

**Minehead BID Company Limited Board Meeting**

Minutes of meeting held on:                      Date and Time: Tuesday 21 April 2020 at 6pm

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:**

Graham Sizer	GS (Chairman)
Ryan Boulton (D)	RB
Cllr Mandy Chilcott	MC (Advisor)
Tracy-Anne Fraser	TF (Ambassador)
Cllr Andy Hadley	AH (Advisor)
Jackie Jago	JJ (Ambassador)
Jon Lee (D)	JL
Martin Neal	MN (Ambassador)
Alison Prior (D)	AP (part of meeting)
Debbie Sawatzki (D)	DS
Craig Stone	CS (Advisor) standing in for Sam Murrell
Cllr Terry Venner (D)	TV

Andrew Hopkins (BID Manager)    AJH

Sarah Wilsher (Minutes)

GS welcomed everyone to the Zoom meeting. He explained that the BID had been set up to enhance the business streetscape via events, public realm and marketing. However, the situation had changed with Covid-19 and now BID's role was to help businesses in any way that they could. AJH had brought forward many new initiatives and put in much time, for which GS gave thanks on behalf of the Board.

Everyone introduced themselves. Traders explained how business was going in the lockdown. It was noted that some businesses, such as Threads run by JJ, were increasingly busy with online, email and telephone sales as people at home kept busy with needlework projects, etc. DS said that online sales of shoes were increasing at the Lovely Boutique. She had also noticed that the Glenmore Bakery was doing well. JL explained that due to the nature of their business it was not possible for Stuarts to operate at the current time and the only businesses in demand in Friday Street were the two computer shops. RB added that 1300 branches of The Card Factory had closed. TF and MN, due to personal circumstances, were working from home and experiencing few if any sales. AP was in a similar situation and had only recently started selling a few items online. Business proprietors were finding the Government grant a godsend.

**1. Apologies**

Jacqui Sherwood

JS (Ambassador)

## **2. Anything to declare**

There was nothing to declare.

## **3. Matters arising from previous meeting held on 17 March 2020**

GS reported that DS and JL had given him the completed GDPR forms. DS advised that she had some more and would send them to him.

## **4. Adoption of minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of 17 March 2020 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. DS proposed and JL seconded that the minutes be adopted. The proposal was AGREED.

## **5. Coronavirus Update – work so far**

AJH spoke to the BID Manager Update, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. He explained that he had been working within Stage 1 – Crisis, providing reassurance and assistance, allaying concerns and keeping in regular contact with members. Also, liaising with Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT), Visit Exmoor, Visit Somerset and Somerset County Council and gleaning valuable information from the SW Bids Group, Association of Town and City Management (ATCM) and Central Government, which was being disseminated through Facebook, Messenger, e-newsletters and on the BID website. He had also been collating information on those businesses still able to trade and promoting these businesses on social media, etc.

### **Recovery Plan**

AJH put forward a 14-point plan for Stage 2 – Pre-Recovery for discussion by the Board, as follows:

- 1) Prepare and circulate a survey to all BID levy payers and other businesses in the town to understand their thoughts and issues.

It was decided that instead of a survey, phoning and/or emailing businesses to find out how they were would be preferable and more personal than a paper survey.

A major concern was that 160 businesses in Minehead had not applied for the Government grant. AJH had obtained a list of the addresses from SWT, but unfortunately due to GDPR this did not give the business name, and for some premises, such as those on Mart Road, where only a Unit number was given, it was difficult to ascertain which business it related to. It was agreed that there was an urgent need to contact these businesses, particularly as there was the worry that the Government would take back unclaimed funds. CS advised that out of 4,000 businesses across the District Council's area 1,600

had not applied for a grant. An agency was being used to contact them on behalf of the Council.

The list of 160 Minehead businesses would be divided up between the Directors so that they could contact those in their area, although it was noted that the businesses in Minehead Enterprise Park (including Mart Road) were outside the BID levy area. The Councillors were also asked to contact businesses too.

- 2) Lobby the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and MP on identified issues.
- 3) Set up a task and finish group to take the BID recovery plan forward; complemented by a Marketing Group and Town Centre Group.
- 4) Liaise with SWT, SCC, Visit Exmoor and Visit Somerset on their recovery plans and ensure the BID recovery plan fits in with these.
- 5) Liaise with accommodation providers and tourism related businesses within and outside the BID area.
- 6) Liaise with the large employers - Butlins, the supermarkets, West Somerset Railway.
- 7) Continue to make use of the information being shared by ATCM, British BIDs and the High Street Task Force.
- 8) Establish a relationship with British Independent Retail Association (BIRA) and the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB).
- 9) Establish a relationship with neighbouring Chambers of Commerce and business groups for joint working and information sharing.
- 10) Keep businesses in the town informed.
- 11) Appoint the person or company who will be looking after the BIDs social media platforms.
- 12) Keep the BID's webpages and content up to date and ready for recovery.
- 13) Agree a direct advertising campaign to support those businesses that are ready to trade.
- 14) Promote and encourage people to attend webinars and training courses available.

It was noted that whilst some landlords were sympathetic in the current circumstances, others were less understanding. The Government grant could help in this respect but traders also had other outgoings including the cost of their stock, and in some cases the grant was needed for more essential items such as food. GS reported that he and AJH had compiled a list of landlords in the BID area and GS would be writing to them to ask them to be considerate of their tenants at this time.

AJH reported that Wellington Town Council had set up an initial fund of £10,000 to support businesses in the recovery stage. TV advised that Minehead Town Council (MTC) had put £10,000 into the community pot to help people now in the crisis stage.

AJH put forward the proposal that Minehead BID set up a pot of £10,000 to help businesses in the crisis and pre-recovery stages. It was agreed that funding was required to promote a Shop Local Scheme to Minehead residents, and that in order to reach the elderly and those who did not use the internet, the guides should be printed and circulated to householders and published in the West Somerset Free Press. Following the discussion DS proposed and TV seconded that such a funding pot be established. The proposal was AGREED.

GS suggested that the BID approach other businesses outside the BID area to help formulate a recovery plan, such as the financial institutions, hotels and guest houses, the businesses within Minehead Enterprise Park (Mart Road and the surrounding area).

AJH advised that he had recently sat on a Visit Exmoor Recovery Plan meeting. Visit Somerset and Visit Exmoor were working with partners on a South West Recovery Plan. CS reported that the County Recovery Plan was being led by James Hassett, Chief Executive of SWT. If the BID wished to feed into this they could contact Gordon Dwyer at SWT. MC advised that the Police, NHS, Fire & Rescue Service, Chamber of Trade, LEP, SCC, SWT, etc. were all working together under Gold command.

## **6. Agree projects and activities to retain**

AJH spoke to the BID project list and explained that those projects/activities in red were committed, whilst those in white could be either retained, or deleted to save money. The following items were agreed:

### **Admin**

Audit of accounts – committed

Bank account charges – committed

BID Manager – retain

Bookkeeper – retain

British BIDs membership – committed

CIVICA administration charge – committed

Town Watch and Pub Watch – retain

Minute taker – retain

Notification of AGM – committed

PO Box – committed

Public Liability – committed

South West BIDs Group – retain

Storage Unit Hire – committed

SWT admin charge – committed

Xero accounts package – committed

## **Events**

With regards to the proposed events it was agreed at the present time not to decide on any events for this year until the long-term situation was known. CS advised that most events on SWT land had been cancelled, although a couple of organisers for events at the end of July and into August were holding on. TV informed that MTC were still hoping to continue with the Christmas celebrations, but all events up to October would no longer go ahead with the exception of the pencilled in date for Eat Minehead on the 22 August.

AJH reported that of the £3,000 committed to the Steampunk Festival £2,000 had been lost due to fees and bookings that couldn't be refunded. It was hoped to transfer the remaining £1,000 to a Steampunk Festival in 2021.

The state of play in respect of the Minehead Triathlon was not known. AJH would contact JW for an update.

**ACTION: AJH to contact JW for an update on the Minehead Triathlon.**

## **Marketing and Communications**

Business Directory – committed

Car Park initiatives – this would be dependent upon recovery plans

Coach welcome packs – retain

Empty shop dressing – retain

Featured articles on Minehead – this would be dependent on recovery plans

Full Coach Friendly Status – committed and can be prepared for 2021

Leaflet stand to promote Minehead – this had been stalled

Members newsletter – this would now be delivered as an e-newsletter so the collation of email addresses was crucial

Press releases (2 per month) – retain

Print advertising – retain for Shop Local campaign

Business noticeboards and maps in Town Centre – retain

Social media – BID Twitter Page – retain for Shop Local campaign

Social media – Visit Minehead Facebook/Instagram Page – retain for Shop Local campaign

Springboard footfall monitors – retain

Story walks – committed

Visit Exmoor membership – committed

Visit Somerset membership – committed

## **Public Realm**

It was decided that the bunting, flags, hanging baskets should all be postponed for 2020. DS asked if shops could put Union Jack flags in their windows for VE Day and this was agreed.

Christmas lights – it was decided that his project should be put on the backburner and work towards delivery in 2021.

Replacing damaged and old trees in the BID area – retain. It was felt that this could continue.

Public Seating – Recycle old SWT seats for The Avenue – AJH asked TV to chase MTC to send the letter required by SCC Highways to site the benches in The Avenue.

**ACTION: TV to chase MTC re siting benches in The Avenue.**

## **Reducing Costs**

Meercat Associates – this scheme would be stalled for the time being.

Plastic Free Minehead – this project would be postponed as the Somerset Wildlife Trust staff had been furloughed.

The meeting agreed that an event should be put on for the re-opening of the town, whenever that was able to happen.

## **7. Defibrillator funding application for the Harbour and Café 21**

AJH spoke to the funding proposal forms, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. He reported that two applications for funding had been received independently to support the installation of defibrillators in different parts of the BID levy area. One from Jacqui Sherwood for Café 21 in The Avenue and the other from Richard Newton for a unit to be installed at the Harbour. He suggested that £200 be given to each scheme, however, as Richard Newton had already received the £1,600 necessary for the machine and no longer needed the full £200, AJH suggested that £100 be given for legacy funding beyond year 1. TV proposed and JL seconded that £200 be given for a defibrillator in Café 21 and £100 be given for a defibrillator at the Harbour. The proposal was AGREED.

## **8. Financial Update**

AJH reported that there was £70,000 in the bank. Following advice from British BIDs who confirmed the BID needed to issue invoices for the levy in July as normal but

AJH was reluctant to do this on this date and it was agreed AJH will see whether the date they are sent out was delayed and whether we could introduced a monthly payment scheme. Lobbying was taking place at a national level by ATCM, British BIDs, the Institute of Place Management and SW BIDS Group to the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills at the Government to pick up the BID levy that would be due.

#### **9. Dates of future meetings**

Board meeting to be held on Tuesday, 19 May 2020 at 6pm

**The meeting finished at 7.40pm**

SW 23-4-20