

Minehead BID Company Limited Board Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on: Date and Time: Tuesday 23 June 2020 at 5pm

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Graham Sizer	GS (Chairman)
Cllr Mandy Chilcott	MC (Advisor)
Cllr Andy Hadley	AH (Advisor)
Jon Lee (D)	JL – part of meeting
Sam Murrell	SM (Advisor)
Martin Neal	MN (Ambassador) – part of meeting
Alison Prior (D)	AP
Debbie Sawatzki (D)	DS

Chris Parker Miconex

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

GS welcomed Chris Parker from Miconex to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

1. Apologies

Julian Abraham	JA (Advisor)
Ryan Boulton (D)	RB
Tracy-Ann Fraser	TF (Ambassador)
Anne Lawton	AL (Advisor)
Scott Murphy	SM (Advisor)
Cllr Terry Venner (D)	TV

2. Update on sub-groups

GS explained the work of the sub-groups and advised that there would be a joint meeting of the events and public realm sub-groups on 7 July to look at resurrecting shelved projects. GS and AJH would be updating the budget to find out what could be brought forward into the third year. AJH asked for the Board's ideas on what they would like to see money spent on in Minehead.

3. Anything to declare

There was nothing to declare.

4. Matters arising from previous meeting held on 9 June 2020

Invoicing situation for year 3 and bad-debt provision

AJH reported that a joint press release had been agreed with SWT yesterday and this would go out next week with the letters to BID members regarding the AGM and the letter explaining the postponement of the issuing of the BID levy invoices until September 2020.

MC referred to the discussion at the last meeting regarding the option of paying the BID levy in instalments and that this had concluded with the agreement that the instalment option should be open to all BID levy members irrespective of size. However, this did not seem to be reflected in the minutes. AJH advised that the vote had been *JL proposed and TV seconded that the principle of offering instalments over a three month period be accepted. The proposal was AGREED.* This decision did not discriminate between BID levy payers. The offer of instalments over a three-month period would be given to all levy payers.

Adoption of minutes of the previous meeting

AP proposed and DS seconded that the minutes of 25 May 2020 were an accurate record of the meeting. The proposal was AGREED.

5. Marketing/Social Media Update

SG and LG reported that the social media was going well. They were focussing on Facebook and Instagram and relayed data gained from when they had begun:

Facebook:

- Page views: 517 (increase of 94%)
- Page previews: 41 (increase of 156%)
- Page likes: 130 (increase of 73%)
- Post reach: 27,185 (increase of 28%)
- Post engagement: 10,461 (increase of 93%)
- Page followers: 145 (increase of 96%)

Instagram:

- 33 new followers in the past week
- 531 accounts reached in the past week
- Audience: 4.1% in Minehead, 16% in Taunton
- Highest Engagement:
 - Monday – Friday between 6pm and 9pm
 - Saturday 12noon and 9pm
 - Sunday 9am and 9pm

They had commissioned drone footage of the town centre, parks and harbour, the seafront and golf course.

The main Minehead pages on the Visit Somerset website had been updated and the sub-pages had been done, but not uploaded. They would be talking to Visit Somerset about this.

In order to entice day visitors to Minehead they were looking at advertising in the Somerset County Gazette, North Devon Gazette and Bridgwater Mercury. They had also spoken to Marcus Kravis about using poster sites on his premises in Minehead, where they could put up posters directing people to the shops. An A0 poster would cost £32.

Billboard prices were cheaper than advertising with the Somerset County Gazette. It cost £150 +VAT for one month including the poster and fixing it to the billboard. The billboard at East Reach would be available in a couple of weeks' time. DS thought that when WSR was up and running again fingerposts from the station directing people to the town would be a good idea.

AP advised that she often gets asked for directions to the town centre and felt a map showing the different shops would be a good idea. Also it could include a tidal clock to encourage people to go shopping when the tide was in.

JJ asked whether the maps within the town could be updated with businesses listed by type of business as this would help shoppers more easily find the goods/services they were looking for. GS explained that the existing maps were too cluttered and AP suggested an index on the side of the map, which would prevent the map getting too cluttered. This was thought to be a good idea.

AJH added that the search capability on the website would enable shoppers to search by business type. However, JJ expressed the wish to reach those people who did not use the internet, it was agreed this would be looked at.

6. Minehead Gift Card – presentation from Chris Parker of Miconex

Chris Parker talked to slides, as follows:

- The gift card was in operation throughout the UK and was entering the USA.
- Gift cards locked in spend, drove footfall and stimulated economic activity.
- 50 cities and towns were working with Miconex to introduce the gift card scheme.
- It could be used in a selected number of shops, such as the local independents.
- It could be used for gifts.
- The gift card market brought in £6billion pa.
- An increasing amount of money was being spent online and leaking from the local economy. Gift cards ensured money was locked into the local economy.
- It could be publicised on social media channels.
- The gift card scheme used Mastercard and a closed loop solution so it could only be spent in participating businesses.
- It took only a few minutes to set up a business.

