

**Chester Renaissance Board - Minutes**  
**22 May 2014 8.00am – 10.00am**  
**Boardroom, 9 Abbey Square, Chester CH1 2HU**

**Attendees**

Eric Langton (EL)	Chair Chester Renaissance
Phil Harris (PH)	University of Chester
Roger Croston (RC)	Croston Engineering
Andy Foster (AF)	Andy Foster Architects
Gemma Davies (GD)	Chester Renaissance
Katrina Michel (KM)	Marketing Cheshire
Charlie Seward (CS)	Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC)
Alison Knight (AK)	Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC)
Councillor Stuart Parker (SP)	Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC)
Councillor Samantha Dixon (SD)	Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC)
Paul Daniels (PD)	CH1 Chester BID
Nigel Bruce (NB)	Chartered Surveyor
Nigel Davies (ND)	West Cheshire College
Peter Cocker (PC)	Chester Civic Trust
Sally Williamson (SW)	Chester Renaissance
Chris Capes (CC)	Chester Renaissance
Roz Munslow (RM)	Chester Renaissance
Ian Tordoff (IT)	Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC)
Jamie Matthews (JM)	Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC)
Emma Birkett (EM)	Turner & Townsend

**Apologies**

Peter Carstensen (PCa)	
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1.	<p><b>Welcome and introductions</b>  Chairman welcomed the meeting.</p> <p>Previous minutes agreed. Outstanding action for housing sub-group to meet prior to next Board.</p>	<b>EL</b>
2.	<p><b>Chairman's Report</b>  The Northgate team have recently moved into 9 Abbey Square. There is a core team of 3 staff, and there will also be a presence from the design team once appointed. This is a great opportunity to develop closer working with the Renaissance team.</p> <p>Good series of consultations recently for the new Market Hall in Chester, which is a key component in the Northgate scheme. Recent Theatre consultation also well attended across the Borough.</p> <p>Interesting Places Chair Dinner this week, thanks to KM for hosting. SD asked whether there might be a Board to Board meeting with the</p>	<b>EL</b>

	<p>regeneration Boards in future and EL confirmed there was a hope to move that way in the future.</p> <p>Chairman has responded to a circular from DWH about a new Park &amp; Ride site in Hoole. Whilst encouraging private investment in the city EL would not comment on the specific site which he notes includes proposal for 300 new homes on green belt. This is not a Council initiative and it was felt that the marketing was not transparent.</p> <p>The Chester Station footbridge that was restored and improved as part of the Chester Townscape Heritage Initiative in 2012/13 received a commendation at the Institution of Civil Engineering Awards.</p> <p>Thank you to Board members who have responded to the invitation to the Waterways Strategy launch on 3 June. Still places left please let SW know if you would like to attend.</p> <p>Setting up new Design Review Panel in the Borough, innovative for Borough and will be an asset to design in the city. The Renaissance team are working with the Planning team on this. Thanks to AF who lent his valuable advice on this from his own experiences and involvement in CABE and the Regional Places Matter! Panel. The next steps are to recruit the Panel prior to a launch at end of July. The first Panel sitting will be September.</p> <p>AF updated that the Place North West breakfast was well attended and showed interest of local business in Chester.</p> <p>KM questioned the exterior design of new Muse building in Business Quarter. CS commented that that was a matter of taste, the scheme has been through planning and consultation. RC noted that the ULI report pointed out some bad design in the past in the City and thinks that the façade of the new Theatre isn't good. EL agreed to put on next agenda.</p> <p>Congratulations to PH, some wonderful news to share with the Board. Phil is just back from China where he has been made a Visiting Professor of Xiamen University of Technology's Entrepreneurship and Innovation Centre. Congratulations to Phil. It is one of the largest business development centres in China. Developing links with China is a passion for Phil in new role as Executive Director of the Business Research Institute. During his tour he went to 10 universities, met with one of the largest Infrastructure/Dam building companies and also did a piece on CCBC (Chinese TV) about the link-up with the Entrepreneurship Centre in Xiamen. He has formed a joint collaborative initiative to develop entrepreneurs and business collaborations between Xiamen University of Technology (XUT) and UoC.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Cheshire and Warrington Sub-regional Update</b> CS updated the Board that the Borough is putting together a submission for Local Growth Fund – prioritised for Chester Transport Infrastructure</p>	CS

