

PART I MINUTES
of the Board meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC)
held at 13:00 on Wednesday 20 January 2021 by video conference

Board Members Present:

Michael Cassidy CBE (Chair)

David Holt (Deputy Chair)

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

Louise Hardy

Cllr Jeremy Kite MBE

Bob Lane OBE

Lord Moylan

Ian Piper (EDC CEO)

Nick Shattock

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

Apologies:

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
Simon Harrison	EDC Head of Design
Jen Hunt	EDC Head of Ebbsfleet Central
Kevin McGeough	EDC Head of Strategy and Placemaking
Mark Templeton	EDC Head of Communications
James Richardson	Board Secretariat
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.

1.3 The Chair reported that the required consents from Central Government for Cllr Mike Whiting and Cllr John Burden's appointments to the Board appeared to now be in place, and that formal letters were expected soon. He thanked both for their continued patience.

Apologies

1.4 No apologies had been received. It was noted that no MHCLG representative was in attendance this month.

Declarations of Interest

1.5 The Chair asked for any declarations of interests, noting that the EDC register of interests on the EDC website listed all declarations in full. No additional declarations were made.

Part I Minutes of the 16 December 2020 Board Meeting

1.6 The Board approved the Part I minutes of the December Board meeting.

Board Actions

1.8 Board members noted that the five remaining actions in the Action Log had now all been resolved – or would be through Board business during the meeting - and so all were formally closed.

Item 2 Chief Executive's Report

2(a) CEO's Strategic Report Updates (Paper 021/001)

2.1 Ian Piper's Part I CEO report was Paper 021/001. Ian started by thanking the EDC Chairman, Michael Cassidy, on behalf of all of the staff of the Corporation for all his support, guidance and leadership since 2015 when the EDC was formally established. Michael's term as Chairman ended on the day of the Board meeting. Ian and the Board recorded their grateful thanks and best wishes to Michael for the future.

2.2 Ian's Part I paper covered an update on a number of matters including the EDC's ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Corporation's funding for 2021/22, the London Resort proposal, and also an update on key strategic projects.

2.3 Ian said that the report was lighter in content this month due to the Christmas break, but that he wanted to draw specific attention to Section 3 of the paper that confirmed that LRCH had submitted their Development Consent Order (DCO) on 31 December. The DCO was with the Planning Inspectorate who had 28 days to decide whether to formally accept it. Ian said that, as anticipated, PINS had asked the Corporation - as one of the relevant authorities - for its view on whether LRCH had complied with a set of duties, and the EDC had submitted a joint response with DBC and KCC.

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

2(b) Ebbsfleet Living (Paper 021/002)

2.5 The Ebbsfleet Living update was Paper 021/002, prepared by Kevin McGeough. The paper covered community activities across the Garden City, including community events during the Christmas period, an update on the recent call for new members for the Ebbsfleet Garden City Community Board, and details of the EDC's work to support mental health resilience in respond to the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.6 The Chair invited Kevin McGeough to provide a verbal update on activities over the past month. Kevin highlighted the details of the ArrivaClick fare structure following the request from the Board for further information at the December meeting, provided an update on the call for new Community Board members, and confirmed that the licence has been approved for a pharmacy at Castle Hill. Kevin also provided further details of the way the

Corporation had responded to the 'learning from lockdown' survey to fund mental health initiatives with partners in the area.

2.7 The Chair invited the Board to discuss Kevin's update. David Holt said that he was very pleased to see that the EDC had progressed the mental health support package and asked about the funding commitment on this going forward. Kevin said that the EDC's commitment was time limited, and that it was intended to support partners in their long-term plans. The school support was for two years, assisting the schools to develop their own capacity so that this could then continue beyond the EDC funded period. The Porchlight/ Togetherall support was for one year and the EDC would be working with the Kent & Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), TogetherAll and Porchlight to identify opportunities to continue the support once the EDC's funding ended. Kevin clarified that the CCG already fund the Togetherall service for 16-18 year olds in the area .

2.8 Cllr Whiting asked about the reference to 'additional rider' fares on the ArrivaClick service. Kevin said that his understanding was that the £1.00 fare price was applicable to additional passengers irrespective of time and distance travelled. The Board noted the 30% discount for local residents.

2.9 Nick Shattock asked about the quality of the Wi-Fi provision in the Garden City, and also the arrangements in place to ensure that the Covid-19 vaccinations process was as locally convenient as possible. On Wi-Fi, Kevin said the 2020 learning from lockdown survey had included both positive and negative comments in relation to the service. Board noted that Wi-Fi services were provided privately in the area. On local vaccinations, Kevin confirmed that the EDC did not have a specific role, although the Corporation's Health and Wellbeing Hub Project Manager continued to work very closely with the CCG and would seek to provide any support the EDC could assist with if required.

2.10 The Board **NOTED** the update.

2(c) Communications (Paper 021/003)

2.11 The Communications update was Paper 021/003 prepared by Mark Templeton, the EDC's Head of Communications. The paper covered communications activity during the past month, including an update on media involving the Garden City, social media activity and website views.

