**CHESHIRE SCIENCE CORRIDOR ENTERPRISE ZONE BOARD**

**Minutes**

**23rd November 2016, Birchwood Park, Warrington**

1. **Attendees and Apologies**

**Present:**

Robert Mee (Chair)

Howard Hopwood (Vice Chair)

Cllr Russ Bowden

Cllr Brian Clarke

David Slater

**In attendance:**

Philip Cox

Paul Vernon

Andy Allen

Chris Farrow

Myles Kitcher

Steve Park

Tony Clark

John Willis

Martin O’Rourke

Katrina Michel

Caroline Baker

Heather Standidge

**Apologies:**

Cllr Peter Groves

Jonathon Walsh

Alison Knight

Chris Doherty

Andrew Round

Andy Evans

1. **Previous EZ Board Minutes**

All matters arising from the previous EZ Board held on 29th September have been actioned.

All agreed minutes for sign off.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

No member of the Board member declared any pecuniary interests.

1. **Cheshire Science Corridor EZ Update**

**4a) BRD Application Update**

6 BRD applications have been submitted since April 2016, but no new applications since the last EZ Board.

An application is anticipated from Bathgate Flooring (Birchwood Park) in the coming weeks. All to provide updates to Heather on other potential applications in order to inform BEIS on future schemes. All to encourage eligible occupiers to apply for BRD ASAP. Growth Director can provide support, if required to filling in application form.

**4b) Protos Development Update**

Myles Kitcher, Managing Director at Peel Environmental, provided a presentational update on current activities and future aspirations for land and premises at Protos. Slides are provided at Annex A. Video of development progress and slides to be added to EZ website. Key messages include:

* Phase 1 (EZ) incorporates 2 million sq ft of consented employment space across 134 acres or wider 700 acre scheme.
* Looking to sell Phase 1 sites to fund wider infrastructure including water berth and rail due in 2017.
* Protos is one of 13 projects identified as Northern Powerhouse oven ready investment projects pitched to Chinese investors. Raised profile at national and international level.
* Currently 6-7 live enquiries including energy generation interest in respect of Phase 1 EZ. Covanta energy from waste facility is in legals.
* ‘Private utility strategy’ will supply energy at a reduced price to occupiers.

**4c) Site Specific Update**

The following points were made in respect of the site specific update:

* **Birchwood** – Martin O’Rourke confirmed Bathgate Flooring has completed and moved into 711 Cavendish Avenue. They are being encouraged to apply for BRDs. Werfen completed their £1m fit-out of 712 Cavendish Avenue in early November and are now operating from the unit – KM agreed to draft press release. Two international science based occupiers are interested in 713 Cavendish Avenue. The £1.8m refurbishment of 106 Dalton Avenue has commenced and awaiting a decision on a new potential occupier from Spring 2017.
* **Thornton Science Park –** A new chemical automation occupier has taken space in Building 49. As a sole trader who lacks capacity to complete BRD application, HS offered assistance. Paul Vernon described how the previously mentioned 100,000 sq ft Government backed occupier would set up its project office in Building 49 and would require an additional 10,000 sq ft modular build. TSP is seeking to raise £100m as running out of space. Paul Vernon noted that he was inundated with enquiries which he could not accommodate. Caroline Baker suggested that these should be shared with Tony Clark and other local authority reps to see if they could assist in their areas.
* **Alderley Park** – Andy Allen reported that a revised RedX BRD application is anticipated. A 60,000 sq ft occupier is currently in legals on a 100,000 sq ft building. An inward investor is looking at 40,000 sq ft of animal facilities and another the 250,000 sq ft former CTL building. Working up a bid to Manchester and C&W LEP for equity funding into Antimicrobial Resistance Centre. PC and AA to follow up on potential funding schemes
* **Ellesmere Port** – Chris Farrow had nothing to add.

1. **Governance**

**5a) Sign off of the Memorandum of Understanding**

Philip Cox confirmed Andrew Percy, Minister for the Northern Powerhouse signed the Cheshire Science Corridor Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Northern Gateway stand at MIPIM UK on Thursday 20th October.

Cllr Brian Clarke added that Ken Skates, the equivalent Welsh Minister, launched a cross-border Energy Summit at the Mersey Dee Alliance event. Paul Vernon confirmed his attendance (w/c 3rd April) linked to the Energy Generator. CB suggested could try to link with EZ first anniversary marketing campaign. HS to add to EZ Board Agenda.

Philip Cox’s discussions with BEIS regarding the potential scale of aggregate funding for LEPs within Northern Powerhouse agenda should be clearer by end of year.

**5b) Progress on Appointment of Growth Director**

Philip Cox confirmed appointment of John Adlen as the new CSC Growth Director from 1st February 2017. John has good science and commercial experience having been at Staffordshire University for 5 years and Savils/DTZ prior to that. Sarah Harvey is working up a press release.

**5c) EZ Board Schedule 2017**

All agreed that the EZ Board continues for meet on a bi-monthly basis throughout 2017 to ensure that the momentum achieved to date in maintained in the critical early years. The proposed EZ Board schedule is as follows **(N.B. venue change from previous)**:

* Thursday 15th December 2016 CANCELLED
* Thursday 26th January 2017 2pm Birchwood Park
* Thursday 23rd March 2017 2pm Thornton Science Park
* Thursday 18th May 2017 2pm Alderely Park
* Thursday 20th July 2017 2pm Birchwood Park
* Thursday 21st September 2017 2pm Thornton Science Park
* Thursday 23rd November 2017 2pm Alderley Park

Land owners to be responsible for ensuring a suitable room is available for each Board.

1. **Operational Overview**

**6a) Monitoring and Evaluation**

Heather Standidge provided a summary of second quarter Monitoring and Evaluation as submitted to Government on 2nd November.

Robert Mee reminded the Board that Monitoring and Evaluation is critical to evidencing the success of the EZ and made a plea to landowners to review and update (especially to identify their level of private sector investment) to support both this process and the generation of press releases and articles.

**6b) High Level Business Rate Modelling**

Heather Standidge provided an overview of the high level Business Rate Revenue modelling for the CSC EZ, demonstrating that if no further development occurs on the EZ than that already committed the total cumulative ‘pot’ will be in the order of £20.9m by year 25 (2040/41). However, early returns are relatively low, limiting the scale of potential for re-investment in the first 5 years without borrowing.

Philip Cox reiterated that the Business Rates retained are genuinely additional and the MoU states that agreement will be sought on how best to spend. Propose that first use should be on projects within the EZ that deliver additional floorspace and hence accelerate and grow the total rate retention pot over the EZ’s 25 year lifespan.

Steve Park reminded the Board that investment in Birchwood’s road network was identified as a funding priority within the original EZ application.

**6c) EZ Commercial Support Funding**

All agreed sign off of the Draft Application to DCLG for £50,000 of match funded commercial grant support to prepare a Development and Investment Strategy for the CSC EZ, together with integrated Development Plans for each of the EZ sites/areas in line with the Draft Implementation Plan.

Application to be submitted by noon on 30th November 2016.

1. **Marketing and Communications**

**7a) Schedule of Events**

Katrina Michel provided an update on a number of successful events since the last Board including Place Northwest Cheshire Development Update (4th October); Ellesmere Port Business Breakfast (14th October); MIPIM UK (19-21st October) including signing of the MoU; and Cheshire Business Leaders at House of Lords.

Steering Group to consider new pipeline of potential events for 2017.

**7b) MIPIM 2017**

Katrina Michel provided a presentation on the MIPIM 2017 proposition (slides provided at Annex B). CSC will be a key proposition alongside Northern Gateway Development Zone, Chester and Warrington New City. Actively seeking partners to support via branding, sponsorship and attendance. Please speak to KM

1. **Finance**

Nothing to report.

1. **Any Other Business**

Chris Farrow asked if Robert Mee could provide a summary of his speech to the House of Lords as reference to others doing similar presentations.

**Next EZ Board – 2pm Thursday 26th January 2017 at Birchwood Park**

**Thursday 15th December 2016 - CANCELLED**