

Minehead BID Company Limited Board Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on: Date and Time: Wednesday, 22 May 2019 at 6pm

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

| | | |
|------------------|-----|---------------|
| Graham Sizer | GS | (Chairman) |
| Andrew Hopkins | AJH | (BID Manager) |
| Chris Corbett | CC | |
| Jon Lee | JL | |
| Deborah Sawatzki | DS | |
| Naomi Waters | NW | |
| Sam White | SW | |
| Jim Whittaker | JW | |
| Mark Wathen | MW | (Advisor) |

Sarah Wilsher (Minutes)

AGENDA ITEMS**1. Apologies**

Ryan Boulton RB

2. Minehead Gift Card – presentation by Colin Munro, MD from Miconex

Colin explained that the gift card was a pre-paid Mastercard based card, which could be spent at those businesses registered with the scheme – retail outlets, cafes/restaurants, leisure facilities, health and beauty, etc. Based on a Swedish model, the first Miconex gift card had been launched in Perth in 2015 where there was a population of 45,000. There were 33 gift card programmes, 25 of which had been set up for BIDS.

He highlighted the following:

- Up to 45% more than the value of the gift card was likely to be spent.
- Most redemptions were after Christmas in January/February.
- Can be used as a staff incentive.
- Programmes grow through sales of gift cards extending through families, colleagues and friends.
- An expiry period of 12 months for a gift card was considered best for the consumer. If more than 12 months was given less of the card

tended to be spent and the value remaining (average of 15%) could be used to offset the cost of the programme. For example, an average gift card had a value of £40. If 15% was not redeemed £6 would be returned to the BID.

- If the card was not redeemed 100% of the non-redeemed funds would go to the BID.
- 600 independents and 170 national brands were in the system.
- The card is often used as local currency for use on everyday items/foods.
- The card can be sold online or over the counter.

In responses to queries from the Board, the following information was provided:

- Individual businesses could find out how much the gift card scheme had benefitted them from the BID, who would collect the money and have access to the data.
- A Mastercard client account would need to be set up and an initial deposit made in order to run the programme.
- There was a one-off set up cost of £10,000 providing 5,000 cards. This sum could be phased over a number of years.
- Fees would be paid to Miconex to license the programme, set up a website listing the businesses registered with the scheme, training for BID, etc.
- The total cost of paying up front in year one would be £16,000.
- A town with a similar population to Minehead which had recently set up a gift card was Enniskillen with a population of 16,000.
- A consumer could use a number of gift cards to make one purchase.
- A consumer could use the value of one gift card to make a number of purchases.
- The gift card could not be used to make an online purchase.
- E money programmes were available.
- The gift card was aimed at all ages, but could have more appeal to the elderly population.
- The scheme could be used to attract voluntary members, paying a fixed fee to BID to become a member of the gift card scheme, which would enable the card to be used outside the catchment area of the BID, e.g. at market stalls.

The Board agreed that if the card could be redeemed at Butlins it would make it more attractive.

3. Visit Somerset – John Turner, CEO and Giles Adams, Chair

John reported that Visit Somerset was a not-for-profit business and based in Wookey Hole. He described how Visit Somerset could support Minehead's marketing strategy as a visitor destination. Their new website reached from Bath to Exmoor, supporting marketing and businesses. Locally they worked with Visit Exmoor, the Hinkley Tourism Action Partnership, the West Somerset Railway, Sheppy's Cider and Quantock Ales. They lobbied MP's locally and nationally in respect of the visitor economy and represented the county at about eight conferences per annum.

John explained that marketing Minehead online as a visitor attraction was very important, particularly as travel packages sold through travel agents were losing favour and visitors preferred to tailor their own holidays and days away using the internet. Visit Somerset were working with Weston College's Web Build Project and if Minehead BID became a member of Visit Somerset, they would benefit from this development plus have their own webpages on the Visit Somerset website, with regular free locally run training sessions.

John emphasised that Visit Somerset wished to build strong relationships with the BID and would visit once per month to talk to businesses about what was working and what wasn't.

The cost to BID to join Visit Somerset would be £5,000 plus a one-off cost of £600 to update their own webpages on the Visit Somerset website.

Questions were then raised as follows:

- How will Visit Somerset benefit an individual business?

There are 25 million visits per annum to Somerset. This could include visits to Minehead.

- Would retail outlets have to update their own webpages?

There would be one dynamic 'platform' for all outlets, which was more user friendly and include itineraries, offers, promotions, events, things to see and do, competitions, etc. which would change on a monthly basis. Offers, etc. would be personalised depending on viewers' interests, as per the Amazon model.

It was noted that use of the Minehead Bay and Visit Somerset brand could lead to conflicting messages for consumers. The BID is still considering their position in respect of Minehead Bay.

4. Meercat Associates Update - Rishi Sood, MD

Rishi circulated booklets advertising Meercat's savings advisory service, which was available to BID members. He reported that he had covered 20 meetings over two days. If any more businesses wanted a meeting whilst he was in Minehead to let him know. Updates would be provided to AJH.

5. Anything to declare?

Nothing was declared.

6. Matters arising from previous meeting

Public Realm - AJH reported that he had met with Somerset County Council's Tree Officer who was very enthusiastic about a replacement tree scheme. He was looking into a proposal for Minehead which, if successful, could be rolled out across Somerset. AJH was awaiting details of the scheme.

