

PART I MINUTES
of the Board meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC)
held at 1pm on Wednesday 26 July 2023
taking place at the Observatory, Castle Hill, Ebbsfleet

Board Members Present:

Simon Dudley (Chair)
Simon Blanchflower CBE
Neil Cameron KC (except for Item 11b)
Fred Maroudas (except for Item 11b)
Lord Moylan
Valerie Owen OBE (except for Item 11b)
Ian Piper (EDC CEO)
Nick Shattock

Apologies:

Cllr John Burden
Cllr Jeremy Kite MBE
Cllr Derek Murphy
Izzy Grigg Board Apprentice Programme

In Attendance:

Cathy Francis DLUHC Director of Housing Delivery (Part I only)
Paul Abrahams EDC Director of Infrastructure & Enabling Works
Jen Hunt EDC Director of Development
Mark Pullin EDC Director of Planning and Place (except for Item 11b)
Gerard Whiteman EDC Director of Corporate Services
Caroline Doidge EDC Head of Marketing and Communications (Part I only)
Denise Johnson EDC Board Secretariat
Kevin McGeough EDC Head of Strategy and Placemaking (Until Item 10)
James Richardson EDC Head of HR and Corporate Affairs

PART ONE

Item 1

1.1 Board members were welcomed to the meeting, which was taking place at the EDC's offices in Ebbsfleet.

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

Apologies

1.3 Apologies were received from Cllr Kite, Cllr Burden, Cllr Murphy and also the EDC Boardroom Apprentice Izzy Grigg.

Declarations of Interest

1.4 The Chair asked for declarations of interests, and drew attention to the standing declarations of EDC Planning Committee members. No additional declarations were made. It was noted that the full register of Board interests was accessible at the EDC website.

Part I Minutes of the 14 June 2023 Board Meeting

1.5 The Board approved the Part I minutes of the June 2023 Board meeting.

Board Actions

1.6 The Board noted the Action Log. Ian Piper referred to Action 06-05 concerning the DLUHC appointment process for new local authority nominated members of the EDC Planning Committee and said that approval was still awaited from DLUHC. The Board noted the importance of the appointments given the planning applications that would be coming to the Planning Committee in the Autumn.

Item 2 Chief Executive's Reports

2(a) CEO's Strategic Report (Paper 023/066)

2.1 Ian Piper's Part I CEO report was Paper 023/066. The paper reported on health, safety and wellbeing, the recent Board Effectiveness review, expenditure approval delegations and corporate performance. On expenditure approval delegations, Ian confirmed that the EDC had received confirmation from DLUHC that HMT did not wish to see approval requests from the EDC for lower than £30m, and so the previous delegated limits for the Board had been reintroduced.

2.2 Ian moved on to update the Board on Q1 performance, and drew the Board's attention to Annex B of this his report. Lord Moylan asked about the term 'diversified homes' and it was noted this would be discussed later in the agenda. Neil Cameron asked why no timings had been given in relation to progress against the Blue Lake strategic outline case priority. Jen Hunt said that this had been an oversight and timings would be included in the next performance report. The Chair remarked that the Board would be discussing this project in more detail during the Board visit to York in September. The Chair said that overall performance for Q1 had been very positive.

2.3 The Board moved on to discuss the Board Effectiveness Review report and recommendations – included as Annex A to Ian's report. Cathy Francis joined the meeting at this point. The Chair said he wanted to include the report and discussion in Part I of the meeting so that the results were fully visible to stakeholders. He thanked Aman Dalvi and Hattie Llewellyn-Davies – the independent review team – and said that overall the results were very positive, although there were some areas that the Board could now focus on to improve its effectiveness.

2.4 The Chair asked the Board to discuss the report. Simon Blanchflower said that it was a good, useful report and the reviewers had clearly understood the context of the EDC very well. Lord Moylan started a discussion on the balance between Part I and Part II of Board, and Board members agreed it would be useful to develop criteria or guiding principles in line with the report recommendation. Board members noted the importance and value of including as much as possible in Part I of Board, but also that on occasions certain items needed to be taken in Part II to ensure full debate of commercially sensitive issues.

