

PART I MINUTES
of the Board meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC)
held at 1pm on Wednesday 25 September 2024
taking place at the Observatory, Castle Hill, Ebbsfleet

Board Members Present:

Simon Dudley (Chair)
Simon Blanchflower CBE
Cllr John Burden (from Item 2b)
Neil Cameron KC (except for part of Item 7)
Cllr Jeremy Kite MBE (except for Item 8a, 8b and part of 8c)
Fred Maroudas (from the end of Item 7 until the end of Item 9)
Valerie Owen OBE (except for part of Item 7)
Nick Shattock
Ian Piper (EDC CEO)

Apologies:

Cllr Derek Murphy

In Attendance:

Richard Garvey	Boardroom Apprentice Programme
Paul Abrahams	EDC Director of Infrastructure & Enabling Works (except for Item 11)
Jen Hunt	EDC Director of Development (except for Item 11)
Mark Pullin	EDC Director of Planning & Place (except for part of Item 7 and Item 11)
Gerard Whiteman	EDC Director of Corporate Services
Kevin McGeough	EDC Head of Strategy and Placemaking (Part 1 only)
Lara Pool	EDC Inclusive Growth Manager (Part 1 only)
Paul Dunkin	EDC Project Manager (Item 8a only)
Mary Rouse	EDC Community Development Manager (Item 8b only)
James Richardson	EDC Head of HR & Corporate Affairs
Elizabeth Roach	EDC Board Secretariat

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.

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 Apologies were noted from Cllr Murphy.

Declarations of Interest

1.4 The Chair asked for declarations. Declarations are recorded in full on the Register of Interests that is available from the EDC website, including the standing declarations of Planning Committee members. No additional declarations were made.

Part 1 Minutes of the 24 July 2024 Meeting

1.5 The Board agreed the Part I minutes of the 24 July 2024 Board meeting

Item 2 Chief Executive's Reports

2(a) CEO's Strategic Report (Paper 024/061)

2.1 Ian Piper's Part I CEO report was Paper 024/061. Ian briefly covered the items in his report, including confirming that EDC's Business Plan for 2024/25 had been approved by MHCLG during the Summer and that it was published on the Corporation's website.

2.2 Ian also mentioned the recent Government announcement on the next Spending Review and outlined the timetable for the preparation of EDC's next Corporate Plan. Ian said that the Board would begin to discuss the Corporate Plan in more detail at the 22 October strategy day. The Corporate Plan would be targeted for completion in March 2025.

2.3 The Board **NOTED** the report.

2(b) Communications and Marketing Report (Paper 024/062)

2.4 John Burden joined the meeting from this Item. Ian Piper said he would take Paper 024/062 as read and welcomed any questions in Caroline Doidge's absence.

2.5 The Chair said that he had recently received the Residents' Satisfaction Survey launch email and encouraged all residents to complete it. He said that the Corporation appreciated all feedback it received. Simon Blanchflower asked about the level of interest and take up in the Green Map initiative. Ian said that it had only just launched and that he would ask Caroline to report figures at the next EDC Board meeting.

2.6 Valerie Owen asked how much involvement Board members would have in branding and visioning work for individual projects and specifically mentioned Ebbsfleet Central. Ian Piper said that the Yard Creative had been appointed to lead this work and Jen Hunt said the organisation had already engaged with the Chair and Nick Shattock. The Chair said that he would like other Board members to have the option to feed into this engagement. Valerie said that she would like to participate and it was agreed that this would be arranged.

2.7 The Board **NOTED** the report.

01-06	Data on the Green Map to be provided to the Board at the November meeting. Action: Caroline Doidge
02-06	Caroline Doidge to contact Valerie Owen on Ebbsfleet Central brand and visioning. Action: Caroline Doidge

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

3(a) Planning, Design and Delivery Report (Paper 024/63)

3.1 Mark Pullin presented Paper 024/063 that provided an update on planning, design and delivery across Ebbsfleet. Mark provided a short summary of his paper. He reported that a Section 73 application to amend the outline planning permission for Eastern Quarry had been received, and based on the pre-application discussions it was expected that this involves a proposal to reduce the office floorspace allowed for and an increase to the number of residential units from 6,250 to 6,600 and to allow for C2 use - older persons accommodation.

3.2 Mark said the application for the third phase at Ashmere (Parcel 9) that had been expected the previous week had been delayed. He said that the Alkerden Hub application for reserved matters was expected to be presented to the Planning Committee for decision in October or November 2024 and that Phase 3A at Harbour Village was expected to report to the Committee in October. Mark also reported that the Committee would meet later that day to consider an application for a small car park at Ingress Park.

3.3 Mark moved on to housing numbers and flagged that, although completions were ahead of target, a lower number of starts was recorded during the period. He also drew the Board's attention to Annex B of the report, the Infrastructure Funding Statement for 2023/24 which detailed the developer contributions received and spent during the period. Finally, Mark said he had recently met with developers regarding the consultation on the Sustainable Design Assessment Tool. The consultation closes on 4 October.

