

Friday 7th February 2020 8.30am-10.30am
Cedar House, Chester Zoo

CHESTER GROWTH PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS

Peter Carstensen, Harry Bolton, Andrew Bentley, Cllr Stuart Parker, Andrew Lewis, Cllr Adam Langan, Peter Cocker, Carl Critchlow, Phil Harris, Andy Foster, Andy Farrall, Eryl Edwards, Nicholas Dobbs, Chris Matheson MP, Tim Stratford, Cllr Richard Beacham

OTHER ATTENDEES

Adam Wisher, Jamie Christon, Lisa Harris, Stephanie Ramsden, Robert Gatensbury, Beth Skinner

APOLOGIES

Richard Grove

	<p>Action Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of Chester Northgate BID Briefing on 5th March to be circulated to board members • Details of CWaC Design Review Panel to be forwarded to AW • Transport/Infrastructure to be added to next Board Meeting agenda • Board members to provide any useful contacts on how we can consult on carrying out the review • Progress on One City Plan Review to be reported at next board meeting • CC to act as Chester Growth Partnership Board representative on Chester Heritage Action Zone Steering Group • PH to enquire about availability of Churchill House for May board meeting • BS to send out diary markers for 2020 meetings to board members
1.	<p>Welcome and Introductions - Peter Carstensen PC welcomed board members to the meeting and gave introduction to Robert Gatensbury who has recently taken post as the new CGP programme manager.</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting on 29th November 2019 were approved.</p> <p>AL gave an update on the collapse of the City Walls on 17th January. The development was under a high level of supervision and investigations are ongoing. Safety is the first priority and CWaC are looking to create an alternative route for this critical part of Chester's tourism, with a potential 1-2 year timeframe before repairs are complete.</p> <p>A Northgate update paper was tabled at the meeting which includes details of the preliminary works about to take place and traffic management plans. RG informed further public press releases are to follow shortly. CC highlighted a Northgate BID briefing for businesses will take place on 5th March in the Town Hall.</p> <p>ACTION: Details of Chester Northgate BID Briefing on 5th March to be circulated to board members</p>

2.

Chester City Gateway - Adam Wisner

AW gave an update presentation on the Chester City Gateway project with the following highlights:

- LCR and Network Rail have a national collaboration with around 40 projects - Chester is the first new project
- CWAC, LCR and Network Rail are aligned with a collaboration agreement and task agreement to discover and agree what the opportunities are
- May - December 2020 - feasibility and strategy stage
- Study area will be defined in the first stage will include:
 - Regeneration and public realm improvements
 - Chester Station enhancements
 - Rail service enhancements
 - City gateway access
- Land ownership study will be updated to identify potential site opportunities to align with the objectives of the One City Plan
- Preferred options for core consultant support will be approved by the client group at inception meeting
- Indicative timeframes:
 - May 2020 - consultant team in place
 - 3 months - strategic framework
 - 4 months - spatial masterplan
 - 2 months - approval for next steps
- A communications and engagement strategy will be carefully considered

PC gave encouragement to be as bold as possible around the station to ensure something exciting is delivered, carrying on or exceeding the quality of the adjacent Muse development. HB agreed adding the opportunity to link residential areas of Hoole to the city centre to draw people through with thought to be given to how key streets interact.

AF commented on the area needing to tie everything together to link the station with the city centre, and the opportunity to raise Chester's profile with a quality, quirky, colourful and sustainable scheme.

Hoole Bridge was highlighted as a key part of the masterplan, with SR informing that CWaC are already undertaking a Hoole Bridge Study with traffic models which will help inform the City Gateway masterplan.

AF highlighted the use of local architects and practices for the project who know Chester well with AW agreeing that the masterplan will have many projects spinning out with opportunities to think differently about how these services are procured.

ACTION: Details of CWaC Design Review Panel to be forwarded to AW

AL gave mention to the positive collaboration and mentioned we cannot separate the regeneration of the area from the rail service and focus shouldn't be lost on improved connectivity. RB agreed adding the importance of how Chester can be branded as a sustainable gateway with a modal shift of transport, for example an electric bus between the station and city centre would be a good idea.

