

WREXHAM CITY BOARD

MINUTES & ACTIONS from Board meeting of 14th August 2025

ATTENDEES

Board Members:

Graham Williams	Chair
Moss Garde	Wrexham University
Joe Yates	Wrexham University
Faye Sheldon	Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
Ian Edwards	Wrexham Business Professionals
Freya Groom	Student Union President
Dawn Roberts-McCabe	AVOW
Lt Col Nicholas Lock	Royal Welsh Fusiliers, British Army
Sam Regan	This is Wrexham Destination Management Partnership
Jess Tyrer (representing MP Andrew Ranger)	Member of Parliament for Wrexham
Alex Jones	Wrexham BID
Matt Smith	Guest Speaker from Key Fund

Technical Advice and Support to Board:

David Fitzsimon	Wrexham County Borough Council
Killian Troy-O'Donovan	Our Future
Owen Davies	Owen Davies Consulting
Adam Greenwood	Owen Davies Consulting
Mike Corcoran	Independent Researcher and Consultant
Natalie Edwards	Administration for Wrexham City Board

1. WELCOME, AND INTRODUCTIONS

Vice Chair, Graham Williams (GW) welcomed all present.

2. ACTIONS AND UPDATES

The previous meeting minutes were approved as correct (proposed by MG and seconded by NL).

Actions were displayed on slide 2.

3. GUEST SPEAKER – MATT SMITH FROM KEY FUND

Killian Troy O'Donovan reminded the board that it is currently exploring using a portion of the Plans for Neighbourhoods funding, to create a far-reaching fund, to provide support and sustainability to projects whilst potentially galvanising other pots of money. KOTD introduced Matt Smith explaining that a similar venture is being explored in Grimsby with Our Futures and Key Fund. Information on the Key Fund can be found here - <https://thekeyfund.co.uk/>

Key points from Matt's presentation

- Key Fund is a social enterprise that invests in community and social enterprises, approx. 100 per year.

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- It has been running for 25 years however at the start, the KF was not structured for future demands and therefore MS advice is that anticipation of future needs, should be factored into the initial foundation rather than alter retrospectively.
- A Wrexham fund would likely take 1 year to establish a pipeline of opportunity and structure.
- Money is often the last thing that people need to succeed, support with confidence, capability, customers, capacity and capital are key. Whilst the first two are time heavy, it unlocks the last three Cs.
- Look for gaps in the market and do not replicate existing markets. No ambiguous language, provide simple and clearly named products and services.
- Risk tolerance is different to normal finance providers; all of their clients have been turned down by 'normal' providers.
- The KF are able to react quickly due to monthly assessment panels and emergency committees which allows for flexibility.

GW thanked MS who confirmed that he would be happy to keep in contact and support the City Board as they don't operate in Wales, therefore there would be no conflict.

KTOD informed the board of the following:

- A Government workshop is taking place next week with policy leads and lawyers regarding the possibility of a Fund for Wrexham.
- A workshop would be run at the end of August involving Wrexham Council colleagues regarding the fund.
- The Board's Governance taskforce would be meeting later this afternoon.

4. ESTABLISHING A COMMUNITY FUND

Killian Troy O'Donovan (KTOD) presented slides 5 – 8 detailing the four potential organisations that could govern and deliver the Fund for Wrexham.

Key points

- Using a funding intermediary would result in lower costs to the new organisation and allows time to build up a reputation.
- FS suggested a risk benefit analysis on each option
- MG suggested that high administration costs should be avoided.

Action

- Board members interested in joining the Governance Task & Finish group to contact Ian Edwards (Chair)
 - KOTD to provide a consolidated note to the Board from Governance Task & Finish group, on the proposed operating model, benefits, risks and preferred organisational structure
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5. WREXCHANGE

Mike Corcoran (MC) presented slide 9 to the board (with reference to the WrexChange options paper that had been circulated prior to meeting).

Key points

- It is a fledging idea based on the board being a convener of partners, organisations and people.
- The event could take place at the new Creative Hub in Queens Square
- Key partners could use the event to explain to the public what they are doing and how public can get involved
- WrexChange could be a quarterly or periodic event, approx. £3-4k required although this

could come from engagement budget and therefore budget lines would not need to be altered.

IE added that the Leadership Alliance could get involved.

MG suggested a hybrid option between options 2 and 3 from the paper with an event where each table was manned by a different board member representing their organisation or sector. An option 2 event could lead to an option 3 event a few weeks later.

The board **APPROVED** that MC should continue working on the proposal.

Action

- Board members to feedback to MC regarding any ideas for WrexChange (see circulation) including potential partner organisations.