Events - Letters about the cycle event had been distributed to businesses along The Avenue, plus to all residents affected and taxi drivers impacted by the road closure.

Local Authority Board representatives - DS had not been able to speak to Mandy Chilcott. AJH advised that he had had positive meetings with Minehead Town Council and the new Chair (Sandra Slade) and Vice Chair (Paul Bolton) and it was felt we should ask the Town Council to appoint a representative at this year's AGM. At the town Annual meeting a wish for the BID to deliver had been expressed.

7. Adoption of minutes of the previous meeting

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

8. Company Secretary Update

CC reported the following:

Receipts for the year so far - £99,055

Main expenses for the year so far:

Marketing - £509

Public Realm - £1,760

Consulting - £7,691

Events - £15,730

Subscriptions - £1,674

Bank balance as at today's date - £66,701.55

CC needed to meet with Ian Melhuish regarding the online annual tax return on Zero Accounting. JW advised that he used Zero Accounting and offered to help.

9. BID Manager's Monthly Report

The Update as previously circulated was noted. In addition, AJH reported that he had met with James Hassett, CEO of Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT), regarding Blenheim Gardens and was working with the Licensing Specialist, John Rendell. There was a need to do a procurement exercise to find a temporary mobile catering provision for the Summer whilst the cafe was closed.

The Government had introduced a £40million future high streets fund for improving heritage. AJH was meeting with the Heritage at Risk Specialist at SWT to arrange to show her around Minehead.

James Hassett had agreed, that if BID pays for the bunting, flags, etc. SWT would cover the cost of installing.

Eleven court summonses for non-payment of BID levy had been issued. These would be heard at the magistrates court on 5 June. AJH would be attending. AJH and GS had offered to meet businesses to explain the levy situation. The bills for next year would be issued on 6 July 2019.

10. Events Update

a) Minehead Steampunk Festival

AJH and GS reported that the engagement with businesses had been positive. The Festival had been small in scale but it was a good template to work on. The evening shows at the Regal Theatre had been long and a little risqué. According to Lewis Lintern about £1,000 had been taken in ticket sales. David Smith, the organiser, was keen to run a festival again next year, when it was proposed to spread it around the town and use smaller venues, such as pubs. The BID had underwritten the Steampunk Festival by £5,000.

It was acknowledged that there was a need to advertise events earlier and that posters were needed in all the shops. Local press - Somerset County Gazette and the West Somerset Free Press - and local radio - West Somerset Radio had covered the festival, but the potential link with Visit Somerset would mean details of events could be spread more easily around the rest of the County.

DS proposed and CC seconded that the Steampunk Festival be held in 2020 and be underwritten by BID by £5,000. The proposal was AGREED.

It was noted that BIDs financial input would be reduced to the Cycle Festival, which would release more funds for future events.

b) Steam Bus Proposal

It was agreed in principle to fund the steam bus. Whether the bus be held in conjunction with the artisan market on Saturday mornings or be a separate attraction, and on which days it should run and the route it should take would be considered further.

11. Public Realm Update

JL reported that floral baskets would be displayed in the first week of June. There were eight benches available. Four businesses owning forecourts would take one each and SWT would hold the remainder until planning permission was secured to locate these in town.

A walk had been undertaken around Minehead. Weeds needed clearing but, on the whole, it was pretty clean. AJH advised that he had walked around today with SWT and they would be coming back with details of their areas of responsibility. BT had been approached in respect of replacement phone boxes. Bus shelters needed cleaning/refurbishing. JL had cleaned the BaileyMac shopfront. Bins were inconsistent in style and not always stable on the ground. Benches in Wellington Square were damaged and due to the pigeons in Wellington Square Queen Anne's statue and the Square needed cleaning. The feeding of the birds by local residents did not help. GS advised that the School litter pick up had been postponed, but the tabards were available.

County Highways were in favour of the bunting. This would go around the town centre. GS would obtain quotes for the bunting. SWT had agreed to erect it. Permission would be needed from the property owners to attach the bunting.

The works on The Esplanade in respect of planting, play areas, etc. was discussed. MW informed that Derek Merson had complained about the dust and he would be talking to Nicki MacLean at SWT about this. There had been some positive feedback from visitors about the flower beds but there was an issue with weeding and maintenance and who would be responsible once the

contractors had moved off the site. The drains needed clearing of sand but this was an ongoing issue.

12. Any other business

Proposal to join the SW BIDS Group

It was AGREED to pay a voluntary contribution of £150 to join SW BIDs Group.

Minehead Gift Card

The Gift Card was proposal was discussed, with the following comments:

- Good idea for the elderly population, particularly as potential birthday/Christmas presents.
- Brings businesses together.
- Money could be spent in Butlins and in the town.
- Can be used in non-tourist outlets, such as hairdressers.
- There is sufficient funding in the marketing and communications budget to pay for the scheme.

It was agreed that AJH would ask Colin Munro for different funding proposals for consideration at a future meeting.

Visit Somerset

The Board agreed that there was a need to promote Minehead more widely. JW proposed and GS seconded that the BID become a member of Visit Somerset. The proposal was AGREED.

13. Date of next Board meeting – Wednesday, 12 June 2019

Events and Public Realm sub-groups meeting –
Other sub-groups to be agreed

Meeting finished at 8pm

SW – 5.6.19