

Chester Growth Partnership Board Meeting - Minutes
26 November 2015 8.00am – 10.00am
Room CCU102, Churchill Building, Queens Park Campus, University of
Chester, Queens Park Road, CH4 7AD

Attendees - Chester Growth Partnership Members

Guy Butler (GB)	Chair – Chester Growth Partnership
Andy Foster (AF)	Andy Foster Architects
Cllr Samantha Dixon (SD)	Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC)
Cllr Brian Crowe (BC)	Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC)
Phil Mayall (PM)	Muse Developments
Phil Harris (PH)	University of Chester
Peter Carstensen (PC)	Blue Banyan Trading Ltd
Liz Carnie (LC)	Chester Zoo
Will Heath (WH)	Redrow Homes
Claire Griffiths (CG)	Plus Dane Housing
Dean Paton (DP)	Big Heritage
Fran Burgess (FB)	Fran Burgess Consultancy
Sally Pilott (SP)	DTM Legal
Chris Matheson MP (CM)	MP for City of Chester

Attendees – Working Group Members

Chris Capes (CC)	Chester Growth Partnership
Beth Skinner (BC)	Chester Growth Partnership
Caroline Thomas (CT)	Chester Growth Partnership
Roz Munslow (RM)	Chester Growth Partnership
Ruth Wojtan (RW)	Chester Growth Partnership
Helen Crampton (HC)	Business Growth Service (CWaC)

Other Attendees

Lee Heywood (LH)	Graphic Design (CWaC)
Susie Woodward-Moor (SWM)	Growth Strategy Programme (CWaC)
Dave Anderson (DA)	Northgate Project (CWaC)
Georgina Patel (GP)	Energy and Carbon Reduction (CWaC)

Apologies

Gemma Davies	Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC)
Alison Knight	Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC)
Charlie Seward	Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC)
Ed Oliver	CH1 Chester BID
Katrina Michel	Marketing Cheshire

1.	<p>Welcome and Introductions of New and Existing Board Members GB welcomed all attendees to the first board meeting of the new Chester Growth Partnership. Introductions were made and the new board membership is as follows: Guy Butler, Andy Foster, Cllr Sam Dixon, Cllr Brian Crowe, Phil Mayall, Phil Harris, Peter Carstensen, Liz Carnie, Will Heath, Claire Griffiths, Dean Paton, Fran Burgess, Sally Pilott, Chris Matheson MP and Katrina Michel.</p>	All
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2.	<p>Presentation of the Vision – Guy Butler</p> <p>GB highlighted the change in approach for the board and how the new vision has been set out. Working on a two year timeframe, the aim is to influence change within the first year, and then continuing to build on the platform. The new Business Plan sets out the objectives of the partnership with clear goals and aspirations for the future. These goals will be monitored to ensure that further facilitation or resources can be put in place if they aren't achieving.</p> <p>The Working Groups will be steered by the Board and future meetings will involve each working group giving an update on the progress of objectives and goals. The five working groups have been established and leads have been matched to each. GB will organise for further additions to become populate the groups further where gaps have been identified.</p> <p>GB informed that www.chestergrowth.co.uk has been purchased to fit with the new name which sets out a clear direction. Chester Growth Partnership's mission statement is: To help to transform the economy of the City of Chester, delivering sustainable growth and prosperity to the city region by raising Chester's profile, attracting investment and development, helping businesses grow, encourage tourism and providing individuals with new skills, employment opportunities and great places to live and play.</p>	GB
3.	<p>Investment Working Group Update – Phil Mayall & Liz Carnie</p> <p>PM and LC are the group leads for the Investment Working Group. An update was given and the following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to get as much investment into the city centre as possible, possibly through businesses relocating or expanding in the city. • Information such as employment figures, population etc. aren't readily available to the public and the aim would be to pull together a database of information for potential investors as it is important to understand what there already is. • Skills - need to establish what is already here and what isn't as there is a gap in the regional economy. • Seen as an ongoing role to highlight to key partners and stakeholders the good, as well as the bad in the city. • Would like an active interest in the Northgate project to facilitate the process and progress of the scheme. <p>GB – highlighted the importance of linking in with the Engage Working Group and Chester having a presence at MIPIM, to draw in potential investors from London or Manchester.</p> <p>PM – agreed how it is becoming apparent that larger employers assume they need to be based in Manchester or Liverpool and don't consider Chester as an option, and this perception needs to change.</p>	PM /LC

4.	<p>Housing Working Group Update – Will Heath, Claire Griffiths & Andy Foster</p> <p>WH, CG and AF are the group leads for the Housing Working Group. An update was given and the following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main aim of the working group is to promote/encourage city centre living which is beneficial to plug city gaps, although the vision is wider than just the city centre. • There are conflicts and debates around student accommodation which many see as a problem, and difficulties occur within the conservation area. • Would like a shared vision for housing in the city centre. Liverpool and Manchester have good examples of this, and more city centre living will increase footfall. <p>GB – suggested seeing this working group as a mentor to developers within the city as a team to provide enthusiasm and drive. Looking at Liverpool and Manchester is a good idea to look at being ambitious to add to the economy.</p> <p>SD – strongly suggested linking in with council officers, such as the spatial planning team. SD also informed of a student accommodation planning document to go out to consultation shortly which this working group should be involved and respond to.</p>	WH/ CG/ AF
5.	<p>Infrastructure Working Group Update – Sally Pilott & Chris Matheson MP</p> <p>SP and CM are the group leads for the Infrastructure Working Group. An update was given and the following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The initial focus of the group will be on rail travel into and out of Chester and car parking both at the station and in the city centre. • Slow infrequent trains to Manchester and Liverpool are creating a barrier to accessing employment which in turn impedes the economic growth in Chester. • Chester needs to be properly linked to Manchester and Liverpool to become a strong member of the Northern Powerhouse. • Long term objectives include line electrification and identifying new sites for car parking in Chester City Centre. <p>CM - informed how a case is now being made to be involved with HS2 with GB mentioning HS3 and the need to lobby hard to be a part of it.</p> <p>SD – highlighted how HS2 is essential for the economy of Wales to be linked in and informed that the linkages to the Northern Powerhouse are to be considered at an upcoming North Wales Ambition Board.</p> <p>CM – discussed the lobbying of a group of local MPs for short term action on the M56, however have been informed by C&W LEP that no action will be taken before 2020, and suggested to board members that any influence they can bring would be helpful.</p>	SP/ CM

6.	<p>Dwell Working Group Update – Dean Paton, Fran Burgess & Phil Harris</p> <p>DP, FB and PH are the group leads for the Dwell Working Group. An update was given and the following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dwell aims to bring people and Chester together for longer, encouraging people to spend more time in the City and giving people a reason to spend more time at specific attractions. • Objectives include understanding the different dwell patterns and trends and identifying gaps within the data. • Aim to increase education-related dwell time in the city centre through supporting a university-led annual festival within the city • Aim to support key tourism stakeholders to strengthen their presence in the city by exploring the possibility of utilising empty buildings for ‘pop ups’. • Identifying a list of existing events and creating a list of core dates for Chester to encourage others to host events around these. • Aim to host a one question poll ‘What would make you stay in Chester for longer?’ and would benefit from hosting a Dwell page on the new CGP website details remit and contact details. 	DP/ FB/ PH
7.	<p>Engage and Report Working Group Update – Peter Carstensen</p> <p>PC and KM are the group leads for the Engage and Report Working Group. An update was given and the following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PC will provide coordination to the working groups and aims to develop and plot a timeline of activity to for monthly promotions/ press releases. • Holding a Chester based event to explain what the Chester Growth Partnership Board is, the priorities and about the enhancement of the One City Plan will coincide with the new branding and launch. • Also aim to hold an event in summer 2016 in London to use as a platform to spell out Chester’s position in the Northern Powerhouse and why Chester should be involved. • Find a consensus of what the city wants and drive a debate forward to encourage people to engage, by coordinating with key stakeholders. • Aim to lever champions for Chester locally, nationally and internationally. • Create a group of Chester ambassadors through a LinkedIn presence to make use of technology which would bring in new connections and advocates from other areas. <p>PH – informed of a Chester Forum event taking place in May 2016 regarding the Northern Powerhouse and how Chester fits in, which would be ideal given the timings</p>	PC

