



West Chester Commercial **BID**

Annual Report and Accounts

2019-2020

West Chester Commercial BID
C/O Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire & Merseyside
Waterside House
Navigation Road
Northwich
Cheshire
CW8 1BE
Tel: 01606 723175
Website: www.westchesterbid.co.uk



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1.0 Review of 2019-2020

The following Annual Report and Accounts covers the third year of the West Chester Commercial Business Improvement District (2017-2022).

Sections 1.2 through to 1.5 of the report detail everything that has been delivered during 2019-20, ensuring that the West Chester Commercial BID continues to work towards its vision:

“To provide a safe and more secure trading environment, to develop and maintain a range of image enhancements across the trading environment, to work towards providing sustainable travel options for companies and their employees and to provide a co-ordinated and supported Business Community”

1.1 The Executive Board

At the end of the financial year of 2019-2020 for the West Chester Commercial Business Improvement District, the membership of the Executive Board was as follows:

Jordi Morell – Obsidian Group (Chairperson)

Steve Potts – B&S Group Ltd (Vice-Chairperson)

Ann Rogers – Deva Designs Ltd

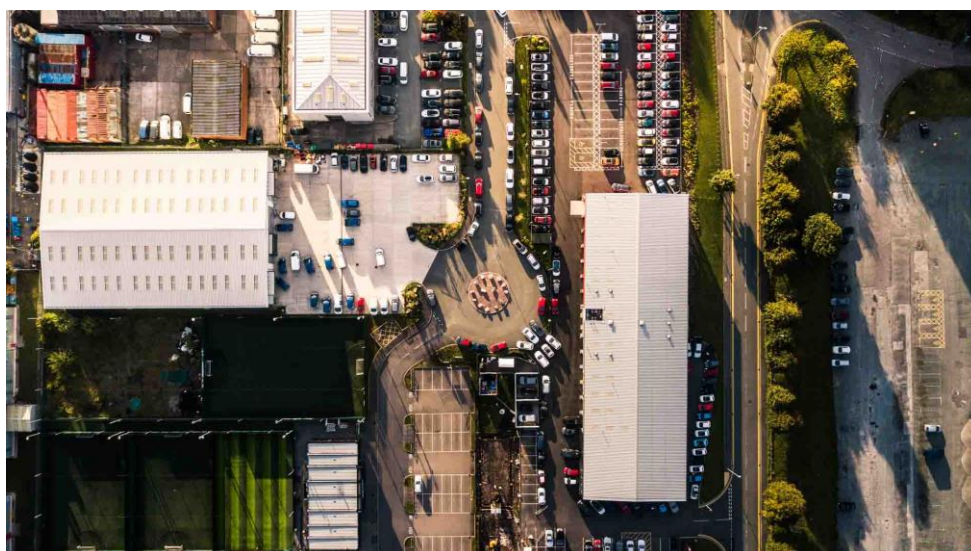
Mark Diaper – Legat Owen

Chris Leicester – Sanctuary Housing

Lexa Farthing – Cheshire West Library Services

Eleanor Thomas – Living Floors

The Executive Board met four times in 2019-2020, meetings were conducted face to face until the March 2020, since then meetings have been conducted virtually, and was quorate at all meetings. Full copies of minutes from these meetings are available from www.westchesterbid.co.uk



1.2 Theme One – A Safe and Secure Trading Environment



Throughout 2019-20, the West Chester Commercial BID made investments in to the highly valued mobile security patrols conducted by Alpha Omega throughout Bank Holiday weekends, Easter Weekend and during the Christmas and New Year period to ensure the area remains as secure as possible, as well as during periods when it was deemed necessary to have additional security on site. The BID board also made additional investments into security 24/7 over the first lockdown period and adhoc weekends each month throughout the year.

During the third year of the West Chester Commercial BID, the 24-7 Rapid Text Service was once again funded - a 24/7 hotline that businesses are urged to report any suspicious activity to so the information can get disseminated across Sealand Industrial Estate and Chester West Employment Park. Both Alpha Omega Security and Cheshire Police have representatives signed up to the service, as are the BID Team, to ensure rapid distribution of key security messages.



SELECTADNA™
DNA FORENSIC PROPERTY MARKING

SelectaMark DNA Kits were once again distributed to any new businesses moving in to the West Chester Commercial BID area, with the kits aiming to protect the assets and belongings of businesses and ensuring the police can link criminals to the crime scene and secure a conviction.