2.12 The Board **NOTED** the update.

Item 3 Chief Planning Officer's Report

3(a) Planning and Housing Delivery Report (Paper 021/003)

3.1 The Planning Report was Paper 021/004 prepared by Mark Pullin. The paper covered an update on the work programme for the Planning Committee, a summary of activity across the development sites, a planning update on the London Resort, local plan making, housing delivery progress and also an update on other planning related matters. The report confirmed that at the end of December 2020, there had been 242 home completions for the year to date.

3.2 The Chair invited comments or questions from Board members. David Holt asked for a view of the latest sentiment from housebuilders in the area. Cllr Whiting declared an interest at this point due to his son-in-law working for the developer Countryside, and asked about how the EDC could find more opportunities for the SMEs to get involved in the area going forwards.

3.3 Louise Hardy provided some insights from another Board she was a member of, reporting that developer sentiment suggested that the current lockdown had actually had the effect of driving footfall and sales upwards, as housebuilders were now all set up for virtual viewings, and also because people were deciding to look at opportunities to move and upsize because of their experiences in the previous lockdowns.

3.4 Mark responded to the points raised. He said that developers in the area had started 2021 keen to continue delivering, and keen to progress planning decisions to get permissions into place. Developers continued to be positive about the market in Ebbsfleet. Mark said that his team had been struggling to get information from developers on sales/reservations, but that this information was now flowing and he would report details next month. On SMEs, Mark referred to the Whitecliffe permission requirements that had encouraged some SMEs to be more active, and also the opportunities in the future on land owned by the EDC.

3.5 Bob Lane asked about wider housing opportunities. Mark said that the Planning Committee would receive a presentation that evening from Westerhill Homes concerning custom build at Whitecliffe, and that the organisation was also consulting publicly on this.

3.6 The Board **NOTED** the update.

3(b) Ebbsfleet Design Forum Review 2020 (Paper 021/005)

3.7 The Ebbsfleet Design Forum Review was Paper 021/005, prepared by Simon Harrison, the EDC's Head of Design. The paper covered the background to the Forum, which had been established in September 2019, explained how the Forum operated, provided a summary of the Forum's first year in operation, and set out the recommended approach for the future. Simon gave a short presentation to the Board that built on his paper

3.8 The Chair invited comments or questions. Lord Moylan declared an interest as the Chairman of Urban Design London. Lord Moylan requested that details of the members of the Forum be circulated to the Board, and asked whether Urban Design London had any members on the Forum. Simon confirmed that Esther Kurland was a member.

3.9 Lord Moylan commented on the proposal in the paper to broaden the commercial experience of the Forum. He said that this needed careful handling, as whilst it was important that planning applications were commercially viable, in his view the Design Forum was not the place for an excessive focus on commerciality. He added that sourcing the right people with this expertise who were not conflicted was challenging, and the field would be quite narrow. One opportunity would be designers who had previously worked for housebuilders.

3.10 The Board **NOTED** the update.

01-01	Details of the members of the Design Forum to be circulated to the Board Action: Simon Harrison
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Item 4 **Finance Director's Report**

Finance and Operations Report (Paper 021/006)

4.1 The monthly Finance and Operations Report was Paper 021/006, prepared by the Finance Director. This focused on the EDC's capital and revenue spend and forecasts for the remainder of the year, staffing and an update on relevant governance matters.

4.2 The paper reported that total admin & programme revenue spend for December 2020 was £720k, and programme capital spend for the month had been £2.6m. Gerard's report also confirmed that the EDC's 2019/20 Annual Report & Accounts had been laid before Parliament on 17 December 2020 and the document was available on the EDC's website. On staffing, the report confirmed that Ian Piper would formally take up his role as the EDC's permanent CEO from 1 February.

4.3 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 would now be published on the EDC's website. Lord Moylan remarked that the public questions received were very high quality, and that the answers were comprehensive, fair and transparent. He said that he had not seen a public body do this so well.

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 online once agreed by Board at the February meeting.

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 January Board Meeting Part II Agenda Items and Decisions

Item 6

The Board approved the Part II minutes of the December Board meeting subject to one change requested by Lord Moylan to Part II of the minutes.

Item 7 **CEO'S Commercial/Confidential Update (Paper 021/007)**

The Board received an update on commercially confidential matters from the CEO, focusing primarily on the Thames Ways Development Area. The Board NOTED and discussed the report.

Item 8 **Q3 Performance Report (Paper 021/008)**

The Board received the quarterly performance report, reporting progress against the priorities set out in the EDC's business plan for the year and also on performance against the EDC's 11 key performance indicators. The Board NOTED the update.

Item 9 **Investment Programme Report (Paper 021/009)**

The Board received the monthly update on the investment programme and on EDC project progress from the Director of Projects. The Board NOTED the update.

Item 10 **Investment Programme Report: Ebbsfleet Central Update (Paper 021/010)**

The Board received the monthly progress update on the Ebbsfleet Central Project. The Board NOTED the report.

Chairman's signature:

Date: