Winsford 1-5 AGM Minutes

Date: 18th September 2026
Location: Meridian House – The Hub
Time: 12:00pm

Present: Name	Company	Name	Company
Phil Lomas	Property Wise Group	Michael Sawicki	Ranger Electrical Services Ltd
Pete Price	Office Essentials	Dan Ranger	Ranger Electrical Services Ltd
Jeremy Meredith	Safety Shield Global	Steve Margerum	Finning UK Ltd
Simon Schofield	Prop Sco Ltd	Troy Gent	Total Industrial Solutions
Melissa Mansfield	IAA UK	Louise Gent	Total Industrial Solutions
Nathan Perrie	Coveris	Hugh Shields (HS)	Groundwork CLM
Gill Williams (GW)	Cheshire West and Chester Council	Greville Kelly (GK)	Groundwork CLM
Nathan Pardoe (NP)	Cheshire West and Chester Council	Adam Gerrard (AG)	Groundwork CLM
Andrew Cooper MP	Office of Andrew Cooper MP	Stephanie Leese (SL)	Groundwork CLM
Teresa Keefe	Office of Andrew Cooper MP	Hayley Owen (HO)	CWAC
Dean Lomas	D C Lomas	Dylan Davies	CWAC
Luke Jackson	OneTek	Jamie Barron	CWAC
Lucy Brissenden	OneTek	Collette Murphy (CM)	C&W Careers Hub
Apologies:			
Darren Alley	Saint Flooring		

		Actions
Welcome	PL welcomed all to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. PL discussed the successes of the BID over the past year and the results of the BID 5 ballot. PL discussed all the positive projects and relationships the BID has fostered.	
Hayley Owen - Combined Authority & Mayor Update	HO presented on the Cheshire & Warrington Combined Authority and the Mayoral elections and priorities. There will be a £650m investment over 30 years. Powers and Policy making will be brought to a local level to make decisions for local areas. Focus points will be transport, housing, skills, investment and growth and strategic regional planning. In March 2027 a Local Transport Authority will be created. The first Mayoral Election for Cheshire and Warrington will be held in May 2027. Until the Mayor is in place, certain aspects can't be devolved. The mayor will work with	

	the three local authorities. There will be powers over transport, housing strategies, skills and business support and planning. An Independent Economic Review will be conducted looking at the region's economy which will inform the mayor's actions.	
CWAC – Winsford Bridge	Dylan Davies and Jamie Barron from CWAC provided an update on the railway bridge. There are just under 400 bridges and various retaining walls that are covered under the team's remit. The bridge has 3 support piers. In the early 2000s the bridge underwent numerous works to the structure. The central pier is only 2.5m from the live railway. Inspections are carried out on all of the structures every 2 years. A detailed inspection took place in 2024. Cracking was found in one of the main beams – another inspection was required 12 months later. The underside and top of the bridge have had investigation works. The concrete repairs on the central pier have now started to fail. There is a concern the concrete may fall on to the train platform. This loose material has now been removed. In April 2026 the DfT announced a £1bil structures fund for local authorities to bid for to remedy broken bridges. A bid has been submitted to DfT – the announcements of whether it will be successful will be in autumn. Consultant has recommended that 40 tonnes is viable with 1 lane, and 7.5 tonnes with 2 lanes. The bridge cannot be 2 lanes of unrestricted traffic. The problem with weight restrictions is that there is no way to police this. A height restriction cannot be added to the bridge to prevent heavy loads. JB discussed traffic management. Temporary lights at the Bostock Roundabout caused more queues. A temporary signal was put on Bostock Road on Friday but this proved to be unsafe. The team have looked to see if the two lanes could run together – Clive Lane and Road One run together. This was unsafe to implement. A temporary restriction of 20 will be put on the bridge along with a new traffic management layout. It is imperative the traffic management plan is adhered to with the 7.5 tonne restriction. ANPR and CCTV will be in place. This will be implemented as quickly as possible and then will be made in to a more permanent situation with enforcement. JB asked if there were any questions. SS – will it go back to normal once the bridge is repaired? Yes it will do. SS – surely this will be a priority. NP – Network Rail only have limited periods to allow closure so this repair work will most likely take years.	

	SS – is the bridge safe without the central column? Anything with the central column will require possession of the railway – can only get Saturday night possession, and for 5 hours at a time. It would require a piled foundation. It is a very challenging environment to work in. CWAC need to be guided by what is possible. SS – would the submission have been different if the report would have been received earlier? If the results had been back earlier then the restrictions would already have been in place – the funders have been updated that the situation has changed with the bridge. JM – longer term possession is for a Christmas close down. Is planning in place for 2026 Christmas or 2027/2028 Christmas. Embargos on the railway can be applied. Can get 2 days or 104 hours depending on when Christmas falls. CWAC believes more is required. There is a significant cost on the council to close the West Coast Mainline for a week. The Council have bid for £16mil. What is the earliest time the embargo is being considered should the funding come through? CWAC is in negotiation with Network Rail and have been for some time. As the funding is not there yet, the embargo discussions have not started. The funding must be used by 30th March 2030. HS – what happens if the funding isn't achieved. 7.5 tonnes two way working is the priority – CWAC would look at if the structure can be temporarily propped and will look at alternative funding streams. SS – are there any other bridges that are having structural issues? Is there a Nationwide plan to review bridges. Vast majority are masonry arch bridges. The early 1960s bridges are the problem. National Highways are replacing a number of these bridges on the M53. MM – is there any way this could have been captured sooner? The bridge has been poorly designed – it has been designed in a way which could not be maintained. One option would be to remove the pier and replace the bridge deck. One option is to completely replace the bridge which would remove the central pier and have more piers further back set well away from the railway. It depends on which is the most cost effective in the long run. New structures now are maintainable and have a 120 year lifespan. What date will the bridge be 2 way again? This will be next week. The signs are bespoke and will be on A frames. There will be a night time closure on the bridge and the signs will be installed overnight. CWAC do not have a date for when the signs will be made. The go ahead has been given by the council. There is a legal aspect as well.	

	The BID will be updating businesses on the bridge. It is important that everyone knows about this and do not allow overweight lorries going over the bridge. Network Rail would close the bridge if it was being misused.	
Presentation of Annual Report and Accounts	HS and SL went through what the BID has delivered over the three themes for improvement (Safe and Secure, Green and Clean, Supported Business Community) over the past year (1st April 2025/31st March 2026). SL presented the finances from the BID year in terms of expenditure and income. There were no questions on the report or the accounts.	
Election of Executive Board	BID Members in attendance were handed a ballot paper to approve or reject the executive board for the next BID year. The board was approved with 100% of the ballots with 14 in agreement.	
Colette Murphy – Cheshire & Warrington Careers Hub	CM presented on the Cheshire & Warrington Careers Hub. The hub works across Cheshire & Warrington to make connections easier, more meaningful and more sustainable. CM discussed what employers need and what needs to be solved. The Careers Hub helps match the need to the correct place. There is a support offer for businesses – the Open Access with toolkits, templates and guidance (this is an information service). Employer members network to support business priorities with careers education. Finding out the needs of businesses and finding out what skills are required and how this can be aligned with local schools. Cornerstones – by invitation is the third tier. Business feedback is that basic skills are lacking, such as communication. Future talent recruitment is an issue and enticing people to do certain types of work – looking for machine operators but people don't want to do this. SS – changes to age and minimum wage brackets haven't helped – businesses will hire people who have more experience than people who have to be trained up. CM discussed upcoming networking opportunities and events.	
AOB	There were no further questions from the businesses. PL thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.	