

Message from the Chair

Covid 19 might feel as if it's over, but those who have had to take extreme precautions for two years cannot easily slip back into old routines.

In fact, for many companies the ways of working have changed for ever.

In '96 I was given a remit by the then leader of Chester Council, John Price, to explore if introducing home working was indeed possible.

We showed that remote working was possible with a minimal effort, sending documents back and forth over dial up modems. How delighted John would have been to see his dream fulfilled now beyond expectations.

Our staff now expect the flexibility that technology provides so easily. As business owners we expect the increased productivity that we gain from allowing flexible working from our staff. The BID is helping by providing

the infrastructure to make remote working better and faster.

During the five years of this BID progress might have seemed slow but progress has been made, with improvements to the environs, repairs to roads and the introduction of mobile security patrols. The whole area is in much better repair than before the BID existed too.

The groundwork team have been tireless in liaising with the council, auditing the sites and ensuring that the cleanliness of our streets is maintained.

On its way at last, the CCTV and ANPR project is close to installation, together with a fibre backbone to improve connectivity to all our businesses. We need the BID to continue if it is to be maintained and monitored.

The voting for BID 2 has commenced and if we wish the work that has been done so far to be maintained we must



make sure that another resounding "Yes" vote goes in.

It is very important that ballot papers are returned. As you will read, we need over 50% of those eligible to vote, less than that and it is a "No" vote.

If you are in favour of the BID continuing then talk to your neighbours and encourage them to vote and remember to vote yourselves.

Yours Sincerely,
Jordi J Morell,
Chair of the West Chester
Commercial BID Executive Board



BID 2 ballot now open

The ballot for businesses to decide on the future of the West Chester Commercial BID and whether it will continue for a second term is now open.

Everyone who is eligible to vote should have received a ballot paper through the post by the beginning of June from Civica electoral services, with the ballot taking place from Thursday 2nd June to Thursday 30th June.

Earlier this spring, all members were sent the West Chester Commercial BID 2 Draft Business Plan, with the BID seeking the views of businesses in order to ascertain precisely what they want to see delivered over the next five years.

A survey was also published which had a deadline for responses of Friday 8th April.

Since its inception in 2017, the BID has delivered a number of crucial projects to support businesses and create an environment where they can thrive.

This has included the installation of new signage at the entrance to West Chester Employment Park and Sealand Industrial Estate, various litter picks, support for companies trying to access grants before, during and after Covid and a range of image enhancement projects.

On top of this, nearly 200 BID business employees have been upskilled thanks to the many free training courses that have been delivered, and through the lobbying of Cheshire West and Chester Council, the installation of new road signs took place in 2018/19 alongside additional funding being secured for highway improvements.

A no vote would mean that similar projects to the above would immediately cease to exist leading to outcomes such as:

- ▶ Loss of dedicated security services including the mobile security patrol
- ▶ The end of locally delivered training courses



- ▶ No maintenance of planting schemes and no landscape projects
- ▶ The end of the West Chester Commercial BID website and e-communications
- ▶ No scope to maintain the new CCTV project

Ultimately, all the progress that has been made so far would be completely halted if a yes vote isn't returned.

For more information and further details, take a look at the BID 2 Proposal: <https://tinyurl.com/BID2Proposal>.

West Chester BID welcomes new business

The West Chester BID is pleased to welcome a new business to the estate.

Soup Creative, based at Chantry Court, is a content-led agency who work across a range of sectors. The team's wide skillset covers everything from creating and developing brands to building marketing strategies and creating all forms of content.

This includes film and animation, brand films, 360 tours, drone videos and content for TV, radio and social. The new marketing arm can also deliver across all platforms, maximising their

clients' budgets and improving return on investment.

With pricing models to fit all types of businesses, they can help bring new life to brands to help elevate them above the competition.

You may also be interested to know that Soup have a podcast suite along with a video and photography studio at their facilities which can be hired out by the hour by anyone.

For more information about this and the work they produce, head over to the Soup Creative website: www.soupcreative.co.uk.



Updates from around West Chester Commercial BID



Security

The BID Team organises extra security patrols through Alpha Omega for the Estate and Employment Park over holiday periods. This covered the Easter holidays and also took place during the bank holidays at the beginning of June.

