

Minehead BID Company Limited Board Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on: Date and Time: Tuesday 28 July 2020 at 6pm

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Graham Sizer	GS	(Chairman)
Julian Abraham	JA	(Director)
Ryan Boulton	RB	(Director)
Cllr Mandy Chilcott	MC	(Advisor)
Cllr Andy Hadley	AH	(Advisor)
Cllr Anne Lawton	AL	(Advisor)
Jon Lee	JL	(Director)
Alison Prior	AP	(Director)
Lisa Redston	LR	(Advisor)
Debbie Sawatzki	DS	(Director)
Cllr Terry Venner	TV	(Director)
Jim Whittaker	JW	(Director)

Andrew Hopkins (BID Manager)	AJH	
Sharon Grant (Social Media Manager)	SG	Daffodil PR
Livvi Grant (Social Media Manager)	LG	Daffodil PR
Sarah Wilsher (Minutes)		

GS welcomed Lisa Redston to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves. Lisa informed the meeting that she was the Economic Development Operations Manager for Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) and had been in post since the beginning of June 2020. She had worked for Taunton Deane Borough Council and more recently with West Somerset Council and now SWT for over 20 years. She lived in Taunton and knew the area well.

Apologies

Jacqui Sherwood	JS	(Ambassador)
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Anything to declare

There was nothing to declare.

Matters arising from previous meeting held on 14 July 2020*Events/Public Realm Update – Women 4 Women*

DS reported that she was only happy to do the Women 4 Women event if things improved regarding the coronavirus, and in all likelihood the event could not be held this November due to the limited number of people allowed in stores due to social distancing. Although the event would not require much funding from the BID this would depend on what each shop supplied themselves for the goody bags, refreshments and raffles.

This would be discussed further under the Events/Public Realm update.

Adoption of minutes of the previous meeting

JA proposed and RB seconded that the minutes of 14 July 2020 were an accurate record of the meeting. The proposal was AGREED.

SWT support for town centres – Lisa Redston

Lisa reported that the Leader of the Council and Economic Development Portfolio Holder had enabled a £500,000 emergency fund to be set up for the purposes of supporting town centres in the challenging times of post Covid-19. Of this £500,000, £100,000 had been allocated to Minehead for immediate and short-term projects (within 12 months) including aesthetic improvements and cleanliness. It had been agreed that Minehead BID would be the grantee and accountable body for the spending of the £100,000.

The monies could be used for, but are not limited to, the following:

- Providing advice, guidance and training for small and medium enterprises.
- Digital interventions/enhancements.
- Providing online offers.
- Physical changes and public realm
- Delivery of events and markets.
- Marketing and promotion in general.

A funding agreement would be worked up with Shape, the Council's legal service, which would determine the governance arrangements, monitoring, etc. The funding agreement required an outline indicative plan on how the £100,000 would be spent. This was required within a two-week period.

Lisa emphasised that at this stage the plan should be just indicative and not fully worked up, and be flexible with types of projects that could be changed over time according to circumstances. Engagement with local businesses, residents and visitors should all feed into the plan.

Once the funding agreement had been completed, SWT would sign it and the money would be transferred to the BID's bank account.

Lisa further advised that consultation had taken place amongst the business community via a new email address:

openinghighstreets@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk – whereby businesses had been asked to write in with their ideas, etc. Three webinars – one for Taunton, Wellington and Minehead – had also been held for businesses to look at the immediate and short term plans that SWT would be putting in place to reshape the high streets over the next 12 months. Thirdly, Somerset County Council in conjunction with the District Councils had undertaken a Somerset Business Survey.

AP asked what the time limits were for projects financed by this fund. Lisa said that the projects should be short-term and described them as punchy interventions which were expected to be delivered within a 12-month timeframe, although the 12 month deadline would not be strictly enforced, if there was a need to stretch some projects.

JW asked about the size of the area that the funding should cover. Lisa replied in that the BID would be setting the geographical area, not SWT, as it should be based on local knowledge.

GS raised the issue that Wellington had no BID and no business plan, whilst Taunton would have produced a plan, not yet actioned, for the Taunton BID. Minehead BID had undertaken a major consultation exercise of businesses in Minehead in order to form the BID's business plan and that it had been the culmination of 18 months' work and was being implemented. Covid-19 had, however, changed things. How could all the ideas in the Plan now be sifted in such a short time period.

