

Minutes

Meeting: West Chester Commercial BID – Executive Board Meeting
Date: Friday 2nd August 2019
Time: 9:00am – 11:20am
Location: B&S Group Ltd, Sovereign Way, Chester CH1 4QJ

- Jordi Morell - Obsidian Group (JM)
- Steve Potts – B&S Group (SP)
- Ann Rogers – Deva Design (AR)
- Mark Diaper – Legat Owen (MD)
- Gill Williams – CWaC (GW)
- Greville Kelly – Groundwork CLM (GK)
- Stephanie Leese – Groundwork CLM (SL)

Apologies Received:

- Mark Henshaw – Groundwork CLM (MH)
- Jane Hough – Groundwork CLM (JH)
- Iain Paton – CwaC (IP)
- David Brindley – CIPFA (DB)
- Ceri Roberts – Arco (CR)

| Agenda Item | Minutes | Actions |
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| Welcome | JM welcomed all those present to the meeting. | |
| Approval of the minutes | GK distributed the minutes from the previous meeting and asked if there were any queries. There were no comments on the minutes. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. | |
| Finance Report | <p>GK handed out copies of the accounts to the board members present. There were no questions on the claim. GK explained there was a surplus from Year 1 and there will be another surplus going in to Year 3. JM noted that the training had gone over budget. JM questioned the newsletter budgets, as the budget for Q3 was £750 but only £193.15 has been spent. GK informed the board the last news bulletin was in March. GK will look in to whether the newsletter providers have sent in their invoices.</p> <p>JM asked whether finance reports could be distributed ahead of time before the meeting (around a week in advance) in order for board members to be able to check the figures thoroughly. This was agreed. JM also asked whether over and underspends of the budget could be flagged up on the document. This was agreed going forward utilising a colour coding scheme.</p> <p>The board were happy with the financial report.</p> | <p>GK / JH to check with Solutions 24-7 for Q3 to establish whether they have invoiced for the hard copy bulletin and why the actual costings for Q3 are only £193.15.</p> <p>JH to distribute the cash flow statements a week in advance of board meetings going forward.</p> <p>J H to ensure the claim document is colour coded for over and underspend going forward.</p> |
| Business Park Manager | <p>Business Park Manager</p> <p>GK explained that David Snasdell (DS) had supported the back filling of the Business Park Management service in the absence of MH. DS has been leading in business engagement work including the following work activities, some which were new enhancements* to the services delivered previously:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. News ebuletin * 2. Increasing in social media activity on twitter with 64 separate twitter updates over 12 weeks. * 3. Website developments and development of the business users guide | |

4. Supporting the Board work group to review CCTV
5. Meeting with local business representatives to drive forward image enhancements
6. Completing crime investigations following incidents*.

GK explained that DS had also delivered multiple company engagement and visits to site meeting companies and had also held meetings with and been in contact with a range of CWaC departments delivering project investigation work linked to image enhancement and the CCTV development project. Further specific work streams covered by DS since MH absence included:

- Direct engagement with circa 30% of companies over 3 months.
- Updating BID website entries for companies.
- Supporting challenges around traveler encampments and liaising with CWaC and local businesses, and providing advice for companies to address challenges from unauthorised encampments on private land.
- Meeting with businesses to review car parking issues in relation to cars parking on grass verges and faded double yellow lines (these have been reported to CWaC for rectification).
- Meeting with new lead Cllr for Regen Cllr Richard Bearcham and attending the new CWaC business units.
- Co-ordinating a CCTV review meeting with businesses, CWaC and the Police.
- Produce e-bulletin newsletters released.
- Meeting with Landscape Architect to review the proposed development projects and scope out new landscape improvement projects.
- Reporting issues to CWaC (hedge trimming, tidying).
- CWaC Council highways and enforcement contacted to action enforcement and renewal of yellow line marking that have faded (Hartford Way).
- Meeting inward investors moving into the BID area.
- Raising opportunities for BID members to benefit from BID services on the website, training courses.

JM, SP and DR all commented they had not received the website user guide yet.

GK discussed speaking to local recruitment agencies about job vacancies. GW discussed links with the Work Zone in Chester. JM would like a vacancy on the website to be fired out to the work zone/local recruitment agencies. GW mentioned the University also has a careers service.

Work plan moving forward

GK explained to the board that MH returned back to work on the 23rd July in a phased return to work period. MH will be back to working 5 days a week at the end of August. GK explained to the board that MH's only focus is the West Chester Commercial BID on his return to work phase. GK explained that MH has been conducting Customer Care visits since he has been back and has visited 10 businesses over the past 2 weeks. JM asked whether when MH was back full time would he be doing 2 days a week in West Chester. GK confirmed that this would be the case.

GK informed the board that MH had identified a potential new board member – the branch manager from MMK on Winsford Way.

GK explained that recently a business owner had spoken to JH to voice some of his frustrations, with the main points of contention being CCTV/ANPR and image enhancements.

SP stated he feels the business park is split in to two parts – the well-maintained side (West Chester Employment Park) and the not so-well maintained side (Sealand

GK to check distribution of the website user guide and MH to ensure this is sent out to all businesses and check they have received it.

MH to look at vacancies being sent to the Work Zone/local recruitment agencies and Chester University's careers service and come forward with an action plan to raise the profile of the job feature on the website.

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| | <p>Industrial Estate). SP feels this needs to be joined up and more things implemented in the Sealand Road Industrial Estate side to get that part looking better maintained</p> <p>AR explained that there had been issues at the Europa car junction with vehicles unloading on a junction which is dangerous – there had been an accident the week previous.</p> <p>GW explained that BIDs had been raised by the management team at CWAC. CWAC is looking to do an SLA for each BID.</p> <p>The issues of street scene were raised as part of the discussion around the SLA and GW explained Mark Brazil has offered to come to meetings and if the board feel it would be beneficial for him to be invited back again to listen to businesses concerns. GW advised to invite Mark Brazil to meetings with good notice so he is able to log it in his diary and attend.</p> <p>JM stated that he believed Groundwork had saved money during MH’s absence through not charging his time to the BID and that DS was doing a lower amount of hours per week. GK had advised during the meeting the figure of 2 hours support from DS included on the agenda was incorrect, and that Groundwork costs had increased with additional staffing costs being incurred to bring DS into the project to ensure that the project activity expected was covered.</p> <p>JM asked whether a discount on the management fees would be applied in light of this. GK stated he would review this request in further detail and feedback his conclusions.</p> | <p>GK to feedback to CWAC regarding SLAs.</p> <p>JH to invite Mark Brazil to next board meeting with a long period of notice.</p> <p>GK to look at applying a discount on management fees for the BID during the period of absence by MH.</p> |
| <p>Communication with BID Members</p> | <p><u>Accuracy of Database</u></p> <p>SP and JM felt that the information wasn’t reaching the right people in terms of the businesses in the BID. It was stated that accurate e-mail addresses are needed so those who need it are getting the communication, there was opinion stated that using generic email addresses was not going to support getting the message to the right people in companies. It is important to improve the amount of communication, the quality of the information, and to provide it regularly.</p> <p>JM questioned the number of “info@” email addresses on the database. GK explained he did not have this information to hand, however would not expect this to be a significant number of address. GK agreed to review this and feedback to the board on the use of generic email addresses. Note: The review has identified that less than 17% of businesses email addresses are of a generic nature. These are generally linked to national chains who do not always issue staff with personal emails, however this will be reviewed through the customer care visits.</p> <p>GK reported that the open rate for the e-bulletin was an average of 26%, which was similar to the average openings achieved on other long term BID projects.</p> <p>JM felt it needs to be checked to see who isn’t opening the bulletins and to engage with them directly. While 26% are opening it there are 74% who are not. These businesses need to be logged and engaged with. GK explained that the ebulletin whilst valuable was also part of a wider communication strategy including the website, hard copy bulletins and customer cares visits in relation to communicating the story about what is being delivered, however agreed to review further actions that can be taken to help communicate the difficulties with specific BID projects (CCTV / ANPR/ Landscaping)</p> <p>SP asked if there is anywhere on the website where individuals can sign up to receive the e-bulletin. GK explained that there was a contact page, however there is no specific sign up to the e-bulletin section.</p> <p>JM felt it would be beneficial to have a forum section on the website that businesses could write their ideas on for all to see. This could also be in conjunction with a comments tab where businesses can write their comments which then gets sent straight to the West Chester BID e-mail address inbox.</p> | <p>JH and MH to ensure that level of communication from the BID Team to businesses is provided more regularly and the quality of information is improved.</p> <p>GK to check the database to see how many email listings are of the “info@” variety that go to nobody in specific.</p> <p>MH to establish which businesses are not opening the e-bulletins and to engage with these businesses directly if not already done so to identify further email contacts in the businesses.</p> <p>JH to review options for additional communications or changes to existing communication methods to better communicate the challenges experienced by the project.</p> <p>MH to speak with Solutions 24-7 to get a “sign up” page established on the website so people can click to subscribe to the e-bulletin. MH to speak to Solutions 24-7 to get a button put at the top</p> |

