

**Meeting: Northwich BID Executive Board Meeting**

**Date: 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025 Time: 8:30am**

**Location: Northwich Town Council**

**Attendees:**

- Ellis Wardle – Salt House NW (EW) (Chair)
- Abda Obeid-Finley – Abda's (AOF) (Vice-Chair)
- Jane Hough • Adam Gerrard • Lynn Riley – Groundwork CLM
- Chris Shaw – Northwich Town Council (CS)
- Kim Smith – Radio Northwich (KS)
- Cllr Rachel Waterman – CWAC / NTC (RW)
- Cllr Sam Naylor – CWAC (SN)
- Lindsey Smith – CWAC Regeneration for Mid-Cheshire (LS)
- Louise Hough – CRS Consultants (LH)

**Apologies:**

- Graham Allen – Sainsbury's (GA)
- Paul Rowland – Superdrug (PR)
- Russ Figgis – Barons Quay (RF)
- Gerry Rooney – Moss Haselhurst (GR)
- Kat Booth – Echo PR (KB)
- Paul Heatley – Cheshire Police (PH)



Agenda Item	Minutes	Actions
<b>Welcome / Introductions</b>	EW opened the meeting and welcomed LR as the new BID manager.	
<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	No declarations of interest raised.	
<b>Approval of minutes and actions from last meeting</b>	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting were approved. Actions undertaken: -</p> <p>AG reported GW has contact with Marketing Cheshire to progress opportunities for Northwich businesses on the new look website at Visit Cheshire.</p> <p>JH: Confirmed that GW currently recruiting additional post to add capacity for Events &amp; extra resource around business engagement. Target to have new hire in place by 1/4/25.</p> <p>AG: PlaceInformatics system for gathering footfall in place and will bring report to next meeting. Following AGM, EW agreed that this will be of interest to local businesses.</p> <p>EW: Finance report to be discussed on this agenda. AG to share finance report and lead discussions.</p> <p>EW: New Police Inspector attended the AGM and will be invited to future meetings.</p>	<p>LR invite successful candidate to next meeting</p> <p>LR to bring detail to next meeting.</p> <p>LR to meet and diarise dates.</p>
<b>Marketing &amp; PR</b>	<p>AG: provided an update of marketing &amp; promotional activity. In response to feedback on the social media content, AG has addressed this with Echo who have been quick to react with changes in approach. Brand metrics continue to increase but a full marketing review will be taken to identify all opportunities to dynamic graphics, on-trend reels &amp; more business profiles.</p> <p>AG: BID continues to work with the Pokémon trail and is funding the design and printing of trail maps.</p> <p>AG: updated the meeting about the Food &amp; Drink Guide that has previously been agreed. Detail is now collated and ready for design stage and will be ready for the next meeting.</p>	<p>LR to bring detail to next meeting</p>