6. PLAN FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS: INVESTMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT

AG presented slides 10 – 12 and 15-22 focusing on slide 16, regarding the allocation of the remaining £1.05 million in revenue funding for the first Investment Period 2026/27 to 2029/30.

Key points

- Slide 17 displayed last year's top objectives and it was proposed these provide the basis for identifying projects to support with the programme's revenue funding.
- Mechanisms for selection projects include the Board running one/multiple call/s for projects that deliver against the Board's top objectives which are in line with its Investment Principles.
- A further and final tranche of capacity funding (£150k) will be provided by UK Government in April 2026 following approval of the first Investment Plan. This could be used to help organisations upskill in order to successfully apply for funds. Further discussions about use of existing and future capacity funding to take place in the September meeting.
- DM reflected that many community organisations don't understand the difference between capital and revenue funding. Small and medium community groups will be affected by the national insurance increases. Some of last years objectives and interventions require capital funding and therefore aren't relevant.
- IE queried who would sign off and then, monitor funding applications, the Board or the Council. It was confirmed that the LA as the accountable body for the Government funding will be responsible for administering and monitoring the funds.
- MG suggested that an open call could result in a large amount of administration work and posed that 'WrexChange' could be used to identify community projects.
- OD reminded Board members of previous discussions about wanting to make a visible impact early on and potentially protecting at-risk or scaling up projects known to be effective, for example city centre Street Wardens.
- FS stated that a focus could be on healthier spaces such as cycling routes, community gardens and improved street lighting.
- MC stated that AVOW has the infrastructure to administrate a fund so it could be between LA or AVOW to facilitate.

Action

- AG and OD to review the top objectives and pre-approved interventions from last year and analyse which are suitable for revenue funding.
- Chair and Vice Chair to meet with Political leaders to discuss plan and potential fund

6A. SUPER GROUPS

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MC presented slide 23 to the Board explaining that the Children and Young People engagement group being held on Thursday 21st August is being led by AVOW and builds on Just One Thing engagement piece. All board members were invited to attend and MC confirmed that he and NE would be in attendance. The second event date and time were still awaiting confirmation. The third event will involve pupils attending their school council training sessions, being invited to discuss the Board's plans.

Action

- MC to distribute information on Multi Cultural Engagement event, provisional date for diaries 16th September.
- NE to distribute information on Youth Voice event for Board members to disseminate

6B. Youth Zone Update

OD informed the Board that OnSide had met with Karen Evans and Donna Dickenson from Wrexham Council to discuss expectations and challenges. There will be a stakeholder meeting, organised by OnSide in early September.

Action

- OD to distribute information on next Stakeholder meeting on Youth Zone

7. Feedback from Government Visit

GW informed the Board that four Government officials visited Wrexham on Wednesday 30th July for a brief meeting and Q&A on the Plan for Neighbourhoods, followed by a tour via minibus of the outlying areas of Wrexham including the Wrexham Industrial estate. They then walked through the city centre and viewed areas of regeneration. The visit was positive and well received.

Thanks were given to Wrexham AFC for hosting the visit at their venue.

8. Website

The Board were shown the draft website. MC explained that the Resource Library was the new name for the Book of Wrexham, key documents such as minutes of meetings would be found under the tab of the same name and that there would also be a blog area as well as a section based on the Board members.

The Board were informed that pictures from LinkedIn had been collected to create profiles on each board members.

There was a discussion regarding the website being available in the medium of Welsh.

Action

- Board members to submit an alternative picture or request that they have no picture to Natalie Edwards asap.

9. Programme Manager Recruitment

MG stated that interviews were scheduled for Tuesday 26th July now that the finances had been agreed. It is expected that the role holder will be in position 1-2 weeks after the interview date.

Thanks were given to Andrew Harradine for his help.

10. Any Other Business

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IE raised that the Groves school was in discussion online with conversations steered towards NHS use. OD informed the group that his understanding was that the level of complexity around the site means that it is unlikely that it would be a viable potential site for the prospective Youth Hub.

There was a discussion regarding whether the next meeting could be held as a hybrid meeting, however it has been confirmed that this is not an option.

Next meeting of the City Board is scheduled for **Friday 19th September at 9.30am at JCB on Wrexham Industrial Estate.**

Reminder –

The Dropbox link for member-only documents can be located here -

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/r39zoxz0jur0aywf2scqa/ACIVPbATGxbn_wJX_IRUIZ0?rlkey=qzg6s5s0nx8lb9pwftsjhlf3c&st=w4yjtqqa&dl=0