

GLOUCESTER HERITAGE URBAN REGENERATION COMPANY LTD

MINUTES OF GHURC BOARD MEETING

Gloucestershire College

Friday 27th March at 1.30pm

Present:	(GS)	Greg Smith	(IM)	Ian Mean
	(PF)	Peter Foyle	(SPi)	Sally Pickering
	(JG)	Julie Girling	(MSec)	Martin Seccombe
	(AG)	Andrew Gravells	(AS)	Antonia Shields
	(CH)	Chris Hallam	(SP)	Sally Pearson
	(PJ)	Paul James	(MS)	Mary Smith
	(IJ)	Ian Jarvis	(MTW)	Michael Tallett-Williams
	(IK)	Ian Knight	(MB)	Maggie Bolt
	(DB)	David Bush	(SJ)	Stan Jones
	(MB)	Maggie Bolt	(DO)	David Owen
	(CF)	Chris Foley	(MO)	Mark Owen
	(JC)	John Cottrell (for David Warburton)		
Observers:				
	(CFO)	Chris Oldershaw	(RO)	Richard Owen
	(MT)	Mike Tilt	(MTh)	Mick Thorpe
	(NG)	Nicky Godding	(JS)	John Seddon
	(PC)	Philip Cooke		
Minutes:				
	(JM)	Jo May		

GS opened the meeting by advising that Barry King was retiring today and thanked him for his support.

David Owen is delighted to have joined the URC Board as a replacement for Stan Jones'. DO will give as much support as possible to take forward the regeneration plans and assist over the coming months.

312/09	Apologies	Action
	<u>Board Members:</u> Franco Muccini, Bishop Michael <u>Advisors:</u> Barry King, Andrew Vines, Julian Wain, Simon Excell	
313/09	Declarations of Interest	
	Peter Foyle – Ecclesiastical and British Legion Mary Smith – Planning Committee Ian Jarvis – Gloucester Quays/Museum Chris Foley – Docks and Blackfriars Antonia Shield – Railway Triangle	
314/09	Minutes of the previous Board Meeting on 30th January 2009	
	The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	

315/09	Matters Arising	
302/09	<u>Railway Triangle</u> The URC has been seeking a meeting with Simon Ford of Allstones since December, it is hoped a meeting with him will be confirmed shortly.	
286/08	<u>Llanthony Quay Hotel</u> No changes to report.	
292/08	<u>Greater Blackfriars</u> Further discussions have been held with Patricia Broadfoot regarding the North and East ranges and No. 17 Ladybellegate Street. A decision on the University's intentions will be known by the end of April. Further discussions are required on the Clutch Clinic site and the long-term action for the area.	
294/08	<u>Greater Railway Triangle Masterplan</u> A Masterplan Event is scheduled for the 2 nd April in the Irish Club, Horton Road for residents and businesses in the Masterplan area to view the emerging plans.	
296/08	<u>Bakers Quay</u> CFO and GS recently met with Mr Bishop and his architect. Some progress has been made with a number of units and various temporary structures around the site which are due to be demolished. However, there is still concern over the Downings Malthouse building and their long term plans for the rest of the site. Mr Bishop has proposed scaffolding to be erected around the building prior to the opening of the DOC. CFO advised that Mr Bishop and his architect would be presenting their plans at the Board Meeting in May.	
297/08	<u>Greyfriars</u> JC advised that the last minutes are still current and accurate, things are progressing well with the Four Gates centre and discussions with the PCT are scheduled. E.I.G have advised that their HQ building proposed for Southgate Moorings is currently on hold. CFO is still optimistic for this site as no formal decision has been made. CFO confirmed that Aviva will not be holding up plans for Kings Square – negotiations to acquire the Golden Egg and the finalising of the contracts with Churchman Landscapes and Niall McLaughlin are now underway.	
305/09	The £25,000 contribution has been agreed to support the Pirates event and the shop front poster campaign in 2008/09. Next years marketing allocation will be in the business plan and will include the Tall Ships festival scheduled for the week after the DOC opening.	
316/09	Urban Youth Forum Presentation – The Journey	
	The presentation has been deferred until the July Board due to the exam timetable.	
317/09	Completing Gloucester's Regeneration – Draft Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company Ltd Fourth Annual Business Plan 2009 - 2106	
	CFO briefly outlined the issued report and the processes gone through to produce the draft business plan and then handed over to IK for a full explanation of the current SWRDA financial position. IK outlined the contents of Jane Henderson's (CEO) letter that had been circulated with the agenda and reiterated that the RDA's current funding	

