

**PART I MINUTES**  
**of the Board meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC)**  
**held at 1pm on Wednesday 27 March 2024**  
**taking place at the Observatory, Castle Hill, Ebbsfleet**

**Board Members Present:**

Simon Dudley (Chair)  
Simon Blanchflower CBE  
Cllr John Burden  
Neil Cameron KC (all items except 11b)  
Cllr Jeremy Kite MBE (from item 2b)  
Fred Maroudas (all items except 11b)  
Cllr Derek Murphy  
Valerie Owen OBE (all items except 11b)  
Nick Shattock  
Ian Piper (EDC CEO)

**Apologies:**

None

**In Attendance:**

Richard Garvey	Board Apprentice Programme
Lucy Wilkins	DLUHC Duty Director, Urban Policy
Paul Abrahams	EDC Director of Infrastructure & Enabling Works
Jen Hunt	EDC Director of Development
Mark Pullin	EDC Director of Planning and Place (all items except 11b)
Gerard Whiteman	EDC Director of Corporate Services
Caroline Doidge	EDC Head of Marketing and Communications
Simon Harrison	EDC Head of Design (Part I only)
Denise Johnson	EDC Board Secretariat
Chris McDonald	EDC Senior Construction Manager (Item 10 only)
Kevin McGeough	EDC Head of Strategy and Placemaking (Part I only)
James Richardson	EDC Head of HR & Corporate Affairs

**PART ONE**

**Item 1**

1.1 The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting, which was taking place at the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation's offices in Ebbsfleet. The Chair welcomed Lucy Wilkins, DLUHC Deputy Director, Urban Policy, who was attending the meeting as a representative of the EDC sponsor team.

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

**Apologies**

1.3 No apologies were recorded.

## **Declarations of Interest**

1.4 The Chair asked for declarations of interests and drew attention to the standing declarations of Planning Committee members. Neil Cameron said that in his role as a Barrister he had provided legal advice to Homes England, although this had been in a different region to Ebbsfleet. Simon Blanchflower declared that he was a Board member of National Highways, and that although this was recorded in the EDC Register of Interests he wanted to declare this at the meeting as National Highways was mentioned in one of the papers. No additional declarations were made. The full register of Board interests is available from the EDC website.

## **Part I Minutes of the 31 January 2024 Board Meeting**

1.5 The Board approved the Part I minutes of the January Board meeting.

## **Board Actions**

1.6 The Board noted that all actions had been closed.

## **Item 2      Chief Executive's Reports**

### **2(a) CEO's Strategic Report (Paper 024/015)**

2.1 Ian Piper's Part I CEO report was Paper 024/015. The paper reported on the publication of the Annual Accounts for 22/23, the completion of the 4,000<sup>th</sup> home, business planning for 24/25, changes to the compulsory purchase system and recruitment. Ian's paper also confirmed that Cllrs Kite, Burden and Murphy had been reappointed to the Board by the Secretary of State for further terms of 3 years each.

2.2 Ian updated the Board on one matter not covered in his paper. He said that in January the Finance report to Board had forecast capital spend for the year of £7.1m, but that the forecast had now been reduced to c.£5.5m. This was primarily because the Corporation had not yet been able to enter into contract with Redrow for the Ebbsfleet Green community buildings, which was now expected later in April, and also because of some underspend on Ebbsfleet Central.

2.3 The Chair remarked on the achievement of the 4,000<sup>th</sup> home and thanked local residents Eddie and Rachel, the occupiers, and also the Minister who had recently visited Ebbsfleet.

2.4 The Chair also remarked on the changes to the compulsory purchase regime and asked Neil Cameron for his view on this. Neil said that his understanding was that the main impact for Ebbsfleet surrounded how 'hope value' could be factored into valuations, although he suspected the application of this would be quite restricted and only apply in very specific circumstances.

2.5 The Board **NOTED** the report.

### **2(b) Communications and Marketing Report (Paper 024/016)**

2.6 Cllr Kite joined the meeting during this item. Caroline Doidge's Communications report was Paper 024/016, providing an update on communications and marketing activity since the January Board meeting. Caroline provided a short update on the highlights, focussing on the 4,000<sup>th</sup> home celebrations in February. Caroline thanked Eddie and his partner, who were

the occupants of the 4,000<sup>th</sup> home and who had participated in the communications activity. Caroline also referred to the visit of the Housing Minister, Lee Rowley, the week after the celebration. Looking forward, she highlighted the work to develop a new Sustainability Marketing Toolkit and how this would be trialled in a pilot project with schools in the Summer. Caroline also clarified the demographics of those who had signed up to the digital newsletter after the Board enquired about this in January, and outlined the work to ensure the results of the Residents Survey are well communicated across Ebbsfleet and beyond.

