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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the **Crewe Town Board**
held on Friday, 11th December, 2020

PRESENT

Doug Kinsman (Chairman)

John Adlen, Andy Butler, Rick Carter, Paul Colman, Jasbir Dhesi, Reverend D Edwards, Sally Hepton, Mark Hills, Andy Knight, Councillor N Mannion, Dr K Mullan, MP Councillor J Rhodes and Simon Yates

ALSO PRESENT

Caroline Barker, Kim Cooper, Jane Dalton, Mark Foster, Dr Ricardo Gomez, Lindsay Lewis and Pete Turner.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Sarah Baxter, Democratic Services Officer
Frank Jordan, Executive Director-Place
Jez Goodman, Development & Regeneration Delivery Manager
Dr Charles Jarvis, Head of Economic Development
Peter Skates, Director of Growth & Enterprise
Carol Young, Senior Investment & Interim Programme Manager

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chairman reported that he and some of the other members of the Board had recently had the opportunity to visit the market hall. He commended and congratulated Cheshire East Council, the Town Council, the market operator, the architect and the team behind the construction. Not only did he feel it was a fantastic achievement, but it set a statement of intent for where Crewe should be in the future and reflected the clearly the vision of a group people who shared the same vision and passion for the market hall.

35 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1 MINUTE)

Apologies for absence were received from Dr Tyrer and Martin Wood. The Chairman requested that Cheshire East Council look at finding a substitute for Dr Tyrer.

36 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (1 MINUTE)

There were no declarations of interest.

37 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS TWO VIRTUAL MEETINGS INCLUDING ACTIONS (10 MINUTES)

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the virtual meetings held on 13 November 2020 and 27 November 2020 be approved as a correct record.

The Chairman went through the list of actions from the previous virtual meeting and updated members on the status of each action accordingly.

38 ENDORSEMENT OF TIP PROJECTS (5 MINUTES)

The Chairman confirmed that a virtual vote had taken place regarding the packaging of projects to be taken forward to the TIP and all fourteen Board members unanimously voted in favour of the proposal.

RESOLVED

That the packaging of projects be formally approved.

39 PRESENTATION ON THE DRAFT TIP (1 HOUR)

Dr Ricardo Gomez representing Hatch attended the virtual meeting and gave a presentation on the draft TIP.

Included within the presentation was information on the following:-

- Progress so far
- Projects details
- Final Draft TIP and Timetable

Members made the following comments;

- Excellent document with a strong narrative;
- More brands of businesses could be referred to eg Mornflake;
- Strengthen the point on housing growth being outside the town centre;
- It was recognised that the paper needs to have a balance between demonstrating partners in Crewe have a track record of delivering regenerative activity (for example: Crewe Market Hall and Royal Arcade) and the evidence base for Crewe demonstrating how important this funding is to progress the broader regeneration of the town;
- Strengthen the impact of the Lyceum on the town;
- Inclusion of a concise 'punchy' summary at the beginning of the document, including the vision;
- Essential to ensure that when reducing the word count of the document the message wasn't lost;
- Important to show investment is taking place;

- The document needed to look at the long-term strategy, but also relay the key messages and golden thread that demonstrated a need for the proposed projects;
- Long term impacts of projects needed to be drawn out;
- Don't have problems attracting business to Crewe but still a lack of services eg leisure;
- More on how investing in Crewe could impact on regional and national growth;
- Importance of Crewe to the Midlands engine;
- Important to finish on a punch particularly emphasising the positive impact for the people of Crewe;
- Introductory letter from the Chairman to include words but anecdotes and images of the areas of Crewe which reflects clearly the challenges faced;
- The document recognised the issues and challenges around Crewe and fits around the packages chosen to take forward which was considered very positive.

In terms of moving the process forward it was agreed that any further comments needed to be submitted to Hatch by Friday 18 December 2020.

RESOLVED

That the presentation be noted and that any further comments to be sent to Hatch by Friday 18 December 2020.

40 TIP DOCUMENT DESIGN (20 MINUTES)

Mark Foster, representing OPEN attended the virtual meeting and gave a presentation on the design of the TIP document.

Members generally welcomed the layout and design of the document. Further comments were made in respect of the colour, the photographic images used and that there should be no controversy with the images chosen, the inclusivity of the type of font and its size, the inclusion of an executive summary and the inclusion of quotes to make the document more personal.

Jane Dalton, representing Groundswell then gave a presentation updating members of the Board on the consultation process.

The Chairman emphasised the need to carry on consulting and engaging as the Board were building a 10 to 15-year strategic plan. In addition, the timescales meant that there would be a number of years before the impact of the TIP would be felt in the town and therefore the momentum needed to continue in terms of the communication process as part of the longer-term vision for Crewe.