position is very serious. Overall funding to projects is declining significantly and is going to have an impact on the work undertaken in Gloucester and its regeneration programme. IK asked for the assistance of the Board in this difficult time. The letter explains that the RDA have lost staff and have more losses to come. It is estimated that £26m will be taken from the 2008-2009 budget which will impact in the 2010/11 budget. The receipts income from the sale of property has almost collapsed. The RDA is being pressed by the Government to fund recession busting activities. Long term investment and regeneration projects are currently not considered favourably, although the Government can suggest where the monies are spent by the RDA; they currently do not have the authority to insist on where funding is allocated.

The RDA currently has approximately 3000 financial commitments across its region.

AG asked for clarification on the exact decline in funding available to the URC.

IK no confirmed figures are available at the moment.

GS asked if it was across the country or just within the South West area that funding was being reduced.

IK indicated that the SWRDA are taking earlier action than other RDA's in the country. All RDA's will be experiencing losses, but Agency's up north are dealing with larger funding allocations than those in the south west, and have more room for manoeuvre.

GS – are we going to suffer because of the European Status of Cornwall?

IK – has asked himself the same question, there is 25% match funding available.

SPi – the Residents & Community forum asked if monies can be transferred between RDA's.

IK – once budgets are set Government does not allow for monies to switch between RDA's, but the RDA's themselves are able to transfer monies to cover any deficits at year end where necessary.

DB – the priorities of the government and all the success of the regeneration are employment based. If government are seeking to help if the building industry is helped it would create the momentum we are looking for.

IK – this is a good point, however it will be down to what will have the greatest impact and least investment.

CFO gave his presentation which is available from the GHURC Office Manager.

IM – considered it represented a great overview of the current situation. We must maintain the momentum in Gloucester that has been created and feels personally that things are starting to move and we have to be very careful in what our partners at the RDA can help us with. If we lose momentum it would be disastrous. The Linkages project has to be advanced and completed. With the Quays opening if we cannot then fund the linkages it would be disastrous for the rest of the city.

PJ – in this difficult climate we have to be realistic and be clear over our priorities. PJ agrees with IM that the Linkages are high priority; the other important area is delivery of Kings Square which will help change the perceptions of the regeneration and that the whole city is changing. PJ expressed some concern over the proposed Public Art on the Linkages project.

SPI – The Residents and Community forum are in agreement with both IM and PJ, but feels that it goes without saying that the Linkages are top priority, and if nothing happens in Kings Square then many members of the public will consider that there has been no change in Gloucester.

PF – Confirmed again that the Linkages must take priority. Another key project to deliver, to enable Gloucester people and visitors to see the success of the regeneration is Kings Square. Once this has progressed, the retail side of the project will happen through developers seeing the changes and wanting to be apart of it, we have to make people want the change.

MO – apologised for being late. Feels that we are at a cross roads and agrees with what has been said so far. The reputation of the Board is at stake, the Linkages are fundamental to keep the business community on our side.

DB – endorses the Linkages and Kings Square and thanked CFO for an excellent presentation. Kings Square is seen as the centre of the city and visitors to the city need to see Kings Square delivered. The meeting has been bad news today but we must not try and make savings by reducing the quality of the finished projects.

MS – if we have to make cuts we must also remember to consider the big picture, if the Linkages are felt to be the most important we must not forget the other projects i.e Blackfriars.

AS – agrees with DB’s comments about not reducing the quality of the projects and thanked IK for the clear description on the RDA’s situation.

MTW – agrees with all that has been said, but we must not forget we are a Heritage URC, and we must give heritage projects a high priority or we will not have succeeded.

AG – agreed with all that has been said. We must not lose the momentum otherwise it will be very hard to pick it up again once lost. Gloucester people are already saying it is not going to happen, so we must not let this be true. AG asked if IK thought it would be worth the individual URC Board Members contacting the SWRDA Board.

GS – does not want to let down the people of Gloucester as we could be seen as making the city worse if all we achieve is moving the College out of the centre and introducing the DOC. GS asked for IK on how to address the SWRDA Board.

