

GLOUCESTER HERITAGE URBAN REGENERATION COMPANY LTD

MINUTES OF BUSINESS FORUM MEETING

Venue: Coots Cafe, British Waterways Museum, Gloucester

Monday 21st July 2008

Present	Business Forum - Board Members	
	Michael Tallett-Williams (MTW)	GHURC Board Member (Chair)
	Peter Foyle (PF)	GHURC Board Member

Present	Panel Members	
	Chris Gabb (CG)	
	David Tate (DT)	
	Geoff Day (GD)	
	Paul Hopkins (PH)	
	Phil Hanman (PHa)	
	Roger Hanbury (RH)	
	Fred Reed (FR)	

GHURC	Chris Oldershaw (CO)	GHURC
	Sam Hoad (SH)	GHURC
	Ian Williams (IW)	GHURC

Refs.	Item Title	ACTION
110/08	Apologies	
	Mark Owen, Martin Wallace, Angela Presdee, Grenville Bird, Neil Draper, Simon Baldwin, Martin Seccombe	
111/08	Introductions	
112/08	Declaration of Interest:	
	None	
113/08	Minutes of the Business Forum Meeting held 27th May 2008	
	Minutes agreed.	
114/08	Matters arising from the minutes of previous meeting – 30th May 2008	
	<p>SH gave a brief update on the appointment of Community Ambassadors, confirming 6 have now been appointed with an outstanding vacancy for the Quays area.</p> <p>PHa gave feedback from the Good Practice trip to Dublin; visited squares that could be related to Kings Square, which had good late afternoon use with free activities giving a vibrant air. There were small squares holding up to 300 people. Impressive stage systems – roll out, retractable stages. There were new smaller projects that fitted well with existing structures. Felt that the area still had a long way to go. Much importance was put on walkways and access routes. A good new iconic bridge. Felt that as the regeneration</p>	

	so far had taken 17 years not a great deal had happened. There are now issues over maintenance of public realm. There is a great emphasis on cleanliness and the use of sponsored bins. Graffiti is removed very quickly. Use of public art to counter graffiti. There was no reference made during the visit to public transport or car parking. There appears to be bad traffic problems in the area. Short tramway system.	
115/08	Feedback from the Board meeting 30th May 2008	
	CO confirmed 2 presentations had been given at the Board meeting, GVA Grimley, Masterplan for the Railway Triangle and the City Employment Plan. Forum discussion regarding the City Employment Plan, CO suggested Ahmed Goga be invited to a forum meeting to give an update in approximately 6 months time.	MTW
116/08	Update forum protocols and membership	
	MTW confirmed that forum membership had been reviewed and persistent non-attendees now removed as members. This will be a 12 month rolling brief. Would like to see more representation from retail and licence business' e.g. restaurant trade.	
117/08	Marketing Update	
	Deferred.	
	Board Agenda Items	
	<p>263/08 Programme Performance Update Report given. GD requested information regarding the sale of Bloor homes. CO to provide at next meeting.</p> <p>MTW asked with the new bridge on St Ann Way, what will happen to the traffic systems? CO felt it likely that Llanthony Road will be closed, this may take the form of a temporary order for 18 months by the County and may happen by mid-next year. Quays may extend to 'table-top' Llanthony Road. RDA will be developing the Victoria Basin area of the Docks. The County are leading on the upgrade from Kimbrose Triangle to Longsmith Street, but we are still awaiting confirmation of funding. All of this will hopefully lead to a reduction of traffic on Commercial Road.</p> <p>PF enquired about timescales? CO advised route 1 involving the Quays (a detailed breakdown on routes will be given at the next meeting), work will be on site by the opening of the Quays.</p> <p>GD asked whether it would be beneficial to see the effect of the Quays before any final decisions are made.</p> <p>PH advised that he is led to believe that there will be a 'square' for parking/turning taxi's just inside Merchants Road. RH asked if the British Waterways/Llanthony Road wall will come down? CO advised this is the plan and to include some trees.</p>	CO

PHa asked if the British Waterways carpark will be removed? CO – not yet, other parking will be made available first with the thought to encourage park & walk.

Information was requested on the lettings of the units in the Quays. CO advised out of approx. 100 units, 25% have signed up, 25% are currently with solicitors and 25% are in detailed negotiations. Franco Muccini has reported that this is better than expected and that there are a good mix of retail. PF and CO advised that most of lettings are normally signed up in the last 3 months prior to opening.

264/08 Public Art Presentation

IW gave a presentation on examples of public art.

CO advised that GINKO have been commissioned to produce a Public Art Strategy and Gerry Wall will manage this on behalf of GHURC.

Forum members generally felt the inclusion of public art to be a good thing especially in the Alney Island area.

RH – Good way to capture peoples attention.

PH - Good environmental sales point.

GD felt that caution should be taken not to 'over-do' public art and that subtlety was key. Public art can be a target for graffiti. Consideration needs to be given to the material used to enable upkeep. Co-operation will be needed from the Police/camera's etc

CO agreed there are maintenance issues.

GD advised that perhaps some pieces should be temporary and could be changed.

PF felt that effective lighting could be used to good effect in the city. PH felt that the 'new' lighting of the Guildhall makes a positive difference.

265/08 Blackfriars Masterplan – Position Statement

Report given.

It was enquired whether the Clutch Clinic could be left? CO advised that if the Priory is to be brought back into use and the University take up space in the area that views to the Priory buildings need to be opened up.

PHa felt this was an important gateway as part of the linkages routes.

PH asked if public art could be used within the building.

