

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the **Crewe Town Board**
held on Friday, 7th May, 2021

PRESENT

Doug Kinsman (Chair)

John Adlen, Andy Butler, Guy Kilminster, Rick Carter, Paul Colman, Jasbir Dhesi, Reverend David Edwards, Sally Hepton, Adam Knight, Dr Mullan MP, Councillor Jill Rhodes and Simon Yates

ALSO PRESENT

Kim Cooper, Lindsay Lewis, Pete Turner and Martin Wood

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Sarah Baxter, Democratic Services Officer
Jez Goodman, Development & Regeneration Delivery Manager
Dr Charles Jarvis, Head of Economic Development
Helen Paton, Cultural Economy Manager
Peter Skates, Director of Growth & Enterprise
Carol Young, Policy & Partnerships Officer

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mark Hills, Frank Jordan and Councillor N Mannion.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS VIRTUAL MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the virtual meeting held on 9 April 2021 be approved as a correct record.

4 TOWNS FUND PROGRESS UPDATE - (5 MINUTES) - DK

The chair provided a verbal update in relation to the position regarding the Towns Fund. Following a delay due to the election period it was hoped

that an announcement would be made in the next couple of weeks and the Board were asked to ensure: -

- Good communications were available for media releases once the announcement was made;
- A timetable was in place for media releases;
- The processes post announcement;
- Consideration to given as to what support would be required for projects in stage 2.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

5 TOWNS FUND NEXT STEPS FOR PROJECT-(20 MINUTES)-CJ

Dr Charles Jarvis, Head of Economic Development provided an update on the progress of Towns Fund Next Steps Project to ensure the Board and the Council are in a strong position to move quickly when it receives the governments offer, which is expected before Parliaments summer recess.

A timetable following an announcement by the government on Crewe's Town Deal was outlined which included:-

- 1) The Board and Cheshire East Council have a three week window to consider the governments offer and sign the heads of terms. ;
- 2) By week five the Board and Council will submit further details on the projects in the town deal and also submit a monitoring and evaluation plan;
- 3) Up to 12 months from the announcement to provide the government with detailed business cases for each project., which could be submitted in batches.

The Board was updated in regard to initial discussions with HATCH which had commenced, to agree the requirements of stage 2 and to seek clarity on what was being taken through. A brief would be developed, within a set budget of what the Board would like to achieve, in line with the sub-group.

Martin Wood provided further clarification on the anticipated timetable in respect of the announcement by government.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted and that the TIP Development Sub-Group be reconvened at a time deemed appropriate.

6 PRESENTATION ON THE HISTORY CENTRE-(30 MINUTES)-HP

Helen Paton, the Cultural Economy Manager for Cheshire East Council attended the virtual meeting and gave a presentation on the plans for the History Centre.

Members of the Board made comments and raised questions in respect of the following: -

- Consideration of a simpler and more accessible consultation process in order to engage people in the design process;
- HS2 funding was available if there were shortfalls which needed to be met;
- Concerns regarding the use of cladding and its longevity;
- Collection size – Limited collection size thus the perception taking second place to Chester;
- Activity space – would need careful management;
- Outreach – would need a considerable development if it was to be effective;
- Link with the lifestyle centre and the market hall was essential in terms of creating a set of cultural facilities many towns envious of;
- The consultation process was key in driving ownership and engagement forward;
- Great opportunity for members of the Cultural Forum and other groups to engage with the heritage of the town;
- Inclusion of an Engagement Plan;
- Submission of the planning application and associated timescales;
- Whether or not consideration had been given to the name of the centre;
- How local businesses could play a more involved role;
- Accessing the centre, particularly as there were issues with parking and congestion and how these matters would be addressed.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

7 FUNDING UPDATE-(20 MINUTES)-CJ

Dr Charles Jarvis attended the meeting and gave an update on the Levelling up Fund. He explained the role of the Council in taking levelling up bids forward which relied heavily on the support of the local MP, and there have been several meetings to discuss proposals. These discussions have concentrated on transport issues associated with congestion and activities around the HS2 Hub.

Concerns were raised in relation to congestion and accessibility to the town centre particularly with through traffic using Nantwich Road. The chair recommended that once the Transport Forum had been established consideration should be given to de-trunking the A534 – Nantwich Road and rerouting traffic through the bypass.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted, and further discussions to be held outside of the virtual meeting on how to solve the accessibility challenge.