Lisa advised that SWT were collating the information obtained from the webinars, emails and business survey and that this data, once redacted/data protected, could be given to Minehead BID. With no BID Wellington Town Council would be looking after the high street fund for Wellington and as there was only a small number of staff at the Town Council SWT officers would be offering extra support.

AJH advised that he was comfortable with the principles of what SWT required. An indicative plan could be formed within the next two weeks and then the BID could look at the detail from September onwards.

AL asked if there would be any differentiation between the types of businesses, which could lead to a division being created between those with a high street presence and those without.

GS explained that the BID consultation into the business plan encompassed everyone. The majority of businesses were happy with the plan and others had seen the benefits of the BID's work and were coming on board. This included all businesses, including dentists and solicitors, etc. not just retail outlets.

JA stated that the indicative plan needed to dovetail with the SLA agreement. He was happy to assist with the plan and stressed that it was important to keep it broad at the outset.

JW asked if there would be any opportunities to access more funding?

Lisa said that the BID should look at how far the £100,000 could stretch and that match funding could be drawn in by the BID to boost it.

She was also looking into the possibilities of finding more money for high street recovery and if this was realised then there may be the opportunity for SWT to give more funding.

AJH reminded the meeting that there were other sources available such as the Opening High Streets Safely Fund, which had financed the signage, extra footfall counter and new lamppost banners.

AJH would share the guidelines from Lisa with the Board, together with an outline indicative plan and request their agreement to it by email. He emphasised that the detailed plan of how to spend the money did not need to progress during August as Shape Legal would be formalising the agreement during this time so BID were

unlikely to receive the funding before September. Minehead Town Councillor Andy Kingston-James, Deputy Mayor and Covid-19 representative, would be brought into this conversation too.

ACTION: AJH to circulate to the Board the guidelines regarding the SWT fund and an indicative outline plan on how the £100,000 would be used, for their agreement by email.

Quiz our Council representatives on the BID Board

AP expressed her concern about the influence of so many councillors attending the Board meetings as the lines could become blurred between councillor business and BID business.

AH explained that although there were three different Councils (County, District and Town) there was only one Director seat on the Board for the three Councils and this role rotated around the local authorities on an annual basis. The other Councillors were advisors. The Directors ran BID not the Councillors.

TV advised that he was a Director of BID and a District and Town Councillor. He tried to split the roles so in BID meetings he fulfilled the role of a Director not a Councillor. He was an active person and liked to get involved.

MC said she had a huge interest in BID and was very impressed with their work. She had been involved in the establishment of the BID for about ten years. Most of her advice was given outside of BID meetings as AJH contacted her regularly on County Council issues.

AL added that she was a recent addition to the BID meetings. She did not yet regard herself as a Director as she was still learning about how the BID worked. She saw her role as not to influence events and decisions, but to give a different perspective and to act as a conduit for information between the BID and the Town Council and vice versa. She did not wish to be seen as an interferer. If the BID Board or levy payers felt that there were too many Councillors on the Board this could be looked at.

GS advised that over the years he had enjoyed a good working relationship with the Clerks to Minehead Town Council and the local Councillors.

GS recalled that in the early days of the pandemic and lockdown, Minehead Town Council (MTC) had offered to pay for the signage, however, this had not been required on the whole due to the availability of European monies provided via SWT. The funding from SWT had paid for signage within the town centre as the required eligibility criteria concerning the number of shops within a certain distance could be met. However, due to a lower density of shops, etc. along the seafront and harbour European monies could not be used for the signage for this area. Would MTC be paying for the signage for the seafront and the harbour?

TV advised that Minehead Town Council had set aside £10,000 to be used to mitigate the effects of the pandemic. The Town Council agreed to pay £5,000 from this pot for the signage at the seafront and harbour. The Town Councillors had

worked very hard individually to support the local community, but as an organisation as a whole, may not have done as much towards the Covid crisis as they could.

AL stated that although there had been no organised, co-ordinated response by MTC, they had set aside £10,000 and through the actions of the Mayor, Cllr Paul Bolton, and Cllr Toni Bloomfield, vulnerable people within the community were being supported through a meals on wheels scheme, which extended to Porlock and Carhampton, and the Minehead Coronavirus Support Group had been set up at the outset and was still successfully running. The Town Councillors were all heavily involved and participated in these schemes. The schemes were not funded by MTC.

GS asked if the BID could draw down match funding from MTC from the remainder of the £10,000? AL advised that, since this money had been set aside as an emergency fund, it would depend on what it was to be used for.

