

Newport Unlimited

Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 15 November 2006

Present: Grant Watson (in the Chair), Piers Bisson, David Bowler, John Burrows, Councillor Erryl Heath, Grenville Jackson, Gerry Keighley and Karen Thomas

Apologies: Councillor Bob Bright, Nigel Campbell, Chris Freegard, Professor James Lusty and Don Wilkes

Also in

Attendance: David Ward, Andrew Dakin, Leigh Donovan, Kevin Dooley, Phil Jardine, Steven Slocombe, Paul Tarling and Richard Jefferies

1. Minutes

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 13 September 2006 were confirmed as a true record, subject to the addition of Grenville Jackson to the list of attendees and the deletion of Nigel Campbell, who was present, from the list of apologies. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

1.1 Matters Arising:

Uskway / Kingsway

Councillor Mrs Erryl Heath was pleased to report that the City Council had worked on a solution for the residents of Emlyn Street who had been adversely affected by the current city centre works. She was pleased to report that the Council had agreed a total street scheme which would seek to create a similar street scene for residents as in its original form.

2. Chief Executive's Progress Report

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

Progress on key projects and target dates for the regeneration programme were reported. Members were pleased to note the positive progress on the vast majority of projects.

The Main issues arising were:

Ryder Cup

The Board requested a presentation on progress on the Ryder Cup arrangements.

Retail Schemes

It was understood the Inspector's report was being considered by the Welsh Assembly Government. The outcome was expected soon.

Royal Gwent Hospital

It was reported that the City Council and Newport Unlimited would respond to the Gwent Healthcare Trust's Consultation document on Clinical Futures which proposes breaking up the 800 bed Royal Gwent Hospital in Newport and creating a 350 bed Local General Hospital in Newport and a 500 bed regional specialist and critical care unit out of Newport in a rural location at Llanfrechfa near Cwmbran. It was reported that the City Council would respond as follows:

- That the preferred option for the location of the Local General Hospital for Newport was the Whiteheads site opposite the current Royal Gwent Hospital site;
- That the regional Specialist and Critical Care Unit should be located in Newport next to the Local General Hospital in view of the healthcare, environmental, transport and sustainability advantages of this site over that of the proposed rural location .

It was considered important that Newport City Council objects formally to the proposal as a statutory consultee. It is important that Newport Unlimited also objects to the Trust's proposal in view of its serious regeneration implications for the City.

Former Art College

The Statutory processes had begun to ensure work would be done either by the owners, or by default by the local authority at the owners cost, to ensure the building was made wind and weather tight. The Board asked for timescales of this process to be reported.

It was important to get a legal view on the position as to any grant application received from the developers in the light of the statutory process being in place.

West Newport

The Chief Executive expressed concern regarding the implications for the future development of a new West Newport Office Business Park arising from proposals to expand manufacturing development.

Karen Thomas updated members on the current position with the Hynix building. It was important for joint meetings of the City Council, the Assembly Government and Newport Unlimited to work on future proposals.

University

Work was still required to move this project forward and discussions needed to be held involving the University, Newport Unlimited, the Assembly Government and the City Council.

Board Membership

The term of office of four private sector representatives was coming to an end. Two Board Members had indicated they would not be seeking reappointment – Mr Nigel Campbell and Mr Don Wilkes.

IT WAS AGREED that a sub group comprising the Chair, the Chief Executive and a representative of each of the Founder Members should meet to finalise arrangements for the Board places.

3. Project Coordination Group

Recent minutes were circulated for information.

4. East Newport Development by St Modwen

The Board received a presentation from St Modwen regarding their proposals for development of the Llanwern site.

Members were informed of progress and were provided with details of the 600 acre brownfield site which would accommodate 4000 homes, 1.5 million sq ft of employment provision, open space and other facilities.

The development process was explained and issues were raised around the timing of the east – west link. The public sector would also need to take a view on the potential rail link.

As to planning, it was important to work up an achievable timeframe for a start on site and work back through the process. It was important that SPG was in place as soon as possible. Planning consent was likely to be sought in the spring if progress was maintained and SPG achieved.

5. Dowd's Wharf

The Board received a presentation from potential developers regarding their proposals for development of the Dowd's Wharf site.

Members were informed on progress and were provided with details of the scheme to develop 114 apartments in three landmark blocks together with enhanced public space to include an enhancement of the wharf to allow access by the pleasure boats.

The Board was informed that finance was in place and that an application for planning was likely to be submitted before the end of the year. A start on site could be achieved by the summer of 2007.

6. Mid Year Estimate – Capital Programme

The Board was provided with details of those projects approved by the Board for delivery during the current year, utilising either 'grant' money or recycled receipts.

The Board also received details of the revised end of year outturn now forecast in light of known events and changes in the market. The majority of issues leading to these financial changes had already been reported to Board at previous Board meetings either through specific Board papers or through discussions on the key targets register.

IT WAS AGREED

- To note spend against budget for the mid year point;
- To note forecast end of year spend against the original Business Plan;
- To note the fact that land sale receipts are still to be realised which means that some projects which were initially to be funded through receipts now require alternative sources of funding;
- To note additional requirements that have been identified;
- **TO APPROVE** the continued dialogue with Founder Members to identify available sources of finance to fund the full programme for the rest of this year.

7. Mid Year Estimates - Revenue

The Board was provided with details of actual spend from the revenue budget to the end of September. Expenditure was broadly in line with expectations with spend on some budget lines (known to be weighted towards the end of the year).

The Board was also informed of expected spend to the end of the year for each budget line and a comparison to the original approved budget. Virement of funds between some budget lines was recommended to take account/advantage of known events

It was agreed to note spend against budget for the mid year point and the projected end of year outturn for the Revenue budget and **TO APPROVE** the virement of funds between budget lines to complement forecast end of year spend.

8. Date for the Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on 20 December 2006 at 9:30 am.