

Minehead BID Company Limited Board Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on: Date and Time: Tuesday 12 March 2019 at 6pm

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Graham Sizer	GS	(Chairman)
Andrew Hopkins	AJH	(BID Manager)
Chris Corbett	CC	
Ryan Boulton	RB	
Cllr Andy Hadley	AH	
Jon Lee	JL	
Deborah Sawatzki	DS	
Jim Whittaker	JW	
Gordon Dwyer	GD	(Advisor)
Sarah Wilsher (Minutes)	SW	

AGENDA ITEMS**1. Apologies**

Naomi Waters NW

2. Meercat Presentation by Rishi Sood, Managing Director

Rishi reported the following:

- Meercat Associates Ltd was set up 11 years ago, initially working with the Camden BID, looking at reducing costs, neutralising levy payments and supporting businesses.
- Meercat established the National BID Buying Group in 2008.
- They have assisted 25,000 businesses and made £21M savings.
- Main services covered: Energy, Telecoms, Waste. Others include: merchant fees, pest control, water, testing, stationery and security.
- Find local suppliers as well as national ones.
- Deliver bespoke solutions for businesses.
- Provide leverage to get better deals with existing suppliers as well as new suppliers.
- Have worked with coastal BIDS of a similar size to Minehead:
 - Hastings BID – saved £25,000 in the first few months.
 - Aberystwyth BID – saved £100,000 and greatly improved the poor image of the BID.
- Exeter BID – invested £40,000 in 3 years for a £200,000 return.

- The first few months can show little change. It can take years to make a return, as old contracts cease and new suppliers are taken on.
- Meercat is not a sales agent, no commission is obtained and it is transparent and accountable.

The Question and Answer session provided the following information:

- An allocated local consultant (former Swindon BID Manager) would come in, with a support team, to meet and assist interested businesses.
- Consultants stay in different B&Bs/hotels in the area and assess services whilst there.
- Costs incurred by a business can be validated if no better supplier available.
- Businesses have six-monthly reviews.
- BID members only should be entitled to all Meercat's services in the first instance. A voluntary membership could then be introduced which allows access to certain services.
- If there is a poor take up by businesses Meercat will say that the scheme is not working.
- Meercat's services can be terminated within the first 30 days.
- The fee is less in year 2 as the data, etc. has been collected in year 1. BIDS tend to go passive for a year or so after year 2, and then are proactive up to year 5. There is no obligation to continue to year 2 if the BID does not wish to, otherwise year 2 can be agreed about 1-2 months before the end of the first 12 months.
- Meercat Associates can help the BID to achieve a more positive reputation amongst local businesses.
- Businesses like dentists, hairdressers who tend not to benefit from events being put on, would be able to benefit from BID membership

Rishi Sood then left the meeting.

RB advised that he had spoken to businesses in Exeter – Phoenix Theatre, cafes, etc. The Exeter BID had started with Meercat Associates, then changed to another Company. After six months they went back to Meercat. Meercat greatly enhanced the profile of the Exeter BID.

Following a discussion, DS proposed and JW seconded that the BID sign up with Meercat Associates for 12 months. The proposal was AGREED.

3. Anything to declare?

Nothing was declared.

4. Matters arising from previous meeting

None.

5. Adoption of minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

6. Company Secretary Update

CC and AJH reported the following:

AJH was working on Zero accounting with Ian Melhuish. All accounts would be digitally recorded by the end of the financial year – 31 March 2019. However, the five-year life of the BID had started on 1 July 2018 so it was suggested changing the financial year end to the end of June.

£1,500 of levy had not been paid and 14 businesses would be taken to court once the new district council (Somerset West and Taunton) had been formed.

A copy of the BID Business Plan plus a covering letter would be given to new owners of businesses in order to get them on board. Unfortunately there was no obligation for businesses to inform the Council of changes in ownership. However, AJH was liaising with SWT to try to ascertain future changes and how the council would meet its obligations to update business records.

7. BID Manager Update

The Update as previously circulated was noted.