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| | <p>JM asked if the customer care visits are recorded on the database. GK answered not at present as it is recorded separately but a CRM system is being looked at to be implemented in the future which will record this all on one system.</p> <p>GW enquired what MH's referral method is with businesses that are looking to expand. MH should be asking whether he can pass on their details to the council. GW wants to know where this intelligence is going – what does MH do with it and where does he go with it to progress it further for the business. GK explained that this is captured in our records and action linked to this information shared by the business would be specific to each company and dependent upon what the company has agreed to share with 3rd parties.</p> <p>GK informed the board that the weekly e-bulletin would be passed over to MH from DS. JM commented that the ebullient was quite long, and asked whether it could be more succinct. GK explained this feedback would be reviewed and considered for future editions.</p> <p>JM requested that GWK review click rate to see what businesses are clicking on and increasing more of that content in future e-bulletins.</p> | <p>of the website that shows on all pages where people can click to sign up.</p> <p>MH to discuss with Solutions 24-7 about implementing a comments/ideas page on the website and implementing a comments field which gets sent straight to the West Chester BID inbox.</p> <p>MH to pass on appropriate and authorised (by the company supplying the data) intelligence regarding businesses looking to expand to GW to signpost to wider business support services.</p> <p>MH to establish what is being clicked on off the e-bulletins and to include more of that type of content in future bulletins.</p> |
| <p>Website Completion</p> | <p><u>Correction of errors</u></p> <p>GK reported that DS has taken feedback on the errors that were on the website and completed corrective actions. There is now greater interactivity on the website and offer and the facility to post job vacancies and offers by businesses.</p> <p>SP informed GK that B&S Group entry on the Business Directory referenced Sealand Industrial Estate and not West Chester Employment Park.</p> <p>GK reported that all businesses in the BID area should be on the directory (note a check of the website following the meeting has identified 97 separate business entries).</p> <p>Some concerns were expressed that not all entries were accurate, GK explained that the feedback from customer care visits over the next few weeks would improve the level of accuracy.</p> <p><u>Interactivity for members</u></p> <p>GK reported back that since January there have been 234 users on the website, 229 of which were new users. The site has been viewed 442 times since January with an average dwell time on the website of 4 minutes 27 seconds.</p> <p>SL stated that the website did not come up first on web searched on google. JM confirmed this and explained that a town in America called West Chester had much more diverse content and updated content and hence had a higher Google rating. A discussion around SEO was held, JM stated that having the website regularly updated would be the best way to maintain a good search ratings. (Note: web searches since the meeting show the website coming up up 3rd on google searched and 1st on Bing searches).</p> <p>JM asked if the BID had a LinkedIn account. GK stated not at present. JM feels this would be a good idea in order to post information and regular updates. JM also wants</p> | <p>MH to check the Business Directory for B&S's entry and amend.</p> <p>MH to cross check company address and contact data with company entries on the website.</p> <p>MH to produce monthly news articles for the project website and encourage companies to engage with the website and upload their own content for jobs and offers.</p> <p>MH to look at setting up a LinkedIn account for the BID.</p> |