PH commented on the need to generally tidy up the area around the station and

	<p>questioned whether volunteers would be a good route to look into.</p> <p>SR informed of a project working with local geography students to look at engaging electronically in the intermediate term, through channels such as google maps and social media.</p> <p>PC gave thanks to AW for the presentation and encouraged easy wins to be identified that could be brought forward.</p>
3.	<p>Chester Zoo Presentation - Jamie Christon</p> <p>JC gave a presentation to update on the zoo's latest plans with the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Development Plan currently runs until 2033 • The zoo had just under 1.9million visitors in 2019 • Working on a new gateway project to enhance the entrance to the zoo • Grasslands will be a major project this year which will include the reorganization of the west side and a number of animals being moved to a holding area away from public access • Planning permission was granted in 2019 for a 42 bed hotel which will be due to open in Spring/Summer 2023. A hotel operator has been identified and investment packages are currently being put together to seek further partners. • Monsoon Forest rebuild will start next month with animals returning in May to reopen to the public in July • Chester Zoo has a close relationship with CWaC planning department, with the planning committee visiting every 6 months for updates • The zoo has 130,000 members, the majority living within 60 minutes. 12% of Cheshire West's population are zoo members. • Number of different departments and projects where apprenticeships and younger people can be brought in • 97% of visitors travel to the zoo by car so would like to reduce carbon emissions by encouraging further public transport use and possible connectivity opportunities with the station • Signposting to hotels and the city centre is already taking place, but thoughts on how to encourage a Chester cluster of tourism to be considered
4.	<p>Chester Place Marketing - Andy Farrall</p> <p>AF updated the board on the recent ongoing work around place marketing with the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following a meeting with Marketing Cheshire, CWaC and partners it was clear a coordinated working approach was needed including joint events, programming and promotion • Marketing Cheshire to revitalize focus on Chester as the attack brand for the wider sub-region • Establishing a visitor economy network 'Destination Chester' with joint letters to be sent shortly from MC and CWaC to partners - first meeting will take place on 3rd March • Initial meeting will feature core partners in the city and will be a chance to identify quick wins and simple things that can be coordinated together • Marketing Cheshire will facilitate the new network, but it needs to be owned by its participants • The group will report back to CGP board, EP board and MC board

	<p>PC thanked for the work done so far as the right way forward to ensure a joined up approach to our visitor economy network, and encouraged board members to participate.</p> <p>TS commented on the Cathedral perhaps being too isolated in the wider context but can now be much more together, and is looking forward to the conversations.</p> <p>CC agreed stating it's something business have needed for a while and will fully support, and thought needs to be given to how it reports back to CGP to tackle issues.</p>
5.	<p>Dee House Working Group Update - Andy Foster</p> <p>AF updated on the work of the Dee House Working Group with the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft report summarising the groups conclusions and recommendations will be submitted to the council later this month • Public event took place last night at Storyhouse to present the recommendations - positive vibe in the room with much agreement about need to save Dee House • Cheshire Historic Building Preservation Trust have produced a project viability report which includes proposals for ways to safeguard Dee House • Conservation deficit of the building is £500k - eliminating this makes the project viable and attractive to developers and there are a few options for funding this • Another public drop in session will be held next week in Chester Town Hall • Report will incorporate public feedback and comments gathered <p>A discussion took place on highlighting the layered 8000 years of history, not just romans and how this should apply to the whole of Chester, so more people can get behind its history.</p> <p>PC thanked AF and the group for their hard work and highlighted the inclusive approach was key to success.</p> <p>AB mentioned an experiment of the ring road to see what the disruption does to attractions in the city could be looked at by the group. SR confirmed additional monitoring will be put in place to see where the traffic goes.</p> <p>ACTION: Transport/Infrastructure to be added to next Board Meeting agenda</p>
6.	<p>One City Plan Review - Robert Gatensbury</p> <p>RG gave an overview of the progress of the One City Plan Review with the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halfway through current programme in the One City Plan • Elements that will be explored include what has been achieved to date, resources, gaps in knowledge and future opportunities • Review will link to future phases of Northgate and will fit into wider High Street strategy • Early input from board members is appreciated <p>PC questioned who to involve in discussions with the possibility of an external evaluation, with other opportunities, including Urban Land Institute, to be explored.</p> <p>ACTION: Board members to provide any useful contacts on how we can consult on</p>

	<p>carrying out the review</p> <p>ACTION: Progress on One City Plan Review to be reported at next board meeting</p>
7.	<p>AOB</p> <p>RG gave a brief update on the progress of the Chester High Street Heritage Action Zone. The Scheme Programme was submitted to Historic England on 20th December and is currently being reviewed by their national team, with announcements expected in March. A Steering Group has been set up for the programme which required a representative from CGP to attend, with suggestion as CC already sits on the group as a key project partner could act in a dual role.</p> <p>ACTION: CC to act as Chester Growth Partnership Board representative on Chester Heritage Action Zone Steering Group</p> <p>Date of next board meeting is Friday 15th May with suggestions open for future venues.</p> <p>ACTION: PH to enquire about availability of Churchill House for May board meeting</p> <p>ACTION: BS to send out diary markers for 2020 meetings to board members</p>
8.	<p>Date of Next Meetings</p> <p>Friday 15th May 2020, 8.30am Friday 18th September 2020, 8.30am Friday 20th November 2020, 8.30am</p>