

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Crewe Town Board**
held on Friday, 4th February, 2022 at Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT

D Kinsman (Chair)

John Adlen, Rick Carter, Paul Coleman, Reverend David Edwards, Sally Hepton, Guy Kilminster, Adam Knight, Dr Kieran Mullan MP and Councillor Jill Rhodes.

ALSO PRESENT

Colin Davies (Aviary Works), Lindsey Lewis, Daniel Lindsay (Ekosgen), Pete Turner and Martin Wood

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Rhiannon Hilton, Communications Officer
Dr Charles Jarvis, Head of Economic Development
Jez Goodman, Development & Regeneration Delivery Manager
Karen Shuker, Democratic Services Officer
Peter Skates, Director of Growth & Enterprise
Carol Young, Policy & Partnerships Officer

91 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1 MINUTE)

Apologies for absence were received from Mark Hills.

92 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (1 MINUTE)

There were no declarations of interest.

93 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (3 MINUTES)

That the minutes of the virtual meeting held on 3 December 2021 be approved as a correct record.

94 TOWNS FUND FORWARD PLAN (1HR 30 MINS)

The board received an update on the Towns Fund Forward Plan which included progress on the business case developments and how information on the progress of each project would be shared with the Board in the future. This would include presentations from each of the projects, monthly updates, and a dashboard to show progress of each project over its lifespan.

Questions and feedback were received from the board which included

- From previous experience, where were the main areas of weakness in business cases;
- Would there be a requirement to amend the projects outcomes following the twelve pledges listed in the Levelling Up Fund which had recently been published.

The Board were informed that although projects had been listed in different tranches there may be some flexibility required depending on the progress of each project, with some projects potentially being moved into other tranches. The Board sought reassurance that if that was the case that there would be some flexibility and understanding from DLUHC. There continued to be good progress made with most of the projects despite challenges in respect of delays with planning services, increases in construction, energy, and utility costs. These issues were reported nationally and not just confined to the local area.

The Board received an introduction and presentation in respect of the assurance framework by Daniel Lindsay from Ekosgen. The consultants had been appointed to support and work in partnership with the Board and the Section 151 officer on project appraisal and evaluation. The presentation covered the appraisal process, what area each project would cover and the potential appraisal recommendations.

The Board received a presentation from Colin Davies, a visual artist and design consultant with Aviary Works, in respect of the artwork commissioned for Lyceum Square. The board welcomed the bold designs which referenced historic patterns and heard that a consultation exercise would be carried out with the people of Crewe to gain their views and feedback on the designs.

The Board thanked Colin Davies and Daniel Lindsay for their presentations.

RESOLVED:-

That the update be noted.

95 TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW (10 MINUTES)

The Board considered its terms of reference and had a discussion in respect of the strategic intent and purpose of the board now that the Towns Fund had moved on to the next stage. Feedback and comments received included

- It was felt that there needed to be an overarching body within Cheshire Easy to look specifically at Crewe as there was lots going on but nowhere to bring it together;

- More engagement with the political element may help push things forward;
- It was felt that the board needed to get together in person to look at what the Boards vision was aside from the delivery of the projects;
- There was a need to maintain the focus on Crewe and ensure there was a structure and process in place to build on everything that had been learnt in recent years.
- There was an opportunity for the Town Board to be used by the Council as a vehicle to promote Crewe, maintaining the political control but bringing everything together to ensure there was a strong voice and purpose to drive everything forward.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

96 PUBLIC FORUM UPDATE (5 MINUTES)

It was noted that a pop-up exhibition stand would form part of the public forum event scheduled for 18 February 2022 at Crewe Market Hall. There would be a story board and spacial map for each of the ten projects and all board members were invited to attend the event.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

97 SUB-GROUPS UPDATE (5 MINUTES)

An update was provided on the sub-groups which included

Transport Green & Blue – Following a review of the strategic direction and the aims of the forum it was reported that the latest meeting had been more dynamic and positive.

Sports Provision and Open Spaces – A review of the direction and aims of the forum would be conducted.

Heritage Centre – Thanks was given to Crewe Town Council and specifically the work of Vicky Harrison, Heritage Development Officer for all the hard work around the governance structure and pushing for Museum Accreditation Scheme.

Youth Sub-Group – Arrangements would be made to schedule a meeting.

Skills Forum – The Chamber of Commerce was leading on a skills forum for Crewe and an initial meeting had been held.

It was felt that an interim Town Centre group was required to pull together existing retailers to try and rejuvenate with short term initiatives. The Board

suggested that opportunities for short term funding could be looked at including grants, crowdfunding and the community fund from HS2.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

98 COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT SUB-GROUP (10 MINUTES)

It was reported that the commission on the spoken word video was ongoing, but the main focus continued to be on engagement with the project leads to develop and share a communication plan for each project.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

99 STRATEGIC UPDATE FROM CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL (15 MINUTES)

The Director of Growth and Enterprise provided a verbal update which included the following:

Since the last Board meeting the HS2 Phase 2b Bill was introduced into Parliament which sought to secure the powers to construct and maintain HS2 Phase 2B between Crewe and Manchester and its associated works. A second reading of the Bill was scheduled for March 2022.

Great British Railways Headquarters – An announcement was imminent, but a team was ready, along with sub-groups once the scope and specifications were known.

Levelling Up White Paper – The Paper was published on the 2 February and once the guidance had been received for the Shared Prosperity Fund the board would be informed of what the criteria was.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

100 AOB (5 MINUTES)

S Yates informed the board that he would be visiting the Mayor of Crewe, in Virginia in April. A presentation of gifts and materials in relation to Crewe would be made to the Mayor.

101 DATE OF NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING

That the date of the next virtual meeting take place on Friday 4 March 2022 commencing at 9.30am.

The intention was that following the March meeting future meetings would be held at the end of the month rather than the beginning of the month.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 11.50 am

D Kinsman (Chair)