2.7 The Chair invited questions from the Board. Simon Blanchflower said that it was positive that an interim Fastrack service into Whitecliffe might start as soon as early Summer, and asked about the comms opportunities to promote this. Caroline said that November was the expected date of the launch of the main service, but that there was an ambition across EDC and partners to deliver an interim service in the Summer. She added that this was not yet confirmed, and so EDC would need to consider when to send out communications so as to not confuse residents. Simon acknowledged the importance of caution until more information was known.

2.8 The Board **NOTED** the update.

### **Item 3**      **Director of Planning and Place's Part I Reports**

#### **3(a) Planning, Design and Delivery Report (Paper 024/017)**

3.1 Mark Pullin presented his Paper, 024/017, giving an update on planning, design and delivery across Ebbsfleet. Summarising his Paper, Mark referred to previous updates where he had explained that some submitted applications had paused. He said that many of these projects had since progressed and multiple sites across various developments were now progressing. On the planning application for Ebbsfleet Central East, Mark said that this was now out for re-consultation, and also that the re-consultation on Northfleet Embankment East had finished. Mark also said that the application for the Major Urban Park at Whitecliffe had been received, and that Henley Camland had gone to consultation on the Alkerden Hub proposals.

3.3 Mark moved on to report on housing delivery, and said that he was able to confirm the year outturn total of 680 completions. He said that there were signs of a strong start for 2024/25. On the Planning Committee, Mark said that there was a presentation that evening on the sustainability design assessment tool. In April the Committee was expected to meet to consider the application for the Rosherville Primary School.

3.5 Finally, Mark updated on appointments to the Planning Committee. He said that the recruitment of an independent member had unfortunately been unsuccessful, and that the recent KCC nominee to the Committee had decided to decline the appointment. He added that the third term of the other independent member – Penny Marsh – was due to end in the Autumn, and under the current Planning Committee terms of reference (ToR) Penny was not eligible for reappointment.

3.6 The Chair asked for comments or questions. Neil Cameron, Chair of the Planning Committee, said that it was disappointing that the campaign for a new independent member has been unsuccessful and that the Committee would miss having independent voices. He said that it would be necessary to secure replacement members as soon as possible. The Board noted the very important contribution Penny had made to the Committee over the years. Cllr Kite asked if it might be possible to amend the ToR to allow for individuals to serve additional terms in some circumstances so the Committee did not have a gap. Mark said that he was planning to bring the ToR document to the Board in May with some proposed changes, and that he would look at this suggestion in parallel to this. He added

that any appointment or reappointment to the Committee required Secretary of State approval.

3.7 Nick Shattock referred to the 4000<sup>th</sup> completion, and noted that only 298 of these had been completions prior to the Corporation being established. Simon Blanchflower asked about the continued delay in the allotments at Ebbsfleet Green and the community garden and allotments at Springhead Park. Mark explained that the delay at Ebbsfleet Green was due to site conditions and a drainage issue, but that EDC had not had clear reasons from Countryside for the Springhead Park delays. Valerie Owen said that she understood from her role with EGCT that one of the developments was affected by issues concerning a short private access road. Mark said that he would investigate the problems and report to Board in May. The Chair closed the item by remarking on the completions total for the year, another consecutive record for EDC and its developer partners.

3.8 The Board **NOTED** the update.

<b>01-02</b>	Planning Committee Terms of Reference and proposed changes to be considered by Board at the May meeting. <b>Action: Mark Pullin</b>
<b>02-02</b>	Update on allotments at Ebbsfleet Green and allotments and community garden at Springhead to be provided to Board at the May meeting. <b>Action: Mark Pullin</b>

### **3(b) Ebbsfleet Living (Paper 024/018)**

3.9 Kevin McGeough presented his Paper 024/018, which reported on community building activities since the January 2024 Board and provided some highlights. He said that EGCT had awarded 10 Community Fund grants during the year, and reported that the Corporation, Blue Print Arts and the Cultural Exchange Group had been successful in securing a grant of £80k from the Arts Council to continue their programme for a further two years, match funded by EDC. He said that there had been many events and community initiatives during the first part of the year, including a ‘couch to 5k’ running group, bicycle repair café and Winter Lights Festival’ run. Referring to National Apprenticeship Week, Kevin said the Corporation and its partners had delivered the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Apprenticeship Event at Wilmington Grammar School for Boys.

