

**Minutes**

**Meeting:** West Chester Commercial BID Executive Board Meeting  
**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> April 2026  
**Time:** 12:00pm – 2:00pm  
**Location:** Obsidian Offices

- Matthew Flack– Plan Ahead (MF) – CHAIR – VIA MS Teams
  - Jordi Morell - Obsidian Group (JM)
  - Chris Leicester – Avenue Services (CL)
  - Mary Murphy – Proximo (MM)
  - Lexa Farthing – Cheshire West Library Services (LF)
  - Jenny Williams – Deva Designs (JW)
  - Elaine Thomas – Living Floors (ET)
  - Cllr Alan Smith – Blacon Labour Councillor (AS)
  - Rebecca Griffiths – Calder Lead (RG)
  - Jane Hough – Groundwork CLM (JH)
  - Hugh Shields – Groundwork CLM (HS)
  - Stephanie Leese – Groundwork CLM (SL)
- Apologies:**
- Mark Diaper – Legat Owen (MD)
  - Gill Williams – CWAC (GW)

Agenda Item	Minutes	Actions
<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	<p>MF welcomed all those present to the meeting and thanked all for attending.</p> <p>Apologies were received from GW and MD.</p> <p>Introductions were made around the table.</p> <p><b><u>Actions from the last meeting:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HS is waiting on Onetek to understand if the radio mast can be used for the camera – Onetek is contacting CWAC regarding ownership. If the mast can't be used will introduce Onetek to MF's contact.</li> <li>• MF will join up Onetek with the Parking Authorities.</li> <li>• HS is waiting on GW to arrange a meeting with Highways. HS has a meeting with Cheshire Races regarding buses parking.</li> <li>• Useful stat – 1/3 of the businesses have utilised training.</li> <li>• Quotes for litter picking and hanging baskets have been obtained.</li> <li>• In terms of the ambassadors there was reluctance from businesses in terms of wanting to be ambassadors. This project has been parked.</li> <li>• SL sent out email regarding Blacon High School. MM has contacted the school twice and nobody responded. AS will raise this with Blacon High School. AS – it is so important to be convey the importance of replying to emails.</li> <li>• Careers Fairs are a valid option – need to speak to the Council regarding Careers Fairs in the nearby area. CWAC do Jobs Fairs. HS – the Pledge</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action:</b> HS to sort out infrastructure for new CCTV camera on Jupiter Drive.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> MF will link up Onetek with the Parking Authority company.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> HS and GW to meet with Highways.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> AS to speak with Rachel Thomas at Blacon High School.</p>

	<p>sends out information to businesses also regarding sending staff in to speak to pupils.</p> <p><b>The minutes from the previous meeting were approved as a true and accurate record.</b></p>	
<p><b>BID 3 Process</b></p>	<p>JH held a presentation on BID 3 and the process of a BID ballot. JH touched on what a BID is – the BID here has been delivering for 8 years now. The lifespan of a BID is 5 years before it has to go back to a BID ballot. There are 3 development stages – the first stage is feasibility (looking at the issues businesses have). JH has made a request to CWAC for the RV data. There will also be a desktop review looking at the Retail Park and whether the businesses there are favourable or negative towards BIDs. The Business Plan will then be developed which is driven by feedback from the businesses. The third stage is the ballot process. Business engagement approach – various points of engagement. The more responses received the better. The best approach is HS visiting businesses with his ipad. Chair of the Pride in Place at Blacon will be invited to a meeting.</p> <p>In terms of timeline – the business consultation is being designed. JH will look at finance modelling for BID 3 in terms of business rates data and investment. JH will present on the findings of the feasibility for BID 3.</p> <p>MF – business rates has increased – need to be aware of this. JH will look at where the RV was in the 2023 rates listing and also in the 2026 listing. This will be taken in to consideration with the BID levy. Will look at whether the banding system is retained, or move over to a % levy system. There are a number of assets that would be lost if the BID did not continue – ie CCTV system. Will emphasise what would be lost without a BID.</p> <p>JH went through the development timeline. Groundwork will work through the legal checks and approval between April-June 2027. The ballot will be from May – July 27. If successful BID 3 will start on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2027.</p> <p>JH went through the ballot stage. Each business receives a ballot paper for each business they occupy. Landlord is responsible for vacant properties. Typical turnout is around 45%. For the ballot to be successful two criteria need to be met – majority in favour of those that turn out, and majority of RV of votes cast.</p> <p>JM – are there any exemptions? JH – not on this BID site.</p> <p>JM – if it is a no vote – how does the BID close down? JH - Could pay whatever is left back to businesses or could allocate budgets for legacy projects.</p> <p>There were no further questions.</p>	
<p><b>Finances</b></p>	<p>There is a forecasted income (funds available to spend) of just over £195k for the year, with actual income so far of just over £140k. The actual income amount is made up of £97k carried forward from last year, plus £43k from the second payment for the Apr 25–Mar 26 period (which is 40% of the total levy).</p>	