3.4 The Chair invited questions. Neil Cameron asked about housing starts and specifically the developers that had not provided data on housing numbers in the reporting period. Mark Pullin explained that the two developers were Chartway, who had commenced on site at Alkerden 5B with approximately 20 starts, and Bellway who had commenced Harbour Village Phase 2 with approximately 30 starts. Neil moved on to the Infrastructure Funding Statement and asked whether action was being taken in connection with the outstanding invoices for £1.1m related to Affordable Housing Contributions and £3.5m related to Off Site Transport Contributions. Mark confirmed that action was underway, discussions with the developer were continuing and late repayment charges were being levied. The Chair said that this matter would be discussed in Part II of the meeting.

3.5 Valerie Owen updated Board members on the recent Planning Committee training day which had covered development appraisals and advice on managing conflicts of interest and impartiality. The day had included a site visit to the Manor Way Industrial Estate which had proved very interesting. Nick Shattock asked for an update on the Ebbsfleet Central S106 process and Mark said July's Committee decisions had been a resolution to approve subject to entry into the S106 agreements and the Development team is in discussion with KCC, DBC and GBC on these. Legal drafting is underway and Jen Hunt confirmed that Heads of Terms had already been agreed prior to the Planning Committee meeting.

3.6 Board **NOTED** the paper.

3(b) Ebbsfleet Living (Paper 024/064)

3.7 Kevin McGeough presented Paper 024/064 which reported on community building activities since the last Board meeting in July 2024. Kevin said that 20 Community Fund bids had already been received this year by the Garden City Trust and that the fund was continuing to grow in popularity. He reported that the Community Board continued to gain

confidence and has now started to lead projects themselves, including the 'Our Ebbsfleet' project, and referred to the positive feedback received following the 'Let's Clean Up the School Run' initiative which had involved 6 schools, 260 participants and 3,600 miles walked.

3.8 The Chair invited questions and comments. Simon Blanchflower commended EDC staff for the community support offered by the various activities held over the Summer. Simon asked for further information on the 3 September event with strategic sports and leisure partners and whether this had led to any tangible outcome. Kevin explained that the event was held with a range of partners including Sport England, the Football Foundation, Kent Football Association, Kent Cricket, KCC, DBC and GBC and Ebbsfleet United Football Club. He said that the event had been very useful in strengthening the partnerships EDC had with these bodies and useful to these bodies in helping them plan for future S106 delivery, allowing them to reflect local needs.

3.9 The Board **NOTED** the report.

3(c) Social Value (Paper 024/065)

3.10 Mark Pullin introduced Paper 024/065 which updated the Board on the social value generated across the garden city in 2023/24. Mark said that the period covered was the 15 months of January 2023 to March 2024, and future reporting would be based upon financial years. Mark said that a total of £11.4m in social value was reported in the period, and that this figure included EDC contributions and social value generated by developers. Lara Pool, EDC's Inclusive Growth Manager, had led the Corporation's work on social value. She shared a draft copy of the Impact Report with the Board and said that this would be published soon. Lara also reported that EDC had submitted a bid to the Social Value Awards and had been shortlisted under the Public Sector Leadership category, with results to be announced on 17 October.

3.11 The Chair invited questions, and started by asking how EDC could ascertain if the numbers generated were positive when compared to others. Lara explained that the Social Value Portal is used to measure the activity of 24,000 organisations across the UK and a total of £32bn has been measured in social value, including a 650% growth in the last three years. She said that data was provided by region and the average for each 'project' was £4.8m. Lara said that EDC's £11.4m figure was therefore positive when compared to other projects.

3.12 Nick Shattock asked whether there are any organisations doing something similar to EDC and Lara replied that most of the other new towns who engage with the Social Value Portal are still in their infancy; Ian Piper said that there were not many organisations that were operating on a 'place' basis and so this did make direct comparisons difficult. Valerie Owen asked about data collection and who was responsible for inputting the data into the Portal. Lara confirmed that she inputted EDC and developer data, and that for future years when EDC suppliers are included in the data the suppliers would be responsible for inputting their data. Social value data and reporting was now established into EDC procurement processes to enable this.

3.13 The Board **NOTED** the report.

Item 4 **Development, Infrastructure & Enabling Works Part I Update (Paper 024/066)**

4.1 Jen Hunt and Paul Abrahams' report was Paper 024/066, covering Part I updates on development, infrastructure and enabling works projects. Paul started by informing the Board that approval had now been received from MHCLG for the £300k Springhead Bridge remedial works and that the tender was now live. He also reported that his team had recently met with Southern Water and it had been confirmed that the Northfleet waste water treatment works would be included in their programme for the their next Asset Management Plan period, covering 2025 to 2030. Paul moved on to report that the Fastrack Bath Street Contraflow project had completed and that the opening ceremony would be on 15 October, and then updated Board on patronage for the C2 temporary bus service through Whitecliffe which showed between 1,000-1,900 trips were being undertaken each week. Finally, Paul reported that the Fastrack Bean Tunnels planning application was submitted in mid-July and it was hoped it would be determined in November 2024.

