

BBC/EWR Line Task Group – Minutes



BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Date: Wednesday 8th October 2025

Time: 9am – 10am

Venue: Hybrid

Attendees:

Craig Austin (CA)

Callum Fletcher (CF)

John Molyneux (JM)

Margaret Birtles (MB)

Jo Branson-Budd (JBB)

Antigua Riley Corion (ARC)

Gavin Chiniah (GC)

Sarah Combes (SC)

No.	Discussion	Actions
1.	Apologies Apologies received from Paul Pace (PP), Anna Robbani (AR) and Dawn Staal (DS).	
2.	Minutes from meeting on 25th September The minutes from the previous meeting held on 25 th September were circulated and agreed.	JBB to circulate original FC decision to All.
3.	Subject Experts for ongoing Consultation JBB circulated an engagement framework provided by EWR and proposed BBC's 'subject expert' officers to provide support across different project themes. Discussion and agreement regarding the creation of an 'issues log,' for queries and requests for information to EWR that either remain outstanding or are to be raised.	All to review engagement framework and offer any feedback to JBB by Friday 10th October Once all have reviewed, JBB to confirm how Officers should log time spent on EWR project work for recharge JBB to create 'issues log'
4.	Forward Plan of EWR/BBC Meetings JBB expressed frustration that she has not yet received the 12-month Forward Plan of EWR/BBC meetings from EWR, as previously requested to EWR.	

5.	Stakeholder Engagement EWR/BBC – Ashburnham Road and impact to Nos. 2 – 20 Discussions about impact to 2 – 20 Ashburnham road. JBB confirmed 53 properties and businesses are impacted by the demolition proposals (43 residential, 10 commercial). Meeting confirmed with the Mayor and Portfolio Holders for Environment & Planning to discuss plan for engaging with impacted residents, businesses and landlords in 2 – 20 Ashburnham Road. JBB confirmed she has not yet received EWR’s stakeholder engagement plan. ARC updated group that EWR are planning another drop-in meeting with affected residents, businesses and landlords in 2 – 20 Ashburnham Road. She is waiting to be informed of the date.	AR to check and review domestic households within 2-20 Ashburnham Road CA, JBB, ARC, PP and JM to attend
6.	Planning Infrastructure Bill Update pending.	DS to provide further information regarding the Planning Infrastructure Bill
7.	Non-statutory Consultation Response JBB updated the group that the briefing note will now be heard at Environment & Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19th March 2026, instead of 15th January. EWR to be present.	JBB to ensure EWR representatives invited to the Committee meeting.
8.	PPA Discussion about PPA BBC/EWR, in the context of significant changes to the scope to the EWR line/Bedford Station proposals.	JBB and GC to confirm at the next meeting the extent of what is covered by the existing PPA, given the significant changes to the scope, and determine whether this requires review to ensure that all associated costs (incl. officer time, resources, legal opinions, other third party spend etc) will be recharged as appropriate.
9.	AOB JBB confirmed she has followed up with EWR regarding the technical note they will provide justifying the requirement to demolish 2 – 20 evens on Ashburnham Road. MB confirmed the Properties Team is liaising with EWR regarding additional land and properties proposed for	

	demolition. The team is looking into the possibility for professional advice being made available. Discussion about the potential requirement for external (regulatory) expert opinion regarding aspects of EWR project proposals	CF to evaluate what expert opinion may be required.
10.	Date of next meeting Wednesday 22nd October, 9am	