AP suggested that in the event of another lockdown food parcels could be purchased from this fund. MC informed the meeting that thousands of food parcels had been distributed by SCC.

JL said that he was very impressed with the way SWT had dealt with the grants. MC said that the response within the County by all organisations had been fantastic. £500,000 in grants had been distributed. However, it was noted that over 30 businesses in Minehead had not claimed a grant, which was of concern as the grant period would shortly expire. Lisa agreed to provide a list of non-claimants in Minehead to AJH.

AJH thanked all the councillors for their valuable contributions to BID and their presence at meetings. BID was proving that they could work together towards positive outcomes for the town.

Financial Update

AJH had previously circulated a financial update report for the period from July to the end of September 2020, as follows:

Expenditure

<i>Advertising and marketing</i>	£ 2,261.79
<i>Bookkeeping and accountancy</i>	£ 24.00
<i>BID manager</i>	£ 0.00
<i>Covid response</i>	£13,769.39
<i>Events</i>	£ 2,750.00
<i>General office expenses</i>	£ 187.15
<i>Insurance</i>	£ 106.37
<i>Postage</i>	£ 170.50
<i>Public realm</i>	£ 179.85

<i>Reducing costs</i>	£	0.00
<i>SWT Bid collection admin</i>	£	875.00
<i>Total expenditure</i>		£20,324.05
<i>Income</i>		
<i>Bid levy</i>	£	0.00
<i>Other income</i>		£10,675.23
<i>Total income</i>		£10,675.23
<i>Balance as at 26/07/2020</i>		£58,105.81

GS was working hard to get the accounts audited by Lentells for the AGM.

MC asked whether the expenditure for 'covid response' and for 'other Income' could be broken down so that it more clearly reflected how much had been spent and on what and details of funding sources, etc. GS replied that these items were broken down and more detailed in the income/expenditure accounts.

AGM and Director update

GS reported that the deadline for nominations for the Board was the end of play on 31 August. Two Directors had retired temporarily.

Directors were needed for the following sectors:

- Hairdressing/beauty
- Non-licensed/hospitality
- Tourism
- Banking

AJH reported that financial information for the back of the levy invoices had been prepared and sent to SWT. The invoices would go out on 2 September.

Marketing/Social Media update

RB reported that BID were looking to use shop vinyls for empty shop windows, to make use of the space and to improve the appearance of the high street. The revised Story Walks had gone live. They would encourage people to be interested in the town and ensure walkers get to see the whole of the town.

Monster Hero Safari had been launched, was up and running and good feedback was being received. If anyone received positive comments could they please send them to Sharon and Livvi to put on social media.

Social media update

Sharon and Livvi spoke to the Social Media Update Report, which had recently been circulated.

- Page views + 77%
- Page likes + 40%
- Post reach + 15%
- Post engagement + 14%

Most engagement was with the scenic photographs of Minehead, which stirred memories, etc. and attracted visitors.

The six A0 posters were arriving on 29 July and would be up by the weekend. Three would be displayed on the sides of the Arkade and three on the eastern side of Electric Avenue. These posters would include the whole town.

They reported that the businesses in The Avenue felt more isolated from the rest of the town and this was increasing

AJH advised that there was currently little difference in footfall. It was only 6% up week on week and this was with Butlins re-opening on 24 July. The new monitor at the Beach Hotel would be in place this week and would provide useful footfall statistics for this end of town.

Sharon and Livvi asked for more information to be sent to them for social media.

a) Minehead Gift Card

RB reported that as there would be no late night Christmas shopping events within the town he would like the gift card scheme to be looked at again. DS agreed and advised that from talking to local businesses about the scheme she had not received any negative comments. If there were any delays there would be nothing in place for Christmas.

RB reminded the Board that the initial set up cost was £7,000; the monthly fee would be £350 (reduced from £500) and the BID would have to pay 5% of the sales made. For example, if £35,000 was made in sales, BID would have to pay £1,750.

AP was concerned about the expense of setting up and running the scheme, particularly as it entailed BID paying a percentage of the sales, which would be an unknown and difficult to budget for. She felt that discounts and money off tokens by individual businesses would be cheaper and could be just as effective. DS said that personally she could not afford to give more discounts.

It was noted that the SWT fund of £100,000 could not be used for the gift card.

JW stated that he had not seen a cost-benefit analysis but it did seem to be an awful lot of money, which could probably be reduced with a home-grown app. He felt Minehead was too small a town to gain the full benefits of such a scheme and despite the costs to be paid out BID would still need to manage and market the scheme and identify outlets, etc. JA said that there was a need to look at it in more detail as the cost could be damaging.