Estate Audits

There have been a number of audits carried out by the BID Team from January to April and there was also a follow-up audit which took place after the storms. This was undertaken in order to check for debris or any damage to signs, boards or hoardings. Fly tipping, potholes and ground maintenance were also noted by the BID team during these checks.

Properties/New Businesses

There are not many empty properties on the estate at present. Two buildings on Hartford Lane will soon be occupied, one by Magma Granite Ltd, and there is a new build nearing completion which belongs to Storage King. In terms of new businesses, bravoauto and Soup Creative have been welcomed into the BID. Currently there are empty properties on Dee View, and some offices on Park West are vacant too.

Board Members

With Steve Potts stepping down, the board has appointed two new

members. Welcomes are therefore in order for Ceri Roberts, who is the Area manager for Bumpers Lane based Arco, and Mary Murphy who is Customer Experience & HR Director at Proximo.

AGM

The Annual General Meeting for West Chester Employment Park and Sealand Industrial Estate took place at Chester City FC on Wednesday 25th May 2022. The BID team would like to thank everyone who attended this key event which provided businesses with a review of the projects and services that have been delivered during the BID's first term.

LED Replacement Lighting

The West Chester Street Lighting and Traffic Signal Team are in the process of replacing the street lighting with LED Lights on Sealand Road Industrial Estate and West Chester Employment Park. Both of these areas have an average wattage reduction of 76W per lantern and will operate at a colour temperature of 3000k.

Training

So far a range of training courses have been delivered for employees of BID businesses to attend. These include Fire Marshal, Emergency First Aid at Work and Mental Health First Aid in

the Workplace which are the most requested. All of these courses have been fully booked. If the BID achieves a "yes" at ballot and BID 2 goes ahead, a new schedule of training courses will begin again from 1st September onwards.

If you are looking for free online training for your staff, level 2 is available through the following link: <https://freecoursesinengland.co.uk/>.

Green Innovation Fund

A new £400k green innovation fund has been launched to help small and medium-sized enterprises in Chester to transform their ideas into reality in the race to net zero. Businesses, charities and social enterprises can get up to 60 per cent funding towards projects worth £25,000 to help them deliver sustainable products, processes or services.

Find out more here: <https://tinyurl.com/GreenInnovationFund>.



Proximo receive prestigious award

Well done to the Proximo Group which recently announced that they had won the Outstanding Customer Journey Award as part of the 2022 UK Customer Service Excellence Awards.

This prestigious award celebrates customer service success in the insurance and broker markets.

A spokesperson from Proximo said: "With 2020 bringing to the fore the true weight and value of the customer experience, price is no longer the main driver when purchasing a service within the insurance sector. Customers are more engaged in understanding how a business represents itself and technology has seen astronomical integration with quality communication still remaining at the heart of all transformations."

The Proximo Group stood out to the judges because of the exceptional customer care they provide throughout the entire customer journey, along with their customer-centric mindset that has been evidenced across the business.

Speaking about the award, another member of the Proximo team commented: "The reason this has all been possible; our people. The hard work and commitment they have given, the customer service that they have delivered, and the number of customers they have kept moving during very challenging times all played a part in getting us here and this is a big win for us all at the Proximo Group."

“ We are thrilled to be in a position where the specialist vehicle hire and excellent customer service we are offering is deemed industry-leading by an independent panel of judges. **”**

The whole West Chester Commercial BID team would like to congratulate Proximo on their award.



BID businesses support Ukrainian refugees

A range of West Chester Commercial BID businesses have been helping to support Ukrainian refugees affected by the current war with Russia.

Earlier this year a call went out to all the businesses on the estate and the Employment Park to help the people affected through donations and volunteering.

Everything collected by businesses was sent to Wood Farm, Deeside, Sealand Road before being packed and loaded onto lorries to be transported to the Polish and Ukrainian borders and the Polish Red Cross.

Donations came in the form of a wide range of products and essentials including nappies, toiletries, baby

wipes, dry food, sweets, blankets, tents and food tins.

Various companies also donated tape and shrink wrap which were vital in the packing of boxes and pallets.

In a gesture of amazing goodwill, Mike Graham from Graham's Machinery

Sales took two of the initiative's organisers shopping as well, and donated £600 worth of nappies, toiletries and children's clothing.

The BID team would like to say a huge thank you to each and every business that helped with the appeal.