- Businesses could join and leave the scheme as they wished.
- On average gift card schemes had 80 to 100 businesses on board, ranging from 30 with the smaller schemes to 900 with the largest schemes.
- Businesses received the full card value plus any additional money that the customer wished to spend.
- Miconex handle all the fulfilment. The customer goes online and decides how much they wish to put on the card and Miconex sends the card out in the post to the customer. When the customer uses the card to make a purchase the card is swiped through the card terminal like a Mastercard. The card could be used at multiple locations or a single location, as the customer preferred.
- Consumers explored more when they had a gift card and spend on average 35% to 65% more than the value of the gift card.

The set-up package cost £7,000 (£1,000 less due to Covid-19) if set up for September 2020. The package included:

- Technical implementation
- Syncing businesses to the programme
- User guide
- Training
- Marketing materials (window stickers/promotional props)
- Draft promotional plan
- Ongoing support
- Programme licence
- Hosting and support
- Data tracking fees
- Customer service for consumers and businesses (email support from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)
- Account management – single point of contact

The cards cost £2,500. They required the same level of security and quality as Mastercard.

There was a three-year contract period.

A monthly fee of £350 also applied.

There were no bank account fees for the BID. Miconex did the reporting and the banking.

Miconex would bill the BID for 5% of the value of everything sold.

After the presentation, there were questions and answers and further clarification on how the gift card worked.

GS asked for the name of the smallest settlement Miconex worked with. CP advised that it was Aran Island. GS asked if Miconex encouraged new businesses. CP

clarified that Miconex provided the service via a contract, but the marketing of the gift card was down to the BID.

The Board asked if there was an alternative way to buy a gift card other than online. CP advised that at the present time the sale of cards was managed by Miconex online, however, by Christmas 2020 they would be introducing 'Grab and Load'. This allowed consumers to pick up a gift card from a shop and load it with their desired monetary value either online or via telephone sales at home. A gift card with a value could not be bought from a shop.

There was no defined amount on the gift card (eg £10, £20, £30) as people were often happy to spend more.

CP advised that it was found that within a 25 mile radius of a location with a gift card scheme, 75% was spent within the radius and 25% was spent outside the radius.

AP said that no research had been undertaken by the BID to find out how many businesses would like to be part of a gift card scheme. She thought it was poor value for money. CP agreed to provide a list of BIDS/towns who used the Miconex gift card scheme.

JJ said that more clarity was needed on the costs involved and JL asked for data on towns of a similar size to Minehead who used the gift card. CP agreed to send case studies, particularly of seaside towns similar to Minehead. Enniskillen was probably a similar size, but the popularity of the gift card came down to how well the card was marketed. If a lot of effort was put in a similar level of income could be achieved as for a larger town/city.

At this point CP left the meeting and there was a general discussion, as follows:

MN said that it seemed really expensive and complicated and wondered how much it would cost to join the Post Office gift card scheme instead which was well established.

AP said that there was need to ask BID members if they wanted a gift card and GS agreed that this could be done. DS suggested asking businesses the question on the Minehead Chat Facebook page as this was used by a lot of businesses.

JL stated that more information was needed before any decision could be made and felt that it needed to be successful for the town overall. MC thought it would suit some businesses (eg, those selling beauty products and jewellery) more than other businesses (eg, furniture shops).

AJH put forward that the gift card scheme could include all businesses within the town not just BID members as this could increase its popularity and usability. However, AH reminded the Board that any money from the BID spent on this scheme should only be for the benefit of BID members as BID levy money would be used to set up and maintain the scheme.

AJH asked the meeting not to see the gift card as a stand-alone operation but as part of a wider recovery package.

GS reported that the gift card could be decided at a later meeting once CP had sent the further information requested and this had been fully considered.

7. Update on activity since the last meeting

AJH reported the following:

- a) There had been a re-opening of shops from 15 June and signage had gone in around the town, seafront, harbour and in Alcombe.
- b) A refreshed Minehead BID website had gone live.
- c) The shops directory would be published in Word Gets Around in two weeks' time.
- d) He had been liaising with local MP, Ian Liddell-Grainger, the manager of Butlins, WSR, Directors at SWT and was in regular contact with other BID managers through ATCM and the SW BIDs group.
- e) GS, AJH and Cllr Andy Kingston-James of Minehead Town Council sat on the Reopening High Streets Task Force which had been set up by SWT.

