



Newport Unlimited

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on 24 April 2008

Present: Mr G Watson (in the Chair); Mr D Bowler, Mr J Burrows, Mr C Freegard, ,
Councillor Mrs E Heath, Mr G Jackson, Mr J Norvill and Ms K Thomas.

Apologies: Mr P Bisson, Councillor R Bright, Mr S Gibson, Mr G. Keighley, Mr M
Noor and Mr D Roberts.

Also in

Attendance: Mr A Dakin, Ms K Evans, Mr P Tarling, Mr S Trythall and Mr R Jefferies

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2008 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Joint PR Work

The Board was informed that progress was being made on the proposals for more joint PR work involving the URC, the Council and the Celtic Manor.

Network Rail

It was confirmed that Network Rail would be making a presentation to the next meeting of the Board.

Accommodation Survey

It was planned that the accommodation survey would be presented to the next meeting of the Board.

2. Chief Executive's Report

Professor James Lusty

The Board was sad to hear of the recent death of Professor James Lusty, a former member of the Board. The URC had been represented at the recent memorial service held in James's memory

Update on events and meetings

The Chief Executive updated the Board on the issues that had arisen and the meetings or events held since the last Board meeting. Progress on key projects and target dates for the regeneration programme were reported.

The main issues raised were:

Banking Situation

The Board considered the current and potential impact on regeneration projects caused by the current banking situation. Newport is strongly positioned, however, with a very good locational advantage and sustained demand. Nevertheless, the impact was likely to be on the timing of projects or phases within projects.

Medipark and Hospital Site

The Chief Executive continued to express his concern about the potential impact on jobs and regeneration in Newport should the decision to locate the regional hospital facility does not take account of the fact that the Newport site fits better with the Assembly Government's principles of sustainable development

It appears that the Minister's independent transport appraisal had recognised the sustainability issues and there were funding issues to be considered also before a decision would be made.

Members considered that, whatever the outcome of the hospital relocations, the unique and strategic nature of the Whiteheads / Monbank site needs to be borne in mind and it was important that master planning for the area took account of the need for a prestigious employment opportunity should the second hospital be not located in Newport.

Karen Thomas mentioned that recent discussions at the Assembly Government had recognised that the Board had never received a presentation on the various issues relating to this complex site.

IT WAS AGREED that the team from the Assembly Government be invited to make a presentation to the Board and that Network rail be invited to make its presentation at the same Board meeting.

Five Year Review

The Board was informed that draft terms of reference were being considered. The review was to be completed by the end of 2008.

Deputy First Minister

The Board was informed that the Deputy First Minister at the Assembly Government was to visit Newport on the date of the Board's meeting in June. It was agreed to invite the Deputy First Minister to part of the Board's meeting on that date.

Data centre in West Newport

It was agreed to ask the Data Centre Company to make a presentation to the Board at a future meeting.

Former Art College

Board members were updated on the current position and were informed of proposals to try to encourage a development partner. The Board asked for further updates at forthcoming meetings.

Karen Thomas and Councillor Erryl Heath

On behalf of the Board, the Chief Executive offered thanks to Karen Thomas and Councillor Erryl Heath for their work, support and excellent service to the Board. This was to be the final meeting for both.

Board members passed on their best wishes to Karen and Erryl. Karen Thomas and Councillor Erryl Heath responded and each passed on their best wishes to the Board for future success.

3. Project Coordination Group

The minutes of the most recent meeting of the Project Coordination Group were circulated for the information of Board members.

4. Crindau Gateway

The Chairman declared an interest in this item.

The Board received a presentation by GVA Grimley and Midshires on proposals for the Crindau Gateway development.

The Board was informed about the opportunity offered by the site. The Developers consider it to be a true regeneration opportunity in a sustainable urban location. There was policy support for the regeneration of the area and the master plan which had been developed had received approval by the EA and CCW and included flood defence proposals.



The site was described and also how it fitted in with the aspirations of the UDP. It was proposed to create a high quality mixed use urban district in a highly sustainable gateway location.

Design proposals were described. There had been a public consultation exercise where support was significant. A development framework was to be presented to the City Council later in the day.

The developers were concerned that the planning consent process was being delayed owing to the need for SPG to be agreed for the area. The developers considered that the proposals fitted in with the UDP proposals and that there was little to be gained by waiting for the SPG process to be completed. The Head of Planning and Economic Regeneration explained that the SPG was required as there are many complex issues involved in the proposals for the whole of the area, of which this was a significant element. It was important that SPG was in place and this would be achieved by the autumn. Board members asked officials to examine whether there was any way in which the proposals for this development or elements within the development could progress earlier without impacting on planning requirements.

5. Marketing Activity Review

The Marketing Executive reported on recent, current and planned short term marketing activity for Newport Unlimited. The Board noted the current and planned activities.

The Board asked for consideration to be given to how key business leaders could see new developments with a view to them being able to promote Newport via networking and business contacts.

6. Business Plan 2008

The Chief Executive explained that the draft business plan would be circulated to all Board members for comment prior to discussion at the next Board meeting.