2.5 The Board moved on to discuss the number of Board meetings each year. The Board discussed this in detail, and noted the burden on the Exec Team and EDC staff of having too many meetings in a year. Lord Moylan remarked that any decision needed to be taken in light of the potential establishment of a new Investment Panel which in his view would add to the reporting burden. The Board agreed to the recommendation in the review of six formal reporting Board meetings per year, and two more strategic Board ‘away days’. It was noted that special/extraordinary meetings could be called to discuss specific topics as and when required. The Chair requested that when 2024 meeting dates are set they are done so to avoid Kent Leaders meeting dates wherever possible. The Board decided to retain the three remaining meeting dates for 2023, including the 13 September meeting when it was noted the Board and EGCT Trustees would be meeting for a working lunch, but suggested that Ian consider the agenda for these meetings and whether all standing papers were required at each meeting.

2.6 The Board moved on to discuss the other recommendations in the report, including working with DLUHC to improve the diversity of the Board, the use of equality impact assessments, closer engagement between the Board and the community and Board member training requirements. On the recommendation that ARAC meetings should take place on days other than Board meeting days, Fred Maroudas – Chair of ARAC – said that he would like to discuss this with ARAC members first, and also said that he wanted ARAC meetings to take place face to face wherever possible.

2.7 The Chair summarised the views of the Board, and requested that an Implementation Plan be brought to the next Board meeting for approval.

2.8 The Board **NOTED** the report.

01-06	Implementation Plan to be developed setting out how the Board Effectiveness Review recommendations will be actioned. Action: James Richardson
02-06	2024 Board Meeting dates to be set, avoiding Kent Leader meetings where possible. Action: James Richardson

2(b) Financial Investment Decision Making Governance (Paper 023/067)

2.9 Ian Piper presented Paper 023/067 that set out the proposal for the EDC to establish a new Investment Panel (IP) in place of the existing Infrastructure and Investment Panel (IIP). Ian reminded the Board of the discussion in Part II of the June meeting, and drew the Board’s attention to the June Board paper that was included as an Annex to this month’s paper. Ian summarised the recommendations in the paper.

2.10 The Chair said that he supported the proposal and was delighted that Simon Blanchflower had agreed to Chair the IP. The Chair said that he would be one of the remaining four panel members, as would Nick Shattock. Lord Moylan said that subject to his appointment to the EDC Board being extended for a further term he would be content to join the IP. It was agreed that Ian would contact the Local Authority Board Members to check whether any of them wished to joined the IP as the fifth panel member.

2.11 Cathy Francis apologised on behalf of DHLUC for the delays to the public appointments process. She said that she hoped there would be an update by the start of w/c 7 August.

2.12 The Board **APPROVED** the establishment of the Investment Panel as a formal sub-committee of the Board on the Terms of Reference attached at Annex A to the report, **APPROVED** the proposal that the existing Infrastructure and Investment Panel (IIP) is dissolved and **APPROVED** that the other consequential changes to the EDC's project governance arrangements noted in paragraph 1.2 of the report are implemented.

03-06	Investment Panel to be established. Ian Piper to contact Cllrs Kite, Burden and Murphy to check whether any would like to join the Panel as the fifth member. Action: Ian Piper
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2(c) Communications Update (Paper 023/068)

2.13 Caroline Doidge's Communications report was Paper 023/068, providing an update on communications and marketing activity since the June Board. Caroline provided a verbal update on some of the highlights, including the ongoing work on the development of the EDC's new website, the launch of the latest edition of 'Ebbsfleet Living' in July, work with the EDC's new Environment & Sustainability Manager to embed sustainability, the community Fusion Festival and the campaign for new members to join the Ebbsfleet Community Board.

2.14 The Chair asked for questions. Valerie Owen said that the number of applicants for roles on the Ebbsfleet Community Board was very positive. Caroline said that the organisation had worked hard to raise interest and also that it was positive that applications had been received from a very diverse range of candidates.

2.15 Nick Shattock and Cathy Francis commented on the EDC's social media initiatives, and in particular use of LinkedIn and potential opportunities to use TikTok. It was agreed that different platforms would attract different demographics and reach people who might not otherwise be contacted. Caroline agreed to send the Board some information to support Board members' use of social media.

2.16 The Board **NOTED** the update.

3(a) Planning, Design and Delivery Report (Paper 023/069)

3.1 Mark Pullin presented Paper 023/069 which provided an update on planning, design and delivery across Ebbsfleet. Mark provided a verbal update on a number of key points in his paper including the applications from Redrow and Bellway due to be considered by the Planning Committee that evening, housing completions to date and an update on KCC and DBC development plans. Mark also drew the Board's attention to the annexes that proposed minor changes to the Planning Committee Terms of Reference (ToR). Looking ahead, Mark said that there would be an informal meeting of the Planning Committee in August for pre-application presentations on the first phase of the Major Urban Park (MUP) in Eastern Quarry and a further phase of development from Redrow.

