

Chester Renaissance Board - Minutes
27 November 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
Councillor Stuart Parker (SP)	Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC)
Councillor Adrian Walmsley (AW)	Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC)
Gemma Davies (GD)	Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC)
Nigel Bruce (NB)	Chartered Surveyor
Peter Cocker (PC)	Chester Civic Trust
Councillor Samantha Dixon (SD)	Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC)
Paul Daniels	CH1 BID Company
Linda Parr (LP)	Chester Renaissance
Roz Munslow	Chester Renaissance
Chris Capes (CC)	Chester Renaissance
Ruth Wojtan (RW)	Chester Renaissance

Presenter's

Phil Mayall (PM)	Muse
Emma Birkett (EB)	Turner & Townsend
Dave Anderson (DA)	Northgate Project
Katrina Michel (KM)	Marketing Cheshire

Apologies

Nigel Davies	West Cheshire College

1.	<p>Welcome and introductions</p> <p>The meeting proceeded with introductions and a welcome from the Chair</p> <p>The minutes from the previous meeting held on 25 September 2014 were confirmed as a correct record with the following review of discussions undertaken:</p> <p>SP – commented on the Culture Strategy document and the need for the second phase of the council's capital vision to include investment in the visual arts.</p>	EL
2.	<p>Chairman's Report</p> <p>The following issues were discussed:</p> <p>Two meetings have taken place with the LEP and the Place Chairs to discuss the priorities in each area and the potential for investment from the LEP. Philip Cox (LEP Chief Exec) and Christine Gaskell (LEP Chair) are both very positive about the potential for investment. EL had</p>	EL

<p>expressed the need for funding coming through the LEP to prioritise investment in Heritage and Culture as they can have a significant impact on the economy.</p> <p>Sir Peter Bazalgette visit to Chester to view the Re:New project and have dinner with the Business Club was hugely positive and he was very impressed with the project and the impact it would have on the City.</p> <p>Cheshire Oaks Planning Application:</p> <p>Board members considered a planning application to expand Cheshire Oaks to accommodate a larger Polo store. A second application to create additional units within Cheshire Oaks and create a second level to an existing car park has been withdrawn. It was reported to board members that some concern had been expressed that the Polo application, and the withdrawn plan if re-submitted, would have a negative impact on Chester City Centre and the Northgate Development.</p> <p>EL – Suggested that it was important for Chester city centre and Cheshire Oaks to work even more closely and did not believe that Renaissance should oppose the Polo store application.</p> <p>SP – Agreed, registering opposition to the application would send the wrong message about the strength of Chester’s plans for the city and the need for close cooperation with Cheshire Oaks.</p> <p>NB – A combination of a strong offer in Chester City and at Cheshire Oaks will create a regional and national destination.</p> <p>PH – Place marketing in Cheshire Oaks is very sophisticated in its approach and Chester needs to learn from that.</p> <p>KM – Reported that the Visitor Information Centre was not busy at Cheshire Oaks but was in the City and the reasons for visiting both destinations are different.</p> <p>SD – Ellesmere Port Regen Board has responded to the planning and we feel we should work together with Cheshire Oaks in the future.</p> <p>PD – Agreed there is a need to work together with BID, CO and the city to maximise the opportunities of visitors coming to the borough.</p> <p>Action Point – CC to write a letter from the board expressing the view that there was no objection to the Polo application; that it was not appropriate to comment on the withdrawn second application for 10 “infill” units and second level car parking; but Renaissance would reconsider its position if there were future proposals to expand beyond the current site.</p> <p>Historic Towns Forum took place in Chester and is reported to have been a very successful event.</p> <p>West Cheshire Embassy took place at Grosvenor offices in London and was well received by the 41 delegates who attended. Work will take place to follow up with the attendees as this will be key to the success.</p> <p>PH – The event was very successful and demonstrated to business, Government and the British Business Bank the vibrancy of CW&C.</p>
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	<p>Action Point – Agreed the need for longer lead in time for future events, at least 6-9 months to get in peoples diaries. PM – Commented it was an excellent event with good discussions about the CBQ, access to finance and HS2 amongst other things.</p>	
3.	<p>City Place – Presentation from Phil Mayall – Muse PM presented a detailed update including visuals of the scheme. The following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening up of Lloyd Campus, Muse have taken the licence over allowing the public to walk through creating better access • The design incorporates different size floor areas to cater for different size companies, offering greater flexibility • There are currently three potential companies interested in occupancy • Parking Scheme, Muse are to carry out further studies looking at various car parking options researching the reality of day to day needs • AW commented on the current debate taking place on the relocation of the Record Service i.e. Crewe or Chester. If Chester is found to be the better option this will impact on car parking numbers needed • PM advised on the active dialogue taking place with Network Rail regarding opportunities for passengers <p>NB approved of the inclusion of space for small businesses and asked for consideration of residential 3 bedroom apartments</p>	PM
4.	<p>Northgate Development – Presentation from Dave Anderson DA advised the board that the Northgate Scheme is a key element of the wider regeneration strategy for Chester as set out in the One City Plan. DA presentation included details of the appointment of Rivington Land as Development Manager and Professional Design Team led by ACME Architects. Also included was an update on the current status of the relocation of Chester’s Bus Interchange.</p> <p>SD sits on the Northgate Member Working Group and was able to advise the board that Northgate is an important investment decision for the City and has been agreed by all political parties at the Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>A discussion took place regarding poor car park provision in Chester City Centre, DA advised that Rivington Land are reviewing car parking solutions.</p>	DA
5.	<p>Rows Transformation Programme – Presentation and Progress from Emma Birkett EB updated the group on preparations for applying for Heritage Lottery Fund which has been delayed until December.</p> <p>A discussion was held on the implications of adding a heritage hub visitor attraction to the programme. Clarity is needed on available funding and Council capital contribution.</p>	EB

	<p>PC voiced his concerns that the Civic Trust had not been involved in meetings at Bishop Lodge Palace, this issue will be discussed further outside of this meeting.</p> <p>EB said invitations had been sent to the Civic Trust.</p> <p>PH asked for future relevant documents to be circulated well in advance of this meeting.</p> <p>Action Point: Turner and Townsend document to be circulated to board members in better time.</p>	
6.	<p>Business Tourism and Conferences – Katrina Michel – Marketing Cheshire</p> <p>KM presented statistics from a sample of Chester hotels showing occupancy's to be high, subsequently placing Chester visitor economy in a strong position.</p> <p>KM spoke of the need to attract and encourage both international and local business to hold meetings, events and conferences in Chester, i.e. 'keep it here and don't go there'. Discussions included Chester proximity to airports making Chester an option for international conferences.</p> <p>All agreed the need to target specific sectors and that it was more relevant for Chester to concentrate on providing and marketing quality small and medium conference facilities.</p>	KM
7.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>No other business discussed.</p>	ALL
8.	<p>Dates of Meetings 2015</p> <p>Will be timetabled outside of this meeting.</p>	