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| | <p>the e-bulletin link to be put on LinkedIn.</p> | |
| <p>CCTV, alternative costings</p> | <p>SP explained that DS had organised a meeting for BID members and the CCTV department in the Council. SP and CR attended. SP explained it soon became clear that CCTV would not be the best use of funds due to there being nobody to monitor it proactively. The operatives will only look at it if there has already been an incident and the police are involved. SP reported there are only 2 operatives that check the CCTV across the whole of Cheshire and Denbighshire. SP feels that there will be no benefit to the BID and the crime stats at present don't justify the costs.</p> <p>GK explained the council had provided £14,000 to the project and JM asked whether the BID would need to pay that back if CCTV wasn't purchased. GW confirmed that if the money hasn't been spent on crime/safety projects by October the money would need to be reclaimed by the council. If the BID didn't want to spend the money on CCTV it may be able to spend it on other crime prevention measures.</p> <p>GK suggested a private ANPR system. SP questioned this and felt that replicating and applying what has been successful in other areas may not work for the West Chester Commercial BID due to the differences in the area/layout of the site.</p> <p>JM asked whether dummy cameras could be installed to act as a deterrent but not actually be operational or linked to anywhere, along with deterrent signs. GK expressed some concern over this as there would be an issue with it being in public space and creating a false sense of security that members of the public thinking they are being monitored when none is taking place. GW said the council would need to approve/reject dummy cameras. It was stated that signage in itself is a deterrent value.</p> <p>SP felt there is a justifiable reason why the ANPR and CCTV hasn't been delivered and this needs to be communicated out to businesses. It needs to be explained as to why the money has not been invested in these projects and that it will be invested elsewhere in other projects that are more beneficial.</p> <p>SP expressed that the BID Businesses need to be more specific in communicating what they want to delivered as opposed to Groundwork developing projects and bringing them to the board. GK acknowledged this, however stated that he believed Groundwork should be party to this process to support the businesses in facilitating the development of new improvement projects.</p> <p>JM feels that the data from ANPR could be useful. SP asked GK what the benefits of the ANPR system have been on the other BID projects where it has been installed. GK advised that it had been used on two other projects, and any specific benefits could be reported as part of further investigation work into ANPR at West Chester.</p> <p>JM stated he would like a comprehensive ANPR system that captures data which can be explored. GW suggested an ANPR company comes to give a presentation on what the data can do so the Board can decide whether it would be of use. It needs to be established what the benefits and limitations of such a system would be and how data from the system is managed and shared.</p> <p>The issue of parking on the grass was raised again – boulders placed on the grass would solve this issue if Aldi do not landscape the area in question during their expansion.</p> <p>GW suggested in future meetings that guest speakers from the council come and talk to the BID board on issues and what they can do to help – ie Ken Prior from Parking Enforcement.</p> | <p>MH to communicate with businesses regarding why money has not been invested in the CCTV projects through his customer care visits.</p> <p>MH to find out what benefits ANPR has delivered on other BID projects since being installed.</p> <p>JH to invite the ANPR company to present to the board on the benefits and limitations of the system</p> <p>The board and GWK to review need for installation of boulders on open green space to prevent car parking.</p> <p>GW to speak to relevant council operatives to invite them to future BID meetings.</p> |

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| <p>Landscaping</p> | <p><u>Report and Delays</u> GK explained that the BID had focused on 3 potential areas for landscaping. There had been delays due to establishing ownership of the areas plus services that were below the sites. On the area at Bumpers Lane/Hartford Way, services below the site would limit any works that could be done.</p> <p>GW asked if there had been any discussion recently regarding the sign near Aldi.</p> <p>GK showed the Board members the plans drawn up by the Groundwork Landscape Architect. The landscaping near the Quad on Sovereign Way would be feasible.</p> <p>The current issue on Hartford Way is cars parked there. GK suggested raised bollards, raised planters and new grass to combat the issue.</p> <p>GK explained that Gethin Owens (the Landscape Architect) and DS had walked around the site and identified areas that could be improved, as well as having conversations with the landowners.</p> <p>GK suggested that where services were making project unfeasible, raised beds and smaller planters with benches could be installed to improve the aesthetics of the areas and provide locations for staff to sit during lunch breaks. JM suggested government funding to access mature tree planting. This was supported by the board.</p> <p>It was agreed that in place of the three specific improvement projects developed to date, the board and GWK develop a wider range of smaller improvements which could be delivered across the BID. This could still incorporate some improvements on the three original project areas in line with the limitations of these sites. This was supported by the board.</p> | <p>MH to contact Aldi again regarding the sign and an option to install an estate sign on the land.</p> <p>Consider installation of bollards for this project.</p> <p>GK to send out photos of the areas identified to board members</p> <p>GWK to prepare a proposal to scope out improvements, and bring these opportunities together into an overall master plan of small scale improvements for the BID area. The plan will also need to identify private land ownership, services challenges and produce shovel ready project for implementation by the BID, CWaC or private land owners.</p> |
| <p>Litter cleaning</p> | <p><u>Regular Baseline Audit</u></p> <p>JM feels there has been a slippage of standards with regards to cleaning and litter in the area. The litter has got much worse recently. JM asked if MH can have a look round and identify litter issues.</p> <p>GW stated that enforcement officers can legally go and enforce litter cleansing at businesses.</p> <p>JM asked if MH's litter checks can be reinstated.</p> <p>GK informed the board that Mark Brazil had been conducting Local Authority Maintenance Schedules with an audit conducted in April. JM asked when the next one would be.</p> <p>GK raised the opportunity for the BID to pay fund small area tidy ups and litter picking over and above the current litter picking services provided by CWaC. This was supported by the board.</p> | <p>MH to look around at litter issues and reinstate litter checks if needed over and above LAMS audits by CWaC.</p> <p>GW to ask Mark Brazil when the next LAMS audit would be.</p> <p>GWK to identify costings from a potential contractor for additional litter picking.</p> |
| <p>Newsletter</p> | <p>GK informed the board that the next newsletter is due out soon. GK asked if there were any particular messages the board wanted to include. The board felt that information on the CCTV was needed to be included, explaining how long projects take to implement so businesses understand. It was agreed that landscaping services also needed to be included so businesses know why these projects aren't being delivered.</p> | <p>MH to review newsletter content and include CCTV and image enhancement updates</p> |