2.17 The Chair asked the Board for comments. The Board discussed housing delivery and noted that the 189 housing completions to date put the EDC slightly ahead of the scheduled target for the year. The Chair asked if there were any notable trends affecting the developments. Ian Piper said that progress was positive, although the activity was not the same as it had been pre-pandemic. Mark Pullin agreed that there had been a slight slowing in delivery. Mark added that developers were now raising issues of material prices/shortages and staff shortages less than they had been doing, but instead were raising issues about mortgages rates and products.

2.18 Neil Cameron referred to the approval process for new members of the Planning Committee and said that it was vital that approval was forthcoming for local authority representation to ensure good community involvement. The Chair agreed. The Board noted this referred to both local authority nominated representatives and also the recruitment for a new independent member of the Committee as Chris Hall's term was shortly coming to an end.

2.19 The Board briefly considered the changes to the Planning Committee terms of references which were explained by Neil Cameron. The Board agreed to approve the changes.

2.20 The Board **NOTED** the update and **APPROVED** the reviewed Planning Committee Terms of Reference.

04-06	Updated Planning Committee terms of reference to be adopted with immediate effect. Action: Mark Pullin
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3(b) Ebbsfleet Living Report (Paper 023/070)

3.1 Kevin McGeough's Ebbsfleet Living report was Paper 023/070, reporting on community building activities since the May Board meeting. Kevin provided a verbal update that included an update on the recent Community Board recruitment campaign; he said that this process had started with a 'Get involved in Ebbsfleet' event for residents in December 2022 where existing Community Board members shared their experiences of being involved in the group. An 'open' Community Board meeting had been held in May where residents could see what was involved. Kevin suggested that the volume, quality and also diversity of applications was very positive. Kevin explained that existing Community Board members had said that the opportunity to influence community buildings through the co-design process and to shape the type of events held throughout the year was the reason they liked to be involved.

3.2 The Chair asked how the Board could gain a greater understanding and level of engagement with the community and the Community Board. Kevin said that we have found that the most effective way to engage with residents was to attend other events such as the festivals, where people are gathering anyway. He added that there was representation from the Board on the Community Board, and reminded the Board that the Community Board was a small representation of wider garden city residents. The Board said that it would be helpful if Kevin could consider opportunities for the Board to engage with the community and bring options to the Board to consider at a future meetings.

3.3 The Board moved on to the discuss the Community Board, and asked about the role of chairing the Board. It was noted that Cllr Kite continued to chair the Board, but that the Community Board was now transitioning and in the process of moving toward a resident chair. Ian Piper said that the recent Community Board meeting to review the applications had been chaired by a resident.

3.4 Kevin informed the Board of the work on education and out-reach programmes, which were working well and highlighted the Ebbsfleet Apprenticeship Programme. He added that EDC had recruited two Apprentice Planners and would be hosting a post-masters' student who had been funded by the Royal School of Arts to undertake a 6-month placement to explore ideas around community development. Lord Moylan informed Board that the Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust (EGCT) had taken over community funding and had issued its first small grants.

3.5 The Board **NOTED** the update.

05-06	Options for closer Board and community engagement to be considered and reported back to Board later in the year. Action: Kevin McGeough
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Item 4 **Director of Corporate Services' Report**

4 Finance, Operations and Report (Paper 023/071)

4.1 Gerard Whiteman presented Paper 023/071, which provided an update on 2023/24 budgetary matters, workforce issues and other operational matters. Gerard provided a short summary of the key points in his paper; he highlighting the £12.5m of capital headroom and said that options around how to utilise this amount in 23/24 or beyond were being reviewed. He also highlighted recent progress and success on recruitment. Moving on to health and safety matters, Gerard said that it was disappointing that the EDC was continuing to experience incidents of trespass on its sites, including recent incidents of people breaking into Blue Lake and swimming in the water.

4.2 The Chair asked if there was anything else to be done to stop the trespassing, particularly in the Blue Lake area. Gerard explained that a review was underway, including security arrangements and fences. Gerard added that a nearby footpath had recently been closed because of damage to a footbridge and this could have led to some of the incidents.

4.3 Neil Cameron asked about the £650,000 that had been rolled over to 2023/24 to support any potential work on the London Resort DCO application. He asked whether this would continue to be rolled over into future years or whether it would be used for other work. Ian Piper said that his preference was to roll it over as the funding would be required to review any DCO in the future and to use it for another purpose would place us at risk if the Resort did progress.