RESOLVED

That the presentation and feedback be noted.

41 DEFINITION OF SUB-GROUPS AND THEIR ESTABLISHMENT (SPORTS, TRANSPORT, MEANWHILE USES, HERITAGE AND DIGITAL) (10 MINUTES)

Simon Yates presented a report on the definition of Sub-Groups and their establishment.

The proposals contained within the report were :-

- a) To create a structure which encouraged local government, community organisations, businesses and individuals to cooperate in developing strategies and projects which deliver those strategies;
- b) To establish thematic groups along the lines of the successful Cultural Forum which had over a few years brought together a strong coalition of interests and had been able to create projects which were being delivered;
- c) Thematic groups could include those focussing on
 - Railway heritage
 - Sports and open spaces
 - “Meanwhile use” of vacant land or buildings in the town centre
 - Longer term development of the town centre not being developed as part of the Royal Arcade
- d) Thematic groups to be led by a Board member with membership from stakeholders with an interest in the theme. Terms of reference to be agreed with the Town Board.

The Cultural Forum was considered to be a model of best practice and how their success could be replicated with other groups. It was clear that there was a need to look at the type of groups, the necessity for groups to be well chaired, a focal point, terms of reference etc. Some of the unsuccessful projects could be involved in these groups to chase down other funds available.

Dr Kieran Mullen MP gave a verbal update on the offer of the LEP to provisionally fund a business case development on town centre congestion and retail reconfiguration which he felt would support the TIP. It was suggested John Adlen alongside Dr Mullen and officers from Cheshire East Council could work together in terms of submitting a bid for the £400,000 funding opportunity available from the LEP.

The Chairman felt that in respect of the establishment of forums, the heritage centre was a good starting point in establishing a group which could support the centre with their bid for new facilities. Given the

timescales it was agreed that separate discussions needed to take place outside of the virtual meeting.

Councillor Jill Rhodes felt the Town Council could possibly support the heritage centre with their bid for upgraded toilet facilities. In addition, the recent appointment of a Heritage Officer would also provide assistance to the heritage centre with bid submissions.

RESOLVED

That further discussions in respect of the heritage centre take place outside of the meeting.

42 COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT SUB-GROUP UPDATE (10 MINUTES)

Reverend David Edwardes attended the virtual meeting and provided a verbal update to the Board.

He reported that with support from colleagues at Cheshire East Council a draft Engagement Strategy had recently been agreed which would be shared with the Board in due course. The first official press release had been issued and he reminded those who had yet to submit a photograph and short biography to do so as this would form part of the content for the website. In addition, he extended special thanks to colleagues on the Town Council for all their hard work in assisting with the development of a website.

Lindsey Lewis gave a brief update on the procurement process undertaken in respect of the website. An advert had gone out to all local businesses resulting in five good responses. JG marketing, a not for profit organisation with considerable experience in communicating with community-based organisations had been appointed. Work was currently being undertaken on the branding with a need to ensure accessibility. In respect of the website it was anticipated a number of web pages would be visible by end of December with a fully functional live website by the end of January 2021.

Meetings with Cheshire College had taken place and students from the college would be involved in initially observing the process before giving students an opportunity to work in the background on videos, photos, designs and so forth. In addition, the college had kindly agreed to support the marketing campaign.

The three key areas of the website were based on, who the Board were, where the Board was and where was the Board heading. The branding and name of the website needed to be agreed in order for a domain name to be purchased. In terms of a logo for the Board it was felt that the Crewe name should be utilised.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

43 STRATEGIC UPDATE FROM CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL (10 MINUTES)

Peter Skates, the Director of Growth & Enterprise attended the virtual meeting and gave a verbal update on Royal Arcade. Pre-application discussions had commenced with colleagues alongside the developer and it was anticipated a planning application would be submitted by Spring 2021. Demolition was ongoing with no issues to report in respect of that process.

In relation to the bus station the principles had been agreed with Arriva for the early return of the bus station back to the Council. It was expected this would take place by early January 2021. The opportunity for members of the Board to undertake some decorative painting work to the bus station was being reviewed and in the New Year further information would be provided as to how members could be involved.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

44 COVID (5 MINUTES)

There was no further update in respect of this matter.

45 AOB (5 MINUTES)

There were no items of other business raised.

46 DATE OF NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING

RESOLVED

That the date of the next virtual meeting take place on Friday 8 January 2021 commencing at 9.30am

The meeting commenced at 9.30am and concluded at 11.32am

Doug Kinsman (Chairman)