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| | <p>It was agreed that regular project updates should be communicated to companies in addition to the range of hard and electronic communications undertaken to deliver regular updates on what is happening and to provide a work in progress report.</p> <p>GK explained that MH would be briefed in full on the projects and work in progress for the Customer Care Visits.</p> <p>GW will pass on to Groundwork when new units are taken up on the site. It was agreed that a member of the BID would go and meet any new tenants so they understand about the BID. Members of the BID Team and Board Members would do this.</p> <p>SP felt it may be a good idea to hold informal coffee mornings so businesses could meet up and discuss the BID and projects.</p> | <p>MH to produce work in progress emails to businesses detailing the projects currently being worked on</p> <p>GK to brief MH on the current work in progress</p> <p>MH to facilitate BID board introductory meeting between new BID area tenants.</p> <p>All review opportunities for additional networking.</p> |
| <p>Training Courses</p> | <p><u>Current courses and uptake</u></p> <p>SP reported that B&S Group were pleased with the Fork Lift Truck Training and the First Aid training.</p> <p>GK reported that since the start of the BID 129 people have been on training courses. JM questioned whether this was quite low.</p> <p>GW asked if the BID asks business what training courses they would like to see delivered. GK explained that such intel should come out of customer care visits and general company engagement work.</p> <p>Following discussion around further work that can be done to raise the profile of the BID and its services with a wider community of employees in the BID area GK suggested the BID creates a simple poster that can be put up in businesses and on noticeboards about the BID, stating what the BID is, listing the BID website, listing the BID social media accounts, mentioning about the BID e-bulletins and how people can sign up and containing information on benefits to employees such as BID funded training courses.</p> <p>SP suggested that businesses can collate emails of employees who are interested in receiving the e-bulletins.</p> | <p>MH to speak to businesses during Customer Care visits to establish if other training courses are required. SL to send out email asking businesses for suggestions on specific training courses they would like to see.</p> <p>MH to get costs for an "About the BID" poster to be designed and printed</p> <p>MH to advise businesses to collect email addresses of employees who are interested in receiving the e-bulletin</p> |
| <p>Board Membership</p> | <p>GK informed the board that MH has found another new potential board member from MMK on Winsford Way – both the Director and Branch Manager are interested. JM will meet with MMK and invite them on to the board.</p> <p>It was agreed that a communication story would then be sent out regarding the new board member.</p> <p>It was asked what other actions there would be to identify new board members. GW suggested knocking on doors with face to face engagement to establish new members. GW suggested Robert Kidd from Laminate Solutions as an option.</p> | <p>MH to introduce JM to MMK.</p> <p>JM to meet and invite MMK on to the board.</p> <p>MH to arrange communication of MMK being a board member once invited on</p> <p>MH to speak to Robert Kidd from Laminate Solutions regarding Board membership.</p> |
| <p>A.O.B</p> | <p>GW informed the board that the council now has a new newsletter and website which has information on government funding with lots of national information that could be of use to businesses. This could be included as a business support element. GW felt it would be a good idea for MH to sign up to the newsletter and check the website to garner information with regards to news and events that could then be passed on to businesses through the BID e-bulletin.</p> | <p>MH to sign up to the council economic development newsletter.</p> <p>MH to check the council website for economic development news.</p> |

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| | <p>The board discussed benefits from a longer schedule of pre planned meetings for the Board and for the AGM. It was agreed to set a schedule of meeting dates for the next 12months + and sharing the full calender with businesses.</p> <p>GK asked what timings and days worked best for the board. Mondays and Fridays were to be avoided.</p> <p>JM requested a date be arranged ASAP for the ANPR meeting to discuss the project.</p> <p>The date of the AGM was agreed for Tuesday 12th November 2019. This needs to be communicated well in advance to the business community so they can attend.</p> <p>JM thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was closed.</p> | <p>JH to schedule forward plan of board and AGM meetings and issue outlook calendar invites to board members</p> <p>JH / MH to arrange a meeting with the ANPR company to come and present to the board.</p> <p>JH/MH to arrange invite to businesses for the AGM in advance.</p> |
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Next Executive Board Meeting Date: Tuesday 12th November 2019. Time and venue TBC.