

Meeting Minutes: Northwich BID Executive Board Meeting

Date: 20th May 2026 **Time:** 8:30am

Location: Brio Leisure. Memorial Court. Northwich

Attendees:

- Ellis Wardle (EW) – Salt House NW (Chair)
 - Kristy Ellison (KE) – Purl & Peach
 - Louise Hough (LH) – CRS Consultants
 - Insp Paul Heatley & PCSO Robertson – Cheshire Police
 - Cllr Sam Naylor (SN) – CWAC /NTC
 - Gerard Rooney (GR) – Moss Haselhurst
 - Paul Rowland (PR) – Superdrug (PR)
 - Chris Shaw (CS) – Northwich Town Council
 - Kim Smith (KS) – Radio Northwich
 - Lindsey Smith (LS) – CWAC Regeneration for Mid-Cheshire
 - Cllr Rachel Waterman (RW) – CWAC / NTC (RW)
 - Adam Gerrard (AG) – Groundwork CLM
 - Jon Houghton (JonH) – Groundwork CLM
 - Lynn Riley (LR) – Groundwork CLM
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- **Apologies:** Rupert Adams – (RA): Kat Booth (KB) – Echo PR : Julie Kirkham (JK) – Brio : Russ Figgis (RF) – Barons Quay :



Agenda Item	Minutes	Actions
Welcome / Introductions	EW opened the meeting and welcomed those attending. Introduced Kristy Ellison owner of Purl & Peach as a new Board member following the Nov 25 Board decision to recruit new representatives.	
Declarations of Interest	To note the standing declaration for advisory members of the board in their capacity as elected representatives to Cheshire West and Chester Council & Northwich Town Council, as both bodies are stakeholders to the BID.	
Minutes from 18-3-25 Board & matters arising.	Minutes of the 18-3-26 meeting were approved. Actions identified and proposals for Year2 activities were included as agenda items for further discussion by the Board. No matters arising. Minutes approved.	
Update from the Chair	Since the Board last met, key activities to note include; Bid Area Performance (Theme 1) – direction of travel: ○ Footfall showing a 4.1% increase for 2026 with a 2.0% increase YoY. ○ Marketing: Visit Northwich brand continues to grow in followers on both Facebook and Instagram. Monthly report was attached to Board papers to show how we manage things. ○ Facebook views for March 26 were 691k vs 495k in March 25 - an increase of almost 200k YoY & 23% MoM. ○ Instagram 9.7k in March 26 vs 7.4K in March 25 with new followers on both platforms + website. Visit Northwich brand (T1): ○ Annual What's On Guide published with largest version to date (52 pages) ○ Within budget envelope taking Visit Northwich branded bus sponsorship on road to promote town to adjacent postcodes in Cheshire East/Chester Villages. ○ Applied for Britain in Bloom 2026 to reinforce investment made in aesthetics. ○ Submitted application to DCMS for Town of Culture 2028. Decision for long listing expected Q2 2026.	

	New businesses update (T3). ○ Axel opening 30th May – new offer for ladies’ sportswear. ○ M&S planning application submitted following positive public response to M&S pre-application comms. Does Board want to make any comment through planning. ○ Loungers (originally July but now Oct 26); ○ New Market (Aug 26) ○ Encouraging that Gaia has changed hands – exciting plans around food offer. ○ Dry Cleaners also changing hands to Terry&Co ○ Flocking Legless – gone into partnership to reinforce her offer ○ Banks – all have made investment in premises - Lloyds doing same. ○ Positive engagement with CWAC Libraries about library relocation Q1 2027. Weaver Square public engagement. Chair & some Board members attended last Friday (15th May) to raise specific issues impacting BID area. Regulatory Compliance raised at March26 Board: BID met with CWAC directors around poor regulatory compliance: Northwich prioritised for heritage at risk assessment. ○ To note Police & Trading Standards targeted action with 2 stores closed. ○ Town Centre Security inspection in response to Home Office guidance for LA’s around Martin’s Law: Initiated by NTC & BID. Quick wins identified to protect town centre against vehicle attack with short/med/longer terms action plan in progress. Northwich to be prioritised by CWAC based on size of events Dredging of River Weaver for 1st time since 1990’s following representation from many including BID chair. Opens up key asset for Town with potential for future events and activities.	
Q&A – Board Discussion	EW: RAG Report circulated before hand and only red alert is for unknown status of the Pokemon Hunt by Northwich Toppers. Board accepted RAG with no further issues raised. EW:Bid Area Performance (Theme 1) PR: Footfall overall is encouraging but not for every business. Daily demographic is older people and not attracting younger consumers who prefer online.	LR to visit & explore options.