8 COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT SUB-GROUP UPDATE (10 MINUTES)-DE/RH

Reverend David Edwards attended the virtual meeting and presented a report updating the Board on the work of the Communication & Engagement Sub Group.

In summary recognition was given to the sub-group and partners working to support the Board, developing a strategy, creating a new website and providing a number of social media platforms. The Board was reminded that there was a need to be realistic about what could be achieved within current resources and members were asked to give consideration to putting in place a communications resource.

In terms of the brand filter it was reported that the Brand Steering Group felt other organisations needed encouragement to use the branding and this would best be done through the Crewe Town Board website. A new section would be created on the home page giving brand information. Tools for branding for some smaller projects could be downloaded and for larger projects people would be placed in touch with the brand manager.

Further to this approval was requested from the Board on the following:-

- Communications plan and matrix;
- Hosting of a brand website and filter on the Crewe Town Board's website

The Chair advised that he had been working with Helen Paton and Amy Lewis in order to submit a proposal to the Board to help bring the website to life which would involve working with two local performance poets to showcase Crewe. The Chair acknowledged there would be a cost which he hoped could be covered by the Capacity Fund. He stated that he would prepare a report for circulation to the Board with further details including links to the artists.

RESOLVED

(1) That the approach set out in the communications plan and associated matrix acknowledging be agreed.

(2) That the proposal to host the Crewe Brand assets and brand filter tool on the Crewe Town Board website be agreed in principle and that the Sub-Group review the proposal when full details were available to enable the pages to be installed as soon as possible.

(3) That a report be circulated by the Chair with further information on his proposal to work with two local performance poets in order to showcase the talents of Crewe.

9 SUB-GROUPS UPDATE (10 MINUTES)-DK/SY

The Chair gave an update in respect of the confirmed memberships of the sub-groups.

In respect of the Transportation sub-group the chair thanked Andy Butler and Paul Colman for putting themselves forward to sit on the Transport Forum. An inaugural meeting would be convened once letters outlining further details had been circulated to the sub-group representatives.

In respect of Sports and Open Spaces Forum, despite writing to members from Cheshire East Council officers at the Council, ANSA and Everybody Fitness there had been a poor response. Further correspondence would be sent inviting people to proceed with the inaugural meeting.

Further discussions were ongoing in terms of what the Skills Forum would look like and what was required to get the forum up and running.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

10 STRATEGIC UPDATE FROM CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL (10 MINUTES)-PS

Peter Skates, the Director of Growth & Enterprise attended the virtual meeting and gave a verbal update on the following: -

- **Crewe market hall** – The hall would be open on the 19th May with the official launch due to take place on the 26th June when all restrictions were expected to be lifted. The majority of the units had now been let. The outdoor market was also now up and running and early indications were traders were doing well and feedback on social media was very positive.
- **Royal Arcade** – Demolition was nearly completed and work was being undertaken with colleagues in Crewe Town Council to look at creating some artwork to be erected round the hoardings. The planning application had been submitted and validated and this could be viewed on the Planning

Portal. Committee dates had been identified and hopefully a decision would be received in June;

- **Future High Streets Funding** – Waiting for the formal Grant offer letter then the necessary authorisation could be sought.

Adam Knight reported that Lyceum Square was progressing well. RIBA stage 3 was now complete and progress was now being made with the technical design stage which would inform the planning application. Challenges with working from home had extended some of the timescales. RIBA stage 3 had been presented to the Cultural Forum and the feedback had been extremely positive.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

11 COVID-(5 MINUTES)

There was no further update in respect of this matter.

12 AOB-(5 MINUTES)

Jasbir Dhesi gave an update relating to the original project which did not make it through to the TIP stage. The Government as part of its manifesto commitment had made a desire to create 20 institutes of technology across the country. A bid had been put forward as the lead college for Cheshire and Warrington securing investment for all colleges which had successfully reached the 2nd stage. A further detailed proposal had to be submitted by the 16th June and if successful this would potentially mean a £5-6,000,000 investment in the Crewe campus.

13 DATE OF NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING

RESOLVED

That the date of the next virtual meeting take place on Friday 4 June 2021 commencing at 9.30am.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 11.30 am

D Kinsman (Chair)