<b>Project Updates - RAG Report (for review and questions)</b>	<p>AG: talked through key points from the RAG report starting with a summary of key successes &amp; opportunities since start of BID3 to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New budget supported 54 members trained since 1-9-24 representing 428 hours of training &amp; net savings of £12.4K to businesses.</li> <li>• 9 new courses booked btw April-July 25.</li> <li>• enquiries from new businesses looking to set up in BID area.</li> <li>• appointment of LR as new BID3 manager</li> </ul> <p>EW: All agreed that the AGM was a successful event and blueprint for more regular meetings with businesses. The format worked well and involving key stakeholders will connect businesses to the wider ambitions for the BID area.</p> <p>EW: Keen to build on this successful networking &amp; move forward with more businesses engaging through task and finish groups.</p> <p>AG: Reported the challenges identified include: A difficult trading environment as Autumn Budget changes start to impact on businesses.</p> <p>AG: To respond to anti-social behaviour and shoplifting in town centre, we are working with NABC (Northwich Against Business Crime) on new ideas for town centre wardens similar to what takes place in the Burnley BID. Budget is identified in the BID3 plans and as soon as firm proposals are in place, this will be reported to the BID Board.</p> <p>JH: Discussed NH's difficulties in finding workable dates for task and finish groups. All agreed it was important to set dates as a priority &amp; offer online option to support greater participation.</p> <p>RW: Highlighted the need for businesses to feel connected to the town &amp; all that is going on.</p>	
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	<p>AG: highlighted the improvements to cleanliness and acknowledged work of NTC.  CS: itemised additional cleansing of carparks bridge/CRS gateway, directional signage and street sweeping in town centre. Identified grot spots around service areas are inspected and cleansed weekly. Painting is planned for the pocket park.</p> <p>AG/CS: confirmed that CWAC enforcement is working to regularise businesses who contravene street trading regulations.  RW: raised concerns about specific signage of a new business.</p> <p>AG/CS: confirmed that bunting will be installed earlier this year. All agreed this would provide a welcome refresh of the town centre.</p> <p>AG: led discussions around Pina Colada Festival (PCF) 2025 emphasizing that this is a flagship event for the BID members and NTC. Planning is already underway and the BID3 budget will be able to deliver a bigger, festival-feel event with a number of new variations to counter some negative feedback following the 2024 event.</p> <p>Changes include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at the top of town building a sandy beach thanks to a donation of sand from TG Builders</li> <li>• at the bottom of town, a new vibe by closing Weaver Way/Crown Street to provide a pedestrianised thoroughfare through the whole town centre and improved stage &amp; hospitality areas.</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>AOF: raised concerns about access to the town centre for businesses at the start of the day.</p> <p>AG: Reports the parade has been scaled up to 100 drummers with dancers providing different costumes to boost impact and will run several times throughout the day.</p>	<p>LR to circulate dates and invitations.</p>
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	<p>Cover over the Market Place in the event of wet weather and additional gazebos available to businesses.</p> <p>AG: previous events have seen some negative &amp; misleading social media about who organises PCF. To highlight that this is a BID led and financed event and to build participation and buy-in from the wider community members, a PCF Ambassador program is to be launched this week across all social and print media. 10K promotional coasters are being distributed across town venues to publicise the event dates.</p> <p>LR: Business engagement activities will start actively promoting this event so traders can plan their contribution to PCF25.</p> <p>AOF: confirms her customers want to be 'the pineapple' and felt this is a good way to proceed.</p> <p>EW: Welcomed the ambitious program of PCF25 and asked what comes next in future years. Discussions around making this a 2-day event took place with concerns raised about the exponential uplift in costs and the impact on staff working on this busiest of days. Previous suggestions about extending the hours of the festival and fringe were considered and will feature in planning for future PCF events.</p> <p>EW: Given significance of this project, PCH25 needs to be a standing agenda item.</p> <p>Risk assessment has identified the need for more medical &amp; H&amp;S provision for this larger scale event, meaning that PCF25 requires £40K of BID3 Year1 budget. This a sizeable commitment from the BID but the ROI to the town economy is significant and this popular event is welcomed by most businesses as a boost to their trading.</p> <p>AG: As BID3's area has increased, plans for improvements are underway. "2025 will see NTC install new planting around Station Road to coincide with the CWAC active travel routes from the station to the town centre. Manchester Road sites are scheduled for 2025.</p>	
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	<p>EW: Must prioritise red elements of the RAG to ensure delivery of the Year1 program. JH: reminded the board of all that is being achieved and the GW team will focus on priority areas, quick-wins and the wider Year1 program.</p>	<p>LR: BID team to prioritise 'red' status delivery</p>
<b>Finances</b>	<p>AG: Led discussions around the finance report and will circulate via email.</p> <p>The budget for the expanded BID3 looks healthier than BID2 where previously the BID ambitions were constrained by available finances.</p> <p>The £429K annual budget figure includes £95K allocation for NOW Northwich. This is because the BID acts as the responsible financial body for Cheshire Dance's grant funding from The Arts Council.</p> <p>The Year 1 Events &amp; Festivals budget of £87K together with the £25K Aesthetics Improvements budget is fully allocated to Northwich events and activities. The £20K allocation against ASB and business crime is under development with the NBCP partners and proposals will come to a future meeting. Concerns around counterfeit notes are being addressed by the Police and the BID is funding a further round of UV scanners to any interested business.</p> <p>AG: Confirmed that the Year1 budget includes provision for a Customer Excellence award. This has proved a popular event in other BID areas and proposals for 2025 will come to the next meeting. JH: Offered to share a short video of the Burnley event whilst recognising the need for this event to celebrate the unique Northwich BID area.</p>	<p>AG: finance report to be circulated.</p> <p>LR: to share Burnley video</p>
<b>Regeneration</b>	<p>JC provided an update from Cheshire West and Chester to include;</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library program is progressing well. An event on 13/3/25 at Weaver Hall (temp library) was well attended and plans around future activities to be based at the library are well received.</li> <li>• Relocation of market – is now at Riba Stage 3 with plans being prepared for a formal application. This is led by the CWAC Markets + the Capital Delivery Team. LS confirmed that the markets team are in touch with traders.</li> <li>• Weaver Square is still in procurement phase for a delivery partner with a decision about the successful partner going to Cabinet in July 2025. The scheme at Weaver Square is likely to be a mixed-use development site – with a combination of social housing / young professional housing, 2 /3 stories high with the aim being to get more people living in a sustainable town centre. It is a conservation area that constrains the demolition of the site that the meeting agreed would be a welcome development for the town as a signal of progress and new investment.</li> <li>• Active travel consultation ended on 13/3/24 around the road closures required to deliver the improved access options from the station into the town centre. LS to update AG/CS/LR so the Station Road upgrade can be planned.</li> </ul> <p>AG: Congratulated LS on being in post for 3 years as the Regeneration Manager and welcomed her positive updates to the BID Board. The BID will be keen to discuss temporary use of the demolished site as future event space at an appropriate time.</p> <p>The new Barons Quay manager has been in post for 2 weeks and was not able to attend this meeting. LS believes every empty unit has some expression of interest.</p> <p>LS: Update on the glazing in Asda following nicolsulphide breakage; films have been placed to monitor/counter further issues so the safety netting can be removed. Completion due May25</p>	
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<b>AOB</b>	None.	
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Next Executive Board Meeting Date: 8:30am, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 (venue to be agreed).