4.4 The Chair asked about EDC vacancies. James Richardson explained that there were four recruitment campaigns currently underway and that the EDC structure chart showed a number of additional vacancies. James said that most of the recruitment exercises so far in the year had been successful, although some, including the recent Development Manager campaign had failed. Nick Shattock asked about the recent Head of Property campaign. Jen Hunt said that this role had been filled by an internal candidate following a competitive recruitment campaign and outlined the proposed scope of the role.

4.5 The Board **NOTED** the report.

Item 5 **Director of Development's Report**

5 Development Report (Paper 023/072)

5.1 Jen Hunt presented her Paper 023/072 that provided a Part I update on development projects including Ebbsfleet Central, the Thames Way Development Area, Grove Road and Northfleet Embankment East.

5.2 Jen said that there had been good progress on Phase 1 of the Ebbsfleet Central project, and that confirmation of the frameworks that would be utilised for the design team roles had been finalised. Jen said that the full design team was due to be on Board by November. Jen also said that there had been continuing work to reset the Blue Lake and Grove Road projects, and that there would be presentations on both at the September Board

Away Day in York. Finally, Jen said that there had been confirmation from DLUHC that the Northfleet Embankment East project could now progress to the next phase.

5.3 The Board **NOTED** the update.

Item 6 **Director of Infrastructure & Enabling Works' Report**

6 **Infrastructure and Enabling Report (Paper 023/073)**

6.1 Paul Abrahams introduced Paper 023/073 that provided an update on infrastructure projects including the Springhead Bridge, waste water, electricity supply infrastructure, waste management and Fastrack.

6.2 Paul highlighted some key points from his paper, updating the Board that there had been a response from KCC on the adoption of the Springhead Bridge and that there was a meeting with the Council's Director of Highways the following day. On waste management Paul said that there was a fuller update to Board in Part II, and on Fastrack he reported that KCC were looking to provide a temporary service into Castle Hill by September. Paul said that there was continuing work on the revised business cases for electricity supply and Fastrack and both would be going to relevant Projects Boards and the newly formed Investment Panel before coming to full Board.

6.3 The Board **NOTED** the update.

Item 7 **Responses to Written Questions from Members of the Public**

7.1 The Chair referred to the EDC Board responses to public questions that had been received, and confirmed that responses would now be published on the EDC's website.

7.2 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 next meeting.

7.3 Cathy Francis left the meeting at this point.

Any Other Business

The Chair declared the public part of the meeting closed. Part Two of the meeting concerning matters solely of commercial or personal confidentiality and for which the public was excluded would now commence.

Summary of July 2023 Board Meeting Part II Agenda Items and Decisions

Item 8

The Board approved the Part II minutes of the June 2023 Board meeting.

Item 9 CEO's Part II Report (Paper 023/074)

The Board received a report on commercial and confidential matters from the CEO. The Board NOTED the report.

Item 10 Housing Diversification Ambitions for Ebbsfleet (Paper 023/075)

The Board received a paper that included an analysis of need and opportunity for the provision of different housing types across Ebbsfleet and recognised the limited opportunities to significantly influence the supply side. The Board NOTED the paper and considered further work required.

Item 11(a) Part II Development General Update (Paper 023/076)

The Board received a report on commercial and confidential issues relating to EDC development projects. The Board NOTED the report and APPROVED the additional £250,000 expenditure on the Ebbsfleet Central Stage 1 project and the revised project approval total of £39,690,245 (RDEL: £436,136 and CDEL: £39,254,109), noting that DLUHC have confirmed that their approval is not required.

Item 11(b) Part II Development Planning Update (Paper 023/077)

The Board received a report on planning matters connected with EDC development projects. Board NOTED the update.

Item 12 Waste Management Update (Paper 023/078)

The Board received a report that provided a summary on waste management provision in Ebbsfleet and the surrounding area. The Board NOTED the report.

Item 13 Corporate Risk Register and Risk Management Strategy (Paper 023/079)

The Board received a report that included the latest EDC Corporate Risk Register and the updated EDC Risk Management Strategy. The Board NOTED the report and APPROVED the Risk Management Strategy.

Item 14 2022/23 Draft Annual Report and Accounts (Paper 023/080)

The Board received the draft 2022/23 Annual Report and Accounts. The Board NOTED the report.

Chair's signature:

Date: