



## Minutes

**Meeting:** West Chester Commercial BID AGM  
**Date:** Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2026  
**Time:** 12:30pm – 2:00pm  
**Location:** Chester Football Club

- Matthew Flack – Plan Ahead (MF) (Chair)
- Jordi Morell - Obsidian Group (JM)
- Mary Murphy – Proximo Group (MM)
- Chris Leicester – Avenue Services (CL)
- Jenny Williams – Deva Designs (JW)
- Lexa Farthing – Library Shared Services (LF)
- Elaine Thomas – Living Floors (ET)
- Mark Diaper – Legat Owen (MD)
- Andrew Maddock – Deva Designs (AM)
- Clare Wellstead – Obsidian Group (CW)
- Katie Cocks – Daktela UK (KC)
- Lauren Jones – Daktela UK (LJ)
- Martyn Seddon – Plan Ahead (MS)
- Claire Lewis – Library Shared Services (CLe)
- Fiona Mooney – Library Shared Services (FM)
- Jenny Murphy – Calder Lead (JMu)
- Hannah Brearley – RAS Ltd (HB)
- Alex Hurst – RAS Ltd (AH)
- Katie Nicholas – Inn Trade Associates (KN)
- Gemma Cain – Inn Trade Associates (GC)
- Andy Clynych – Victrix IT (AC)
- Owain Clegg – Essell (OC)
- Gill Williams – CWAC (GW)
- Cllr Alan Smith – CWAC (AS)
- Hayley Owen – CWAC (HO)
- Jane Hough – Groundwork CLM (JH)
- Hugh Shields – Groundwork CLM (HS)
- Stephanie Leese – Groundwork CLM (SL)

Agenda Item	Minutes	Actions
<b>Welcome</b>	<p>HS welcomed all those present to the meeting and thanked everyone for coming.</p> <p>MF thanked everyone for attending the meeting and highlighted the support the BID provides to businesses, the training programme for employees and the rollout of defibrillators across the estate. Security also remains a key priority with the CCTV investments across the estate.</p>	
<b>Cheshire &amp; Warrington Combined Authority - Devolution</b>	<p>HO introduced herself and what the combined authority means and includes. The combined mayoral authority sits above the local authority. HO asked for feedback – Nick Walkley is the Chief Executive of the Combined Authority. The combined authority will look at public transport – will have the opportunity to take control of funding. The Combined Authority will also look at funding for skills. HO provided a timeline of the journey to date of the Combined Authority. HO introduced the areas of competence the combined authority would be looking at. HO explained what funding available is for the Combined Authority. There is £1.5mil of capacity funding to set up teams and put policies in place over the next 3 years. There is a 30 year mayoral investment funding of £650mil. Manchester and Wales are already devolved authorities. HO detailed the next steps and welcomed feedback.</p>	

	<p>JM asked if the £650mil is new money or if it will be taken from the local authority. HO – local authority has to bid for money from central government. Devolution is taking the pots of money that already exist and then giving to combined authorities to manage. Money is tending to go to areas that are combined authorities. The area has elected to combine. CWAC will not have a reduction in budget. The leverage of a combined authority is the key goal as it will make a huge difference to Cheshire &amp; Warrington.</p> <p>Does the combined authority anticipate cost saving from procurement? HO – can already do this – it will be about being more efficient at a sub-regional level. Local authority will continue delivering what they still deliver.</p>	
<p><b>Presentation of Annual Report and Accounts</b></p>	<p>HS introduced the BID team to those present.</p> <p>HS introduced the executive board and those present introduced themselves.</p> <p>HS and SL presented on what the BID has achieved over the past BID year.</p> <p>SL discussed Theme One – Safe and Secure. The BID manages a 54 CCTV camera and 3 ANPR camera system across the BID area. The BID also funds SelectaDNA Property Marking kits, Rapid Text Service and Mobile Security Patrols. HS has also worked in partnership with Cheshire Police throughout the year.</p> <p>HS discussed Theme Two – Sustainable and Greener Environment. Programme of planned maintenance across the BID area as well as reporting of faults and opportunities for improvement. BID conducts monthly estate audits.</p> <p>Theme Three – Co-ordinated, Supported and Connected. The BID provides a dedicated Business Support service to businesses as well as a full portfolio of training courses. BID manages the West Chester Commercial BID website and sends out a range of communications.</p> <p>SL went through the finances for the BID’s financial year including the income and expenditure profiles.</p> <p>SL asked if there were any questions on the presentation or accounts. The question was asked if there could be a dashboard where businesses could find services from other BID businesses easily. SL – this is something the BID will look at as it has been discussed before.</p>	
<p><b>Election of Executive Board</b></p>	<p>SL instructed those present to cast a vote in the ballot to approve or reject the proposed Executive Board. The votes were counted and there were 19 ballots in approval, and 0 rejecting. The Executive Board was elected by a unanimous yes.</p> <p>The question was asked whether any businesses could apply to be an Executive Board members – yes anyone can apply if they are a BID levy payer.</p>	
<p><b>Speaker: Pride in Place funding</b></p>	<p>AS introduced himself and the Pride in Place funding available. Has been a lot of deprivation in Blacon. Sealand Industrial Estate is hugely important to Blacon. Pride in Place continues from Blacon extending to Sealand Industrial Estate – AS highlighted the links being so important. Sam Dixon is the Pride in Place MP for</p>	

	<p>the Blacon area. AS spoke about the history of Blacon and the demographic. Social Enterprises and Charities is an initiative. There will be £20million over 10 years. There will be an independent chair – hopefully in place in the next month or so – this will be voluntary. The role will be a community champion with links with the Blacon community. JH there needs to be a support mechanism in place to support the Chair and the Governing body. JH – would like to see a representative of the business community on the Pride in Place board. JH – are applications for a Chair still open? AS – yes – the advert will be going out online and via post. The board will need to be in place by July. The survey has gone out and there was over 1000 replies. MF – will the survey results be published so we can see what priorities are? AS – there needs to be a strong link with the BID and the board.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> JH to invite Sam Dixon to a future board meeting/meeting.</p>
<p><b>AOB</b></p>	<p>Some businesses have a need for certain skills and help doing things – would like to see general business advisors and help available. There will be businesses on the estate who have different skills and trades that can help businesses on the estate. Would like to see Business Advisors/consultants on how to run a business.</p> <p>Businesses would like to see a portal where businesses can easily look for services or provide services on the estate. Businesses often think “I have this problem, who local can solve it”. There is a high coverage of expertise on the estate. MF – the BID could look to invest in this. AC – could happily look at costs for providing this and building a portal for businesses to use.</p> <p>HS thanked all for attending. HS asked businesses to encourage other BID members to get involved with the BID.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Look at business help consultancy through the BID</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Look at portal for businesses or an app where businesses can easily look for services or provide services</p>