8. Events Sub-Committee Update

JW reported that the Sub-Committee had looked at a variety of funding requests.

Unfortunately some requests were not fully justified or substantiated and had therefore been rejected.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that funding requests needed to meet the BID's strategic plan and that the application form needed to be more specific and ask more detailed questions relating to finance, risk assessment, etc. A checklist could be drawn up asking for (as appropriate) a health and safety policy, emergency action plan, breakdown of costings, details of other funding, details of promotion of the event, use of the BID brand, etc.

It was also agreed that it could be useful to invite funding applicants to give a presentation to the Board.

a) May Day proposal – 1 May 2019 at Wellington Square, Minehead.

DS proposed and AH seconded that the request for £906 be approved. The proposal was AGREED.

b) Chapter 8 Training. It was agreed that funding be provided based on the trainees being agreeable to officiate at BID events. DS proposed and GS

seconded. The proposal was AGREED. AJH had found cheaper training than the £1,100 requested and would go back to Gateway Events with the information.

- c) Steampunk proposal – 4, 5 and 6 May 2019. GS proposed and RB seconded that the BID underwrite the event to a maximum of £5,000. The proposal was AGREED.

9. Public Realm Sub-Committee Update

The following was reported:

40 hanging baskets were up.

A cheaper Company was being sought in respect of the dressing of empty shops.

The seafront development had started, but the benches would not be freed up until a later date. GD would circulate the weblink to the drawings for information. It was agreed that the plans of the new development needed to be displayed on the construction fence(s) to show what was being put in place.

The funding request of £500 for BID printed hi-vis jackets to support the Spring clean Litter Pick Up had been approved by the Sub-Committee.

Tesco were on board with the pick-up.

- a) Bunting and Flag Project – June to November 2019. It was recognised that more needed to be done in the lower part of the town and that the cost would include permanent items which could be used on a regular ongoing basis. AH proposed and DS seconded that the request for £8,370 be approved. The proposal was AGREED.

DS said that signage for Holloway Street had also been discussed at the meeting and JL advised that where trees had been removed it was planned to talk to SCC about the planting of replacement trees which could be funded/sponsored by residents who wished to have a memorial tree for loved ones.

10. Marketing and Communications Sub-Committee Update

In NW's absence AJH reported the following:

Following a meeting with the Chair of the Minehead Development Trust, the Minehead Bay website proposals would be looked at at some point in the future once a wider discussion had taken place on how we wanted Minehead to be marketed as a destination.

The funding request of £500 for BID banners to promote the BID's support of events had been approved by the Sub-Committee.

The funding request of £500 to commission a leaflet stand to promote Minehead in Butlins reception, as agreed with Julian Highfield, had been approved by the Sub-Committee.

The funding request of £500 to commission the services of Chris and Debbie Rundle to produce regular press releases to promote the work of Minehead BID had been approved by the Sub-Committee. Debbie would be commencing work on this next week.

The funding of retail and customer service masterclasses at a cost of £1,500 had been rejected. GD and AJH were looking at another proposal for support for retail businesses provided by the Local Economic Partnership.

11. Any other business

AJH advised that a bumper newsletter would be going out during the week commencing 18 March which would include a nine-month review, future events and activities, etc.

GD circulated posters advertising 'Business Breakfasts' at The Beach Hotel from 8.30am to 9.30am, as follows:

Going Digital – 27 March 2019

Developing Talent within Your Business (apprenticeships) – 30 May 2019

Hinkley Point C project update – 25 July 2019.

These events would be advertised in the newsletter and JW offered to promote them to the West Somerset Business Group which had about 40-50 members.

DS told news of shops and banks possibly closing within the town.

AJH reminded Board members to please let him know the hours of time they spend on BID matters.

12. Date of next Board meeting – Tuesday 9 April

Events and Public Realm sub-groups meeting – Tuesday 2 April

Other sub-groups to be agreed

Meeting finished at 7.40pm

SW – 13.3.19