The BID Team continue to maintain an excellent partnership with Cheshire Constabulary and local PCSO local PCSO

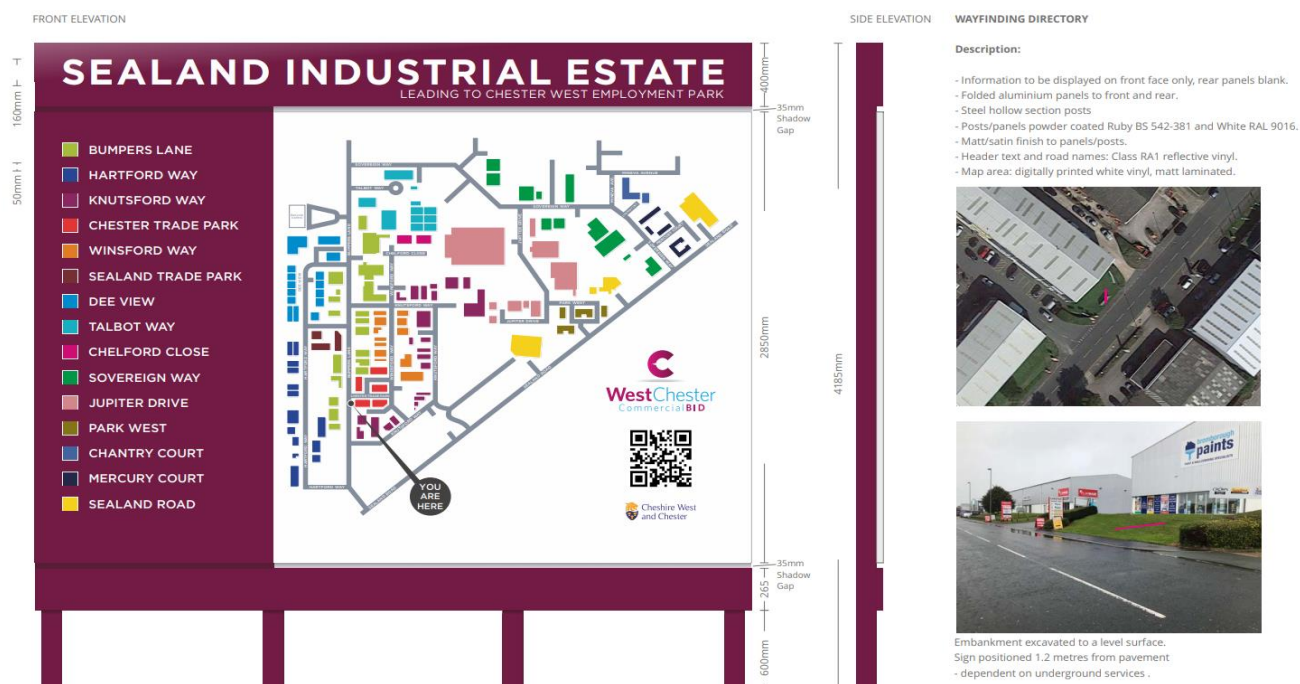


Martin Quick throughout the year as well as working hard alongside the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison department at Cheshire West and Chester Council to ensure that any illegal traveller encampments were moved on as quickly as possible .

1.3 Theme Two – A Sustainable and Greener Trading Environment

During 2019 - 2020 the BID Team have conducted regular image audits across the entire West Chester Commercial BID area and have worked with Cheshire West and Chester Council to enhance the baselines that they are delivering in the area. A clear plan of image enhancements, planting and maintenance schemes at key locations across the estate have been established and will look to be implemented over the coming months. Regular audits of the condition of the roads are also implemented, with the relevant team at Highways informed of any improvements that need to be made.

The West Chester Commercial Business Improvement District (BID) has agreed to fund three new image enhancement projects, which will help make the estate a more attractive place for businesses and employees to work whilst making the area more accessible to customers and suppliers. These will be at sites located outside Bromborough Paints, the Quad and at Chester Football club with the aim of being completed in the spring 2021. Additional signage has also been approved by the BID board – all valuable projects with the aim of ensuring the area is more aesthetically pleasing.



1.4 Theme Three – A Co-ordinated, Supported and Connected Business Community

The West Chester Commercial BID funded the Estate Management Service during 2019-2020, with Groundwork providing support and advice to all companies across Sealand Industrial Estate and Chester West Employment Park. The Estate Management Service is the central point of contact for all businesses in the West Chester Commercial BID area. The team have also successfully built and maintained relationships with a variety of partner organisations including Alpha Omega Securities, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire Constabulary. In 2019, Hugh Shields took over the role of the Business Improvement District Project Manager.



