



Newport Unlimited

Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 12 April 2006

- Present:** Grant Watson (Chairman)
John Burrows, Nigel Campbell, Chris Freegard, Gerry Keighley, Ed Bampton (Alternate Director for Karen Thomas) and Piers Bisson (Observer).
- Apologies:** David Bowler, Councillor Bob Bright, Councillor Ken Critchley, Professor James Lusty, Bob Macey, Karen Thomas and Don Wilkes

Also in

- Attendance:** Leigh Donovan, Kevin Dooley, Richard Jefferies, Gareth Prosser, Steven Slocombe, Paul Tarling, and Philip Jardine (Company Secretary).

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2006 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman, subject to recording Philip Jardine's declaration of interest in relation to the WISP Project.

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.

Issues arising:

The City Council's MD stated that the Development Agreement between the City Council and Modus would be signed in the coming week.

The CPO Inquiry was scheduled for August 2006 and a start on site in July 2007. The UBS contract to demolish the car park was on site.

The Usk footbridge was to be raised into position on Monday, 1 May through to Friday, 5 May 2006.

As to the Uskway, Kingsway and Queensway road boulevarding contract, discussions were continuing with the Welsh Assembly Government about funding. A commitment in writing was needed before the contract was let.

It was confirmed the Rodney Parade site currently remains in public ownership.

The former Whiteheads Steelworks site opposite the Royal Gwent Hospital was now in public ownership. Further discussions with adjacent landowners were required, along with a master plan for the whole area including the Mon. Bank sidings.

Flood Alleviation

A map giving a visual representation of the current position on each site was circulated. The Managing Director of the City Council would further discuss with colleagues Section 106 and bond issues.

3. Project Coordination Group

The most recent minutes of the Coordination Group were circulated for information.

4. Business Plan 2006

The Chief Executive presented the Draft Business Plan 2006 which contained the Development Programme for the next 3 years and the latest funding position for all the principal projects.

It was agreed

To submit the Draft Business Plan 2006 to the Founding Members for their approval, subject to the following:

- References to the Arts Centre to read 'Riverfront Theatre and Arts Centre'
- Addition of the former Art College to the key priorities in the plan
- Land acquisition costs incurred by the private sector to be incorporated into the private sector investment figures for projects in Table 1
- Gateway projects to be considered a priority and be programmed for completion prior to the Ryder Cup
- Members discussed the allocation of funds to a specific scheme. Members were aware of the need for flexibility and whilst it was agreed that the allocation may remain in the plan, it was confirmed it would only be used in certain circumstances
- Checking the phasing of the Council's 'in principle' support to the University project
- The Chairman and the Chief Executive would consider benchmarking comparative information with other URC's.

5. Land Acquisition

Board members were advised it has now become critical to acquire additional land on the Usk Riverfront to ensure that the optimal amount of land can be utilised for the education campus and in the interests of the strategic development of the City Centre in accordance with the City Centre Master plan.

It was agreed

- a) To approve the principle of using Compulsory Purchase Order legislation, if required, to acquire the site specified in the report at Usk Way, Newport;
- b) To ask officers of Newport City Council, Welsh Assembly Government and Newport Unlimited proceed with the transaction to acquire the site specified in the report at Usk Way, Newport.

6. Date for the Next Meeting

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