	(bus interchange and inner ring road) which will help Northgate and Central Business Quarter. Expecting an announcement early July.	
4.	<p><b>Cultural Strategy</b></p> <p>Board welcomed the update from AK and IT. Coordination with other agencies is key.</p> <p>PD noted the need for high quality events and festivals. If the BID is voted in 20% of £.5m investment per year earmarked for events to extend over weekend and overnight stays. Will use BID database to inform businesses. Forward planning is key.</p> <p>RC asked if CWaC chased events? IT noted that yes have done in the past and will do again, but some events are costly and don't have the funds currently. Commissioning body can play a role and dialogue with partners is key. Can also back on to other events outside of the city. SD noted that advanced notice is also beneficial to residents as well as businesses, need to manage the balance of their needs too.</p> <p>NB noted that the National Portrait Gallery for example have more pictures in store than on their walls, could we house a gallery here? Would be good to have more cultural spread in the city. Also suggested a fund of ambassadors for events which would be welcomed.</p> <p>KM offered to raise culture in open forum at International Festival of Business when minister is there. KM to circulate date.</p>	AK IT
5.	<p><b>Rows Transformation Programme - HLF</b></p> <p>Turner &amp; Townsend lead consultants on this project to produce HLF bid for Rows. Very complex project with variety of stakeholders and partners. EB introduced project and confirmed very good team working on this and strong history with HLF, Donald Insall is the conservation architect. Would like to bring project scope and definition to next Board meeting, suggest the Project Board is the Renaissance Board in terms of governance structure and would like ambassadors / champions for project, and possibly small working group.</p> <p>Huge heritage merit but need to de-risk project in terms of multiple ownerships, contingencies while backing with unique offer.</p> <p>Timeline 9-12 months, need to get it right and to agree which pot to bid for – regional up to £2m, national £2.5m or over £5m (unlikely). Possibly will include a phase bid but that will pan out as the project unfolds.</p> <p>PH noted we shouldn't underestimate the international and historical importance of the rows.</p> <p>SD noted that Localities should have an input on this and to consider the</p>	EB RM

	<p>rows vertically as well.</p> <p>Civic Trust confirmed they are very supportive of this initiative and would support interpretation centre along the way.</p> <p>AF considers it important to start the interpretation now, design is really important and ought to solicit tv coverage on this. CS confirmed that the Design Review Panel is intended to add value and not replace professional expertise.</p> <p>NB sees an opportunity to introduce value i.e. boutique hotel.</p> <p>SD sits on the Chester Fire Board and there are lots of issues with the rows. It's important to provide a simplified voice so owners aren't barraged with information from different sources.</p> <p>CS noted the BID will be a key communicator if it comes into being, and the CWaC owned properties.</p> <p>City Manager has an operational role to play in this.</p> <p>Chairman confirmed that Board unanimously agree to play the role of Project Board for this project.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Chris to convene small working group to discuss with EB prior to next Board meeting. PC nominates SL for this group.</p>	
6.	<p><b>CH1 Business Improvement District</b></p> <p>PD updated the Board on the BID progress. BID team in place and active Board working well. Have complied with national criteria in run up to vote. Excellent communications and have got contacts for businesses in the city now. Business plan contains information, will be flexible over 5 years. Monitoring voting intentions and hoping for positive result at end of ballot 1 July. Noted thanks to CWaC for resources and knowledge. Already starting working in partnership i.e. on parking. If positive vote company will go live on 1 September. <b>Action:</b> IT to meet PD re events.</p>	PD
7.	<p><b>International Festival of Business</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.ifb2014.com">www.ifb2014.com</a> 9 June – 25 July. CWaC part of Place Expo, focussing on Central Business Quarter, Barons Quay, Ellesmere Port and rural offer i.e. equine. Information also on <a href="http://www.finditincheshireandwarrington.co.uk">www.finditincheshireandwarrington.co.uk</a> .</p>	GD
8.	<p><b>Transport Strategy &amp; Gorse Stacks</b></p> <p>Bus interchange – need to move the bus station to allow Northgate to happen, proposal to put it on Gorse Stacks, consultation in June. Detailed design and business case later this year to take forward April 2015.</p>	JM

	<p>Park &amp; Ride contract renewal 2016, member working group looking at this. Pedestrianisation in city centre at early stages, lots of parties to consult with. Congestion DFT provide pinchpoint funding.</p> <p>PC noted 1300 houses proposed on Wrexham Road site, would have expected to see that in Local Plan and housing strategy. Pedestrianisation will be difficult. Gorse Stacks will be a challenge with bus access. Shopper hopper service possible.</p> <p>SD noted the importance of funding coming through LEP and is there an opportunity for lobbying.</p>	
9.	<p><b>AOB</b>  KM confirmed £50k on summer campaign. Science Festival this week, thanks to partners who supported this exciting initiative.</p> <p>PH shared event on China in business in Chester. SD noted lots of children learning Chinese would be good to involve young people. PH confirmed University Chinese language and culture degree launched this year.</p> <p>AF updated that the Civic Design Awards will be in 2015 (5 yearly event) – Borough wide initiative led by Civic Trust and the Cheshire Society of Architects. Seeking Board endorsement and support for it. KM suggested asking Muse to sponsor. PH will mention it.</p>	<b>ALL</b>
10.	<p><b>Dates of meetings 2014</b>  24 July, 25 September, 27 November  Boardroom 9 Abbey Square, Chester 8am – 10am</p>	<b>ALL</b>