GS offered to talk to Kendal, the smallest town who used the gift card, and it was noted that both Winchester and Salisbury had advised that it worked if part of a package.

As a number of Directors were concerned about the costs involved in the scheme, RB decided not to proceed with a vote on the proposal and it was decided to shelve the idea.

As an aside, TV felt that free car parking was very beneficial for the town and asked if this could be extended to the Christmas period. AH advised that in Taunton businesses were tending to use the car parks, which prevented shoppers from parking.

b) Summer Ambassadors update

AJH reported that four members of staff from the Minehead Information Centre had acted as ambassadors last weekend (24 and 25 July). They had given out 250 information packs, received positive feedback and talked to businesses. They would be in Minehead again for the next five weekends, including Bank Holiday Monday.

The Visit Minehead guide had been reprinted plus the food and drink map, which had been updated to link with the 'eat out to help out' scheme.

The steam bus had taken 100 passengers each day. Entertainer, Damian Patton, would be in the town during the weekends in August.

Events/Public Realm Update

GS reported the following:

- Eat Minehead - the banners were up along with the yellow road closure sign.
- 40's Weekend – Robin Wichard had booked nine entertainers and there was the possibility of an additional two.
- No further action had been taken on the Christmas events.

a) Minehead Cycle Grand Prix update

- GS had consulted 23 shops and businesses along the new route. Of these thirteen had been open and had completed the consultation form. Two were against the event. Minehead Cycling Club wanted all businesses to be consulted before they were prepared to be involved in the 2021 Grand Prix. GS said that the Cycling Club wanted a response by the second week in August, but he did not have enough time to talk to all the businesses. Could the ambassadors help?

MC felt that they were unlikely to ever achieve a 100% consensus from all businesses and AH agreed, saying that there would always be complainants, and it was only possible to go with the majority view.

AJH stated that the cycling competitions were not a priority over the next two weeks. As the Cycling Club wanted the BID to do all the paperwork for the event, consult businesses, undertake the risk assessment, etc. an event organiser would need to be employed. This was not the right time to take this forward.

JA proposed and TV seconded not to go ahead with the Cycling Event for 2021. The proposal was AGREED.

ACTION: AJH to write to Minehead Cycling Club with the Board's decision.

- Women 4 Women – DS read out the report of the meeting organisers, as follows:

Going forward it is definitely not going to happen this side of Christmas by the original organisers. I have one key shop owner who now has other priorities and does not want to work in the evening. I think lockdown and quality of our own lives has made people think what is more important; I know I feel this way.

The idea of this is to make money for our shops but with some shops having a one-in- one-out system, this evening does not work and the wearing of masks in shops means we cannot offer refreshments as this was a social event too. Social distancing is still in place and is likely to stay that way over the Winter.

Also, we all feel that the complaints from others were not on. We felt we had a good idea that worked and others wanted to cash in on our success. The town is in two parts, we cannot get away from that - you have the top and the bottom half. This event was to celebrate women-only led businesses and for women only to shop. This event was held at the top half of town and to make sure women on their own didn't have too far to walk, which came back in feedback following the first event as a good idea. There was nothing to say anyone else couldn't copy this idea in another format.

We had one hairdresser open to see how it could work for them. Christy from Attractions would be very happy to explain to anyone that it's a retail event with added therapists and cooks in those retail shops and it was a complete waste of time for her. Also Christy was the only one asked as she couldn't do the first year as pregnant. I did ask another, but they were not listening when asked and gave us awful problems as said we hadn't. The first year we had a coffee shop open, but it was also a waste of time for them and they closed early.

If someone else wants to take over the event, I have the bags and the tickets and all that would be needed is money for posters. Ideas were given to others who had complained about not being part of this event to enable them to hold similar events, but nothing happened.

GS asked DS and the Board if they would like the Chamber of Trade to take this event on next year? This was agreed.

GS provided a public realm update, as follows:

The promised bunting hadn't arrived. Another source had been found and it would be arriving on 29 July and be up by the weekend.

Public benches – SCC's solicitors would be consulting those affected by their removal.

Date of next meetings

It was decided to hold a public realm/events sub-group meeting on 1 September prior to the 40's Weekend.

The next Board meeting would be held on Tuesday, 15 September.

The AGM would be held on Tuesday, 22 September.

The meeting finished at 7.42pm

SW 3-8-20