



## Newport Unlimited

### Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 8 March 2006

**Present:** Grant Watson (Chairman)  
Councillor Bob Bright, Nigel Campbell, Councillor Ken Critchley, Chris Freegard, Gerry Keighley, Professor James Lusty, Karen Thomas  
  
Councillor Mrs E Heath (Observer), Piers Bisson (Observer), Chris Munday (Observer)

**Apologies:** David Bowler, Bob Macey and Don Wilkes

**Also in**

**Attendance:** John Burrows, Leigh Donovan, Kevin Dooley, Philip Jardine, Richard Jefferies, Gareth Prosser and David Ward

**Declarations:** The Chairman declared an interest in any items relating to developments at Crindau, Nigel Campbell declared an interest in the items relating to George Street and the hospital district and Gerry Keighley and Professor James Lusty declared an interest in any items relating to the University

#### 1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2006 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

##### Minute 2 – West Newport

The minute was amended to read:

The Board was informed that the need to attract external funding for development relating to the Hynix Building had been recognised. An approach had been made by a major developer interested in the possibility of a major investment in West Newport

##### Matters Arising

##### Chief Executive

It was agreed that following the appointment of Mr John Burrows as Chief Executive, Mr Burrows be appointed as a Director and Board Member.

### Legal Position of the Company following the WDA/WAG Merger

Morgan Cole had amended Articles and Memorandum of Association to take account of the advice previously given, and noted by the Board, on the implications of the merger. The amended documents would be circulated to all Board members for comment and would need endorsement by the founding members.

### Usk Footbridge

Chris Freegard reported discussions were continuing with the Lord Lieutenant regarding the bridge opening arrangements.

### Flood Prevention Works and Capital receipts

Officers were asked to investigate, and report back on, ways in which the flood prevention works necessary on the east bank of the river could be facilitated, even if this involved sites in private ownership.

## **2. Chief Executive's Progress Report**

The Chief Executive updated the Board on the issues and meetings that had arisen since the last Board meeting.

### Key Tasks and Targets

The Key Targets Schedule and progress on projects was noted. An explanation was provided when there had been any change in circumstances.

In summary, there was little change from last month. The legal timetable for the Modus Development Agreement and the UBS Ramp Site Agreement meant that agreements were to be signed at the end of March. Work was being undertaken actively by the lawyers on all three sides. Consideration of the planning application by Modus was deferred from February to May to undertake further Environmental Assessment studies.

The Board was reassured that both the UBS development and the Modus developments are still being pursued actively by their respective developers.

## **IT WAS AGREED**

### Hospital district

To confirm the need for comprehensive regeneration of the Whiteheads/Mon. Bank sidings area to facilitate hospital use, housing and mixed use, and to support site acquisitions in the area on the basis of the need for comprehensive regeneration.

### **3. Housing Completions Estimates**

The Board recognised that a significant part of the regeneration programme for Central and East Newport is driven by housing developments.

In particular, the redevelopment of some of the most prominent City Centre sites is based on there being a market for City Centre apartments and furthermore the projected land sale receipts for the Company is based on some of these sites being developed for that purpose.

In previous meetings there had been some discussion about the likely strength of the apartment market in Newport and a request for more information on the totality of the housing proposals for Newport as a context for Board consideration of the apartment issue and of the Company's proposals for Old Town Dock which is the subject of a separate report on this agenda.

The Board considered details of proposed housing developments in Newport grouped according to the City Centre Masterplan sub areas and distinguishing between those sites outside of the URC areas and those within. Members were reminded that the UDP Inspector had endorsed the growth strategy for Newport.

#### **IT WAS AGREED**

To note the forecast housing completion estimates of 8,833 units in Newport up to 2012 ( 2,731 units within the City Centre and Edge of Centre sites; a further 2,136 units in other Central Newport sites; 2,612 units in East and West Newport, and 1,354 units outside the URC areas) and to keep the programme under review throughout the various phases to ensure the programme is demand based.

### **4. Old Town Dock**

The Board was informed that there had been an analysis of the Newport residential market, out of which a disposal strategy for Old Town Dock has been derived. The strategy is set within the context of the UDP Growth Strategy and assesses supply and demand for both traditional housing and 'lifestyle' apartments. The Board was provided with details of the sites coming forward for development, the rate of take up that could be expected at Old Town Dock and the residual values that can be expected at Old Town Dock in five potential scenarios.

#### **IT WAS AGREED**

- a) To endorse the proposal that sites are released to the market every nine months (subject to ongoing monitoring and review);
- b) To establish planning obligation principles with the City Council prior to marketing further phases of Old Town Dock; and

- c) To undertake a branding exercise to assist in marketing the entire Old Town Dock area and individual developers is required to adopt the marketing strategy.
- d) To ask officials to further discuss proposals received from a private developer in relation to a Joint Venture to develop Jack's Pill Phase 2.

## **5. University of Wales, Newport City Centre Campus**

*Professor James Lusty provided some information to the Board but declared an interest and withdrew from the meeting prior to any discussion by the Board and the decision. Mr Gerry Keighley declared an interest and withdrew from the meeting prior to any discussion by the Board and the decision.*

It has been the intention of the University to relocate some of its facilities to the City Centre for a significant period. This move has a synergy with the general plans of Newport Unlimited and the City Council for the redevelopment of the City Centre sites. The Board was informed that the first phase of the University's plans cannot be achieved without some financial assistance from both the City Council and Newport Unlimited.

The Board carefully considered the proposals and master plan approach of the University and discussed the financial considerations and implications. The City Council's Cabinet had agreed, in principle, to support the project to relocate part of the University's facilities to the City Centre by way of a grant of up to a maximum amount agreed specifically by Cabinet. The City Council's agreement in principle was subject to a participation agreement, legal agreement and was dependent upon Newport Unlimited also agreeing to support this project.

### **IT WAS AGREED**

To agree, in principle, to support the University of Wales, Newport's project to build a city centre campus in Newport and to confirm that a continued provisional sum of up to £5 million be included in the Business Plan for Newport Unlimited to support the city centre campus project. This in principle support is subject to: equivalent support from the City Council to the project; a legal commitment by the University to complete all four phases of the city centre campus; and the project satisfying the appropriate public sector funding and value for money requirements.

## **6. Date for the Next Meeting**

The next meeting would be held on 12 April 2006 at 9.30 am.