	EW: Visit Northwich activities (T1): LR: Difficulties in engaging businesses to share input for What's On & social content. AG: Recommended VN postcard drop to all businesses & reminder about how to upload RW: Welcomed bus sponsorship on 2 routes. New opportunity when CLIC took over Community Transport scheme for CWAC Council. Planned for 30K miles per annum so brand will be seen outside of Northwich into adjacent towns and Cheshire East. Already reviewing routes and changing to drop-off at supermarkets. Brand impact tracked through web links. AG: Suggested bus stops on Witton St by Weatherspoon's in town core. EW: New businesses update (T3). M&S planning application now submitted. Board supportive of new investment and new audience it will bring to Northwich. Following discussion about options to create connectivity with the town centre Board decided to submit comments to planning. SN: Raised issue of improving signage around the town signage and importance of using new business development as opportunity to make necessary changes. RW: Outline planning in for apartment block on Old Dairy site. Board discussion about carparking, access and impact on residential & business amenity. Board discussed how small changes signalled confidence in the town: new businesses opening; changing hands rather than closing, banks refurbishing and new market & library. LR: Loungers planning to open in Autumn and are interested in hosting a B2B event for EW: Weaver Square public engagement. Chair & some Board members attended last Friday (15th May) to raise specific issues impacting BID area. Encourage All Board members to participate in future consultations to represent BID. GR: Regulatory Compliance raised concerns about heritage at risk assessment. Key gateway to town at Winnington Hill looks terrible. Discussion about options available to CWAC LS: CWAC is in contact with Osbourn House owners about building safety & exterior LR: BID liaising with MP to identify future funding for heritage improvements GR: suggested contact with Heritage Society. SN: confirmed he attends when possible.	RW: To feedback to CLIC LR: To draft submission for circulation to Board members. LR: To draft submission for circulation. LR: To draft submission for circulation.
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	SN:Dredging of River Weaver is positive opportunity for Northwich and welcome after decades of lobbying. Current activity does not include Hunts Locks that will complete in Q2 2027. CS. Left the meeting due to a prior commitment.	
Financial Report	LR: Shared the financial report with the Board and outlined the reconciliation with CWAC for 1st BID Levy round (Sept25-Feb26). Second levy tranche now invoiced for Mar-Aug26. Collection is 27K higher than forecast for income (£366K) against forecast expenditure (£339K) and will add to carry over for next year. AG: Detailed importance of building a large carry over for the final year of BID3 as BID3 operates from 1 Sept-31 Aug and outlay for PCF and BID activity have to be secured pending ballot outcome. AG: Informed Board that CWAC now levying £4.6K charge for levy collection. No charges have been paid to date but financial pressures on local authority now requires it. Agreement to be signed.	
Partner Updates	CWAC Regeneration Update: discussions led by LS Weaver Square: engagement event on 15th May saw 200 people attend with more online input. Concept masterplan is for a mixed housing led scheme; groundworks determining the ratio of apartments to houses. Principle is to change demographics of town to attract more younger people to live and work. LS: Will be maintaining Apple Market as community space and recommends BID inputs to how this space can be used (detailing essential infrastructure). Scheme is part of UK REIFF portfolio as scheme will require external private+public sector funding (Homes England). LS: Bus hub will be led by CWAC as part of wider transport review funded by Combined Authority. Focus on how buses arrive in town centre and whether meets passenger destination needs. SN: Raised importance of public toilets and also public debate about future of subway as a feature of the town. LS: Ongoing dialogue with tenants about future occupation and options being explored on individual basis.	

	RW: Highlighted latest work to board up empty units to prevent further ASB. Looks awful and makes area look derelict hiding vibrancy of town core from public view. Need to be careful with public perception. AG: Request for BID/NTC to undertake this work on behalf of contractor/CWAC to deliver best VFM and create best perception of the town centre during demolition/construction. Northwich Market: Medlock work underway and handover scheduled for July/Aug. Active Travel Corridor: work underway til end of July with latest update on road works circulated by BID. Library: Contractor now confirmed with work due to start in June. Town Centre Crime Reduction: discussion led by Cheshire Police Inspector PH + PSCO Robertson. PH: Cheshire Police has identified shoplifting as a key priority, with the Northwich policing team progressing charges & CBOs against known offenders and using facial recognition technology to help identify organised criminal activity. Partners continue to work closely through the co-located Community Safety Partnership to address issues including homelessness and anti-social behaviour. A dedicated town centre PCSO is supporting by targeted interventions, close engagement with schools and additional patrols during peak trading periods, while police and partner agencies continue to work together to disrupt and close down criminal activity in the town centre. Two traders were recently charged and businesses remain closed.	
BID 3 Year 2 priorities & proposals for Board discussion: 2026 Music Festival 2027 New Event VN Website	EW: Left the meeting due to a prior commitment Northwich Music Festival: 13th/14th June: LR: Report circulated from March Board to confirm BID contribution to NTC Music Festival. This annual event is taking place over 2 days in town centre rather than Verdin Park and will benefit local businesses. BID Board agreed to £5k contribution towards infrastructure, security and medical costs. CS: NTC is seeking a contribution from BID towards infrastructure and security costs. Costed proposal to be circulated to Chairman and Board.	

	April 2027 New Event: LR: Report detailing new event for Northwich in partnership with NTC. This would be a high impact event working alongside local schools with children playing a lead role in acting out a historic story. Board discussed and agreed to further discussions with NTC so a formal proposal will be brought to a future Board meeting. LS: ION working with schools on a new flag for young people and this could feature September Business Networking Event: LR: Report outlining proposal to progress the concept of bringing local business together in September was agreed within a £2.5k budget. Formal proposal to be brought to July Board. Visit Northwich Web-site: AG led the discussions and highlighted how the VN brand retains key authority online, built over life of BID. The web site was created over 10 years ago and given how technology has advanced can no-longer deliver the customer experience expected nor the performance required. Technical capabilities for bookings and payments must be improved and capable of consistently presenting all activities to attract people to town and its businesses. The limitations of the current platform are compromising this position and in consultation with the Chair, an RFQ has been issued to benchmark costs, designs and logistics around future migration. BID can manage the RFQ process to identify a qualified contractor. Board agreed to proceed and a full proposal will be brought to the July Board meeting.	LR: To work with NTC to scope the event and bring future proposal to Board. LR: To scope proposal for July Board. LR: To liaise with Chair & prepare proposal for Board
AOB	Date of next meeting: 22 nd July 2026. Brio Memorial Court.	LR: To confirm & circulate papers