing review in line with current Government guidelines. The Chair asked about the current procedures for planning enquiries and consultations; Mark Pullin advised that an officer had been set up at home to deal with these.

2.5 The Chair commented on the statistics in relation to housing numbers. He said that production rates at 85% were impressive, and that it was very positive that Springhead Bridge was now open. The Chair asked about usage of the Bridge. Julia Gregory explained that it was too early for data to be available, and the Board then discussed general traffic levels in the area, including high usage of the A2, but lower levels of use in the car parks at Ebbsfleet International. There was anecdotal evidence of mixed use on and around the Bridge with families using the River Park foot path. Julia added that there had also been enquiries on other cycle and foot paths.

2.6 Bob Lane commented on the Thames Estuary Growth Board's Report which did not mention the Garden City, and suggested this should be discussed at a future Board. It was noted that the Estuary Envoy was due to join a pre-Board session of the Board in September.

2.7 The Chair advised that there was no Communications Report this month, but that this item would return in September.

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

## **2(b) Ebbsfleet Living (Paper 020/077)**

2.6 The Ebbsfleet Living update was Paper 020/077, prepared by Kevin McGeough. The paper covered community involvement in the period since the last Board, including a virtual meeting with the Community Board, which gave members an opportunity to comment on design proposals for community buildings at Ebbsfleet Green and Castle Hill. The update also covered a number of health and community initiatives to give residents confidence to go outside and also get more active in conjunction with the Government's Obesity Strategy.

2.7 The Chair invited comments or questions. Members welcomed the report and Bob Lane thanked Kevin for the useful and interesting content. Sandra Fryer referred to 3.2.2 of Kevin's paper concerning the recent emergence of small businesses and how this links to Inclusive Growth, agreeing that it would be good for the EDC to be able to help with premises for micro/small businesses. The Chair endorsed these observations.

2.8 The Board **NOTED** the update.

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

### **Planning and Housing Delivery Report (Paper 020/078)**

3.1 The Planning Report was Paper 020/078 prepared by Mark Pullin. The paper covered an update on Planning Committee activity; the July Planning Committee meeting considered the reserved matters application for the Primary School at Ebbsfleet Green and the August meeting will consist of 2 informal presentations on the residential led scheme at Grove Road and the Market Centre at Alkerden. Mark added that there had been a meeting of the Design Forum since the papers were published.

3.2 The Chair asked for comments or questions. Sandra raised an issue in respect of the Government's White Paper "Planning for the Future" and how this might affect new schemes in the Garden City. The Chair suggested that Ebbsfleet was a prime example of where planning limits had not been a factor and that the record of process and approval was strong. He stressed the emphasis on a design approach was a good fit with the EDC.

3.3 The Board **NOTED** the update.

## **Item 4 Changes to the Building for Life Scheme (Paper 020/079)**

4.1 Paper 020/079 had been prepared by Simon Harrison to update Board on changes to the "Building for Life 12 Tool" and to explain any impact on its use by the EDC as a KPI.

4.2 The Chair asked for any comments or questions. Sandra asked for clarification in respect of the reference to the area defined “back of pavement – front of home”. Simon explained this as the space between the back of the footpath and the bin storage area by the front door. Bob asked if Simon felt the overall changes were useful; Simon said that in his view the updates had given greater clarity.

4.3 The Board **NOTED** the update.

## **Item 5**      **Finance Director’s Report**

### **Finance and Operations Report (Paper 020/080)**

5.1 The monthly Finance and Operations Report was Paper 020/080. This covered an update on the EDC budget, workforce and other operational issues for the month of July 2020. The report stated that the EDC’s total admin and programme revenue spend for July was £420k and programme capital spend for the month was £10.2m. The current forecast position for 20/21 was for a capital spending requirement of up to £41m for the year. The report also summarised the EDC’s recent and current recruitment activity.

5.2 The Board **NOTED** the report.

## **Item 6**

### **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 would now be published on the EDC’s website.

5.2 It was noted that a video of Part I of the meeting would be made available on the EDC’s website following the meeting, and that the Part I minutes of the meeting would be made available once agreed by Board at the September meeting.

## **Summary of August Board Meeting Part II Agenda Items and Decisions**

### **Item 7**

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

### **Item 8 CEO'S Commercial/Confidential Update (Paper 020/081)**

The Board received an update on commercially confidential matters from the CEO, including on the expansion of the HMRC Customs Facility and EDC's preparations for the Spending Review. The Board NOTED the update.

### **Item 9 Investment Programme Report (Paper 020/082)**

The Board received an update on the provision of community buildings and considered a set of Civic Infrastructure Principles intended to guide the development of civic and community buildings within the Garden City. The Board NOTED the update and ENDORSED the Principles.

### **Item 10 Investment Programme Report: Thames Way Development Area Progress Update (Paper 020/083)**

The Board received an update on the individual projects within the Thames Way Development Area (TWDA). The update included delivery strategy, risk management and mitigation exercises. The Board NOTED the update and APPROVED the strategy for development in the TWDA.

### **Item 11 Investment Programme Report: Northfleet Riverside Progress Update (Paper 020/084)**

The Board received an update on the Northfleet Riverside Development Area (NRDA) including delivery strategy, programme/ project risks and mitigations, and land procurement. The Board APPROVED the suggested approach.

### **Item 12 Investment Programme Report: Grove Road Preferred Developer (Paper 020/085)**

The Board received an explanation of the proposed principles and process to select preferred developers for the Grove Road Riverside Residential Quarter. The Board APPROVED the proposed approach.

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Chairman's signature:

Date: