

## Newport Unlimited

### Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 12 July 2006

**Present:** Grant Watson (in the Chair): David Bowler, Councillor Bob Bright, John Burrows, Chris Freegard, Councillor Erryl Heath, Grenville Jackson, Gerry Keighley, Professor James Lusty, Karen Thomas,

**Apologies:** Piers Bisson, Nigel Campbell and Don Wilkes

**Also in**

**Attendance:** David Ward, Steven Slocombe, Paul Tarling, Leigh Donovan and Richard Jefferies.

#### 1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2006 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

#### Exhibition about the East Bank Developments

It was confirmed that the intention of the proposed exhibition on the east bank of the river was to provide information on the range of developments on the east bank and not any specific development. It needs to cover the area from Newport Bridge to George Street.

#### Marketing Activities

It was considered important that a targeted approach was taken to marketing activity. The signage planned by the City Council was welcomed and the Working Group on a Gateway Strategy would now draw up proposals based on the priorities identified by the Board at its last meeting. It was considered that discussions should be held with Modus and other developers to work with Newport Unlimited on the strategy.

Opportunities should be taken to use the Ryder Cup as part of the City's marketing exercise as soon as the tournament in Ireland was over.

The Board considered it would need regular updates on branding and marketing.

#### **IT WAS AGREED**

That the Board would receive a presentation on branding and marketing opportunities.

## **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.

### 2.1 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.

Overall progress was good with visible signs of activity as a result of the demolition of the Kingsway car park and the construction of the footbridge. The road works at Kingsway were also under way and the new office block at George Street was progressing.

### 2.2 Royal Gwent Hospital and the Regional Health Plan

Members of the Board remain concerned about the current proposal from the Gwent Healthcare trust to locate a new regional specialist and critical care unit for Gwent on a greenfield site east of Cwmbran. A response had been sent in this respect. It was recognised that it would now be important to stress that healthcare for residents throughout the Gwent region would benefit from a Newport location.

Further consultation would be carried out and it was considered that Newport Unlimited's response should:

- Reiterate that Newport Unlimited recognises that the medical reasons for the restructure of services were based on sound arguments.
- Continue to press the case for serious consideration of locating regional and local hospital services in Newport based in particular in relation to the environmental and sustainability issues.
- Enhance the argument in relation to sustainability by drawing out the benefits of a Newport location to all residents of the Gwent area seeking health care and critical care.
- Draw out the local infrastructure issues around the Cwmbran and Newport sites

It was agreed that the issue would also be discussed at a political level.

### 2.3 Former Art College

Members of the Board remain concerned about the deterioration in the building. The current owners did seem to have the wherewithal to progress their current plans but it was agreed that a strategy should be adopted to ensure progress.

The way forward would be to issue a letter asking for details of the programme and a commitment to progress. If progress was not achieved, a listed building notice would be issued and, if no further progress all necessary default action would be put into place.

#### 2.4 Amendments to schemes

A proposal on public realm work was presented. It involved a reduction in the proposed water feature, to be replaced by steel 'pillows'. **It was agreed** that this would be considered only as one option and that there should be political involvement at an early stage where schemes, concepts or costing are planned to change significantly.

#### 2.5 Usk Place Public Realm Works

The board asked for a discussion on options for public realm works in this area.

#### 2.6 Advance Infrastructure Works

The Leader of the City Council stated he had stressed that an approach for funding of advanced infrastructure work at a specific site would only be considered should a legal agreement be drawn up in relation to a first call on receipts and an agreement in relation to the Council's costs of interest.

It was confirmed that other means of funding were being examined.

#### 2.7 Usk Way Site and University Campus

It was important that Newport Unlimited made an urgent submission to the Assembly Government about the proposed contribution by Newport Unlimited to the University Scheme.

Further discussions were required on proposals relating to student accommodation.

It was noted that terms have been agreed, subject to contract, for the ATS part of the Usk Way site.

#### 2.8 George Street

It was considered that some positive publicity about the success at George Street should be drawn up.

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

The next meeting would be held on 16 August 2006 at 9.30 am.