AH asked whether empty premises could be advertised on the website and AJH advised that this could be done. It was noted that Holloway Street had a number of empty units at this time.

8. Open discussion

AJH asked for feedback on the signage, the removal of parking along one side of The Parade and the re-location of the fish van (part of the Farmers Market) in to Wellington Square.

DS advised that walking in the parking area was working. SG and LG had spoken to the fish van and the other Friday Market traders. Customers were finding the position of the van and stalls positive as it enabled social distancing. SG and LG admired the signage; they felt it was amazing, consistent, smart and welcoming, a subtle change to the bold colours being employed by other towns.

JL agreed that the subtle message and colour of the signage was working and welcoming. He noted that the town was not very busy now but this would change as more shops opened.

Wellington had been quieter this week than last week and this was probably true of Minehead and elsewhere as last week's re-opening had led to an initial burst of curiosity.

GS reported that the Springboard footfall monitor had shown an increase in footfall and this data could be compared with other towns' data.

AP stated that everyone she saw had been keeping their distance. She suggested that breaks in the barriers along The Parade be made to allow people to cross the

road more easily. MN suggested that wheelchair ramps were needed in the breaks between the barriers. AJH said that he would feed both comments back to the site meeting he would be attending on Thursday.

AJH reported that signs would be displayed on 24 June to direct people to the car parks for free car parking. It was, however, thought that the free parking in SWT car parks would finish at the end of July 2020. AJH wondered whether, in order to increase footfall, the BID should consider subsidising car parking charges in order to continue free parking in certain car parks for longer.

JJ reported that scaffolding and plant relating to the works to the Regal Theatre roof and the cinema were taking over disabled car parking spaces in Summerland Road car park. JJ agreed to take photos and send them to AJH.

ACTION: JJ to take photos of the scaffolding and plant in Summerland Road car park and send them to AJH.

AJH reported that Butlins were due to make an announcement in the near future and the West Somerset Railway did not think that the railway would be able to run a full service this Summer.

Bunting would be hung in the town next week. The Monster Hero Safari would be launched on 4 July. The app could be downloaded onto a mobile phone and ten monsters would appear in windows of different venues throughout the town. Monster Hero Safari would be taking place in 100 places throughout the UK.

Full guidance was awaited following the relaxed measures announced in the Ministerial briefing earlier today, which would affect the hospitality and health and beauty sectors. Extra pavement tabling was required for cafes; this would depend on SWT's licensing stance.

MC advised that she had met with the owner of the cinema. The building had been gutted inside, but he was in a difficult situation with no funding or support. His other cinemas were closed so he was not receiving any income from them.

SM advised that she had passed on AJH's details to the Chair of MATA (Minehead Amateur Theatrical Association) regarding the use of the Regal Theatre's box office display space.

AJH reported that SWT were hoping to go live with the Shopappy campaign next week. They were looking to speed up the normal procurement process and legalities. This would operate in Minehead, Taunton and Wellington.

Minehead Town Council were to open up more toilets next week and were awaiting hand sanitiser gels. This would include the toilets in Summerland Road car park, Blenheim Gardens, Quay West and those on the seafront towards Butlins. The toilets by the Arkade, which were operated by Marcus Kravis, would come into use when the Arkade re-opened and likewise with the toilet at the Jubilee Gardens Café.

9. AOB

Annual General Meeting – 22 September 2020

GS reported that letters were due to go out in the next few days inviting member businesses to attend the AGM and giving details on how interested members could join the Board. Nominations would need to be returned in about a months' time from the date of the letter, and then members would be asked to vote for their preferred candidates. JL and RB had agreed to retire as Directors and would re-apply for their positions. It was noted that the Local Authority representative for the coming year would be from Somerset County Council. AJH and MC would discuss this.

As the end of the financial year, 30 June, was approaching the BID's bookkeeper and Lentells in Taunton were closing the accounts.

Independents Day – 4 July 2020

SG and LG reported that posters would be given to all the shops in the town to promote the independent stores. The meeting suggested that the format of the posters produced by Eat worked well and could be replicated. There would be promotion on social media about one week before with a shop local campaign. This hopefully would help businesses feel good about re-opening. The Monster Hero Safari would also be launched on this day (see above).

DS suggested that shops may wish to do an offer or discount on the day and SG and LG agreed to approach businesses to see if they wished to this, which they could then publicise. AP said that she would be happy to do a sales offer. MN disagreed with doing discounts on this day.

JJ felt that there would be return of holiday makers to the town, hopefully spending money, on 4 July.

10. Date of next meeting

The next Board meeting would be held on 14 July 2020 at 6pm.

The meeting finished at 6.45pm