3.10 The Chair asked for comments and questions. Neil Cameron thanked Kevin for research conducted on the Flourishing Index, and noted the information in Kevin’s report that explained the initiatives EDC had in place already that enabled similar evaluation for the garden city, including the Quality of Life Survey and ‘wheel’, and the Outcomes Framework.

3.11 Simon Blanchflower referred to the “Early Careers Show” trailer which he said was very positive. He said he was very encouraged about the employability training schemes run by O’Halloran and O’Brien which were funded by EDC, and also said he welcomed the cycle repair sessions.

3.12 Valerie Owen remarked on the different bids that had been received by EGCT for the Community Fund, and how this showcased the different sections of the community, and also suggested that the Community Board might have members who would wish to apply for the independent member roles on the Planning Committee. The Chair asked about the £180k investment in the unlocking cultural and creative potential in Northfleet. Kevin said that this included match funding from EDC and whilst it was mainly for cultural programming it would link to the potential Northfleet Station site meanwhile project.

3.13 The Board **NOTED** the update.

### **3(c) Environment Programme 2024/25 (Paper 024/019)**

3.14 Simon Harrison presented Paper 024/019, which included a progress report on actions in the Ebbsfleet Sustainability Action Plan that were carried out in 2023/24 and also proposed the actions for prioritisation in 2024-25 and the funding that would be required. Simon said that he was seeking Board approval for £140,000 (RDEL) inclusive of VAT to deliver the 2024/25 programme.

3.15 The Chair asked for comments or questions. Simon Blanchflower asked about the Soft Landings Framework and the training undertaken by EDC's Environmental Sustainability Manager. Simon Harrison said that the Framework had been developed by Government and industry, that it had been around for c.15 years and that its intention was to close the performance gap on projects, particularly focussing on how they are handed over by the construction site to those who will run, manage and monitor the project after handover. He said that was embedded into the Corporation's Sustainable Performance Framework, and the training helped EDC to support its development teams.

3.16 Simon Blanchflower asked about the 'Green Map', and whether this included green and blue infrastructure. Simon Harrison said that the Map was a digital map tool that would be publicly accessible. Blue assets and projects were included as a habitat typology as are sustainable drainage systems. Nick Shattock asked about water reuse project and Castle Hill lake, whether lessons that could be applied to Blue Lake and also whether the £30k requested would be matched by Henley Camland. Simon said that Castle Hill lake sat below the water table as it was in a quarry, and that it included surface water. He said that a lot of the water was pumped into the Thames, and although the water was not potable it could potentially be reused in the garden city.

3.17 Neil Cameron asked about the annual travel monitoring, which he said could be very useful depending on how it was used, and gave the example of how it could assist to assess the impact of Fastrack once the service is extended. Simon Harrison said that mainly focussed on carbon reporting, but that it would also provide useful information on journeys within the garden city. Neil said that the data could help with future decision making, especially if it were made publicly available. Richard Garvey asked how often the data would be collected. Simon said that it was proposed to conduct the monitoring every two years.

3.18 The Board **NOTED** the progress made in 2023-24 and **APPROVED** RDEL funding of £140,000 (inclusive of VAT) to deliver the environment programme in 2024-25.

### **Item 4      Development, Infrastructure & Enabling Works Part I Update (Paper 024/020)**

4.1 Jen Hunt and Paul Abrahams presented Paper 024/024, the combined Part I report on development, infrastructure and enabling works projects. Jen briefly outlined development highlights, reporting that the design team had completed RIBA Stage 1 for infrastructure required for the first phase of development at Ebbsfleet Central Phase 1. She added that her team had worked closely with DLUHC to re-establish a Cross Whitehall Group for Ebbsfleet and a DLUHC working group to support EDC through the development of the OBC for the project. Jen also reported that the SOC for Grove Road South has been submitted to DLUHC, and that the Board would be discussing the Blue Lake SOC in Part II.