	<p>The forecast includes the actual amount and also assumes the BID will receive the first payment for the Apr 26–Mar 27 period in April, estimated at at least £55k (50% of the total levy).</p> <p>The end-of-year balance is likely to be higher than £61k, as the BID is expecting a third payment for Apr 25–Mar 26 of at least £2k, which hasn't yet been included in the income. The End of Year balance is the forecast income minus the committed expenditure.</p> <p>West Chester's collection rate was 91.2% in November, and we are expecting the final year-end position shortly. Note - the invoice period and BID years are separate - for invoice years CWAC pay the BID 50% of the levy in April, and 40% in September.</p> <p>Expenditure is detailed on the sheet with the annual budget split by each sub theme, the amount that has been committed as expenditure and the spend to date. There is an annual budget of just under £148k, committed expenditure – which is the money we know we are going to spend is £134k, the actual spend of which to date is £61k, with budget remaining that is not committed of just over £13.5k. There is a forecasted spend due to come of around £5,700 for the 12 monthly monitoring of the CCTV cameras by Alpha Omega which is not on the committed expenditure yet as they have moved the billing period from Sept to April, but this will cover the BID all the way through until March 27. Keeping in mind the proposals for litter picking and hanging baskets there is around £7.5k of budget not committed – the majority of which is under Theme 2 Greener &amp; Cleaner which has budget not spent.</p> <p>JM – Asked the question on solar business parks and what this entailed? JH – this was the net zero/carbon studies/workshops and audits that the BID funded for businesses. JM – no report has been issued as to what has been done so far.</p> <p>MF – would like to see on the finance sheet what the actual BID levy income is separately to the BID levy income and the surplus combined. This would give a more effective projection of what the BID is spending vs actual income not counting any surplus.</p> <p>MF would like to have a conversation of what we are spending the expenditure on going forward as costs are going up and the surplus can't last forever. Need to look at including higher level contingencies for certain items of expenditure such as mobile security. MM – do we go out to tender? JH – yes we regularly tendered. Last time it went out to tender was last year.</p> <p>The aim is to be able to let businesses know what the return on their investment is.</p>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> GK to send report to the board on the Net Zero/carbon work.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> AG to include cell on the balance sheet which indicates what the actual BID levy income is (separate from bank balance containing the surplus).</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Agenda item to look at expenditure spend at next board meeting (July).</p>
<p><b>Project Updates</b></p>	<p><b><u>Security &amp; Crime:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HS had arranged additional security patrols over easter.</li> <li>• There have been some issues on Jupiter Drive.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Greener &amp; Cleaner:</u></b></p>	

- Will look at hanging basket installations and litter picking on the estate
- Landscaping takes place on the estate from March to November
- There are some ultra rapid charging units on Bumpers Lane on Stoker's Land (Instavolt)

**Business Support:**

- HS has sent out various information over to businesses via email
- A speaker is attending the AGM on the subject of Devolution
- A full schedule of training courses are booked in for the next 6 months – 39 delegates have been trained so far this year with a cost saving for businesses of £9,410.

**Landscaping  
Quotes – Litter  
Picking and  
Hanging Baskets**

HS presented the cost obtained for Litter Picking on the Estate and for Hanging Baskets on the estate both by Northwich Town Council. The cheapest cost for litter picking was £338.75 per visit for an operative to pick litter on the estate for a full 6 hours – there was an additional higher cost provided by the current landscape maintenance company.

LF – the cost seems expensive and it seems doubtful that one person would have an impact in just one day. CL – the majority of the cost is most likely on waste removal.

MM – could we ask businesses to pick litter or are there any community groups that can do it? Could board members send out employees to litter pick?

MF - Plan Ahead could provide litter pickers and hi-vis jackets. AS can also assist. Hi – vis jackets would have the BID logo. MF will provide a date and businesses can all follow this.

RG - Could make it a clean up week – could see more people attend over several days – Tues, Weds, Thurs. AS will get in touch with StreetCare to see if the litter can be removed. SL asked the question about syringes and the protocol surrounding this and volunteers. MF – there needs to be a talk before people head out there. The BID needs to look at the liabilities and protocol. MF will compile a list for litter picking. AG can look at the liabilities for this regarding syringes. HS will speak with the Winsford group to see if they have any intel regarding liabilities and volunteers.

The quotes for the hanging baskets were discussed – watering costs are high on the quote obtained. The initial cost is also higher due to the installation of brackets, it would be cheaper in following years. JM – it will need to be established if the lamp posts can hold the brackets as there were some issues with the CCTV cameras being installed. HS will speak with CWAC to establish who waters the flowers in Chester City Centre and to obtain a quote for them to water hanging baskets in the BID area. HS will also speak with CWAC regarding installation of hanging baskets on the lamp posts.

MM - Could the BID look at businesses to sponsor flowers or the hanging baskets to cover the costs of planting? Or other local companies such as B&Q or

**Action:** MF to provide dates for litter picking week in May

**Action:** AS to get in touch with StreetCare to see if the litter can be removed

**Action:** SL to speak with AG regarding liabilities for litter picking

**Action:** HS to speak to Winsford litter pickers regarding liabilities and volunteers

**Action:** HS to speak to CWAC regarding a quote for watering hanging baskets from the company who waters the flowers in Chester City Centre.

**Action:** HS to speak to CWAC to establish if hanging baskets can be installed on the lamp post columns.

	<p>community groups? LF – could businesses water the hanging baskets? SL – no, as they would be too high up and needs to be done on a regular basis by a watering contractor.</p> <p>Once HS gets a further quote on hanging basket watering the item will be discussed again at the next board meeting.</p> <p>RG asked whether 3 quotes are normally obtained. SL – only 2 companies provided a quote for litter picking as many companies did not even respond. 3 quotes is the minimum normally obtained.</p> <p>The board will look at how successful a community litter pick is by employees before going back to Northwich Town Council regarding funded litter picking. The quote for litter picking was not approved. The quote for Hanging baskets was not approved.</p>	
<p><b>AOB</b></p>	<p>AGM is programmed for the 22<sup>nd</sup> April at the Football Club. AS will be doing a talk on Pride in Place and a background of Blacon. Hayley Owen from CWAC will talk about Devolution.</p> <p>HS asked Rebecca if she would like to join the board.</p> <p>Rebecca would be happy to join the board. Rebecca was accepted onto the board by a unanimous vote.</p> <p>RG felt that Sealand Industrial Estate is very different to Gadbrook Park and Winsford Industrial Estate and it is not a direct comparison between the 3 sites.</p> <p>There was no other AOB.</p> <p>MF thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.</p> <p><b>Date of next meeting: Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July 12pm. Obsidian Offices.</b></p>	