MTW asked if railings could be used instead of a wall. CO advised that part of the wall is listed.

PH asked what the current plans are for the Telephone Exchange building. CO advised discussions have taken place with BT in London, they are reviewing the need for this building on a 12 monthly basis. They also have issues of car parking which maybe able to be accommodated elsewhere.

GD asked that as the plan is to make this area the 'cultural' quarter, is there enough modern exhibition space? The crown court building is incorporated in the scheme but is there enough for teenage/young 20's/cultural groups etc How far do the Guildhall go to fill that role? And will there still be a gap?

PHa asked if the plans for Kings Quarter will include cover for events etc? CO advised that this is not included in current proposals but a light weight structure could be accommodated.

GD asked that although some steps have been taken to involve schools, is there enough provision for schools within this scheme? CO advised that

funding is not readily available. The North Range will provide space for music, dance, cat walks etc

GD asked if the University don't take up space in this area what will happen to the 'cultural' side of the plans? CO advised that there would be more emphasis on bringing in other cultural industries, but the area is likely to be more residential. It will be another 9-12 months before it is clear whether HEFCE will provide funding for the University to re-locate.

PH asked if other areas of the scheme would progress, e.g. the hotel? CO advised that some funding was available to proceed.

PF raised that during the trip to Dublin it was noted that the number of front doors along a street showed increased activity, if the University do locate in Blackfriars how will 'dead frontage' be avoided? CO advised that Fielding Clegg Bradley have been asked to look at the development in detail with the brief of requiring lively ground floor uses and permeable routes through the area.

PF – will this include old alleyways such as Bull Lane? CO – yes.

FR – one obvious mistake in Dublin to be learnt from, not to have large shops/restaurants on ground floor level. CO – the plan is not yet at that level of detail.

PH – the only evening economy in Gloucester is based in Eastgate Street and the city needs a 'new' area to expand this.

266/08 Kings Quarter Update - CONFIDENTIAL

Report given.

CO advised that the design team had been chosen. This needs to be taken to the URC Board and then a public announcement will be made.

An update is expected from the City Council following the Roanne case situation.

267/08 Railway Triangle – Gloucestershire Parkway Feasibility Study

Report given.

CO advised that by 2014 there is likely to be improvements on the mainline, but currently there is no extra capacity.

GD advised that by capacity, it is meant in terms of time and no more stops can be afforded. There could be more carriages on trains, but the Government impose heavy penalties. CO confirmed safety and punctuality was the prime concern.

It was asked what the likelihood is of Gloucester Parkway getting funding instead on Worcester or Longbridge? CO advised that the Park & Ride facilities need to be in place to strengthen Gloucester's case.

It was felt that Cheltenham would be against the plans for Parkway.

GD felt that the situation had been badly handled by the County Council as no information has been readily given and it has not been made clear what the impact of a Parkway station would be on Cheltenham. Some people in Cheltenham find Cheltenham station difficult to access, with limited parking and some may prefer to use a Parkway. Detailed information is needed and engagement with the general public and business'.

CO agreed that Gloucestershire County Council now needs to proceed in an open and transparent way.

MTW felt that the County Council may not be the right body to persuade people that the Parkway option is the way forward. If/when the decision is taken, people need to get behind it and support it.

	<p>GD advised that no-one from the private sector is involved on the committee, this should include representation from the Chamber of Commerce, FSB etc CO raised that if this report goes through the URC Board, how can we deliver a scheme and improve the offer at Central Station. A plan needs to be formed to drive forward the scheme and advocate tasks and check on progress, although this is not the direct responsibility of the URC. PF felt that Cheltenham needs to be represented. CO suggested Cheltenham Chamber of Commerce should be approached. PH raised that the area of land planned for the Parkway station is owned by Tewkesbury Borough Council and they need to be involved. They will be responsible for the licencing of taxi's working out of Parkway. GD agreed that this is a county issue not just Gloucester. MTW advised that these comments would be taken to the URC Board and there needs to be some co-ordination to drive this forward.</p> <p>270/08 "Building on Success/Adapting Change" – DVD from Urban Regeneration Companies Annual Conference 2008 This was shown at the end of the meeting.</p>	
118/08	Impact of "Credit Crunch" on the URC programme	
	<p>CO - Persimmon have cut back drastically and their site at St Oswalds Park will be finished but likely to take nearer 4 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not too concerned about the programme as a whole but it may be slow over the next couple of years. - Bloor Homes are pushing ahead. - There will be some effect on the timescales for the development of the Greyfriars site <p>PF advised that most house builders are not building new, but some are finishing existing builds. GD felt that the most important issue for the URC at the moment is the outlet centre. PH asked if the Bishops are prepared to level their ground in the interim? CO advised that some of the buildings on the site are listed and we would want to retain them. PF felt that the planning process was long enough that the Bishop's should begin this process. GD asked if the Bishop's land could be bought on a staggered basis? CO advised that they don't want to sell, they want to develop themselves but they wont currently invest in the designs. PHa asked if the Bishop's were looking to the URC to pay the design fees? CO advised that public money could not be spent in this way.</p>	
119/08	Any Other Business	
	<p>It was raised that although the developments for Kings Square have been discussed, no information has been given about the rest of the Kings Quarter site, including the bus station.</p> <p>CO advised that this area has been effected by the Roanne ruling.</p>	
	Dates of Future Meetings	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Monday, 22nd September 2008 – 6:00pm – British Waterways Museum▪ Monday 24th November – 6:00pm – British Waterways Museum	
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Author: Sam Hoad