IK thanked the Board for their understanding. He advised the Board to rank the projects in terms of importance, but cannot guarantee how far down the list the funding will go. IK is concerned that the figures submitted in the business plan do not reflect the full amount of funding that the SWRDA have given to GHURC.

CH agrees that URC is Heritage based, but it is not all about past heritage, we must create our own heritage for the future. We need to be researching funds from alternative sources. CH offered his assistance to CFO in the possibility of contacting Canadian Banks as a possible suggestion.

IM - we need to ensure we give a high priority to these projects that we know can be completed, these maybe smaller projects but if we can be seen to be succeeding this will help continue the momentum of the URC.

MB – regeneration is about people and their beliefs. Public Art will change how people see Gloucester, it will provide interest and possible future investment if developers can see how attractive an area it is it will encourage them into the city. We must remember that during recessions a lot of new businesses are created.

CFO/CH

SPi – totally supportive of what MB has said.

AG asked for IK clarification if he feels that it would be worth contacting the SWRDA Board.

IK feels this is a reasonable suggestion; however neither IK or CF will be lobbying against their own board members. We must think about what we can say about the leverages that the investment will bring and provide plans. The lobbying needs to be above the RDA's head and it also needs to be done collectively.

SP suggested that maybe we need to change tack with the RDA. We could demonstrate what we can do and how we can do it, but we have other investors and how we can draw them into the URC. Which investments can we rely on that will deliver the objectives of the URC.

JG – feels there is no issue with the priorities. JG asked for an indication on what other Councils were putting into their regeneration programmes. The full council costs are also not included in the financial spreadsheet, as the council put in many man hours which are not charged out.

GS – Feels that the way we are presenting our figures is showing little to encourage the RDA.

CH – has the impression that there is a serious risk that the RDA will withdraw from Gloucester.

IK – no, the RDA will not withdraw from Gloucester but the funding allocation will be greatly reduced. We must remember that very few of the SWRDA Board Members are the same as when GHURC was set up and therefore have no understanding of what Gloucester was like before the regeneration commenced.

GS – thanked the Board for an excellent debate, and rather than do a meeting round up asked the question, where do we go from here?

The recommendation that the draft Business Plan for 2009-2016 is received for comment was agreed.

The recommendation for a special URC Board meeting arranged for 22nd April to consider future SWRDA investment priorities was agreed, however the date would be confirmed by IK after further discussion within the RDA has taken place.

The recommendation for a revised Business Plan to be submitted to the URC Board in May for approval was agreed.

CFO

Additional actions agreed where:

CFO to speak with the URC's Chief Executives in the South West.

CFO and GS to go to London and present their case to Parliament.

It was suggested that the Minister for the South West, MP Ben Bradshaw, be contacted, and DO advised that Gloucestershire First were in discussion with him and would therefore include the regeneration within their discussions and where necessary ensure CFO is included in meetings.

SJ – perhaps a different approach is required. All our efforts need to be focused on getting the right information across. The quality of the submission is paramount on this work. Let the RDA know in a very clear

	<p>way and let them know that we will be trying to deliver the projects with funds from other sources where possible.</p> <p>JC – advised that the HCA’s funds were not under threat and where they can they will support projects where the RDA are unable to supply funding but they will not be a safety net for the whole regeneration.</p> <p>MS – impressed at the maturity of the debate and that the Board are all pulling together.</p> <p>The regeneration will be completed, but it is more a case of timing, and we have to hold our nerve and not compromise on quality.</p> <p>GS thanked the HCA for their support on the Bakers Quay and Railway Triangle projects.</p> <p>IK advised that BERR have undertaken an evaluation of the impact of Public Realm improvements which is very controversial, it suggests that public realm has no value for money.</p> <p>MB would disagree with this and would suggest that CABE be appointed to review the report, the government are still in favour of Public Realm products.</p>	
318/09	Any Other Business	
	<p>GS advised that it was Stan Jones last Board Meeting as he was retiring from Gloucestershire First. GS and CFO thanked SJ for his valued support and wished him every success in his future retirement.</p>	
	Future Meeting Dates	
	<p>Friday, 29th May 2009 – 1.30pm – Cory Rooms, Waterways Museum</p> <p>Friday, 31st May 2009 – 1.30pm – Cory Rooms, Waterways Museum</p>	