

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Crewe Town Board**
held on Friday, 2nd February, 2024 at Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT

Tony Davison (Chair)
Simon Yates (Vice-Chair)

Guy Kilminster, Rick Carter, Paul Colman, Andy Butler, Lindsay Lewis, Jasbir Dhesi, Doug Kinsman, Dr Kieran Mullan MP and Councillor Jill Rhodes

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Rob Polkinghorne, Chief Executive Officer
Peter Skates, Acting Executive Director of Place
Dr Charles Jarvis, Head of Economic Development
Jez Goodman, Development & Regeneration Manager
Rhiannon Hilton, Communications Business Partner - Place
Sam Jones, Democratic Services Officer

70 INTRODUCTION FROM ROB POLKINGHORNE (15 MINUTES)

The Board welcomed Rob Polkinghorne, Chief Executive of Cheshire East Council, to the meeting, and received an introduction from him.

71 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1 MINUTE)

Apologies for absence were received from Pete Turner and Councillor Nick Mannion.

72 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (1 MINUTE)

There were no new or updated Declarations of Interest, other than those already on file.

73 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (3 MINUTES)

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2023 be approved as a correct record.

74 TOWNS FUND PERFORMANCE UPDATE (30 MINUTES)

The Board received an update from Jez Goodman, Development and Regeneration Manager, and individual project sponsors, on several of the Towns Fund Projects and Additional Programme Management updates.

Flag Lane Baths – Almost £1million of external funding secured which should ensure that core Towns Fund elements of the project should be

completed. Cheshire East Council (CEC) to discuss bringing onboard additional support with the the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) Delivery Associates Network. Expected to be completed in Winter 2024/2025.

Cumberland Arena – Works due to start in early 2024. The venue would be accredited to host regional athletics completions next season. Completion expected Spring 2025.

Crewe Youth Zone – Chief Executive appointment pending, and shortly to advertise for new trustee positions on Crewe YouthZone Charity.

Crewe Youth Club – Planning consent is in place and site clearance well in advance, with works to commence shortly. Completion expected Spring 2025.

Mill Street Corridor – Planning application determination imminent, with work to commence Summer 2024, with completion Spring 2025.

History Centre Public Realm – First phase of demolition was underway and would continue until summer 2024, when construction would begin.

Lyceum Square – Completed pending artwork installation. An events group was working with the Town Council on organising events for 2024.

Crewe Warm and Healthy Homes – Project Manager was in place and project on track to complete by March 2026.

Pocket Parks – First four Pocket Parks were well advanced, with completion around February – April 2024. Consultation on remaining Pocket Parks in early 2024, with completion expected Spring 2026.

Valley Brook Green Corridor – Work expected to commence in 2024 with completion Autumn 2025.

Jubilee Project – ANSA leading on the project, detailed pre-application discussions with planning, and external funding opportunities being explored. A designer to be appointed shortly who would develop plans and initiate public consultation.

Future High Streets Fund – DLUHC approved Cheshire East Council's request to extend funding timescales and reallocation of funding to ensure the Technology and Digital Innovation Campus (TADIC) could be completed in late 2024, and Southern Gateway project to be completed Winter 2024 / 2025.

Discovery Programme – DLUHC included Crewe in "Discovery Programme" to understand how the government could help to accelerate funding. A report to the Levelling Up Minister was being produced by DLUHC, which would review information provided relating to spend profile,

risk management, risk management, etc. which will be flagged as Red, Amber or Green for each programme.

Delivery Associates Network – DLUHC initiating new package of support for projects funding under its levelling up fund programme, which may include Towns Fund Projects, intended to address issues impacting delivery.

RESOLVED:

That the updates be noted.

75 MARKETING CREWE (10 MINUTES)

The Board received an update on Marketing Crewe from Paul Colman, Chief Executive of South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce.

The Board were updated that a Communications Officer had been appointed, and a document of proposals with next steps had been created which would be shared with stakeholders. It was noted that public engagement is required. A Marketing Officer would also be appointed.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

76 STRATEGIC UPDATE FROM CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL (15 MINUTES)

The Board received an update from Peter Skates, Acting Executive Director of Place, and Jez Goodman, Development and Regeneration Manager, on Royal Arcade, Crewe post-HS2, Cheshire East Council's budget, Crewe Ward Elections and Crewe Business Improvement District.

It was noted that that the Royal Arcade was expected to open in Spring 2024, and the installation of infrastructure will commence shortly. It was noted that a Phase 2 "Member Reference Group" was being established, a marketing exercise would be undertaken to establish interest from potential leaseholders, and those interested in making permanent developments on site.

It was noted that following HS2, conversations with Minsters, Department for Transport (DfT) and DLUHC have progressed with positive engagement, with a possible site visit in Crewe. Cheshire East Council were looking to hold stakeholder event HS2 in spring 2024 to discuss the importance of Crewe, and potential future rail developments.

It was noted that Cheshire East Council had held public consultation on finances and a growth bid had been submitted to support the maintenance of projects in Crewe.

The Board was updated that the Crewe Ward elections were taking place on 08 February 2024.

It was noted that the Crewe Business Improvement District received a positive vote and was progressing well. A recruitment process for the Board Directors was underway, and a firm of accountants will assist in developing the company, which had received interest from several businesses across Crewe. Safer Streets money was being utilised to improve security in the town.

RESOLVED:

That the updates be noted.

77 REVIEW OF CREWE TOWN BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE (15 MINUTES)

The Board reviewed the current Crewe Town Board Terms of Reference document.

RESOLVED:

That the Crewe Town Board Terms of Reference document be reviewed as approved, subject to the following amendments:

1. The Chair to write to Cheshire East Council regarding the objectives of Crewe Town Board post 2026, and the future relationship of the Board with Cheshire East Council;
2. Officers to check the supplementary guidance for Town Boards to ensure it was consistent;
3. An additional bullet point to be added to section 2 “Main responsibilities of the Crewe Town Board” relating to the role of the Crewe Town Board in monitoring and evaluation, and whether they are any subsequent PAR changes; and
4. To discuss whether the name “Crewe Town Board” is the most appropriate.

78 BOARD MEMBERSHIP (15 MINUTES)

The Board discussed the vacancies and membership of the Crewe Town Board.

RESOLVED:

The Board proposed that replacement Board Members should be, where possible, from currently under-represented sectors on the Board, such as hospitality, arts and culture sectors, and thoughts should be given as to how to make the Board membership more diverse.

That the Chair of Business Improvement District be invited to join the Crewe Town Board once appointed.

79 AOB (5 MINUTES)

It was noted that a Cultural Investment Fund had been created by the government which would focus on levelling up the culture and arts sectors.

The UKREiiF event had recently launched.

There was a proposal to invite Active Cheshire's Chair proposal to address the Board.

It was noted that there was £1.5million of Repurposing High Street Funding remaining and ready to be utilised, and further marketing would be undertaken shortly.

Simon Yates fed back on the recent Special Meeting on 12.01.2024, thanked participants for their input and attendance, and welcomed feedback for the summary document, ahead of it being presented formally to the Board.

80 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To confirm the date of the next meeting as 1st March 2024 commencing at 9.30am.

81 FUTURE ITEMS:

To record future items for agendas:

1. Marketing Future High Streets Fund;
2. Active Cheshire; and
3. Council Community Team.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 11.30 am

Tony Davison (Chair)