4.2 Cllr Burden asked about the remedial works at Springhead Bridge and why these repairs were needed for a new bridge. Paul explained that the majority of the costs related to the roads adjacent to the bridge. Ian Piper reminded Board members of the difficulties regarding KCC's adoption of the bridge and explained that it was quite usual for a Highway Authority, following inspection, to require snagging to be addressed prior to adoption. Because of the delays to adoption this has meant some 'wear and tear' which KCC are insisting are addressed. KCC has confirmed in writing that they will immediately adopt the bridge on satisfactory completion of works. Ian also reminded Cllr Burden that the Board had previously considered and then approved the expenditure for remedial works. Paul said that £250k of the £300k was for the repairs and he did not expect all of this to be required.

4.3 Cllr Burden moved on to the Fastrack Bean Tunnels application and said that he had become aware of some local opposition. He said his understanding was that the funding contribution from KCC (which is money received from DfT) of £7-8 million would lead to only a short reduction in journey time of around 3 minutes. Paul said he was not aware of the local opposition, and that the 3-minute gain time was much greater than this at certain times of day. The Chair reminded Board that the time/cost issue had been scrutinised at an earlier Board meeting. Cllr Kite said that it was important to note that whilst the spend was a significant part of the allocation to Kent from DfT, this particular funding was allocated specifically for improvements to bus networks and could only be used for this purpose; it was not for general transport schemes. He said that he was not aware of opposition, and added that it would help ease traffic congestion in Dartford and offer another option for local bus users. Neil Cameron said time saving was not the only gain and that it was also about improving local connectivity which was part of the Fastrack vision.

4.4 The Chair invited Jen Hunt to update the Board on the development projects outlined in the paper. Jen flagged a number of items, firstly that the Outline Business Case for Ebbsfleet Central was progressing and engagement was ongoing with MHCLG and Treasury officials, and secondly she drew the Board's attention to MHCLG's approvals to the Blue Lake and Grove Road SOCs and confirmed that these two projects were now mobilising. The Chair asked if there had been any change to the business case approval process in view of the new administration. Jen said that there continued to be some inconsistencies in MHCLG's approval processes and that Ian was working with MHCLG colleagues in reviewing this, particularly in light of the upcoming Ebbsfleet Central business case.

4.5 The Board **NOTED** the report.

Item 5 **Responses to Written Questions from Members of the Public**

5.1 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.

5.2 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 September 2024 Board Meeting Part II Agenda Items and Decisions

Item 6

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

Item 7 CEO's Commercial/Confidential Update (Paper 024/067)

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

Item 8 Investment Decisions

8(a) Alkerden Hub Full Business Case (Paper 024/068)

The Board received the full business case for investment in the Alkerden Hub. The Board APPROVED additional expenditure into the project of £15,684,200.00 based on the Full Business Case (FBC) provided, taking the total approval on the project to £16,165m comprising £15.35m CDEL and £0.815m RDEL. The proposed funding will cover the costs of enhancing the facility over and above the developers Section 106 obligations, and the acquisition of the developer's freehold interest. Board noted that the approval of MHCLG is required. Additionally, the Board APPROVED, subject to MHCLG approval of the FBC, the Corporation entering into a Grant Funding Agreement with Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust in line with the detail set out in Board paper 024/068 and the FBC.

8(b) Mobile Community Space (Paper 024/069)

The Board received a report seeking approval for EDC capital funding as a grant to the Salvation Army towards the purchase of a Mobile Community Space. The Board APPROVED £49,374 of CDEL payable as a grant to the Salvation Army as a contribution to the purchase of a Mobile Community Space as outlined in Board report 024/069. For the avoidance of doubt, the sums requested includes the cost of any irrecoverable VAT incurred, but excludes any recoverable VAT.

8(c) Castle Hill Local Centre Transfer (Paper 024/070)

The Board received a report concerning the Castle Hill Local Centre. The Board APPROVED the transfer of the long leasehold interest in the Castle Hill local centre to the Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust at nil or nominal value, subject to the following:

- 1) Approval by MHCLG and HMT to the transaction;
- 2) Incorporation of a condition/covenant that any asset owned and/or managed by the Trust with the benefit of this income shall have no restrictions as to access or use in terms of residency of users/beneficiaries;
- 3) The terms of the transfer to include restrictions on use of the income from the asset by EGCT to furtherance of their charitable objectives and being in line with the agreed Articles of Association;
- 4) Clearance through the Subsidy Control 'notification' process without an upheld challenge;
- 5) Formal consultation with local authorities as per the process advised by MHCLG.

Item 9 **Development – Part II General Report (Paper 024/071)**

The Board received an update on commercial confidential matters connected to development projects. The Board NOTED the update.

Item 10 **Draft Annual Report & Accounts 2023/24 (Paper 024/072)**

The Board received the draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2023/24. The Board NOTED the report.

Item 11 **EDC Staff Pay Award (Paper 024/073)**

The Board received a report on the proposed 2024/25 staff pay award and the performance pay budget. The Board APPROVED the recommendations in the paper as endorsed by the Remuneration Committee.