8.	<p>Naming and Branding – Lee Heywood</p> <p>LH presented three options for the new Chester Growth Partnership to replace the old Chester Renaissance branding with the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1 – natural progression from current branding with similar developed elements which overlap. • Option 2 – uses the Exclusively Cheshire typeface with an arrow of building blocks indicating a future upward direction. • Option 3 – simple typeface with five arrows to represent the working strands and upward development and growth. <p>CC – informed that once the branding has been finalised, a press release will be sent out to announce the new board membership and it would be best to communicate this together.</p> <p>SP – suggested adding ‘Chester Growth Partnership Board Member’ to LinkedIn profiles which was agreed as a positive communication.</p> <p>It was suggested that combining the font from branding option 1 with the icon from branding option 2 would be a better fit.</p> <p>Action Point – Branding to be finalised within the next few days in preparation for the launch of the new Board.</p>	LH
9.	<p>Northgate Presentation – Dave Anderson</p> <p>DA gave an update presentation on the latest progress of the Northgate scheme with the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project goals aim to transform Chester’s performance as a shopping and leisure destination by developing a compelling visitor experience and extend dwell time, boosting the evening economy. • Aim to secure new investment, jobs and prosperity and de-risk the scheme to make it attractive to investment partners. • 2012 Northgate scheme was developed under the assumption of working around the Crowne Plaza site, which is to be relocated in the 2015 scheme which will allow a much more prominent and lettable site for the Department Store. • Hunter Street and St Martin’s Way will be opened up, residential apartments have been reintroduced and an additional bus stand has been incorporated. • Consultations are taking place. Stakeholder sessions have started to take place and public exhibitions will be held in throughout December into January, as well as an online consultation taking place from 3rd December – 11th January. • Next steps involve securing Commercial Heads of Terms with a Cinema anchor, the hotel and a department store anchor. • Aim to submit a hybrid planning application in early March 2016 for a decision by mid-summer 2016. <p>PM – highlighted the relationship between the Investment Strategy and CPO as it is key to demonstrate the deliverability of the scheme.</p>	DA

10.	<p>Council & Devolution Update – Cllr Sam Dixon</p> <p>SD gave an update on Cheshire West and Chester Council’s Let’s Talk consultation and Devolution with the following noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CWaC receives a £47m grant from government which will be reduced to zero by 2020 meaning savings are needed over the next 4 years. • Let’s Talk document sets out a vision and priorities and views are important to shape the strategy moving forward. SD encouraged board members to read through the document and respond to the consultation. <p>SD informed of the structure of the four place boards; Chester, Ellesmere Port, Mid Cheshire and Rural. A meeting will shortly be taking place to bring together the chairs of each board to discuss shared priorities.</p> <p>SD also updated on the Devolution bid submitted to government in early September between Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East and Warrington Councils, including the Cheshire and Warrington LEP. A challenge session took place recently and the bid has been viewed favourably with further work and negotiations taking place on an ongoing basis.</p>	SD
11.	<p>One City Plan/Growth Strategy Refresh – Susie Woodward-Moor</p> <p>SWM informed of the area programme reviews that will be taking place to update a Chester strategy with the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review will involve linking in at three levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High Level (Part 1) – Sub regional and national context (Growth Deal, LEP, MDA, Northern Powerhouse) ○ Mid-Level (Part 2) – Borough wide context (Growth Strategy, Investment Strategy) ○ Lower Level – Chester (Delivery, Outputs, Priorities) • Various teams within CWaC will be consulted including Skills and Employment, Business Growth, Arts and Culture, Transport Strategy and the Chester Growth Team. • Currently working to develop a brief for consultants to procure in the new year with the aim to have the work complete by end of this financial year. • The strategy will reflect the priorities of the new administration and new corporate priorities, with the Board being heavily consulted throughout the process. • Skills are a key gap in each strategy which will be brought into the refreshed plan, as well as all key drivers for growth. • In the context of Chester, the strategy will cover all of the Chester geography, not just the city centre. 	SWM

12.	<p>AOB</p> <p>HC informed of some upcoming events of interest. A Northern Powerhouse event taking place in February 2016 which CWaC aren't currently represented at yet but would be useful for board members to attend. Also, a skills event hosted by the University on Higher Level Skills Apprenticeships taking place on Wednesday 2nd December which will feature some high profile local businesses.</p> <p>Action Point – HC to send through event details for circulation to board members.</p> <p>GB concluded informing of the next meeting taking place on Thursday 28th January 2016, from which point monthly meetings will occur for 4/5 months.</p> <p>Action Point – Dates of meetings for 2016 to be circulated to board members and diary invitations to be sent.</p>	ALL
13.	<p>Dates of Meetings 2016</p> <p>Thursday 28th January 2016 8am-10am</p>	ALL
	<p>Action Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branding to be finalised within the next few days in preparation for the launch of the new Board. • HC to send through event details for circulation to board members. • Dates of meetings for 2016 to be circulated to board members and diary invitations to be sent. 	