

**Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Board  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – 8am**

**Present:** Angie Robinson (“AR”) (Chair)  
Joe Manning (“JM”)  
**Marketing Cheshire  
Directors** Steven Broomhead (“SB”)  
Adrian Bull (“AB”)  
Andy Lyon (“AL”)  
David Walker (“DW”)  
Eleanor Underhill (“EU”)  
Mark Goldsmith (“MG”)  
Sarah Callander-Beckett (“SCB”)  
Clare Hayward (“CH”) (part meeting)  
Rupert Collis (“RC”)  
Amanda Newman (“AN”)

**In Attendance:** Philip Cox (“PC”) (observer)  
Stephanie Ramsden (“SR”) (observer)

**Apologies:** None

**1. Opening by the Chairman and Welcome**

AR thanked the board for joining the call and welcomed Stephanie Ramsden, attending the meeting as an observer representing Cheshire West and Chester Council

Congratulations and thank you to Joe for his work during this difficult time

AR advised that it is her last meeting and that she has agreed with the LEP that they will start the recruitment process in June for a new Chair for MC. AR will cover the role until a new Chair is appointed and takes up the position.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Please advise Sharon of any changes to your Declarations of Interest

**3. Minutes and Actions from the last Meeting**

The Board confirmed that the minutes from the meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020 were correct.

AR confirmed that the actions from the meeting have been resolved as follows:-

- It was confirmed that JM has emailed Board members and we are in the process of setting meetings
- Virtual Showround undertaken by Combermere Abbey has been communicated in MC social media channels
- It was confirmed that with regard to the Covid19 impact surveys we are asking business whether they have applied for the grants and this info will be included in the impact report.

- It was confirmed that a 12 month cashflow and reforecast has been produced and has been included in the board papers
- It was confirmed that we have approached DMOs and this information is included within the Board pack
- Joe has been working with Catherine Walker regarding PR and working with the media

#### 4. Board Briefing Note / CEO Report

JM thanked AR for her commitment to the Board over the past 10 years

JM referred Board members to the report circulated with the Board pack and highlighted the following:

- Work is focussed around Covid activity over 4 thematic areas and we have started to build recovery plans
- Trusted –the first webinar with partners was held this week which included updates from VisitBritain and the Growth Hub
- We are now looking to provide practical advice to Partners via a programme of webinars on a sector by sector approach
- Profile –website traffic has increase by 40% in comparison to last week
- We have received an Increase in national and local press enquiries as a result of our social media coverage
- Recovery – we are running 2 collaborative campaigns, Destination Chester and Destination Cheshire. The campaigns will be run in line with government guidelines and one of our key messages with be safety and wellbeing.
- We have put a hold on any recruitment and have Furloughed the VIC zero hour employees. Current roles within the business have been repurposed and we do not have plans to furlough additional employees at this time.

It was agreed that we should aim to review the board strategy in the next few months – JM/SP to review dates

SCB felt that the number of Board meetings throughout the year should be increased to include additional virtual meetings. This will be reviewed as part of the Board Strategy

PC emphasised the importance of providing partners and consumers with the assurance that Cheshire and Warrington is safe, with particular emphasis on the Chester Christmas Market. SR advised that further guidelines have been issued by government which include markets which is being reviewed by CW&C. SR will update when further information is available

AR felt a more flexible approach should be put in place for stall holder bookings for the Christmas Market.

SB questioned the messaging to consumers in relation to visiting Cheshire. JM advised that are messaging to consumers is visit Cheshire (soon) as opposed to advising people not to visit Cheshire, we will review this early June. Target market is local only at the moment and our campaign will be aligned against business opening.

AB stated that we need to recognise that we have a strong population within Cheshire and need to balance this in our messaging

**Actions  
JM/SP**

## **5. 2019/20 Q4 Financial Report**

DW referred Board members to the end of year report included within the board pack and ran through the key elements of the report advising that the Audit Committee have approved the end of year accounts to be sent to the Auditors. The statutory accounts will be presented at the next Board meeting for Board approval

## **6. Cashflow and reforecast**

JM introduced the paper and advised on the following

- The reforecast is built around 2 scenarios. However, this does come with a significant health warning that we are looking a long way into the future on cashflow and need to continue to review our assumptions. The model will continue to be developed with the Audit team.
- JM emphasised that the relationship with the LEP and our Local Authorities provides us with some certainty in the first and second quarters of the year. We may have to review the situation in the second half of year if we do not have any additional income, we may need to make further decisions on cost mitigation.
- We have only included income that we are confident in receiving in the reforecast

PC advised that the LEP view is that its income is there to invest into the economy and MC has an important role in the recovery.

AR stated that the Board will need to consider where it wants to position itself going forward, would not want to go below the line into reserves

AN questioned what the broader picture table of outgoings where

JM advised this consists of consultants' fees spent on design and social media work, and we will at a future date look to bring the design work in house, however it would be prudent to manage as we are at the moment.

## **7. Cheshire and Warrington Economic Resilience and Recovery**

PC advised that we are dividing work into 3 phases

- Emergency response
- Restart – workshop taking place to look at a restart plan which JM will be leading on. Primarily about enabling businesses to be Covid secure and making sure Cheshire & Warrington is safe for residents and visitors.
- Medium Term Recovery Plan – starts from the Local Industrial Strategy and reviewing what has changed as a consequence of Covid.

It was confirmed that the LEP and MC are working closely in partnership with public sector and business to put plans in place for restart and recovery

JM added in relation to the restart plan it will be economy wide but very conscious on how hard the Visitor Economy has been affected. It is important that this is a shared plan that the local authorities across the region can sign up to.

AN asked if there is an opportunity to be seen as an organisation to assist

smaller businesses who may struggle to start up again.

AL suggested looking at producing case studies to assist smaller businesses and PC confirmed that the Growth Hub is looking at this

EU asked if the retail industry fits into the remit of MC – JM advised that going forward we will need to review what our role is but it is felt that retail such as Chester, Cheshire Oaks and our wider town centre offer plays an important part of the Visitor economy.

RC from a property prospective are organisations approaching the LEP to offer assistance to other businesses. JM advised that we are hoping to host a webinar on this. PC stated that the challenge will be to ensure we are signposting those needing help and support to reputable organisations

SCB stated that with regard to hospitality businesses we need a coordinated plan to create an offer with a value to it

**8. Any Other Business.**

EU stated that we will need to manage consumer expectations with regard to what our offer will look like, and it would be beneficial to have a coordinated sector response using MC as a conduit for these responses.

SCB requested that the NT include Historic Houses within the Heritage response.

**Next meeting**

TBC – July

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Signature (Angie Robinson, Chair)

.....

Date

.....