

Newport Unlimited

Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 8 June 2005

Present: Grant Watson (Chairman)
David Bowler, Councillor Ken Critchley, Chris Freegard, Professor James Lusty, Bob Macey, Graham Moore, Karen Thomas and Andrew Wilkinson.

Apologies: Councillor Bob Bright, Nigel Campbell, Gerry Keighley, Nic Neal, and Don Wilkes

1. Councillor Ken Critchley

Board members congratulated Councillor Critchley on his election as Mayor of the City for the current year.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 13 May 2005 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

MIPM Property Conference

A further letter had been received from a local elected member about attendance at the MIPIM Property Conference. The Chairman agreed to discuss a response with the Chief Executive. Chris Freegard stated that the elected member was writing as an individual and not on behalf of the Council.

The Chair said that there were potentially significant outcomes from attending the MPIM Conference and the MAPIC event. It was reaffirmed that the Board had confirmed that expenditure to attend the MAPIC Conference had been approved.

Newport West Master Plan

A meeting had been held with the property adviser and further work had been commissioned. A further report would be brought to the Board in due course.

Business Plan

The Business Plan would be considered by the City Council's Cabinet in June. As much information as possible would be made public.

3. **Chief Executive's Report**

Retail Scheme

Meetings had been held between UBS and Modus and the opportunities to fit the schemes together were being discussed. Heads of Terms were being discussed with Modus and would be reported to the City Council's Cabinet shortly.

Submission of the planning application by Modus for the retail scheme was targeted for December 2005/ January 2006.

Design proposals had received a helpful response from the Design Commission for Wales. Progress was being made on land acquisition but the back-up position of a CPO would be needed.

Pirelli Redevelopment

Andrew Wilkinson declared an interest in this item

The successful contractor for the construction of the employment units would be appointed shortly. The joint venture between the WDA and Newport and Gwent Chamber of Commerce Enterprise and Industry is progressing. The timescale for start on site is on programme and expected in September 2005.

Cambrian Centre

The Board received an update on the latest position regarding the redevelopment plans for the Cambrian Centre. Full appraisal and funding arrangements would need to be considered by the Board in July.

Old Town Dock

Tenders have been received for the first phase of housing alongside Jack's Pill. Evaluation by the working group had reduced the number of bids to four. The outcome of the process and recommendations would be reported to the Board and WDA.

Progress on the first phase of reclamation of the site is nearing completion and a substantial part of the Old Town Dock itself has been exposed and will form the line of a water feature within the development as envisaged in the master plan.

Filming of Newport

An approach had been made for Newport to feature as part of a filmed documentary programme on discovering Britain and its people. The film is likely to be distributed through the TV world and advance discussions are taking place with the BBC. There was discussion about what outcome this type of programme might produce, but it was concluded that discussions needed to be held with the film makers to try to encourage a positive tone to the programme.

Key Targets

Progress on key targets was noted. An explanation was provided where there had been any change in circumstances. Members asked if there could be a way of identifying such changes within the report.

Arising from the report:

University: A business plan for the merger with UWIC was under preparation and a decision was expected by the end of the year.

Hospital District: It was concluded that issues relating to the importance of reserving the proposed hospital site ought to be raised again with the Assembly Government and the new Minister in view of the enormous regeneration and development implications for the City, and the considerable benefit to the public and to hospital management and staffing, of a City Centre location.

4. **Usk Footbridge Lighting Scheme**

Consideration of this issue was deferred to the next meeting when the consultants proposals would be available .

5. **Flood Prevention Strategy**

Newport Unlimited and the City Council had been in negotiations with the Environment Agency Wales (EAW) for two years on the principle of the flood protection strategy for the River. The strategy has enormous implications for the regeneration of Newport.

The EAW agreed to withdraw all its objections to developments on all the sites in central Newport at the UDP Inquiry except the Pirelli site, conditional upon the implementation of an acceptable strategy for protecting the East Bank of the River Usk.

It was intended that the Council should publish a policy document, for adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance in due course. The document would aim to guide developers as to what information should be included in the assessment and the organisations that should be involved in the process.

Work had also been taking place with regard to development sites on the East bank of the River, and here the Council and Newport Unlimited have taken the lead in coordinating the provision of a flood alleviation scheme.

Members were shown a map giving details of the land that has to be raised. It was encouraging to see the developers involvement and also there was an allocation within the Business Plan to help progress this matter.

Agreed

To note the current position and to note that the City Council is producing Supplementary Planning Guidance on flood risk issues for consideration by the Council's Cabinet in June 2005.

6. Next meeting

13 July 2005, at 9:30 am.