With the onset of Covid-19 in March 2020, the BID Team ensured that all businesses in the West Chester Commercial BID area were provided with all the information necessary in order to apply for the relevant government grants available and signposted to appropriate support networks. A page on the West Chester BID website was set up containing links and useful information with regards to grants and furlough support, and all businesses were contacted directly by telephone by the BID Team to offer support and establish what individual businesses needs were.

2019-2020 saw the continued maintenance of the West Chester Commercial BID website (www.westchesterbid.co.uk) while the hard copy quarterly newsletter was produced throughout the year and posted/emailed to businesses, each issue containing updates and information on all of the projects and services undertaken by the BID along with good news stories and successes from local businesses.

The West Chester Commercial BID Twitter account was also utilised throughout 2019-2020. Emails and the West Chester Commercial BID e-bulletin also dropped in to inboxes throughout the year to keep employees up to date with the latest news – do pass these on to staff to keep them informed.



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A schedule of training courses was planned throughout 2019 - 2020 covering a variety of topics designed to upskill employees of West Chester Commercial BID businesses. Courses range from First Aid at Work and Health & Safety in the Workplace to Fire Marshal Training, with courses validated by Quallsafe and The Institute of Fire Safety Managers. Fork Lift Truck refresher training was also funded by the BID for those businesses that required it and was provided by on site Fork Lift Truck specialists GHR Training Services based in Mercury Court. The BID will also be providing Mental Health First Aid Training to BID businesses free of charge as requested by companies in the BID area. Whilst the onset of Covid-19 in 2020 impacted the delivery of training courses, a full Risk Assessment has been completed and training will resume as and when it is safe to do so in a controlled and Covid-19 safe environment. In the meantime, online delivery of courses have been scheduled.

Specific courses that were delivered in 2019-2020 were as follows:

- Quallsafe Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work
- Quallsafe Level 2 Award in Health and Safety in the Workplace
- Fork Lift Truck Refresher Training provided by GHR Training Services.



2.0 Summary of Finances 2019-2020

The total income for the year collected was £102,366. The amount spent on BID arrangements and projects for 2019/2020 was £84,916. There is accrued expenditure of £250 for the West Chester BID external auditor fee.

The surplus of £96,870 brought forward from Years 1, 2 and 3 will be utilised to fund specific projects and services that support the three themes for improvements in the West Chester Commercial BID business plan.

Expenditure Summary	2019/2020	
	CASH	
	Budget	Expenditure
Theme One – A Safe and Secure Trading Environment	£15,250	£34,247
Theme Two – A Sustainable and Greener Trading Environment	£30,000	£6,556
Theme Three – A Co-ordinated, Supported and Connected Business Community	£44,060	£44,363
Total For year	£89,310	£85,166

Income	2019/2020	
	Budget Cash	Actual Cash
Business Improvement District Levy	£89,417	£97,600
MHCLG Covid Support Grant	£0	£4,718
Interest received in the bank account	Nil	£48
Total For year	£89,417	£102,366

The detailed income and expenditure from Murray Smith will be sent separately to companies via email.

3.0 Plans for 2020-2021

Below is a summary of the projects and services which will be delivered during the fourth year of the West Chester Commercial Business Improvement District in 2020 -2021.

3.1 *Theme One – A Safe and Secure Trading Environment*

- West Chester Commercial BID Mobile Security Patrol unit over Bank Holidays, the Christmas and New Year Period and Easter Holidays, as well as any other periods where extra security is deemed beneficial.
- Regular liaison with Cheshire Police regarding crime and security issues
- Rapid Text Service for all businesses to disseminate information to employees
- Provision of SelectaDNA Property Marking kits to all new businesses

3.2 *Theme Two – A Sustainable and Greener Trading Environment*

- New image enhancement projects at selected locations in the West Chester Commercial BID area
- Regular image audits across the BID area
- Working in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester Council to improve the road surfaces on the estate
- Additional signage at several locations in the BID Area
- Installation of 7 landscape projects that have been approved by the board in the BID landscape masterplan across various locations in the BID area.

3.3 *Theme Three – A Co-ordinated, Supported and Connected Business Community*

- West Chester Commercial BID Business Park Management Service
- Covid-19 and Brexit support for businesses
- A schedule of training courses and seminars free of charge to West Chester Commercial BID employees
- Provision of Fork Lift Truck refresher training
- Creation of a West Chester Commercial BID welcome pack for BID businesses
- Business networking opportunities to encourage inter-business park trading
- West Chester Commercial BID website updated with employee membership section and detailed map of the BID area
- E-mail and regular e-bulletin updates
- West Chester Commercial BID news bulletin emailed and posted out to all businesses
- Management of the West Chester BID Twitter Account @westchesterbid