4.2 Paul Abrahams then provided updates from the Infrastructure and Enabling Works projects. He said that negotiations continued with KCC on the adoption of Springhead Bridge, and that whilst items on a recent snagging list were relatively minor and referred back to KCC from a maintenance perspective, an issue relating to road surfacing was

currently being investigated. Cllr Murphy said that he was regularly checking on this issue within KCC. Paul said that his target date for completion of the adoption process was September 2024. Paul provided an update on the electricity supply project, reporting that the variation to the contract with UKPN is close to completion following approval by HMT for additional expenditure, adding that the location of the substation and the cable routing are very close to being agreed. Finally, he summarised the latest progress on Fastrack, stating that regular meetings were held with Whitecliffe developers and KCC to agree the plan for a temporary service to access Whitecliffe in the Summer.

4.3 Nick Shattock asked about the Waste Water Treatment Works project, and specifically who was advising EDC. Paul explained that Southern Water were currently working up their preferred design option to take to their Board on 28 March for approval, and that EDC advice was being provided by Arcadis and Pinsent Masons. Discussion continued on this project, focussed on the impact of odours on residents. Richard Garvey asked whether the odour could be measured. Ian Piper said that visually the Works was not an issue as it was well hidden, and that the odour issue tended to be intermittent. He said that a scientific contour assessment approach was being used and that the odour could be measured.

4.4 Cllr Kite referred to the wayfinding update in Paul's section of the report, and outlined his recent experience within Dartford of wayfinding solution design, including issues of vandalism and damage. It was agreed Paul would contact the relevant officer in DBC to discuss this in more detail. Cllr Kite also raised the issue of MaaS that he has raised in January, saying that from what he had seen since the January Board meeting the initiative appeared to be improving, but that in his view there was still the potential that it would double up on other applications available in the community.

4.5 The Board **NOTED** the report.

## **Item 5 Updated Procurement and Contract Management Policies (Paper 024/021)**

5.1 Gerard Whiteman presented Paper 024/021 that included the updated Procurement Policy and Contract Management Policy for the EDC and for which Board approval was being sought. Fred Maroudas, Chair of the ARAC, said that the ARAC had discussed the updates to the policies over several months and the view of the Committee was that the new versions were significant improvements on the existing versions.

5.2 Valerie Owen asked a number of questions, starting with a query on framework agreements and how these could have the effect of excluding smaller organisations. Ian Piper briefly outlined EDC's approach to using framework agreements, and said that whilst there were benefits to using frameworks they were not the default, and that for each procurement exercise the procuring manager would need to examine the options and propose the most appropriate route to market. Other routes include a Request for Quotation process and an Invitation to Tender process.

5.3 Valerie then asked about the 'safe harbours' set out in Annex A to the Contract Management Policy regarding modifications to contracts, and specifically harbours (b) and (c) and how these could be cumulative. Gerard Whiteman said that Annex A set out the requirements as contained in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR), and said that the ARAC had discussed this very matter at the morning ARAC meeting. He said that – should EDC ever utilise (b) or (c) this would be notified to ARAC. Ian Piper said that (b) and (c) were less likely to be used in practice, and that there were criteria set out for how these could be used. Jen Hunt said that the use of either of these harbours would also require EDC to make a public notice for full transparency.

5.4 The Board **APPROVED** the updated Procurement Policy and the updated Contract Management Policy.

**Item 6**      **Responses to Written Questions from Members of the Public**

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

6.2 It was noted that a video of Part I of the meeting would be made available on the 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.

**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 March 2024 Board Meeting Part II Agenda Items and Decisions**

### **Item 7**

The Board approved the Part II minutes of the January 2024 Board meeting.

### **Item 8**      **CEO's Commercial/Confidential Update (Paper 024/022)**

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

### **Item 9**      **2024/25 Business Plan (Paper 024/023)**

The Board APPROVED the final draft of the 2024/25 Business Plan subject to the changes agreed by the Board in the meeting, and agreed that it could then be submitted to DLUHC for approval prior to publication.

### **Item 10**      **Blue Lake SOC (Paper 024/024)**

The Board APPROVED the Strategic Outline Case for Blue Lake, noting that the approval of DLUHC was now required. The Board also APPROVED, subject to DLUHC approval of the SOC, funding of £2.635m (CDEL) to develop the project through to Outline Business Case.

### **Item 11**      **Part II Development and Infrastructure Reports**

#### **11(a) Development – General Part II Report (Paper 024/025)**

The Board received a report on commercial and confidential matters associated with development projects. The Board NOTED the report.

#### **11(b) Development – Part II Planning Report (Paper 024/026)**

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